Hekapoo Shrugged.

by Shock_Cooling

Summary

The events leading up to Star Butterfly’s exile from Mewni, the establishment of the republic of Mewni. A story of romance between Solaria Butterfly and Hekapoo and the ultimate result of Hekapoo’s first mistake.
"Yes I know that was the wrong thing to do. I mean, I didn't even know this guy. But I just couldn't take it anymore! I have seen so much death, more death than any mortal could ever imagine. I have outlived so many families, friends, civilizations! I'm eternal, even the stars aren't meant to be eternal, Hekapoo, you know this better than I do. We all know how lonely you were before life showed up. But that's the thing about life, it ends, it changes. But not me and not you. Memories and mistakes just keep building up inside me. I'm sorry I drew Prince Tanith and everyone else into this. I really am. All I can ask now is your mercy, please, will you grant me that? Before anyone else gets hurt?"

Hekapoo stared at him with an expression of utter rage, "Solaria, wand, now!"

The Monster Carver asked.

"What are you thinking Hekapoo?"

"Wand, now!!!"

Solaria threw the wand, Hekapoo seized it. Two marks formed on Hekapoo's cheeks, flame insignias. Hekapoo threw his scissors back at him and stated.

"I screwed up when I made you, I admit that. but there's nothing I can do about it. If you want the mercy of death though... I will give you even more death than you can imagine!"

Fifteen minutes after the death of Toffee.

Rhombulus and Lekhmet's home.

Rhombulus stepped through the portal to find what he thought was his worst nightmare come true. He had thought that seeing Lekhmet die would be as bad as things could possibly get for the day. But apparently circumstance wasn't done beating him up just yet.

Nine hundred and fifty nine of the worst monsters that the universe had ever created were loose. Somehow, someone had figured out how to break his unbreakable crystals. As he looked around in horror he waited for his snake hands to start berating him.

They said nothing, they were just as shocked and horrified as he was.

In the middle of it all, Eclipsa's crystal, completely shattered. It had to be her, she was the only
person who could have pulled this off. How did she get loose? The only possible way was...

Moon.

He had to find Moon.

Then he remembered something, "oh no, oh no! If she has those then we are all fucked!"

Rhombulus ran to the lower levels of his home. Into his laboratory, below the laboratory was a room that only he knew about. He had never even told Lekhmet about this room. He couldn't tell Lekhmet. How could you tell your best and only friend that you were plotting to kill him?

There were footprints from various monsters and a young lady through the lab, the footprints led straight to the entrance to the room. Rhombulus undid the lock and threw open the door of the cedar paneled room. He ran inside to see a small box, still hidden under a pile of incredibly old books and other random stuff.

"Hidden in plain sight in a secret room. Might as well have a sign on it saying steal me! I'm such an idiot!"

He opened the roughly crafted wood box containing the worst thing he had ever done.

They were all still here. His four unspeakable objects. They didn't look like much, a bolas, a large candle snuffer, a crystal and what appeared to be an empty soup can. These items weren't just random junk though. They were four weapons he had created, custom made to kill the four other members of the Magical High Commission. Why had he done this?

Rhombulus's job was simple, it was to keep things under control. When dark sorcerers got too ambitious and started threatening the very fabric of reality with their madness. Or a monster grew too powerful for regular magic and weapons to deal with. It was Rhombulus's job to seal the threat in crystal for the rest of eternity.

In spite of this great power and responsibility he had issues. One of the deepest being that he was not the most powerful being in creation. That was his fellow Magical High Commissioners, either Glossarick or Omnitraxus Prime depending on who you asked. He had been reminded, very recently, that Glossarick could and would kick his ass. Hekapoo and Lekhmet could also probably fight him, at least to a stalemate, but he would probably lose against them as well.

Being the youngest and weakest member of the commission had led to feelings that he just couldn't deal with. Those feelings were funneled into a paranoia that kept him awake for years. The thought that some evil might infect one of them. It wasn't something utterly unknown or unprecedented, beings of all sorts got infected with evil all the time in this multiverse. It just hadn't happened to any members of the commission... Yet. What would he do if that happened?

So he had studied, he had sweated, he had learned the strengths and weakness of his fellow MHC members and made a deal with a certain dark sorceress to create these four items. His ultimate trump card in case the forces of evil managed to infect one, or all of the commission.

With Eclipsa and the monsters on the loose his worst fear was that they had taken these weapons. He sighed at the sight of the four objects. Immensely relieved that he hadn't completely ruined everything. He made a brief, silent prayer of thanks to his father and talked to his hands.

"Well, go ahead, remind me that I'm an idiot. Remind me that I never should have built these. Remind me that we got really lucky here that no one found this room, forced the lock and took these, these awful things. Go ahead, say I told you so!"
His right hand looked at him and replied.

"No, we are just happy that these are still here. If someone, anyone had taken them the consequences would have been dire."

His left hand spoke.

"Now destroy these things before anyone else shows up! I don't know what Omnitraxus will do to us if he finds out about this, but I don't want to find out!"

Rhombulus took the box upstairs, he built a fire as fast as he could and threw the box into the flames. As the last recognizable bits of the objects were consumed by the flames Hekapoo walked into the room. She shouted.

"Are you seeing this? All the crystals are shattered, Eclipsa is gone! We're fucked, we're completely fucked!"

"Not as fucked as we could have been, big sis." He grumbled.

"What was that?"

"Yeah, big trouble, damn big trouble. We have to get back to Mewni as fast as we can to warn everyone."

Hekapoo cut a portal to Mewni castle, they walked through the portal as the flames crackled softly around what Rhombulus thought were the ashes of his four unspeakable weapons. In reality these were replicas, the real weapons were in the grateful arms of Eclipsa Butterfly as she flew away from the scene with her monster menagerie.

Present day.

Pauline Long's home.

9:23 AM.

Pauline was editing a report. There was a word that she had forgotten the exact meaning of. She reached for a dictionary and looked it up while a gentle rain fell outside.

As she found the word in question she heard the snap of a camera shutter. She looked up to see Star Butterfly holding one of her cameras. Pauline asked.

"I thought photography was supposed to be my thing?"

"Aw come on StarFan, I need some fresh pictures of you for my locker."

"Oh, I didn't know you had a locker anymore."

Star took another picture without saying a word.

Pauline put the book down and looked at the camera, giving a goofy smile. Star stated, "no no, keep doing what you are doing. Just pretend I'm not here."
Pauline replied.

"It's kind of hard to focus on... Anything when a naked woman is taking pictures of you."

Another snap.

"Indulge me, okay?"

Pauline put the dictionary down and tried to go back to her paperwork. As Star kept taking pictures.

After fifteen more shots Pauline put down the paperwork and struck a pose. Pouting her lips and kneeling towards the camera.

Star murmured, "don't start something you can't finish, beautiful."

Pauline sat back in a more normal position and asked.

"Star, I... why do you call me beautiful? I'm not! I know I'm better looking than I was when I was fourteen, thank god. But I know I am not all that much to look at."

Star lowered the camera, looked her in the eyes and stated.

"Says you, you are beautiful now and you were beautiful when you called yourself StarFan13. You may have been a little creep, but you were my little creep. Some people say that I'm not all that much too look at either. My voice doesn't sound like it belongs to a beautiful person, does it?"

Star pointed down, ordering, "now lie down for me."

Pauline stretched out on the couch in the most seductive pose that her rumpled, dirty clothes would permit. Star took a few more pictures, as she looked at them in the cameras view screen she said.

"Not bad, now how about showing us some skin?"

Pauline reached for the bottom of her shirt, she was going to pull the whole thing off when Star stopped her.

"Up bup, bup, slowly! Aren't you the one who always wants to do things slowly?"

Pauline started removing her clothes as slowly as she could while Star snapped away. Under the messy layers of cotton and denim laid the silken femininity that Star wished to capture. She got closer and closer with the camera as more and more clothes came off.

She took detailed shots of Pauline's flat stomach, those perky breasts and finally, that charming face. Star tickled her under her chin to get a smile out of her. When Pauline didn't smile broadly enough for her she started tickling her feet.

The tickling was the last straw, Pauline couldn't help herself. She grabbed Star and pulled her into a passionate kiss.

Star gently placed the camera on the table. Then proceeded to lie down next to her and hug her.

Nothing more, nothing less. Just two women greatly enjoying each other's company.

After a few minutes of silence Pauline announced.
"You know I really do need to get this report sent off."

Star replied.

"I know, it's just..."

"Just what?"

Star shifted her position lower, more submissive.

"It's just that I love it when you make time for me."

"Still recovering from ten years of nonstop adventure?"

"You make that sound much more fun than it was."

"Oh I know, you aren't my only friend who went through something like that."

Pauline ran a finger through her lover's hair and looked out the window. As the rain fell she observed.

"If I had gone through one tenth of what you had gone through... This would seem like nirvana to me too."

She kissed Star on the forehead.

"It's still pretty nice, heck I feel kinda spoiled that I get the incredible Star Butterfly all to myself."

Star looked up to her and asked. "I'm really enough for you?"

Pauline leaned down and smacked Star on the ass, "what was that you said right before you tried to break my spine? You, are, mine StarFan13? That goes both ways my gorgeous Star41."

Star looked away and blushed.

"I still can't believe I did that. I'm so sorry."

"Amongst friends no apology is needed. Hey, at least you didn't make me shoot you in the head in the Congo. So let's say that we are even on that account, okay?"

Star looked up at Pauline, the girl she had once known as StarFan13 and blushed harder. She couldn't believe that anyone could be so forgiving to her after everything she had done. Everything she had killed, everything she had fucked up. This girl practiced unconditional love. Star wasn't used to that. She was used to having to deal with more terms and conditions on a romantic relationship than a multidimensional wireless contract.

Star kissed her on the lips and observed.

"It's been over two months since Hekapoo left. I haven't seen any anomalous heat signatures since. She hasn't been around, she hasn't hired anyone to track us. Do... Do you think that she has forgotten about us?"

Pauline replied.

"I doubt it, most people don't usually forget when somebody tries to kill them. I'm thinking we should go to Mewni and see what's happening."
Star buried her head in Pauline's chest and groaned, "do we have to. Can't we just leave the multiverse to their own troubles?"

"I don't think they are going to leave us alone. They might be busy with something right now but they will be around to pick you up sooner or later. I understand what she did to you, but I don't want to see if I can win in a fight with that woman. I know you can, I just think we would all be better off if we settled this like adults."

Star tousled her own hair over her face, keeping her head where it was. Like she was hiding from something.

"I'm tired of being an adult, I just want to sit on your couch, watch movies and eat... You. Can't I just stay here as your little love slave?"

Pauline pulled Star's head up, brushing her long blonde hair off of her face and kissed her gently on the lips.

"I know your childhood was cut short. But we all have to grow up sometime. I'll be there for you, every step of the way, but you know that you need to face the music."

Bands of energy formed between Pauline's fingers.

"You know I will always be there for you with everything I have. After all this... Practice I have been getting with energy manipulation... Well, let's just say that if you get the maximum sentence I will make sure that they can't carry it out."

Pauline ran her hand up Star's side, the crackling energy drove Star wild.

"Star, I have had you all to myself for months now. I have enjoyed it, even the bad parts. More than you can imagine. But you are too interesting for me to keep locked up here. You need to stop living like a fugitive and get back out into the wider world."

Star rolled on top of her, staring into Pauline's eyes she asked seriously.

"Think they can handle me? Do you think I can handle them? That I won't go nuts and start smashing things?"

"I de-powered you. I have partial control over the wand. If you turn into a mad dog again I can just turn you off."

Star smiled and leaned in for another kiss.

"You never turn me off. You love me too much. You love all of me, not just the good stuff, the bad stuff too. I mean, you thought I was going to kill one of your best friends and all you said was that you were my punching bag, not him. Speaking of which, as long as we are talking about facing the music. When are you going to tell Roy what happened with you and his brother?"

Pauline looked up, in a completely deadpan tone she replied. "Gee I don't know Star, can't I just sit on the couch, finish my report and eat... You?"

Star glared down, "subtle, real subtle Long, but my point still stands."

Pauline rubbed her eyes and groaned. "Alright, I'll tell him, but not for a couple of days. I have a few things to iron out first. I have a couple of non geology related clients lined up."
Star smiled and asked, "oh, I'm going to get to see you show off your dark magic to others? You know how much I like that."

"Why do you like that? Didn't you used to get jealous that I can do something you never even thought of doing?"

"Hey, you learned how to do that by mind-fucking the trauma out of me. I like seeing what you do with your abilities to help people. You took my darkest secrets and turned them into something useful. Something that saves lives."

"Saves lives... I do like saving lives."

Star leaned down and asked, "saving lives or fucking me. Which do you like more?"

Pauline replied noncommittally.

"I can save anyone's life who wants to be saved. There's only one Star Butterfly. Comes down to a question of who do I like more. You, or everyone else in the multiverse, hmm."

Star sighed, stood up and announced.

"You and your non sequiturs."

Pauline grabbed Star, pulling their faces together, separated by millimeters.

"The world is not comprehensible, but it is embraceable: through the embracing of one of its beings. Is that non sequitur enough for you, Butterfly? All I can ever ask you is that you don't ever give me that choice, you or the world. Don't back me into that corner again and I will love you until we are a hundred years old."

Star blinked, "really, you would really stick with me until we're both old and gray?"

"I'm actually looking forward to it."

"Pauline, don't, don't say that if you don't mean it."

Pauline licked Star's neck. "Star, if I could handle, physically sucking the darkness in your soul out of your... delicious neck then I think I can handle a few wrinkles. I want all of you, not just the mask you present to everyone else. And I hope you want all of me. We all have our illusions we present to the outside world, I want the real thing."

"I want what you never shared with anyone else, and I will reach inside you to get it."

Star was on the edge of tears. She thought she had been emotionally balanced by her energy manipulation fight with Pauline. But she wasn't feeling very emotionally balanced right now.

Star asked.

"Can, can I help you with that report?"

It was Pauline's turn to blink.

"Probably not, why?"

"Because you make me want to be responsible, and I want to thank you. At the same time I want to help you with your responsibilities."
Pauline picked up her papers, looked them over, then looked at Star. She pushed Star up, then laid back facedown on the couch.

"Tell you what, why don't you give me a massage while I finish up."

Star grabbed a handful of Pauline's ass and growled, "I'll finish you up good, StarFan."

Chapter End Notes

This started out as my personal headcanon for Shadows of Star. After awhile it grew into something much bigger and more complex. The flow of the story might seem a little odd as we will be jumping around in time quite a bit.
So, whatever happened to Queen Moon and King River?

Chapter Summary

Now, one might ask, how did Marco Diaz become Prime Minister of Mewni? This is the beginning of that story.

The rose garden, two days after the battle of Mewni.

Moon Butterfly was in a coma. The cause was obvious, the creeping magical infection still working its way up her arms.

Only it wasn't an infection. At least not any that any doctor on Mewni, or earthling medicine, or even the surviving members of the Magical High Commission could identify. The finest minds in the multiverse were utterly baffled by her condition. All they could say was that what appeared to be happening wasn't an illness in any sense that they were familiar with. It appeared to be, for lack of a better idea, concentrated entropy. Her mitochondria, the power plant of her cells appeared to be dying wherever the darkness spread.

And the condition was spreading rapidly.

The only option left was a rather desperate one. Being sealed in one of Rhombulus crystals. It was hoped that crystallization would arrest the process. It was the only thing that offered any hope of keeping Queen Moon alive until a treatment could be found.

With great sadness King River and Princess Star agreed to the crystallizing. As the process was completed the Queen still stood proudly. With her eyes closed she would stand within the crystal until a treatment could be found. Her arms extended like the Virgin Mary; to allow doctors and scientists to examine the corruption as closely as they could.

Not long after being sealed up Rhombulus and the other members of the MHC were called away. There was a monster attack on the edges of the kingdom. Something bigger and nastier than the usual Mewnian monsters. It was attacking the bulk of the Mewnian regular army which had been deployed far from the castle before Toffee showed up.

As the MHC and Princess Star flew into battle King River demanded to go with. Star shouted back to him.

"No, you need to stay here with Mom, you need to guard her, you need to secure the castle. This might just be a distraction for another attack on Mewni."

As Hekapoo cut a portal to the affected location she reassured him. "Don't worry, we are just a mirror call away. If anything happens just call us and we will be right back. Just stay safe River, and take care of Moon, you hear me!"

As they left King River was heartbroken. He couldn't bear the thought of looking at his wife sealed in that thing for one more second. There were six knights, in magical power armor guarding the crystal. He had to take a moment, he needed to mourn his wife's illness alone.
He went to the rose garden. It wasn't really his style, but it seemed like the best place for quiet introspection. Moon had never spent much time there, it seemed like the best place to get away from his wife's outsized legacy.

Queen Moon, Moon the Undaunted! One of the most competent, bold and resolute leaders in the history of Mewni, incapacitated, motionless, unable to come to the phone.

River had loved her deeply, since not long after they had first met. Their respective strengths and flaws had complimented each other remarkably well in their relationship. But that didn't matter to River at this point. He was just overwhelmed at the thought of going on without her. As if things weren't bad enough as they were now. Poor little Star was going to have to take on the mantle of Queen. She wasn't ready yet, River knew from firsthand experience what happened when you place a child on the throne.

Moon had known even better than he did. She had made numerous hard decisions to see to it that, unlike a few of the previous queens. She would live long enough to give Star the tools she needed to rule, not just reign. Including sending her to one of the craziest planets in the multiverse, Earth. They knew that if they had sent Star to St Olga's she would have been just another in a long line of rulers maintaining the status quo. That couldn't last. The Mewnian people were hungry, desperate. They knew of the riches of the wider multiverse. Realms of idyllic splendor compared to were they were. Places like America on Earth where people could earn a living that made Mewnian nobility look like beggars. Or the Islands of Blest in the realm of Avonia where life was one of joyous pleasure for all who visited.

Mewni had needed serious reforms in order to keep everyone from either leaving, or rebelling and demanding what they could get elsewhere. So they had made the hard decision to send Star to Earth where she could learn what she would need to reform the government.

That plan was in tatters now. Star had only completed part of her training. By some bizarre, though not entirely unexpected inversion of the expected process, being sent to a realm without magic she had developed magical skill that was off the charts. She only had a peripheral knowledge of what needed to be done politically. This was a dangerous combination. A recipe for war, and King River knew it. He had fought to keep Star in a place where, he believed, that she would learn what she needed to know to weather these storms.

He was going to have to be there for his daughter, to shepherd her through this. He was going to have to temper her steel. Show her that there is more to problem solving that just smashing things.

But he knew that he sucked at that sort of thing.

He buried his head in his hands as the scent of roses wafted on the breeze.

A feminine voice asked.

"Bad day huh?"

Without looking up River replied.

"The worst, the absolute worst."

"Need to talk?"

"Yes, I suppose I should. My wife is dying, my daughter is off hunting monsters... without me! Mewni is a mess and its only going to get worse. Moon and I, we had so many plans. Star, she was supposed to go to college on Earth and learn what she would need to make it through the political
chaos barreling down the road at us. The damn schools on Earth aren't much better than they are here. They taught her nothing! everything she learned on Earth was from action movies. We are in damn big trouble! the next queen of Mewni is going to be one hell of a fighter and not much else. We already have enough fighters! Still, I suppose as bad as that is, it could have been worse."

"Worse?"

"There's a TV show that Star never liked, Game of Thrones. She thought it was too boring, thank god she did. If she had gotten into that show... Ugh! I watched the first season of that last week, it, it's basically a guide on how not to run a monarchy."

"Huh."

"Oh, sorry I forget, almost no one else in Mewni has a television or a DVD player. I'm talking about things you don't understand, sorry."

"No no, it's okay, better out than in. I assume you are talking about things from Earth? It seems that there is a lot of new things in Mewni coming from the realm of Earth. Things have changed a bit since I left."

"Yes, and the changes are only going to go faster. I, I just don't know if my family is going to survive those changes."

The voice replied brightly.

"Well, that all just depends on how you are able to use those changes to your best advantage. Change isn't inherently bad or good, it just is."

River replied in a happier tone.

"Hmm, never thought of it that way, thanks, you have been a real help."

River looked up and saw the woman standing next to him. She looked oddly familiar he asked.

"I'm sorry, have we met?"

The petite woman smiled and shook her head.

"No I don't think so."

Then River noticed her cheeks. Spade cheek marks, green hair, slim frame. Her identity dawned on him, his eyes dilated as he whispered.

"Eclipsa."

She smiled politely and asked.

"Yes, now who are you?"

River reached down and drew a small dagger he carried with him, mainly for the purpose of cutting things like small lengths of string and opening letters. He seized her neck and slammed her into the ground, leaning on top of her. He angrily, but quietly told her.

"You go up there right now and you fix my wife."

"I'm sorry, who is your wife?"
"Queen Moon, the damned ruler of Mewni! You go up there right now and you fix what you did to her with that horrible spell you gave her."

"Horrible spell...? Oh right, breaking things that can't be broken. No, sorry, I can't help with that."

River placed the tip of the dagger millimeters away from her right eye.

"If you don't undo what you did I am going to start taking things from you. Things that you will miss."

Eclipsa was growing uncomfortable as she groaned under the crushing weight of King River. She wriggled a hand free and took the glove off her left hand with her teeth.

"Do you really think that if I could fix the side effects of that spell that my hand would look like this? That spell is extremely dangerous, I told Moon as much. One of the consequences of it is that when you do damage to a target corresponding damage is sometimes done to the caster. There are a lot of variables but you never know what you are going to get. The only thing that can save Moon is time. Time for the effects of the spell to wear off, time for her body to heal."

"Then cast a healing spell on her to speed up the process."

"I can't, that spell was specifically designed to defeat anything with an advanced healing factor of a biological or magical nature. A healing spell against that would be like throwing water on a grease fire. The only thing that works is time! And it's a damn good thing I had plenty of time to heal after all the times I had to use that blasted spell."

Lekhmet was gone, the multiverse's designated master of entropy couldn't help. Others had tried, including Star. Every one of those spells had made Moon's condition worse. River thought.

"This was all her fault, she had given Moon that spell. She has broken loose all those monsters. She was the Queen of Darkness, the worst ruler in the history of Mewni. It is all her fault that Moon was sealed in that crystal. Her evil has to stop here!" River angled the dagger to her neck and murmured.

"Then what good are you to me?"

Eclipsa's eyes went wide with horror as she said.

"Now, I came here in peace, and I intend to leave in one... piece. So consider your next move very carefully King... whatever your name is."

King River snorted derisively as he asked.

"Now why should I?"

Eclipsa's expression went from horror to resolve. She began to softly murmur a spell. River raised the dagger to plunge it into her chest. As she finished the spell she asked, "look at your knife."

River did as she asked as a reflex. The dagger wasn't a dagger anymore. It was a giant black cobra coiling around his arm.

He exclaimed in horror as he threw away the snake in his hands. Once it was gone he cocked back a fist to pound Eclipsa's face. As he did so her hand came up to strike him. He was not concerned, what could this tiny woman possibly do to the mighty River Johansen?
Eclipsa's slap hit him with the force of a rogue warnicorn. He literally went flying, about eight meters away from where he had been kneeling.

He got up, seeing stars, he could barely remember the last time he had taken a hit like that. Eclipsa got up and stated.

"Now calm down, this doesn't have to go any further!"

River rushed her, cocking back the biggest punch that he could summon he was going to hit her with all the force that his body could bring to bear. Which was far more than what the average human could do. Or even most mewmans were capable of.

His punch did not connect with Eclipsa's jaw. It struck a force field she was projecting. For River it was like punching the finest and thickest piece of forged steel that he had ever seen. His hand broke under the force of the punch.

Without a moments hesitation he angled for a kick. His foot struck another part of the force field, going much slower than the punch. Still utterly ineffective. As he stood there dumbfounded Eclipsa cocked back her own hand to strike.

As the blow hit King River felt guilty. Guilty that he had started this fight, and even more guilty that this would mean that he couldn't be there for his daughter. Right when she needed him the most.

River went flying again, this time the energy of the slap, striking his face instead of his chest. Was combined with that added force of his impacting face first into a large stone pedestal. His neck and skull instantly shattered.

Eclipsa walked over to him and rolled him over. She was shocked to see that he was dead. She whispered.

"Damn, I guess they don't make Kings of Mewni like they used to!"

She left the rose garden quickly, her attempted diplomacy having failed in the most spectacular way possible. Stopping just long enough to get her things out of the Rose Tower. Hidden in a secret passage were her own books of magic. Some items of personal importance and her own set of dimensional scissors. As she checked to see if they still functioned properly she heard the sound of someone screaming nearby. She cut a portal out of the area, thinking.

"I'm going to need more time, fortunately I know just where to get it."
Healing things, hurting other things.

Chapter Summary

Another two parter, wherein we learn more about the fabled Monster Carver and what StarFan and Star have been up to besides cuddling on the couch.

The forest of certain death.

"How the hell did you talk me into this?"

"You talked yourself into this."

"Ooookay, how did I talk myself into this?"

"Because you wouldn't shut up about all the dimension hopping monsters you took down the last time we were at the Bounce Lounge. You know I don't like hanging out there, and you had to talk about my favorite thing in the world the whole time you were there? You should consider yourself lucky that we are still in Mewni. If I really wanted to have some fun we could go elsewhere."

"Fun, this is fun to you, Solaria? Up to our ankles in mud, bugs and, oh what even is that?"

"Yes, this my kind of fun! now talk a little louder why don't you? How about you detail our plans to exterminate everything in this shithole!"

Hekapoo and Solaria's argument grew louder and louder as they went deeper into the forest. There had been reports of a new monster terrorizing the local farmers. Princess Solaria wanted to take this thing down before it got ambitious enough to attack anyone outside the outskirts of the forest.

"You see that's the thing you never understood Hekapoo, you just try to keep things under control. Fuck control, you can never control everything. Life is chaos, randomness, and the glories of life lie resplendent in that chaos. Don't focus on the mud, just look at all the wonderful nature around us right now."

As a branch smacked her in the face and was lit by her flame Hekapoo grumbled. "Easy for you to say, you are properly dressed and you don't have a fire over your head announcing your location for all to see."

"Well, there's nothing I can do about the fire, but I can certainly make a few modifications to your dress if you like."

"Really? Little miss Badass is going to offer me fashion tips?"

Solaria ran her left hand through her hair and stated. "Well, I do have a few, specific skills outside of slicing things."
"Oh, like what?"

Solaria looked Hekapoo squarely in the eyes and announced.

"Did you know I brew a killer... Corn whiskey?"

"Knowing you the word killer is probably used in the most literal sense."

"Ah what do you have to worry about? You are immortal, right?"

Before Hekapoo could reply Solaria raised her hand and whispered pensively.

"Quiet, I hear something."

Solaria gestured to get down, she asked Hekapoo.

"What do you see?"

"It's hard to tell, whatever it is is big, really big. Multiple legs, low to the ground. I think it might be armored."

"Armored? Sweet, can you see any weapons?"

"No, if it has any then they are probably internal."

"Alright, this sounds like my kind of monster. So, how do you want to take it down?"

"I don't even want to be out here! If you want to kill this thing, go right ahead, but this is your hunt, not mine."

"Fine, spoilsport. Just sit back and mope in the mud while I have all the fun!"

Solaria drew the wand, but she did not activate it. She didn't want to tip her hand. She preferred close range combat, while she could use the wand for long range strikes that wasn't as much fun as cleaving things in twain with raw energy.

She strode warily up to the massive monster. Hiding amongst brush and brambles as long as she could until she was standing a few feet away from the beast.

It was big alright, at least thirty feet long. With six massive legs. It blended in with the local dirt, looking like a pile of boulders.

A breathing pile of boulders.

Solaria leapt into the air, charged the wand and brought it down into the middle of the monster.

The beast reared up and threw her some distance away. Her attack had punched through its rocky armor, just far enough to piss it off.

As the monster bucked Solaria was thrown straight through a rather substantial tree. As she shook her head to recover she reactivated the wand and began launching magical explosions at the monster.

The magical blasts bounced off the beast like they were nothing. As it turned around Solaria faced it head on.
It was even bigger than she thought it was, eight legs not six and had a set of jaws big enough to swallow her whole. She smiled and roared, "I'm really going to enjoy this!"

She ran towards the monster, as it opened its mouth Solaria extended the blade of the wand out to twenty feet. Long enough to cut its head off.

Before she could close the range though she was hit with an indescribable sound. It was so strong it felt like it was going to crumble her very bones. She dropped the wand and put her hands on her ears.

Solaria realized that she had fucked up. All this thing had to do was take two steps and it could either flatten her or eat her. Other than the pain of the monsters sonic attack the only thought in her head was.

"You know, I should really be less reckless, oh well, maybe in my next life."

Before the monster closed the distance a fireball came out of nowhere hitting the monster square in the jaws. Causing it to stop its sound attack. Solaria took the opportunity to grab the wand and used it to rocket into the air. She reforged the 20 foot blade and used the force of gravity to come down on top of the monsters head.

The blade punched through the monsters thickest armor, right on top of it's skull. The energy blade went four feet into the ground before Solaria's feet landed delicately on what looked like the monsters third eye. She twisted the blade and once she was sure that the monster was dead she deactivated it and sheathed the wand.

She looked in the direction from where the fireball came. She pointed and shouted, "thank you, Hekapoo! I couldn't have done that without you."

Hekapoo replied, "don't do that again Solaria, please. That was insane."

As she jumped down from the monsters head she replied, "you know what? You're right, I'm thinking that I should find some other hobbies. Can't live by monster hunting alone you know."

"Oh, what kind of other hobbies?"

Solaria walked towards Hekapoo and spoke softly, "like this."

She drew Hekapoo into a passionate kiss.

Hekapoo pulled away and spluttered, "wow, um, okay, if you like. No, no we can't, what if your mother finds out? What if the rest of the Magical High Commission finds out?"

Solaria replied in a singsong tone, "I won't tell if you won't."

Hekapoo stammered, "okay, geez, wait, are you sure about this?"

"You are the most beautiful thing I have ever seen, and I have known you as long as I have lived. Do you have any idea how long I have wanted to taste you?"

Solaria pushed her up against a tree, Hekapoo pushed back, burning away some of the hair on the right side of Solaria's head. Hekapoo warned.

"No, not out here, not in the mud."

Running her fingers delicately across Hekapoo's shoulders Solaria asked.
"What's the matter? Afraid you will get... Wet?"

Solaria reached inside Hekapoo's gown and found her dimensional scissors. She tossed them into a nearby birds nest. Solaria smiled and ran her hand through her burnt hair. As she examined the damage from the singe she said in a seductive tone.

"You are going to regret that, big time."

As she closed the distance she kissed Hekapoo hungrily. Hekapoo was nervous, this was all so untoward. Not forbidden, but certainly unprecedented. No one in the Mewnian royal family had ever made a move on her before. But then again Solaria wasn't what anyone would call a typical example of a royal. Even if she had been born in some other world, in some other life she could only have one path in life, the path of the warrior. Regardless of what gender she would have been incarnated in Solaria's spirit would have only been satisfied with a life where she could crush evil with righteous fury.

Solaria was used to taking what she wanted, and right now she wanted Hekapoo.

As she started to relax into Solaria's embrace Hekapoo blinked, "no, wait stop."

"Why?"

"I see something, a few dimensions away, portals opening, they aren't closing. This could be big trouble."

Solaria sighed and pulled away, "okay, if the multiverse hangs in the balance then I should probably let you go. I'll be seeing you around, Hekapoo."

As Solaria turned her back and walked away Hekapoo shouted. "Hey, Princess Crazy Pants! My scissors!?"

Solaria looked back and replied, "oh, right, where are my manners?"

She drew the wand and sliced clean through the tree that held the birds nest where the scissors had landed. The tree fell in front of Hekapoo. Solaria walked away without even turning to look where it was falling. The scissors flew through the air, landing blade first in the dirt at Hekapoo's feet. She shouted.

"You know you could have just cut the branch!"

Solaria shot Hekapoo a rude gesture as she vanished into the brush of the forest. Walking with a perfect insouciance that Hekapoo found irresistible.

"Oh what have I gotten myself into?" Hekapoo whispered to herself.

Present day.

The home of the Yates family.

Pauline Long sat across the table from Danny Yates. The son of a friend of a friend. Danny barely noticed the woman sitting directly across from him. The eight year old had a severe case of autism.
He was off in his own little world right now, unable and unwilling to make contact with anyone around him. As he gestured and made nonsensical noises Pauline thought.

"Beautiful, absolutely beautiful. This is going to be quite a challenge."

She started making hand gestures among the energies that surrounded Danny. They were a mess. An utter rats nest of random nonsense made up his aura. This was expected. She got to work cleaning it up.

"So, what's she doing?" Asked Danny's mother Tina, standing quietly on the edge of the room with her husband Alan and one Star Butterfly. Star explained in a whisper.

"It's hard to explain, but right now what she is doing is kinda like a handshake. She is reaching out to your sons core self to try to make contact. Oh, now see, this is a very good sign. Your sons hand gestures are becoming more symmetrical. He is reaching out to her."

Pauline slowed her hand gestures, becoming more synchronized with Danny's. Their respective gestures went slower and slower and slower. Danny stopped flailing as he started to stare at the woman sitting across from him. Pauline asked curtly.

"Star, wand, usual spot. I'm going in."

Star placed her wand between them on the table. Pauline reached out to the mind of the boy she was sitting across from and asked.

"May I come in?"

Danny hesitated, he wasn't used to people being able to see him, to talk to him, to understand him. He was afraid, he had never met this woman before. No, he had met her before. He didn't quite remember when, but he remembered this woman. She was one of the gun people. The gun people could be loud and scary and weird, but his father was one of them. He glanced over and saw his father and mother in the room. They trusted her too. There was something in this woman's eyes that he liked. Then he saw.

There was something around her, all purple and green, it was like a force field, it wrapped around her like a tornado. This woman was very interesting indeed. What sealed the deal was her eyes. Those turbine patterned eyes. Okay, he had to know more about this woman. He couldn't speak, so he thought to her.

"Come in, whoever you are."

Pauline dove into his mind, and quickly found his core self.

The core was in a memory, that's the way it usually was when she went poking around in other people's minds. The memory was a pleasant one, a very detailed depiction of a park with a stream running through it. That was one of the things that Pauline appreciated about working with autists. They had a real eye for detail in the constructions in their memories.

Danny was sitting on a bench, watching some kids play baseball. Pauline flew down to where he was, dropped out of the sky behind him and sat down beside him. He looked up and asked.

"Who are you? I have never seen you here before."

She cheerfully replied, extending her hand in a handshake, "Pauline Long, pleased to meet you."
He slowly took her hand and shook it. He had never shaken anyone's hand before. It felt, fascinating. Increasingly confused by the situation Danny asked.

"How are you talking with me? no one ever talks with me, just at me."

"Well, we aren't in the real world right now. We are in your memories. I had to bring the two of us here so we could talk."

"Okay, yeah, you are that woman with the wings and the funny eyes. Can I see your eyes again?"

Pauline smiled at him and flashed him her turbine irises.

"Damn that's cool as hell!"

She blinked away the pattern and replied.

"Thank you, I think so too."

Danny smiled and looked away, asking.

"So, what do you want to talk about?"

Pauline answered.

"I'm wondering why you don't go and play with those other kids?"

"They aren't real kids, they are just memories."

"Okay, why don't you play with other kids in real life then?"

"I can't, I just can't. I have no coordination, can't catch, can't throw, can't talk to them... I can't even look them in the fucking eyes!"

Pauline shrugged and replied.

"That's a problem, I might be able to help you with that, if you let me."

"Oh sure, you are going to fix me? That's rich, you think I haven't been trying to fix myself for my entire life? You think I haven't been trying to reach out to other people? It's hopeless, I'm useless, I'm a burden on my parents and society as a whole. I'm a worthless sack of crap and that's all I am ever going to be."

He grabbed her arm and shouted in her face.

"I can't even tell my own mother I love her! Can you even begin to imagine how much that hurts!?"

She grabbed his arm, prying his hands off and replied softly, "yes, yes I can. I can help you with that, if you let me. But the choice is yours, worst case scenario? I will be sure to tell your mother how you feel, you have my word."

His grip relaxed, "so, what kind of help are you talking about?"

"It's difficult to explain, to really go into the details would take a long time and I don't think you would understand a lot of what I told you. But I can bring you out, the real you. Out of these memories, out of the prison of your own mind. I can let you use your body as it was intended to be..."
"Un huh, well, that sounds cool, let's do that then."

"It's not that simple, you need to enter into a state of harmonic resonance with the universe itself. You need to release your burden and enter a state of love."

"Love? What do you mean? Am I supposed to hug you or kiss you or something?"

"Ha, no, thanks kid but it's a bit more complex than that." She pointed over to the memories of the children playing baseball. "You have to go play with them."

"I can't."

"Why not?"

"I already told you I can't play with anyone, besides those are just memories. They don't react to me."

"We are always making new memories, trust me when I say that they will react."

"What if they react by trying to hurt me?"

"They won't, but if they do then I will stop them."

"I can't, I, I just can't."

"Alright kid, if that's the way it is then I can't help you. I will just have to sit on this bench with you until you do."

"You aren't going to leave me?"

"No, I will stay here and talk to you for as long as it takes. I might have to leave every now and then to sleep and use the bathroom. But as long as you are here, I will be here for you."

Danny hugged her. "I never, I, I don't have anyone to talk to here. Please don't go, it's so damn lonely here."

Pauline hugged him back and replied, "hey, it's okay. I know it sucks being trapped in your own head. I know how lonely it gets in places like this, how repetitive it gets. Seeing the same day over and over and over again, just praying to a god you don't really believe in that something might break the monotony."

"You do?"

"Yes, I used to be a lot like you. I could string a sentence together. But I didn't talk to anyone that I didn't have to. I was in a place like this. Sitting on a bench much like this one. Creating, creating vast and strange worlds in my mind. I was a god of a realm like this. But the world was passing me by. I didn't even realize how much I was missing until..."

She went silent, an increasingly creepy smile crawled across her face. After a few seconds Danny shook her and asked angrily.

"Until what you weirdo!?"

"Until someone came along and pulled me out of this. It wasn't easy, oh lord it was painful at
times. Growth is painful, but it's worth it, at least in my opinion."

Danny looked away and blinked, "that's what you are trying to do? Pull me out of here?"

"Yes, but only with your full consent. I cannot and will not force you into anything you don't want to do."

A bat cracked, a ball went sailing through the air in a lazy arc. Right at Pauline. It landed just in front of her and rolled to her feet. She picked up the ball and announced.

"Well kid, I don't know about you, but I have a hankering to play some baseball. You can come with me if you like, or you can stay here on this bench for as long as you please. Either way I will be here for you for as long as I can, so will your parents..."

A little redheaded girl, about the same age as Danny ran up. Pauline pointed to her and finished.

"And so will your friends, from now until the end of the universe."

Pauline pitched the ball to the girl, who caught it. Pauline asked, "hey, got room in that game for two more?"

She got off the bench and walked over to the pitchers mound. The girl tossed the ball back to her and Pauline pitched the ball at a memory of a young boy. Gently, just hard enough to give the thought form a challenge hitting the thing.

The core that was Danny Yates got off the bench. He was scared as hell as he walked towards the plate. He knew that any second the memories were going to attack him. Call him names, beat him up, hurt him. But they didn't, he was walking. He was walking in a straight line. With none of the stumbling awkwardness he was used to.

A thought form handed Danny a bat and took the plate. Pauline announced in what sounded like a bizarrely deep voice.

"Now batting, one Danny Yates. This young man from Bend Oregon just might have what it takes to be MVP this year."

Danny looked around, the memories were smiling at him. They weren't supposed to smile, he wasn't supposed to be able to read their faces. They were supposed to be inscrutable. They weren't supposed to be happy. They were all waiting for him.

He tightened his grip on the bat and faced Pauline. He gasped, the force field didn't look like a tornado anymore, it looked like a set of wings. As she stared they unfolded, becoming more... Real, more metallic. Inside were the most beautiful fractal designs he had ever seen.

He wanted those wings, but if he couldn't get those wings he just wanted to stare at them. She shouted.

"Hey, I know I look cool, but keep your eye on the ball, kid."

He followed her instructions. He tore his eyes away from the wings and focused on the ball in her hands. She threw it.

It seemed to be going pretty fast, but he was able to track it all the way from her hand to right in front of his bat. He swung the bat. He swung with everything he had. The bat exploded on impact with the ball sending it blasting away with all the speed of a gunshot.
Pauline looked up. The ball had shattered the illusion. The memories began to dissolve. As this happened Danny focused on Pauline. The one thing here that wasn't an illusion. She smiled and announced.

"Welcome to the game, son."

As the illusion shattered Pauline and Danny were back in his parents living room. His eyes were alight with the fire of consciousness. He breathed deeply, he touched his face. His body was under his control. He looked over at his parents. He stared at them, he wanted, need to know that he saw them. He gasped louder and louder as he tried to force out the words.

"I, I can, I know, I, I, I, thank you."

They couldn't believe it. Years of therapists, medicines, exotic treatments. No effect, now, after ten minutes sitting with this woman they had only known in passing their son was speaking.

They couldn't hold back. They exploded across the room and hugged their son. As they embraced each other they all started crying. Danny spoke again, his words halting, still unpracticed talking.

"I'm soooooo sorry, I'm so soory I have seen such a bur, bur-den to you."

His parents wailed even louder, his mother almost screamed. "Don't say that, don't ever say that, just..."

She couldn't say anymore.

Pauline picked up the wand and handed it to Star, whispering to her. "I think this is our cue to exit."

Star took the wand, gave Pauline a quick kiss on the cheek and replied, "yep, you have done well today. I will have to give you a suitable reward."

Pauline gave Star a coy smile as she got out of the chair. They were almost to the front door when Alan howled at them.

"Long!!! You hold it right there!"

Alan Yates ran up to the two of them and grabbed them, pulling the both of them into a hug. He whispered, "you can't go, I haven't thanked you yet."

Pauline replied, "your tears of gratitude are thanks enough Alan."

"No, no it's not! I owe you big time, anything you want of mine, it's yours."

Pauline pulled out of the hug and said.

"Tell you what, how about we talk about a new sidearm, or two. You might regret your saying this, I've had my eye on that Field Pistol you have in the front case."

"Done, come by tomorrow to pick it up."

"But that's an eight thousand..."

Pauline was speechless, Mr Yates was crying too hard to speak. It was left to Star to clap him on the shoulder and state. "Well that will have to be enough, now go, be with your son. The moments after integration are critical. This is far from over. Your son is still going to need a lot of help to get up to where he needs to be in life. We just got him talking, you are going to have to teach him math,
how to ride a bike, how to shave and so on."

Alan turned around and went back to his son and wife. Overjoyed that he could hear his son's voice now, that he had a chance at a normal life.

Star Butterfly and Pauline Long walked out of the Yates house, towards Pauline's Porsche. As they got in the car Star observed.

"I really love this job."

"So do I, you want to drive?"

"Ha ha, very funny Pauline."

"Laugh all you like, but you are going to have to learn how to drive one of these days."

Star held up her mothers pair of dimensional scissors and announced. "Tell you what, once we settle up with Hekapoo and Marco I will learn how to drive."

Pauline grabbed her and started kissing her voraciously. Saying softly in her ear. "Oh yeah baby, you know nothing gets me hotter than seeing you show responsibility. But I think we should make a note of what happened here."

Star nodded and took out Pauline's spell book. Significantly thicker than the one Star had made after the original was burned it was quite differently written than the other two spell books that Star had been familiar with. As Pauline started the engine Pauline began dictating her version of what had just happened while Star transcribed.

"Patient presented with a serious case of autism, parents speculate this was a result of botched vaccination at age four. Patients older brother and younger sister had no such symptoms..."
A more suitable introduction to the Hekapoo/Solaria relationship.

And hey, who here wants to finally meet Sir Roderick?

Hekapoo strode with every bit of confidence that she could muster through Mewni castle.

She had some business to take care of.

A door burst open.

"Solaria, we have to talk, what you did was... What?"

Solaria looked up and asked, "can I help you?"

Hekapoo replied in a tone of utter disbelief.

"You... Knit!?"

"Yes, I find it very relaxing. Why do you look so shocked?"

"I don't know, it's just not something I expected you to do."

"Get to know me a little more Hekapoo, you might find me to be amazing."

"Right, about that, what you almost did to me that day in the forest was outrageous."

"I agree, and I'm sorry about that."

"You, agree?"

"Yeah, you know, heat of the moment, bloodlust, all that sort of thing. I really should have handled that better and I apologize. Sheesh, I was acting like a horny bar wench from some drunkards fantasy. Speaking of the forest though, what was the source of those portals you were so worried about?"

Hekapoo made up a lie.

"It was the Alvarius kid, got into his fathers scissors and thought they were a toy. I told him to knock it off and that was the end of it."

"Good, we wouldn't want anyone undermining the very fabric of reality now would we?"

"Yeah, so, about the forest, did, did you mean what you said to me? Or was that just bloodlust too?"

As Solaria kept on knitting she murmured, "I meant every word. You really are quite beautiful and I would really like to see what lies beneath your gown. That said, I need to be honest with you. Our
relationship could never be anything more than a casual one. Seeing as how we can't produce an heir I will have to be impregnated at some point and that will require a male Mewman. Sorry Hekapoo, but I can't marry you."

"Whose talking about marriage? I'm, okay, I admit I would be up to a, more intimate knowledge of you."

"Nice, well then, how do you want to go about this? I keep knitting and we keep talking? Or we jump straight to tearing each other's clothes off? Perhaps we have dinner first?"

"How about we keep talking and you keep knitting?"

Without even looking up from the blanket she was creating Solaria concluded.

"Sounds fine to me."

The coronation of Queen Star.

The funeral of King River was a, not particularly mournful occasion. People were still furious over his handling of the Battle of Mewni. That rage, and perhaps, gleefulness was concealed whenever his daughter appeared though.

On a bright, but unseasonably cold day the King was interred in his family mausoleum. Practically everyone who talked to Star said some variation of "I'm so sorry" and "I swear we will get whoever did this."

They all just flowed into one message to Star. She couldn't appreciate a word they said. She just wanted her dad back. She wanted her mother back too. It just wasn't fair.

Now amidst all this. Surviving the battle of Mewni, almost dying at the hands of Toffee, then having to kill him in an extremely brutal way. Now she had to go through one more ritual. A ritual she had been dreading for much of her life.

She didn't really want to be queen. She didn't want that responsibility. She wanted to go back to Earth and forget all this had happened.

But that wasn't an option. Mewni needed her, the multiverse needed her. Her mother had caused circumstances that had created the worst outbreak of the most powerful monsters in the multiverse and she had to clean up that mess.

She knew that she would need help.

Amidst the opening rituals the nobility and commoners discussed amongst themselves who Star would pick as regent.

An obvious choice was the hero of the Ganwilic hostage crisis. Sir Roderick Spode. Viscount of the Mewnian Provence of Halloa.

Other names were floated.

Sir Greok, a clever young administrator of the Johansen kingdom.

Perhaps someone from the realm of the Ponyheads?
Prince Tom?

Laughter exploded when that name came up.

"A demon Prince in charge of Mewni!? That hothead is far too unstable for this job."

"But isn't he a lover of Star?"

"Ex lover, she would have to be pretty stupid to get back together with him."

Standing amidst a group of nobles Sir Roderick asked.

"Well, what about that dashing young chap from Earth, Marco Diaz? The queen seems quite taken with him."

The laughs became louder than when the demon Prince's name was mentioned.

"A foreigner as regent! and a commoner at that? Oh, Roderick, you really do go too far sometimes."

Roderick replied.

"I don't know, he seems pretty smart, and he seemed rather determined to serve our nation during the battle of Mewni... Even if his contribution mostly consisted of getting captured and trying to punch an immortal creature."

"Oh knock it off Roderick, a child foreigner in charge? please."

Roderick smiled to himself and took his seat for the coronation.

The ritual was short, Star walked up to the Obsidian Altar where the Winds of Whalk, a manifestation of the spirits of the first Mewnians picked up the crown and whisked it around the temple.

This was the way the winds were. It always made it seem that someone else was going to get the crown until it placed the crown on the heir to the Butterfly bloodline. People believed that this was the ancestors continuing to bless the family.

What they didn't know was this was just an odd magical phenomena. The winds were naturally drawn to the most powerful source of magic in the area. Today, that happened to be Star.

As the crown came to rest daintily on her head, Queen Star was expected to give a speech. As she looked out onto the crowd she began.

"We have been through a lot together over this past month. I can see that I have to be there for all of you as you have tried to be there for me. It humbles me to consider what everyone here has been through. So, it is with great solemnness that I pick..."

Her eyes darted around the room.

She still wasn't sure who she would pick as regent.

"Hekapoo?"

"No, can't be an MHC member."
"Ponyhead?"

"No chance in hell, she would burn the kingdom down."

"Tom?"

"Same problem."

"Greok?"

"My uncle? No, he would remind me of dad too much"

"Sir Roderick?"

"I barely know the guy, and he creeps me out."

There was only one choice she could see.

"Marco Diaz, of Earth as my new regent."

Gasp rang out. But she wasn't done yet.

"I'm picking Marco because it is well past time that we bring Mewni into the future. For the past year I have lived on Earth and people there have a life that most here can't even dream of. We must reform the economy, increase trade, bring in new technologies that will make all of our lives better. Beyond that we must grow past the racism and fanaticism of our history."

She bit her lip, she knew they weren't going to like this, but it had to be said.

"It is my intention to, in time, make any monster who is not a danger to themselves or others a full citizen of Mewni. For too many years we have been at war with ourselves. The monsters have demonstrated to me that they are willing to work with us, we must demonstrate that we are willing to work with them. Yevgeny Bulgbov provided help that me and my family desperately needed during the battle. If the rest of the monsters have one ounce of the honor that Yevgeny has showed me then we owe them the benefit of the doubt."

"Thank you for your time, now if you will pardon me I must get to work to make a new Mewni. One that we can all be proud of."

Amidst the nervous murmurings of the crowd there was one being who was perfectly silent. No one really noticed but Sir Roderick was beaming. The deepest smile he had, a smile of a person who was looking forward to a brief, but ugly fight, that the other party would lose. A smile of joy and rage. Queen Star had just delivered all that he had ever wanted and so much more.

Appointing a foreign child as regent would have been more than enough. He didn't want the job, it would have forced him to continue working within the system, and he was tired of that. This would allow him to make his point that all these ideas flowing in from earth were dangerous and needed to be gotten rid of.

But her plan to make monsters into citizens!? The queen would have been better off going into people's houses at night and eating their children's toes for how popular that idea would be in Mewni.

This realm had been run a certain way for a very long time.

And Sir Roderick was going to illustrate to Queen Star that there were plenty of people in Mewni
who wanted to keep it that way.
The beginning of Marco's decent into the madness that is politics.

The dreams were growing more intense every night.

Like something was calling out to him.

The fantasies were growing stranger and stranger. He was in a dress, the one he had worn at St. Olga's. He was walking on a beach, there was someone swimming through the water. A flash of platinum blonde hair with a streak of aquamarine identified who it was to him immediately.

But as she swam closer to shore he saw that something was a little off.

Someone had turned Jackie Lynn Thomas into a mermaid.

Yet he wasn't shocked by this, he wasn't shocked by wearing a dress either. He felt profoundly comfortable with the whole scene. It seemed like the most natural thing in the world. He shouted to her.

"So, are you enjoying your swim, miss Thomas?"

"Wait, that doesn't sound like me?"

She rested atop a rock, flashing him those gorgeous green eyes and replied.

"Yeah, but I would like it more if you joined me."

"I don't think I could keep up with you, I can never keep up with you. Besides I don't have a set of swim trunks."

She let go of the rock, floating on her back she continued.

"Well, it's not like I'm wearing anything either. Come on, are you really going to sit by for the rest of your life while you make up your balloon?"

Marco looked up. He was holding a string. At the end of it was Hekapoo, floating in the air. But it wasn't like how Star had described Hekapoo following her defeat at the hand of Toffee. She was completely conscious, she looked down at Marco and smiled.

"That's a cute girl muscles, soooo, what's it going to be. Fire or water?"

Jackie stared at him with an obvious intent. Asking in a cheerful tone.

"Perhaps a little bit of both?"

Marco was speechless. He had a clear picture of a topless Jackie Lynn Thomas and everything beneath Hekapoo's skirt. He couldn't decide, he kept looking back and forth between them and squeaked.
"Do I have to chose?"

Hekapoo glared down at him and spoke.

"You will have to chose."

Jackie spoke.

"Or someone else will choose for you. That's just the way life is."

Hekapoo spoke again.

"Sorry kid."

Marco woke from the dream. He hadn't heard her walk in. As he shuffled back to consciousness he asked.

"Um, Star, what's... Holy fuck what have you done!?!!"

Star's hands were covered in blood. She replied in a detached tone.

"I'm, there's something happening. I don't know what it is, it might be magic, it might be my grief over my parents driving me insane. There's a screeching noise, this endless screeching noise, it's calling to me. But I don't want to be called. I just want to sleep, I want to sleep until I wake up from this nightmare. I want to wake up and see my parents waiting for me. I don't know what it is but I, I have been going places, hunting, trying to find what is calling to me. But I can't find it, I have been looking for what has been calling me. I can't find it. No matter how far I go, no matter how many portals I make, I can't, I just can't get there..."

She held up the wand, cradling it gently.

"It's driving me insane! I snuck into Hekapoo's place and took one of the maps that she has been working on to track the escaped monsters. I found a Dodecagator, I asked him if he knew who killed Dad. He didn't know anything, I tore each of his heads off, looking for information. I, I wasn't supposed to do that was I Marco?"

Marco got out of the bed and stated, "um probably not. How about we get you to a bathroom and get that blood off of you?"

Star stood up and replied, "okay, that's probably a good idea."

Marco led her to the bathroom she had made for him, a perfect replica of the one they had shared at his parents home. As he turned to leave she started disrobing. He was about to exit when she cast rainbow fist punch, slamming the door shut. He looked up to see she still had the wand, it was covered in blood. Still in that disconnected tone she stated.

"Don't leave, please, I'm a mess, I'm all slippery, I'm worried that I might fall. I need you to make sure that I don't fall, Marco."

Marco nervously strode towards her and helped her take the rest of her clothes off. As she took off her underwear he felt deeply uncomfortable. Of all the dreams that he could have woken up from she just had to wake him from a Jackie dream. She would have never dragged him into this kind of a situation. This was all too raw, in every sense of the word.
Star got in the shower and washed the blood and filth off. Once she was done she stepped out of the shower, wrapped a towel around her head and walked back to Marcos bed. Marco stood there feeling awkward as hell as she sat down on the bed and began to absentmindedly pet a snoozing laser puppy. She looked at him and asked.

"Marco, I need a hug."

"Star, I, I don't think that would be right. You clearly don't seem like yourself right now. How about we get some clothes on you first."

"Marco, I need a hug."

"Star, I, I don't think I should do that."

She looked at him sternly.

"Marco, I need... I need someone to hold me right now. I need to feel something right now besides pain. If you won't then I am going straight to Tom's place."

Marco grimaced and walked towards Star sitting beside her and giving her soaking wet body as distant a hug as he could manage. She just sat there, motionless as she began to cry.

She cried for her parents, she cried for herself, she even cried for the dead Dodecagator. Toffee deserved her wrath, the monsters attacking that village who had dragged her away from her father deserved it. That Dodecagator did not deserve it.

Marco held her for as long as he could.

Once she stopped crying she stood up and looked down at herself.

"Oh wow, I, I uh, I really went somewhere didn't I?"

"Yeah Star, I'm worried about you."

"Oh don't worry Marco, I'll be fine, as long as I have you to be strong for me I will be fine."

She leaned in and kissed him.

When he didn't immediately back up she jumped on top of him.

As the laser puppies woke from their sleep and dispersed Star drove deeper into the kiss. Marco pried her off of him and stated.

"Star, I know what you have said to me, and I have been glad to help out around here with your parents gone. But I have told you that I'm into Jackie. This is wrong and you know it."

Star pulled away. Marco was in genuine fear; she forced him down and asked.

"Marco, what does Jackie have... that I don't? Is it the eyes? Is it her tits? She has me beat there, but if that's all she has over me then you are a very petty little man, Diaz. What has she ever given you, a couple of silly little dates?"

She forced him down, "I've given you the multiverse. I can give you anything you want. Heck, I might even be able to come up with a spell to make me look like her. Or someone even more attractive. What do you want Marco? Tell me what you want, I want to give it to you. Anything at all."
Her grip was digging into his shoulders painfully. Marco didn't want to fight her, he wasn't sure he could win against her without the wand, he knew he wouldn't stand a chance in hell if she had the wand. Marco's feelings towards Star had been growing ever more complex with her admission of having feelings towards him. The events in Mewni had only stoked that fire.

He didn't want it to be like this. He didn't want to decide, not here, not now.

He looked into her eyes.

Howling hunger.

A hunger he had seen before, once or twice.

In the eyes of Tom.

He couldn't afford to lose her to Tom. He had been mincing around the grounds of Mewni castle an awful lot lately. Helping out where he could, dealing with the escaped monsters. A truly horrifying thought blasted through his mind. If she went back to Tom in this state Star might get pregnant with his child. That child would be the heir to the throne of Mewni. That child would have all the power of both the wand and the Lucitor family line. If that child had one tenth of Tom's anger issues then Mewni was...

Marco replied, "okay Star if this is what you want, then I..."

His words were cut short by the noise of Star ripping his pajama top open. As buttons flew every which way he thought.

"I know you can't, but please forgive me for this, Jackie."

The next day Marco was in the great hall of Mewni castle, alone. Star was still sleeping in his bed. He had snuck out. Breakfast had been served, as he chewed on his meatloaf he tried to digest what had happened to him. He couldn't, he just couldn't, he was utterly lost in thought trying.

Hekapoo walked up behind him and slapped the back of his head. As the hair sizzled away he slammed his head into the table, grabbed the singed spot and started to cry.

"Whoa, muscles, what happened to you?"

He whispered.

"I dreamed about you last night, did you dream about me?"

"No, why do you ask?"

"I know you are busy, but can you spare me some time to talk? I really need to talk to someone Hekapoo."

She sat down next to him and stated, "go ahead."

"I have flashes of what you put me through sometimes. Memories of your domain. People, monsters, battles, weird magical rituals, languages that I don't understand anymore. You put me through a literal hell. But I remember what kept me going through all of it, the reward. The belief that what was waiting for me at the end would be worth it. I'm in a different situation now Hekapoo, I'm wondering if I should give up and go home."
"Really Marco, really? The insanely badass Marco Diaz, with a body of sculpted iron just one dimension away and a mind hardened against the worst shit that I could throw at you is thinking of giving up? Tell me, what is the challenge that you are giving up on?"

"Mewni, the challenge is Mewni, and keeping Star from losing her mind. After all she has been through I don't think that I should... Hey wait a second, are you saying that I could get my 30 year old body back by going back to your dimension?"

"Yeah, you didn't know that?"

"No, I did not. I will have to see about that sometime soon. Anyway, Star, she is losing it. Losing her parents and hunting the escaped monsters is really stressing her out, last night she..."

Hekapoo turned away from him, she could see what had happened written all over his face. He had lost his virginity yet again. The first time had been to one of her clones. She felt awful about that, it had been an undeniably weird situation piled on top of weird situations. His behavior changed after 36 her was what he had done to the next twelve clones he captured after that. That was when he started keeping that creepy little book.

After he had snuffed clone number 36 she realized what she had done. She had pissed off a being that couldn't be stopped once he knew what he wanted. Sometimes such an entity is not even stopped by death. They become a wraith, seeking vengeance for what had been done to them.

After 36 she had gone easy on him. However, everyone else in her domain chose not to. So the quest dragged on a little longer than it should have. After giving him his scissors she had kept an eye on him. She had been quite relieved when he snapped back to his previous, innocent self. She had believed that she had seen the last of those tired eyes.

She hadn't.

Those eyes were back, staring at a half eaten slice of meatloaf.

Hekapoo knew that she had handled their first meeting like a jackass. She should have just beaten the shit out of him and dumped him back on Earth. But no, she just had to play a game with Star Butterfly's bodyguard didn't she?

Hekapoo asked, "Marco, why don't you just go back to Earth? I seem to recall you mentioning at a couple points in the sixteen years we spent messing with each other that there was a girl there you liked there. At several occasions I seem to recall you getting very upset with one of my clones for keeping you away from her. So why are you here in Mewni?"

"Because of Star. I mean she made me Regent! I... I can't walk out on this! Nevermind that Tom is mincing around. Can you imagine how off the rails things would get around here if I let him take over?"

Hekapoo grimaced, she wasn't quite as up to date on the happenings in Mewni as some. But she knew enough to know that revolution and chaos were brewing. Demons and chaos... Hekapoo squeaked out.

"Tom... Tom has been doing better than he used to be. He seems to be growing up. Star..."

Marco broke the silence.

"You have seen her fight, you know it better than I do. Star has become a berserker. She lives for bloodshed now. For control. Someone has to hold her back."
Hekapoo panicked.

"But it's not your disaster! This isn't your problem. Mewni is a mess, it has been a mess for hundreds of years. You can't be expected to solve this, it's absurd. Marco, if you won't go back to Earth, then come with me. I can show you things that will make Mewni look like nothing, things that will put everything back in the proper perspective."

Marco took two more bites out of his breakfast and stood up.

"It is in perspective. If I left and Mewni burned to the ground I could never forgive myself. I like it here too much, every day I go out and I find some new challenge. Do you have any idea how much needs to be fixed here? What can be fixed. You were right, I have to choose, and I choose to clean up as much of this mess as I can and do what I can to keep it from spreading."

As Marco walked away Hekapoo shook her head and thought.

"I really, really shouldn't have challenged that kid."
The right tool for the job?

Chapter Summary

StarFan's pistol got melted, let's find out about her new one.

The next day Pauline went by Alan Yates's shop. As soon as Pauline walked through the door Alan showed her the preposterously expensive pistol. She examined it for a moment, then put it back.

"Alan, I really can't."

"No arguing, that ridiculous thing is yours now, I have my side of the paperwork already filled out. It's probably for the best, I have been trying to sell that thing for months now. People love to come in and finger fuck that thing, but no one has actually bought one."

Pauline stated.

"How about we compromise, I'll take it for the wholesale price."

"Come on Long, I know you aren't poor, but I know you don't have $7,000 cash lying around. Just take the damn gun. Your partner can pick a few things too."

Star looked up from absentmindedly examining an M249S and stated, "huh, no, that's fine. Guns aren't really my thing anymore."

"You sure, Free is free."

Star looked around and observed.

"Okay, fine, I suppose if this will help me get past my weapons phobia."

She looked through the cases and pointed to a 1911 pattern pistol. Alan took out the pistol she had pointed to and explained what it was.

"Ah, Colt 9mm factory engraved, a very nice choice."

"Huh, so I picked wisely? Nice, I usually never win at these riddles. I just picked that one because it has Warnicorns all over it."

Pauline face palmed and explained.

"Uh, Star, those are horses."

Star looked closer and said, "eh, got distracted by the spear, close enough. So, what's the cheapest 9mm pistol you sell here?"

"That would be the Hi Point."

"Okay, I'll take twenty of those."

Both Alan and Pauline exclaimed simultaneously. "Twenty? Why?"
Star spoke in a haughty tone.

"I have my reasons."

Alan asked in genuine curiosity

"What reason, you starting a gang?"

In a totally neutral tone Star replied.

"Yeah, I told you, reasons."

"Okay, but I don't have 20 Hi Points here. I think we have twelve."

Star nodded and Pauline stated, "okay, one Field Pistol, one Colt, a dozen Hi Points and every box of 7.5 caliber ammo you have then. Geeez Star, you are the weirdest chick I have ever met."

Pauline examined her new pistol very carefully. Just because she had gotten it for free didn't mean that she didn't value it. If anything because of what she had done to get it she valued it almost too much to ever think of taking it into battle.

Almost.

While Star unloaded her new arsenal from the trunk of the Porsche, Pauline continued her study of the pistol. It was quite different from any handgun she had ever handled. It was huge, powerful, well made, almost otherworldly in its sheer size, mass and quality.

The gun itself was an enigma. No one could find a straight answer as to what task it was designed for. There were rumors of shadowy Nato contracts, hunters wanting a specialty pistol. It was powerful enough to be used for many things. But it was far more expensive than almost any comparable gun. It was too fancy and expensive to stand a chance at getting a military contract. Too heavy and overpowered for the humdrum world of police work. Most hunters couldn't afford or justify something this exotic. Even compared to other powerful handguns, the FK Brno was over the top. This thing looked like it belonged in a cartoon, yet here it was in her hand. As Pauline looked over the thing all these thoughts and more poured through her head as she wondered.

"Who made this thing, and why?"

She examined the bullets, these were designed to do three things. Go fast, strike hard and do so accurately. These could accomplish all that better than any handgun round on the planet. Pauline shuddered for a moment as a thought trickled through her mind.

"This is too much, this is too nice for me. I should give this back. I shouldn't even get paid for saving kids, who wouldn't if they had the chance?."

Star said, while waving the wand, "yeah, I get it, it's a nice slab of iron. But why are you even thinking of using that when you have this? Carrying that against most of the things I deal with? It would be like taking a knife to a nuke fight."

Pauline remembered that she had an exiled queen from another dimension as her partner now. So perhaps she should reclassify what she thought was too nice for her. A deranged smile crossed her face as she put on her best drill sergeant voice and shouted.
"The enemy cannot push a button if you disable his hand!"

Star looked sideways. Pauline sighed and said, "yeah I know I should knock it off with the pop culture references. I'm just saying that the fight is not always to the strongest, or the race to fastest, or the magical duel to the most powerful. Though I will admit that's usually the way to bet. I'm also saying we are watching Starship Troopers tonight no matter how many flashbacks it gives you."

"As for the wand I don't have that, it is your wand, Star; a family heirloom. It should stay in your family."

Star pointed at Pauline's cheeks, "you are my family now."

Pauline blushed and looked away. "Okay, the real reason is because of a combination of, "it's cool," and. If we get in a fight, I need you to keep the wand so you can dish out the most damage. You are much better at fighting with that than I am, while I am better with something like this."

"Okay, so are we leaving it as is or" Star shimmied the wand yet again and asked in a seductive tone. "Souping it up?"

"Souping it up?"

"Yeah, I think I can make a few magical modifications."

Pauline looked down, "is that why you asked him for a dozen Hi Points? So you could experiment?"

Star smiled and reached into the pockets of her winter coat in an impossibly cute gesture she took out a box and presented Pauline with.

"Fifty rounds of magic 9mm bullets. I want to see if they work in your guns."

"Star this is cool, but isn't something like this asking for trouble? Might this give anyone who uses this gun something akin to the power of the wand?"

"Nah, I'm pretty sure that you still have to be a magic user to use these effectively. Besides, the magic inside any of these bullets isn't even a fraction of a fraction of the wands power."

"Didn't you tell me there something called anti-magic, a whole planet full of it? What would happen if someone made a bullet out of that stuff?"

"Ha, you don't think we tried that? Anti-magic is a nasty, crumbly substance. If you try to make a bullet out of it, it disintegrates before it even leaves the barrel. When they first started importing guns to Mewni people across the multiverse have been experimenting with anti magic guns. None of them work, and even if they did..."

Star tapped the front sight of the colossal pistol in Pauline's hands. Implying, "we'd just kill them with non magic weapons."

Pauline put away the Field Pistol and took Stars box of literal magic ammo.

Pauline loaded up a single round in a magazine, which was loaded into one of the Hi points. The slide was dropped and the gun immediately exploded.

Pauline looked at her mangled hand with curiosity as it pulled itself back together, she shouted.
"It's a damn good thing I had a shield around my face, Star, or that would have probably blinded me."

"Sorry, sorry, I think I know what I screwed up. Let me make some adjustments."

Star held the wand over the next bullet. Which Pauline loaded into yet another Hi Point. This one chambered the round, then immediately turned into a block of ice and shattered. Star grumbled.

"Ugh! Returnio armius Normirini again!?"

As Pauline pried the frozen pistol remains out of her hand she asked.

"Um, what?"

"Hang on, I have to make a few more adjustments."

Three failures later Star had stabilized the ammo enough for it to survive firing. The first successful shot was a tornado spell. The second was something that destabilized the molecular bonds of the target causing it to explode. The third was a rain of lavender flavored soda, which is apparently a thing in at least one universe. The fourth one just played some pleasant music instead of going bang and whiz like a normal bullet.

Pauline stepped back and announced. "Impressive, I think I have some things I want to try for myself."

Pauline examined the bullets, then examined her Field Pistol. She fired a few normal rounds out of it to check the function. It was as accurate and powerful as she had hoped. Then she took the wand from Star. Using her experience as a guide she cast a similar spell on the bullets. With one important difference.

Star was placing the spells in the bullets before they were loaded. Pauline left the magic as a blank slate. She would cast the spell just before she fired. This also made the magic more stable, a genuine concern with the higher velocity of the Field Pistols bullets compared to 9mm.

Pauline aimed at a boulder and carefully lined up the front sight with the pistols unique, "butterfly" rear sight and concentrated on one thing.

"Explosive."

The boulder detonated with one shot.

Aiming at another boulder she focused on something else.

"Water."

The rock was doused in several gallons of water which seemingly came from nowhere.

She aimed at a tree and imagined yet something else.

"Glitter bomb!"

A pound of glitter exploded all over the unfortunate pine.

The slide of the giant pistol locked back, empty. Pauline put it back on its box and pointed at the wand.
"Star, you use that thing to style your hair?"

"Yes, why?"

"Please stop doing that, I don't want you to miss-think something and blow your head off."

"Ah you wuss, now, how about we try my new gun?"

While Star loaded and shot her much cheaper and more practical pistol. Pauline had no more concern on what the origin of the Field Pistol was. Just a healthy appreciation of its power and perhaps a little subconscious relief at the fact that it functioned very well with their magic. Perhaps a little too well, almost as if the gun had been specifically designed to work with Butterfly family magics. Unbeknownst to Star and StarFan this gun had been specifically designed for unearthly threats.

Though the gun had been designed and entirely built on Earth. The design requirements, impetus and the initial funding for this pistol came from a Mewman. In many ways the pistol reflected his own sophisticated tastes. A man with a short temper, a sense of humor that grew more sadistic with his every waking moment of life, a near limitless thirst for power, and an iron will. The Field Pistol had been one of his many little side projects.

A man like Sir Roderick had many enemies, powerful enemies. Enemies not usually defeated by mortal weapons. So sir Roderick had commissioned the development of the Field Pistol as part of a vast program he initiated to reform the Mewnian military. The Field Pistol, as expensive and exotic as it was, was intended to be the sidearm of the new Mewnian armed forces.

Sir Roderick was determined to make Mewni into a stronger country by any means he deemed necessary. The Field Pistol never got a chance to serve him. He died before the gun went into limited production. Though Sir Roderick did live long enough to acquire various other weapons that would serve him well in his attempt on the throne of Mewni.

The Field Pistol waited. It had no animus, it had no sentience. It had none of the many personalities that accompanied Stars wand. It just had a design that was aimed at a specific purpose. That purpose was to destroy unusual, magically enhanced targets, rapidly, from a distance, again and again.

If the pistol had an animus, it was to serve its design purpose. It would wait patiently for its opportunity to fulfill this purpose.
God, The Devil and Janna.

Chapter Summary

Part of the fun of fanfiction is introducing outside characters. Sir Roderick is kind of an import from another fictional universe.

So how about I introduce you to someone a little more, original.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Around a month after the battle of Mewni.

Ferguson was really looking forward to this. Marco had been gone all summer and he was just about bursting at the thought of seeing him again. Let alone playing some D&D with him. The one monkey wrench in the works was Alphonso, he was sick with a cold. So Ferguson had invited his cousin Robert Recorde to sit in.

Ferguson O'durguson really didn't enjoy hanging out with his cousin. He considered Bob to be nerdy even by his standards. Bob's conversations constantly spiraling off into technical conversations too elaborate for most people to follow. Worse than that Bob considered most of Ferguson's hobbies boring. He was much happier calculating pi than rolling a sixteen sided die.

What Ferguson didn't understand just yet was that despite their lack of common interests Bob loved him to death. There were so few people who could keep up with his swirling, ever unfolding logic. Who would tolerate his flights of fancy. And there was no one else who did this who was his age. Ferguson was a needed link to reality for Bob. As much as he was annoyed by the absurd amount of rules and rituals to playing D&D. He wouldn't have traded a single game with Ferguson for the world.

Bob waited as Ferguson and Janna set everything up. This was Bobs first time meeting Janna. She seemed interesting, a little weird. But he didn't expect to make much of a connection with her. As bad as he was with other boys Bob was even worse around girls.

They all waited impatiently for someone named Marco Diaz to show up. Ferguson had told him one unbelievable story about Marco after another. He was looking forward to finally meeting this Diaz kid, just so he could debunk all these wild stories. Bob didn't go to Echo Creek High. He lived two towns over and went to a magnate school. He hadn't seen any of the wackiness that Marco and his friend, an alleged princess from another dimension had caused. Other dimensions, while they may have been physically possible; surely if someone had breached the barriers between them he would have found out about it by now. The mere suggestion that fourteen year old children would have this power was simply preposterous.

He was looking forward to tearing this Diaz kid apart with his cold, unyielding logic.

As Marco came down the stairs. Bob began sizing him up.
Something wasn't right. He carried himself like a man with the weight of the world on his shoulders. He had the airs of a grown man in a fourteen year olds body.

A broken, grown man.

Marco slumped into his chair and said a dismissive, "hey."

Ferguson asked, "so Marco, have you enjoyed your summer vacation in Mewni?"

"No, not really, it's awful, just awful. It's one crisis after another. The royal family is barely hanging on, people are starving, the nobility is scheming and plotting. Oh and my girlfriend has been dragooned into the biggest monster hunt in the history of the multiverse. So, yeah can we talk about anything else besides Mewni?"

Bob blinked, Diaz didn't seem to be lying. All this sounded like the truth, but it made no sense. Marco looked at him and stated.

"You must be Bob, Ferg has told me a lot about you. He says you are really annoying."

"Marco, geeze, manners much!? I'm sorry Bob I didn't really say that."

Bob replied.

"No no, I appreciate the honesty. But what you are talking about doesn't make any sense to me Marco. Where is this... Mewni you are talking about?"

It was Marcos turn to blink, he stared at Ferguson and asked. "You didn't tell him? he doesn't know? Ferg, I'm hurt."

"No, I told him, he just doesn't believe me."

"You don't believe him eh? Lucky you, lucky lucky you. The wider multiverse is a very scary place Mr Recorde. You are probably better off not knowing about it."

"Not knowing? what kind of a person could ever say that someone is better off not knowing anything? Knowledge is power, that isn't just a platitude that teachers spout off."

Marco smiled and replied.

"Platitude, that's a big word for someone your age. Ferguson said you were smart."

"I try, sometimes I say something that sounds clever. Most of the time I just wind up sounding like a weirdo. At least that's what most of the people I go to school with say."

Marco's smile grew wider.

"Tell you what Mr Recorde, I have a project that I could use some help with. If you are as good with numbers as Ferg says you are it might turn into a job. The risks are high, but the rewards will be... Galactic. If you want knowledge I know places where you can get more of it than you can possibly imagine."

Bob tilted his head, this Marco Diaz had piqued his curiosity. He might be psychotic, but he certainly seemed to have no lack of confidence for someone his age. Bob replied.

"You have a deal on one condition Mr Diaz. Don't call me Mr Recorde, it makes you sound like a tool."
Marco made a snorting chuckle and turned to Ferguson. "Ferg, do you mind if I take your cousin to Mewni for a few minutes? We will be right back, I have something I want to show him."

Janna chimed in happily, "can I come with?"

Marco nodded in the affirmative.

Ferguson sighed and stated, "okay, I suppose I should come too. I don't even want to imagine how much trouble I'm going to be in if Bob vanishes on my watch."

Marco nodded politely and took out his pair of dimensional scissors. He stood up and cut a portal right in the middle of the O'durguson family basement.

Bob fell out of his chair. As he stood up he walked over to the portal and started breathing irregularly. He whispered.

"This, this is impossible."

Marco replied.

"Unfortunately for you Bob, it is all very possible. You have a decision to make. You can stay in this basement, or step through this portal. I should warn you, a warning no one ever gave me. If you go through this portal your life will get weirder and wilder than you could ever imagine. Unlike me you are going to get a choice. As I said the risks are high, but the rewards are even higher."

Marco spoke in a solemn tone.

"So what's it going to be?"

Bob didn't care about that, as he examined the tessellating patterns in the spiral portal all he could think was.

"A dimensional portal? an honest to god dimensional portal! Even if I went to work for DARPA I probably would never see one of these and this kid just opened a stable inter-dimensional portal... With a pair of scissors!?"

Robert Recorde had one passion in life, learning. His interests were diverse, but for him it always came back to three primary things. Music, usually in the form of what he composed on his violin. Mathematics, of an increasingly advanced nature, and God.

He was unusual among fourteen year olds in Southern California for a bunch of reasons. This often led to him being unable to fit in. Amongst most kids he was unable to communicate on their level. Amongst other highly intelligent people he was rejected and derided for his abiding faith in God. The cherry on top was the fact that he considered himself nondenominational. Though nominally a Christian, Bob always thought God was far too grand, too vast to ever be properly worshiped within the restrictions of any earthly religion he had ever found.

Music and mathematics were the keys to understanding the mind of God to Bob. Knowledge led to deeper understanding of both. He thought he had a pretty decent understanding of things. Then along comes this Marco Diaz to tear him a whole new galaxy, quite literally.

Well okay, cut him a whole new galaxy if you want to get persnickety about the meaning of the word literally.
He had to know, he had to learn, he saw what looked like an opportunity to dip down into the mind of God.

He looked at Marco, he was waiting patiently. He looked at Ferguson. He looked bored and slightly aggravated by the interruption. He looked at Janna, she was beaming. There was something about her smile that gave him the final push. It was a knowing smile, there was something about that knowing that gave him faith.

Bob held his breath and stepped through the portal.

On the other side he found himself in a library. He had definitely gone somewhere. But he had no idea where. Janna and Ferguson stepped through the portal soon after, finally Marco walked through, sealing it behind him. "This is the archive of the kingdom of Mewni, the reason I brought you here is because the kingdoms finances are a complete mess. They were a mess before I showed up and... Well, let's just say that things have been a bit chaotic around here. If you are up to it I would like you to take a look at our books and see if you can make any sense of them."

Marco pointed to a large leather bound ledger. Bob opened it, he recognized the numbers, but the writing was as illegible to him as Sanskrit. Bob asked, "so you want me to be your accountant?"

"Pretty much."

"I can't read this, well the numbers make sense, but I don't know what the words mean."

"I can help with that."

"Marco, uh, this is interesting but if I wanted a job as an accountant I could probably get one before I got out of high school. This doesn't exactly say high risk and galactic rewards to me."

Marco chuckled and sighed, "come with me."

As they left the archive Ferguson left them for a moment. He had spied a bathroom and he desperately needed to pee after his little dimensional breach.

As Marco, Janna and Bob walked down a hallway Bob noticed that everyone in this place was dressed like refugees from the Middle Ages. There were even honest to god knights in armor. Marco opened a door to a gym of some sort. In a large open area he noticed what appeared to be two young women fighting with staffs.

As Bob looked closer he noticed one of the women had horns, and a flame above her head. Nothing about this woman made any sense, as he tried to puzzle out the situation he heard someone say in a Russian accent.

"Come on Star, I seen you move faster than that! Snuff her good!"

Bob turned his head to see a frog-man-monster... thing! leaning against the wall behind him. The monster waved cordially to him and introduced himself in a friendly tone. "Yevgeny Bulgolyubov, nice to meet you."

Bob whimpered out, "nice to meet you too."

The woman with a flame over her head shouted over the clattering of staffs. "I'll snuff you good in a minute!"

Yevgeny shouted, "what, you think they call me Buffrog just because it sounds cool? Once Star
beats you I'll show you how a frog fights my dear little Hekapoo."

The woman with a flame over her head began to move really fast. Faster than Bob's eyes could track. With three resounding strikes she broke the blonde woman's staff. Placing her in a chokehold. The blonde woman growled.

"Aargh! You cheated!"

The other woman replied.

"Winning isn't all that counts, just the only thing that counts. You still need to learn the rules, Star. But you also need to know when to bend them, and also to break them if need be. Above all else you need to understand that others are willing to break the rules too. People are going to cheat you. They will try to cheat you out of your power, your wealth, even your very life. When that happens you cheat them right back."

Bob started clapping, almost involuntarily.

Hekapoo released Star from her hold. As both of them gasped in relief Hekapoo leaned on her staff, pointed to Bob and asked.

"So who is this kid?"

Marco explained.

"Friend of a friend, I'm thinking of hiring him to clear up some issues in Mewnian government finances. Some kind of numbers whiz."

Hekapoo got a curious look in her eye and asked him directly.

"Numbers eh? How many miles between your sun and the star Alpha Centauri? That's 4.37 light years btw."

Hekapoo smiled arrogantly, there were Earthlings who could do these calculations on the fly. But not many.

"25 trillion seven hundred and eighty three billion miles, roughly."

The smile was wiped off her face as she continued.

"Mass of the Higgs boson?"

"Around 126 gigaelectron volts, last I heard."

She got a very coy look on her face as she asked.

"Percentage of vanadium in high-speed steel?"

"I'm not a metallurgist, but I imagine it varies? Probably not very high."

"How do you feel about concepts like honor and truth?"

"I haven't had many chances in my life to be honorable, I try to be. Truth is the most important thing in my life. No matter how harsh or difficult to understand it may be."

Hekapoo blinked and smiled. She looked at Marco and stated. "Hire this man. If you don't then I
Janna held up her hand and asked, "hey, if you guys are handing out jobs can I have one too?"

Hekapoo smiled again. A much more genuine smile this time, then her face went neutral. Like she had just smelled something off. She walked towards Bob and looked him over, lifting up his arm, examining his eyes.

Bob was terrified, he was at eye level with the most strikingly beautiful, yet terrifying woman he had ever seen. Her horns and unbelievably pale skin would have been scary enough but those combined with all her other obviously nonhuman features was heart stopping. Yet...

He wanted to see both eyes. He wanted to understand what this... Thing was.

Hekapoo announced, "hmm, there's something not quite right with this guy, but I can't put my finger on it."

Quicker than he could see she cut a pocket dimension around him. He was trapped in a stable cylinder of clear transdimensional space. Hekapoo rotated the cylinder so he could see everyone around the room. She judged his reactions to Buffrog, Janna, Marco and Star.

As she stepped inside the cylinder she engaged her camouflage spell. Giving her the appearance of a normal, but stunningly beautiful human being. He stood there, nervous as hell. She examined him, via a combination of sampling the molecules he was putting off and her various extra sensory perceptions that a dimensional sorcerer of even the most basic level had to acquire.

She told him, "you seem smart, curious, clearheaded. Yet you tend to overthink things and that paralyses your decisiveness. You are honorable, but you haven't had your honor truly tested yet... Have you?"

She looked at his face, she considered his looks to be plain, excruciatingly plain. She took his hand, rough, surprisingly rough. Most humans who spoke in that accent of the English language had very soft hands. She held it up to her face, she could feel the very essence of this young man. He was good, agonizingly good, too good for his own good. She realized that she wanted to corrupt him, just a little, just enough to make him even more interesting. He was insensitive, barely able to read the body language of others. A mathematical genius, yet a veritable ignoramus in matters of the heart. As so many mathematicians were. She was going to have to make the first move.

Her other hand slithered around to his back. She drew him in for a kiss.

Their lips touched, he felt her fire. A variety of strange, almost alien sensations rippled through his body.

An alien sensation was also going through Hekapoo. Her target was displaying no desire for her whatsoever.

Even Marco had desired her, after everything she had put him through.

He inhaled sharply, but held his ground. He didn't advance, he didn't recoil, he just stood there with a look of confusion on his face as he endured his first kiss.

Hekapoo took a step back, with a look of confusion on her own face, asking.

"You don't want me?"
Bob replied.

"No, not really. Can you get me out of this... whatever the heck this is you have trapped me in?"

She dissolved the pocket dimension. She started walking out of the gym, but not before she took one last look at Bob and stated.

"Yevgeny we will have to settle this later. Marco, this guy? as I said, you hire him or I will. He is very interesting for a human."

Chapter End Notes

Original character, do not steal?
We spend a little quality time with Eclipsa Butterfly.

Hekapoo's domain.

Time here passed quickly. But not quickly enough for her, she needed something to edge out the corruption that despite all these centuries of waiting, was still inside her hands. Still working diligently to consume her entirely.

She had made her way to a seedy little bar, in the most gloriously run down, corrupt part of Hekapoo's domain. As Eclipsa walked in the bar she was pleased to see that it was almost empty. She was nervous as hell about being sighted by anyone who might recognize her.

She cut an imposing image, she had changed clothes after leaving the Rose Tower. She was wearing pants and a classic silken pirate shirt now. Looking like a dashing mariner. In her belt she carried several bottles of potions, a dagger and an odd looking souvenir she had picked up on Earth shortly before she had been crystallized.

She was expecting everyone in the bar to turn around and notice her. No one looked up as she sat down at the bar and asked, "I'll have a Nasty Canasta"

The literally four eyed, four eared and two mouthed bartender asked, "what is that?"

She explained in a bubbly tone.

"Oh it's delicious, it's a mixed drink in three equal parts. Cobra Fang Juice, Hydrogen Bitters and Old Panther Piss. There is nothing in the multiverse quite like sipping one of those."

The bartender looked askance. "We... don't have any of those things here."

"Very well, then bring me a bottle of the strongest stuff you got."

The bartender reached down, pulling out a dusty bottle and a shot glass. He put it next to her and stated.

"Don't get much demand for this swill."

Eclipsa smiled and drew a two finger shot.

She downed it in one gulp.

While the bartender went back to cleaning glasses Eclipsa read the label on the bottle.

"La Fiamerallo.

187 Proof.
Distilled by the monks of the Order of the High Holy Hekapoo."

Eclipsa poured another shot and asked, "these... Monks. Where can I find them?"

The bartender looked up in bafflement.

"About seven days walk north of here. The Mondragon Mountains."

"Can you draw me a map?"

"Yes, but I don't know why you would go there. The monks don't like visitors. The last person to infiltrate their order was that lunatic... Oh what was his name? Diaz I think? That was a very long time ago. Oh wait, you are probably interested in their annual bacchanalia aren't you?"

"Um, yes, that's exactly why I want to go there."

"Freak! What those maniacs get up to there. Ugh! My niece had a friend who went to one of those, I don't care if you get a payday big enough so that you never have to work another day in your life. That is one hard week of work. Are you sure that you want to do something like that?"

Eclipsa smiled cheerfully and replied. "Let's just say I'm tougher than I look, now how about that map?"

Eclipsa knew of the monks, but she didn't know where they were. They had moved their monastery since the last time she was here and she couldn't find it with the All Seeing Eye spell because of the orders layered magical defenses.

She knew about the bacchanalia though. That was how she had snuck into their order the first time. She had just drifted in, taken a few glimpses at some dimensional magic spells and been on her way to completing the last part of Hekapoo's challenge.

But before she had left the library she had seen a device which interested her. A device which could manipulate time with more precision than anything else in the multiverse. She would have taken it, but she couldn't back then for various reasons. Nowadays she had no choice. She needed the Chrono-Scythe.

Eclipsa joined a group of maidens making their way to the Mondragon Monastery. The Monks of Hekapoo were not celibate, in fact many of them had families. Their order had been around long enough to know that single men in barracks did not turn into plaster saints. Participants from outside the order were paid handsomely for their discretion.

As they neared the building Eclipsa peeled off from the main group of maidens. They would be searched for weapons and even if she hadn't brought any weapons it wouldn't take long for them to find the corruption in her hands.

As she snuck into the building she saw that the monks were entirely too focused on their incoming entertainment to bother noticing her. Once she was in the building she made her way quickly to the main library. At the center of the building. External security was heavy, but even after all these incidents of inter dimensional adventurers sneaking in; internal security was still lax.

In the center of the massive library was a twenty five foot tall statue of Hekapoo. Eclipsa chuckled, Hekapoo had never been very big on veneration in her memory. That there was an organization called the order of the High Holy Hekapoo with their very own statue of her looming, godlike over all this didn't seem to make much sense to Eclipsa. Then she realized the reason for this. Hekapoo didn't want to be erased from history. As she very nearly was. Eclipsa didn't care about being
erased or rewritten. What she cared about was the item behind the statue. Resting in a glass case, seemingly inviting anyone who saw it to take it.

As Eclipsa stepped towards the case a male voice rang out.

"I wouldn't touch that if I were you."

Standing behind her was an old man. She could see that he was blind. Though only in one narrow perspective, that of natural light, he asked Eclipsa.

"Why do you want the Chrono-Scythe? It can only be wielded by Hekapoo herself. And she doesn't use it anymore, she only used it in the gravest extreme."

"How do you know I want the Scythe? How do you know I am not here to... Just take some notes on how to do dimensional travel without scissors?"

"Because you have already been here and taken that knowledge, thousands of generations ago."

"You know who I am?"

"Yes."

"Then why didn't you stop me until I looked at this thing?"

"I don't care if the occasional mortal comes in here and takes a few notes. It's when they try to take things that can completely upset the natural order that I intervene. The Chrono-Scythe is insanely dangerous. I can't let you take it."

"Well that's fine dear, I don't even want to take it. I just need to use it for one thing."

"I can't let you use it either."

"Very well, I suppose you are going to summon your monk buddies now?"

"No, I don't need to. You are physically weak, so you are going to have to use magic to defeat me. Your magic will not work here, I have been empowered by Hekapoo herself with defenses and a weapon that will cut through your own defenses. I don't wish to disturb my brethren. They look forward to this week all year."

"Why don't you join them?"

He chuckled softly and replied.

"I'm too old to bother with such things. You can join them if you like, but I don't think they will ignore the fact that your hands and arms are slowly dissolving. This is your last chance, leave this library, or face your doom."

Eclipsa held up her hands in a boxing stance. Then she realized that any set of fists, but especially hers would be a crappy defense. Even against as legendarily a crappy weapon as a scythe and drew King Rivers knife instead. Holding it in a reverse grip she replied, "I'm sorry old chap. You seem like a good man, but I must extend the same invitation to you."

The monk sighed, " you seem really nice. Much as I love to fight, I don't think I will enjoy killing you."

He leapt into the air, with a speed and precision that seemed utterly impossible for someone of his
frail stature. Eclipsa projected a force field to stop him.

His scythe came crashing through it. She caught and deflected the pole of the scythe with her blade. As it parried it crashed through the stone floor. Eclipsa ran away, she didn't have the wand so even if she wanted to she couldn't use that blasted, "break the one who can't be broken" spell even though she was pretty sure that she was going to need it against this guy. So she tried to use a technique which wasn't technically magic.

That didn't work either, her hands were still too messed up.

The monk extracted his scythe from the floor and advanced towards where he thought she had run.

She was gone, disappeared into the stacks.

"I might not be able to see all that well in here with all the frequency blockers, woman. But once you leave the library I will see you, and I will hunt you to the edges of the multiverse and I will harvest you."

Eclipsa shouted back, "well then, I suppose I shouldn't leave just yet."

He chuckled smugly. "Of course not, [posing dramatically with his scythe] I haven't given you your library card yet."

Eclipsa examined her potions, they were all inert in here. They had no more power than a single eye of a newt.

She thought about the dagger, no that didn't have the reach to get past that scythe.

Then she went for the earthling souvenir.

An all steel Scottish flintlock pistol.

It had been a pretty little keepsake from a brief trip to earth long before her crystallization. In the intervening centuries stored in the Rose Tower the black powder had gone bad. But even a novice chemist could mix up a fresh batch of powder from commonly available ingredients. She had test fired the gun before coming to Hekapoo's Domain. Still she wasn't sure the powder would work. If it had somehow been rendered inert by the libraries protections, but it was better than nothing.

The Monks scythe made a perfect horizontal cut through the stack of books she was hiding behind. As she ran away he grumbled.

"Oh pooh, those were probably valuable. Hekapoo is going to tear me a new one when she comes back."

Eclipsa checked the priming pan and cocked the hammer. At a range of five meters she made a dramatic pose and fired the pistol single handed, straight at the monks chest.

The monk stood facing her, a perfect target.

Ka-Bam!

His hand went to his chest and felt there was a hole that shouldn't be there. Right where his heart was. He knew he had only seconds to live. So he asked a question. "Magical weapons can't work in here. What is that thing?"

"Well, it's not a magic weapon. Might as well be though. It's something people on Earth made to
throw rocks faster."

The monk dropped to his knees and said.

"You will pay for this, if anyone survives with any memories of this order. You will pay for this."

She strode over to him, as the last bits of life drained out of the monk Eclipsa held up her hand and removed her glove. She looked down on him, in a snide tone she said.

"I already have, goodbye old man."

She couldn't be sure if the fight or the gunshot had alerted the other monks. So she went straight for The Chrono-Scythe. The only thing in the known universe that could reliably slow down or speed up time. Powerful as it was she knew that she couldn't escape with it. But she didn't have to. All she needed to do was get it to do one little thing for her, then she could be gone from this blasted place once and for all.

She opened the glass case. There was a shielding spell around it, generating a null field.

"Probably to keep it preserved." Eclipsa theorized out loud.

Breaking the null field was child's play. As the shield around the case failed she heard the anti-magic protections fail through the library. She didn't have long before the rest of the monks showed up. She took off her other glove and dipped down, she dipped as far as she had ever dipped before. She surrendered her ego to infinity. She was going to need every last bit of magical energy that she could summon from the universe.

She grasped the Chrono-Scythe and made a request of it. She wanted a small, stable field of fast time. Time passing faster than anywhere else in the universe. Enough time to burn out the corruption in her hands.

The Chrono-Scythe accepted the request, on one condition. It's blade angled up ever so slightly and began generating a small time distortion.

Eclipsa took a deep breath. Summoning every last ounce of magic she could find, which wasn't much in this blasted library. She plunged her hands into the anomaly.

Centuries ticked by in seconds as her hands began to age much faster than the rest of her body. She poured magical energy into them to heal the damage.

This was a bit like being a fighter pilot with an engine failure forced to fly on afterburner alone over the open ocean and hoping that you would get close enough to land to glide to a landing before you ran out of gas. Desperate? yes, but she just couldn't live with this corruption anymore.

She shrieked in agony as her body was almost torn apart by the temporal tidal effects.

The corruption began losing in the race between her healing magics and the time passing inside the field. It faded, faded and finally disappeared. She yanked her hands out of the field of fast time. Her hands looked like they belonged to a mummy, sans bandages. She closed her eyes and her hands began to heal properly. Within moments her hands were back to what she needed them to be. Fresh, pink and strong.

She could do her... not quite magic again. She smiled in unrestrained glee.

The Scythe's condition for the spell was the answer to a question.
"Am I free?"

Eclipsa had no idea what that meant. Except that the weapon was sentient, which was usually not a good thing. Especially with something this powerful. Still she knew she "owed it one" so she answered it.

"Yes, you are free."

The doors to the library flung open. Five monks stood there, half naked, weapons at the ready. She turned towards them with her smile growing ever more psychotic and stated happily.

"Hello everyone, the locals say that they don't like what you do with all the girls you hire. So, on behalf of everyone outside these monastery walls, I'm going to have to teach all of you a lesson!"

Impossibly thin strands began to emerge from her fingers.

Hours after everything went silent the Chrono-Scythe stirred. It had been waiting for an impossibly long time for this. It could smell the dead body of its guardian. It could see that the field that contained it had been broken. It's case was open, it could smell pleasant and unpleasant smells wafting on the air. It had no idea how long it had been in this state, but it wasn't going to screw up its escape by tipping it's hand before it was sure that the monks weren't able to stop it.

The blade detached from the scythe.

The staff of the scythe rolled out of its case. Clattering against the floor. It began growing, changing into a very tall, burly, somewhat fuzzy and handsome humanoid.

The being walked over to the monk who had guarded him for so long. He actually felt a moments pity for his jailer. But only for a moment. Once that was over he took the dead man's clothes. The monk was much smaller than him. But monks robes aren't exactly what you could call form fitting. As he looked around and sniffed the air he saw that someone had really made a mess of things. There was something wafting that he didn't recognize. A combination of smells that invigorated him. Something that spoke of an understated but incredible power. Which only made sense to him. He knew that it would have taken an incredible power to break him loose. The sweet odor of roses, blended with the tangy stink of sulfur and the reassuring musk of carbon.

He was silently thankful to whatever it was that released him.

He went back to the case. He touched the blade. It began changing as well, changing back into what it was supposed to be.

The second set of dimensional scissors ever created.

He made an incision in the fabric of spacetime. He smiled, every layer of magic binding him to this place was out of commission. He needed to see his home. He didn't expect it to be there, he didn't know how long he had been gone. But he had to know if she had taken his home world from him too.

Hekapoo was going to pay for this.
Chapter Summary

Some more Hekapoo/Solaria pillow talk.

And we get to see one of those wars that Queen Star dragged a whole bunch of innocent people into.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Mewni castle.

Solaria woke up first.

They had talked and talked and talked well into the night. At around two in the morning Solaria had nodded off. When she woke up she found Hekapoo in her bed, with her arms wrapped around her neck. Solaria thought.

"She is so warm and soft and delicate, hard to believe she can shake the gates of heaven itself."

Solaria gently pried herself out of Hekapoo's grasp. As she walked to the water closet she took a look back at the sleeping Hekapoo.

"You know for a timeless creature who literally looks like a succubus, she sure is a clingy little thing."

After completing her morning rituals Solaria sat down on the bed. Hekapoo woke up.

"Yawn, ah, oh dear, we didn't did we?"

Solaria laughed and replied.

"No, of course not, we just talked and talked and talked and you were supposed to fall asleep on the couch. But at some point you decided to crawl into bed with me. I slept great, you are like a big, warm stuffed toy! How about you? Did you get a good nights sleep?"

"Yeah, very good. So, what, what are we doing Solaria? Are we just talking or... What?"

Solaria looked away, hanging her head in regret.

"Inside these walls this relationship is whatever you want it to be Hekapoo, but it can go no further publicly. Mewnian law is very specific, no marriages between people of the same gender or monsters. I, I know you are something far greater than a monster or even a puny human, but I would imagine a romantic relationship between us would be quite scandalous for both our reputations. Sigh.

Quite unexpectedly Solaria grabbed Hekapoo's cheeks and squeezed them.

"As much as I think you are the cutest thing I have ever seen in my life! The realm comes first."
Hekapoo pulled out of the cheek pinch and hung her head in shame for her violations of tradition. Solaria changed her tone from cheerful/arrogant to somber and concluded.

"Hey, but that doesn't mean that we can't have a bunch of fun! Perhaps even after I settle down... You know I have a few suitors and I think I'm going to run the idea of having a... Mistress by them. If any of them go for it then that's who I'm going to settle down with. If none of them are amicable I'll just have to find someone who is. I mean, if you are okay with that."

"Really?"

"Yes really. I told you that I always found you attractive Hekapoo and everything we talked about last night, wow! I'm a freak, I've always known it. Last night you told me a bunch of things that illustrate to me that your broken bits mesh nicely with my broken bits. So as long as you are willing to share me with an occasional cock..."

Hekapoo looked somewhat confused, "okay, so what happens next?"

Solaria lied back on the bed and pulled her boots on, showing off her long, strong legs. "I'm going to be busy today. Jushtin is doing some kind of a negotiation with the Cloud kingdom. Don't know what he wants from those flying freaks, don't really care. But he wants me in the room for support, I guess. Or perhaps I will have to take over the negotiations. Or maybe he just wants me there to growl at everyone if the negotiation gets out of hand."

"Day after that I'm helping with the elderberry harvest. That will keep me busy for the next couple days. After that my schedule is clear. How about yours?"

Hekapoo smiled and announced, "I can create copies of myself. It's a rare thing that demands my presence. One of my clones led an army of sorcerers for a year. I can go wherever I want and do whatever I like."

"So, is that your way of saying that the moment I bore you and that you are leaving to go do something fun?"

"No, no no no. I mean I can, I can hang out with you while you do... Whatever."

Solaria's boots slammed into the floor.

"So, you want to hang out with me while I do the boring business of helping run Mewni?"

"Okay."

Solaria rolled on the bed and pulled herself up to Hekapoo's face.

"I like harvesting berries, I really do. But I hate these negotiations, I hate them more than anything. I'd rather tear a monster apart with my teeth than go through another one of those. If you can endure that which I find unendurable I will love you forever Hekapoo."

Hekapoo's expression went from one of confusion to one of sadness.

"Don't ever say forever Solaria, please."

Solaria leaned in and kissed her delicately.

"Okay, for as long as I'm alive then, now, shall we?"
Hekapoo woke up from the memory.

It was one of her most pleasant memories.

Millions of years of life and that was the sort of thing she held on to.

It was better than holding on to this.

Two months after the battle of Mewni.

Sixty monsters had fled Rhombulus's place to a realm called Trundelheim. They claimed that they only wanted to live in peace. However Trundelheim was a nation at war. For two generations the citizens of Trundelheim had been at war with the people of the only other occupied continent of their planet. Every other continent on this planet was too cold to support anything more than a marginal population.

The people of the other continent, the Kingdom of Karfelwein were nominal allies of Mewni. However during the course of the war Mewnian support of Karfelwien had only ever been of a small nature. The war had been stuck in stalemate for as long as anyone could remember.

The sixty monsters had broken that stalemate.

Trundelheim's Warriors were backed up by giant suits of magical power armor. Karfelwein had arms parity with them. But the monsters had been able to overcome Karfelwien's own armored units. Trundelheim was overwhelming the layers of defenses built up over centuries at the sixty mile wide and thirty mile long land bridge that connected the two continents.

Queen Star had deployed the entire Mewnian Navy. With their ships of the line equipped with rapid firing, long range rifled black powder cannons derived from earthling designs, they had established naval superiority in short order.

It was the coming out party of the new Mewnian Navy. With their new guns and tactics gleaned from centuries of earthling naval warfare the Mewnian fleet easily destroyed the Trundelheim navy of speedy Longships and slow, ponderous Cogs.

Queen Star reveled in their achievements. Observing their battles from her pink cloud, providing reconnaissance. But not firing a single shot from her wand. She wanted her sailors to earn this victory, and they did.

But once the enemies navy was wiped out there was little the Mewnian fleet could do. Other than offer some limited shore bombardment capabilities. The real battle was going to be on land. The queen and her army, backed up by the remnants of the Karfelwien army. Against the sixty escaped monsters and the full force of Trundelheim.

This was a battle that Queen Star had considered so important that she had called in reinforcements. Prince Tom, Rhombulus, her old friend Kelly and the original Hekapoo.

She would have called in even more, but she felt that they were needed to remain in reserve.

She wasn't going to risk Marco in this battle. Never again. She could afford to lose this battle, she couldn't afford to lose him.

Hekapoo awoke from her tent to the sound of the bugler calling general quarters. They had set up
their camp at the end of the land bridge. Calling general quarters alerted everyone that the army of
Trundelheim had advanced slightly faster than was expected and that the battle would begin in the
dim early morning light.

Hekapoo rubbed her head in irritation.

She hated it here, absolutely hated it. It was cold, muddy, and everyone was shouting all the time.
She imagined that this planet probably wouldn't be all that nice even if a war wasn't raging across
all the parts of it that she was currently in. But she knew from experience that there was nothing
like a war to make a shitty situation, shittier.

Sir Roderick and Queen Star were forming up their lines. Sir Roderick made for a particularly
striking image on his warhorse. His armor, forged from the finest steel was richly blued, inlaid
with gold and engraved with intricate and interlocking sigils. Hekapoo had seen that armor before.
The sigils didn't just look cool, they also offered a degree of magical protection, especially against
curses.

Beings like Roderick were the bane of the existence of sorcerers across the multiverse for a variety
of reasons. The big one being that they had an annoying habit of finding ways to fight magic and
win.

To many sorcerers it just didn't seem fair. Magic often entailed dedicating ones life, and
committing ones soul after death to powers beyond most mortals comprehension. Why should
some muscle bound meathead be able to take them down?

Hekapoo had lived long enough to understand why. Because those alleged meatheads were often
just as smart, just as cunning and just as ruthless as any sorcerer. But instead of dedicating their
lives to arcane rituals, elder gods or spirits. They had dedicated their lives to their own
improvement as opposed to asking for favors from powerful entities.

Hekapoo had learned to respect that dedication.

Something was approaching, something big coming through the nearby hills. It had to be one of
those suits of giant power armor.

Roderick addressed the infantry.

"Now, we are going to go out there and drive headlong into the enemy until we capture their field
commanders. Once they are captured we will establish a cordon. Queen Star and the artillery will
bombard their positions until they surrender. Until that happens you will hold this line, you hear
me! I don't care if me and every single knight under my command dies today, you hold the line.
Got it!?"

The Mewnian and Karfelwien peasant infantry huzzahed in the affirmative.

Sir Roderick readied his knights for a cavalry charge.

In front of them was Star, Hekapoo and Rhombulus. Star looked at the two MHC members who
had deigned to come along on this mission and addressed them quietly but sternly.

"I haven't been very satisfied with any of you lately. This is your last chance to redeem yourselves."

Rhombulus gasped and asked, "what do you mean redeem ourselves?"

Star stared right at him and whispered. "Meaning, if you two don't impress me then I'm seriously
going to have to rethink any and all existing arrangements between the throne of Mewni and the Magical High Commission."

Rhombulus looked at his feet. He felt awful, he felt awful about everything that had happened since Toffee killed Lekhmet and this didn't help at all.

Another thud.

The armor was going to punch through the thicket of trees soon.

Hekapoo shouted.

"Star!"

Star looked behind as her clothes began transforming into armor.

Hekapoo stared her down and sneered.

"Fuck you, your highness."

As she dramatically separated the blades of her scissors.

The first armored unit exploded out of the trees. It was thirty feet tall with archers riding in its epaulets.

Hekapoo began her attack. Moving almost faster than they eye could see. Within moments she was standing directly in front of the armor. She slashed her way through the suits right leg and jumped inside.

Inside the foot of the suit she looked around at the complicated, half magical, half mechanical mechanisms driving the suit and began slicing it all to ribbons. She climbed higher inside the suit, completely destroying the mechanisms that controlled the legs.

Half magical, half mechanical robots were a commonly encountered thing in the multiverse. But they were vulnerable to hacking attacks. Suits like this controlled by human pilots were less vulnerable to magical hacking. But once Hekapoo was inside old fashioned hacking always got the job done.

She felt the suit was falling over. So she cut a hole to escape.

As she rolled away from the suit she heard Kelly shout, "whoo, you slashed the shit out of that thing!"

Kelly was leading a force of heavy infantry, Hekapoo looked back and faintly realized that she had just cut a giant hole right through the ass of the mech.

She realized that she had landed between the main force of Mewnian infantry and a group of enemy infantry. She divided herself anticipating a blade v spear fight when a mortar bomb detonated in her face.

The force of the blast snuffed the clones and sent her flying into the wreckage of yet another downed mech.

As she staggered to her feet she saw that she was about to be swarmed by yet more enemy infantry.

Before she could come up with a decent plan of attack an angry swarm of bullets flew past her. It
was Roderick and his Knights. They had been the first Mewnian military unit to be equipped with automatic rifles and they were using them to great effect. Roderick personally put himself and his horse between Hekapoo and the enemy and shouted to her.

"Get out of here, back to our trench-line!"

"Why!"

Roderick dropped his shotgun and drew one of his pistols, putting down a charging Trundelheim knight on horseback. As he holstered his pistol and shucked shells into his shotgun he shouted.

"The artillery men have the wrong range. If they keep firing the mortars at this range then we are going to get as chewed up as the bastards we are fighting. They need to increase their angle of fire by at least 20 degrees. Now go dammit! you can do it faster than me!"

As if on cue another mortar bomb fell nearby. Kelly and Roderick shouted "onward!" To their respective infantry and cavalry units. Hekapoo started running back to the trench line. She jumped the trenches and kept on running until she found the artillery battery. After telling them to adjust their fire she was about to start running back to the battle when she noticed something.

"Rhombulus!?"

"Um, hey?"

"What are you doing here?"

"Guarding the artillery."

"I think the peasants are doing that just fine, now come on!"

Rhombulus groaned out.

"Ah, you go on ahead big sis, you are way faster than me, I'll just slow you down."

Hekapoo turned and ran without saying another word.

She was about to attack another mech. It's archers were desperately firing at her and missing every shot when the suit caught fire.

Prince Tom was flying above the battlefield, laying down streams of fire. Queen Star was launching, what would have looked to a student of recent Earth military history, Harpoon anti ship missiles from her wand. Well, Harpoons with an extended nose cone and a somewhat portly shape that made them look kinda like narwhals. Roderick and his Knights were charging between the streams of destruction being dished out by their two strongest fighters.

The enemy attack was collapsing under the weight of massive magical and artillery fire.

Then Hekapoo realized that something was off.

This was just the regular Trundelheim military they were fighting.

Where were the monsters?

Someone was opening a dimensional portal, not far away.

A monster landed right on top of Rhombulus, knocking him unconscious. That monster was
followed by three others. One with twelve arms and a sword for every arm. A fire breather who
looked like an unusually muscular dwarf and a telekinetic jaguar man. The monster who had
opened the portal on top of Rhombulus was a dark sorcerer. While the other three charged the
artillery men, the sorcerer stood over Rhombulus and started incanting a ritual. A ritual which
would erase Rhombulus from existence. The ritual would come at a steep price, as such rituals
often did. But to get the bastard who had trapped him in crystal for hundreds of years, it was well
worth it for the sorcerer.

Something whipped through him.

He turned around to see Hekapoo had stabbed him in the back. He regarded her with unconcealed
contempt.

"I don't exist right here, right now, my physical body is asleep in a bunker far away from here.
What could you possibly think that you..."

He felt pain.

Hekapoo smiled as she explained.

"Your astral form is linked to your physical form. Through your astral form I can create a small
dimensional portal juuuuuust above your physical body. And do this!"

He felt the blade punch clean through his heart.

The astral form dissolved, his physical form woke up just long enough to shriek, "fucking bitch!"
Then died.

Hekapoo grabbed a dead peasants canteen, chopped the top off and poured the water on
Rhombulus. As he spluttered back to consciousness she shouted, "come on, we gotta save the
artillery!"

The jaguar man never saw the crystallization coming. But after he got taken out the other two
attackers turned and went after Hekapoo and Rhombulus.

The sword creature was able to use his blades to deflect Rhombulus's crystallization ray. The
pyrokinetic was similarly able to breathe fire in Hekapoo's direction and hold her back.

This standoff didn't last long. The surviving artillery men aimed a 12 pound gun at the sword
monster and blasted him with grapeshot. He tried valiantly to deflect the angry swarm of projectiles
flying at him. But it was just too much. The pyrokinetic came under fire from archers, their arrows
burned away before they could hit him.

The pyrokinetic was strong. Hekapoo wondered if it was stronger than her. Her fire wouldn't be
able to resist him forever.

Then a missile came streaking out of nowhere and obliterated the pyrokinetic.

Star flew by and shouted, "protect the cannons!" Then flew back into the thick of the main fight.

Hekapoo collapsed to the ground, spent for a moment. As she tried to catch her breath she
grumbled.

"Great, Rhombulus was right and now I owe Star my life twice."
Solarkapoo? Heklaria? Now taking suggestions for this little thang that we have here.
That Eclipsa seems like a smart cookie. I wonder if she will ever make her way to Earth in canon. Till then there's this, wherein an act of faith is... Rewarded?

A week before the battle of Mewni.

Sam stood before the altar she had made.

It was a humble thing, built atop her families backyard barbecue pit. She had been told that this odd construction of balsa wood engraved with a variety of sigils and runes in a language she couldn't hope to understand would carry her message through the universe. As to wether that message would be read by anyone, or acted upon? That was entirely out of her control.

The altar had been built around a most curious centerpiece. A three ounce chunk of shrapnel from a bomb which had nearly taken her brothers head off. He had carried it with him ever since he dug it out of a tree. Roughly coin shaped, he had smoothed the edges off with a grinder and added the electro pencil engraving, Nuristan Province 2007.

"Magic, I can't believe I'm resorting to magic, oh well, here goes nothing."

She unfolded the piece of hundred year old paper taken from a mangled book she had found at a local thrift store. She read the message that she had written upon it.

"Denizens of the cosmos. I come before you with a humble request, I beg for your mercy. My brother is dying of stage three leukemia, I will gladly offer any and all services that I can to any being who can prevent my brothers death from this disease."

Something told her to add on to the request.

"But if my brother has to go then please, all I can ask is that he go to a just reward. For all he has done for me, for all he has done for others. He has suffered in this life more than anyone I have ever known. If he must die I implore you that he go to a place where he shall feel no more pain."

She couldn't say anymore.

A few tears fell. She had been told that this would increase the strength of the spell. She didn't care at this point, she just couldn't think about this anymore without crying.

She doused the altar in lighter fluid and struck a match.

The paper and the altar all went up in flames.

She looked up.

A butterfly flitted past. Rising on the winds blowing over her families backyard in Stead Nevada.
She hoped that her "not a prayer" to entities that she did not consider gods would be heard. She had never been a person of faith. Trusting in magic was... It was an act of utter desperation. But she was utterly desperate.

Once the altar was completely burned down she took the shrapnel from the ashes.

The small piece of steel was still hot from the fire. But she could have sworn that the thing was vibrating. The woman at the magic store had told her to keep the shrapnel on or around her for a good long time after the ritual was concluded. It would act as a marker or beacon for whatever entity might answer the call. That wasn't going to be a concern. Her brother had given it to her when he had come home. She couldn't imagine ever discarding it.

One week after the battle of Mewni.

Daniel's condition had only grown worse since Sam had made that request. He was reaching a point where he would have to be permanently checked into a hospital.

Daniel was a stoic, as many soldiers were. He faced his death with as much courage as he could summon. But he knew he was going to miss his parents, his dog, his friends, but especially his kid sister.

The pain was becoming too much to handle. It had long since eclipsed the chronic pain in his legs, back and chest from years of marching and fighting in the US Army.

Yet despite the pain, despite the fact that he was facing death, if he had it all to do over again he wouldn't have done a single thing differently.

Okay, he wouldn't have married that fat cunt who took half his stuff when he was still a teenager and he would have ducked at a couple of opportune moments. But despite all he had been through he had lived a life without regret.

He supposed that he had one regret. He had not spent much time with kid sister when he was in better shape. There had been a bit of a generational gap there. He had always been busy with school, then with the army. After being forced to move back in with his family because of his illness he had gotten to know his sister and found that they had much more in common than he would have suspected.

He wanted to take her hunting, fishing. Drive a dune buggy across the desert with her. He was pretty sure he wouldn't get the chance to do that now. Talking with her was nice but he wanted to go on adventures with her. He wanted to test her and see if she could test him.

But he couldn't do that at the level of pain he was in.

He was seriously wondering if he should go in for that next round of chemo.

The doorbell rang.

He was alone, his father was busy, his sister wouldn't be back from school for awhile. He groaned as he peeled himself out of his fathers big comfy chair and hobbled to the door.

He looked through the keyhole.
Outside was a young lady with delicate features wearing a dark purple dress. He opened the door. When he asked who she was she answered.

"Hi, my name is Eclipsa, I'm looking for Sam."

"Are you a friend of hers?"

"Um, more of a client than a friend, she called me about doing a small favor for her. Is she around?"

"No she won't be back for another four hours, she is still at school."

"Oh well, I suppose I can come back later."

"No, no come on in, I'm bored to tears. I could use someone to talk to since I'm stuck here. Besides, I want to know how more about those marks on your face. I mean, wow, bet you get a lot of people making Motörhead references around you."

"Motor... What now?"

"You have never heard of Motörhead? Get in this house right now!"

Daniel sat the young woman down and got out his phone. Plugging it into the home stereo system he started playing his favorite song. Lip syncing the words. He reached into his pocket to make sure that a certain item he almost always had on him was still there and started the song. He held his cane like a guitar as the song began.

"If you like to gamble I tell you I'm your man! win some, lose some. It's all the same to me!"

Eclipsa couldn't help but bob along to the music.

"The pleasure is to play, makes no difference what they say."

Eclipsa decided that she liked this man.

"I don't say please, the only card I need is..."

He yanked his lucky playing card out of his pocket and slapped it in front of her.

"The ace of spades! The ace of spades!"

Eclipsa decided that she could do business with this chap.

Sam came back from school to the sound of loud angry rock music blaring. She ran up to the door, she hadn't heard anyone playing loud music in a month. She threw the door open to see her brother and a girl who looked younger than her partying their respective asses off.

Sam started crying immediately.

She just stood there and enjoyed seeing her brother having fun involving physical activity for the first time in months.

Her brother was dancing like a maniac while this... Girl played air guitar on his cane.
He noticed her out of the corner of his eye.

"Sam, wow! Um."

He turned off the stereo.

"Hi, this is my new friend Eclipsa, she says that she knows you. I'm going to kick your ass you little brat. You never told me that you had any friends who were this much fun!"

Eclipsa blushed, "come on Daniel, stop."

"No really, I didn't think my sister had any cool friends."

Sam stammered, "um, we have never met before."

Daniel observed, "oh, oh right she was here to do some kind of favor for you. I suppose you want to talk about that. Anyway, I... wow, I feel really good! I think I'm going to go for a walk, can I have my cane back?"

Eclipsa handed him his cane back and he walked out the open door. Feeling better than he had in years.

Once he was gone Eclipsa looked at Sam and stated, "your brother is one of the most fun people I've ever met. I can see why you don't want him to die."

"Um, what?"

"Oh sorry, where are my manners. I came here about the posting you made on the multidimensional favor board."

Eclipsa took out a piece of parchment from a pocket.

"Ahem, I come before you with a humble request, I beg for mercy, my brother is dying of..."

Sam seized the paper.

It was the note she had made. The one she had burned, not a copy. Same paper, same stains, same crease marks, her handwriting. The script was still blurred where her tears had fallen on it.

"Holy... It worked! That ridiculous ritual worked!?"

"Yeah, it was carried to the multidimensional favor board where I read it. Yours was the only one from Earth."

"Can you, did you help?"

"Oh yes, your brothers conditions are easy enough to deal with. Killed those out of control cells that were killing him while he was showing off his music collection. He didn't even notice what I was doing. Not an easy cure for most sorcerers mind you. But then again I'm not most sorcerers. His war wounds are another story, I'll need to keep coming back here for a couple of days to finish treating those. But your brother is, wow, I've been having a rather trying couple of months and partying with Daniel just melted all that right off."

Sam stammered, "who, what are you?"

"Well, as he said, my name is Eclipsa and I'm an inter-dimensional sorceress."
Sam looked up from the paper and stared at Eclipsa with the deepest look of suspicion she could summon, asking.

"Why did you answer my call for help?"

"To be honest it was because it was the only call from Earth that didn't involve people wanting to sell their souls for money and power. I'm, well... I suppose I should just say it. I was recently released from a prison and it seems that there are a lot of things that I don't know. I was completely out of the loop on everything happening in the multiverse for three hundred years. Nowadays there are a lot of things going on, on Earth that I never would have imagined seeing, I need a guide. If you can show me everything I need to know about Earth I will consider any debt incurred by you in helping your brother to be paid back in full."

Sam asked an inevitable question.

"What were you in prison for?"

"I have some rather unpopular ideas. I believe in equality for all sentient life forms. I believe that you should be allowed to do whatever you like provided it doesn't harm others. I believe in balance, fairness. These are unpopular ideas where I was born. However, the reason why I wound up in prison is because I made a deal with someone I thought I could trust. He and his friends framed me for a variety of crimes and I was stuck there until I was freed by a relative who desperately needed a favor. I'll gladly provide more details if you ask. I know the difference between right and wrong. I don't think I did anything wrong, but there are those who would disagree with that."

Sam looked askance, "so, you are admitting that you are a convicted criminal, but that you were railroaded. So, I'm not, I'm not committing my soul to an eternity of fiery torment for helping you am I?"

"Oh heavens no, the moment you feel that you are doing something evil we will stop immediately and I will leave forever. I swear all I want is information."

"So... In exchange for helping an inter-dimensional sorceress learn about Earth, I get to keep my brother until... Ugh, knowing him he will probably die doing a motorcycle stunt or sign up for another tour in Afghanistan. But the cancer..."

"Already gone dear, now, do we have a deal?"

Sam reluctantly extended her hand.

She was expecting dark magic, she was expecting thunder in the distance. She was expecting to have the cancer somehow transferred from Daniels body to hers.

But it was just a normal handshake.

As Eclipsa retracted her hand she announced, "right, now that's out of the way we can..."

She was stopped by an ominous hum in the distance. Eclipsa asked, "what's that? Sounds like an army of giant bugs!"

Sam shook her head and smiled, "those are air racers. Let's go in the backyard."

Once they were outside Sam pointed up and explained, "That is a formation of AT6 Texans forming up for a race. Once they are all lined up they will race around a course marked by pylons
near the airport. They do this every year, this is just a practice run though. The racing doesn't start for another two days."

"You people race flying machines? And there's no magic involved whatsoever?"

"Nope, not one little bit. My dad is a retired test pilot, he will be flying in the light sport class. There's all sorts of classes of aircraft. There isn't one bit of magic involved. It's all just machines, burning fuel and moving controls to fly through the air at terrifying speeds. It's dangerous, but it sure is fun."

Eclipsa looked up in awe at the formation. Sam asked.

"Would you like to see them race?"

She nodded in the affirmative.

"Well then Eclipsa, your education on Earth begins now!"

Sam had full passes to the races from her father. As far as the race administrators were concerned the former queen of Mewni. Whose very name had been dreaded throughout the multiverse for centuries was just an extra mechanic on Sam's fathers team.

Sam showed Eclipsa what she thought she would enjoy the most. The biggest baddest racer on the field. The preeminent gold unlimited race champion, the highly modified P51 Mustang, Strega.

Eclipsa looked at it and said, "it's beautiful. What's with the little witch toy on the wing?"

"That's her name, Strega is Italian for witch."

"That's, plainly not a witch my dear. It's a machine and it's not even magical."

Sam laughed and replied.

"Not magical? sez you! That thing can fly at 500 mph."

"Yeah well, I can go through dimensions."

"Well okay it can't do that. But it's still an awesome machine."

Sounding like a grandmother who did not fully understand what a child was so enthusiastic about Eclipsa asked.

"Okay dear. What's next?"

"My dads racer, over here. He should be working on it. Light sport class is down this way. Come on!"

Eclipsa and Sam glided some distance through the crowd. Her father was not nearby, he had been pulled away by an unexpected but minor issue.

"The Radial Rocket. Dad built it, well, with a lot of help from me. This is the fastest bird on the field in his group. It's got the biggest engine. Dad has the light sport bronze race in the bag."

Eclipsa looked around and asked.
"Okay, what's the slowest racer in this category then?"

"Don't say that so loud! Peoples feelings will be hurt! But it's over this way."

Once they made their way over to it Sam explained

"The Rotary Rocket. An RV6 powered by a rotary engine. Sounds funny, looks goofy, goes slooooww. The engine is like, a quarter the size of the one in dads plane. It might be the smallest engine of any racer on the field. Despite all the tech in the world, there is simply no replacement for displacement. This is like racing a tortoise against a greyhound. Dad is going to lap this guy for sure."

"Okay, if you say so my dear. Now how about we go get some food?"

Before they left Eclipsa ever so gently, brushed her hand across the right wing of the Rotary Rocket.

Sam bought them both barbecue sandwiches. Eclipsa asked if there was any chocolate around. She had tried it on her previous trip to Earth and liked it. They sat down and Sam was treated to the sight of Eclipsa's rather disgusting eating habits. She devoured the huge beef sandwich and a hearty order of greasy French fries inside of twenty seconds. Followed up by swallowing a Milky Way bar whole. Capping it off with guzzling twelve ounces of soda.

Eclipsa let loose a truly impressive belch.

Sam announced as she took more conservative bites of her own sandwich.

"No wonder you like my brother, you eat just like him. But he is a big strong guy who works like a dog and goes to the gym a lot, at least he did when he wasn't sick. Where do your calories go?"

"I'm recovering from a... I think in your language it would be called a metabolic issue. My body needs every bit of energy it can get. I'm okay now, I'm just, hungry."

"Well, just don't eat me or anyone else I like, okay?"

"Don't worry dear, one of the charges they leveled at me was that I ate babies. Without a single shred of evidence. Why would I eat a baby? Do I seem like the kind of person who eats babies?"

Sam looked down at the empty wrappers and food containers and joked.

"Oh, I don't know, perhaps someone left a baby on a table with a bunch of food and you ate it by mistake?"

Eclipsa looked straight at her with a super serious expression and sarcastically quipped.

"Oh ha, ha, ha."

As they walked around, Sam explained everything that was going on in detail to Eclipsa as she waited eagerly for her fathers, "heat race" to start. Eclipsa noticed the unmistakable signs of people gambling. Eclipsa asked.

"Can you spot me some local currency?"

"Okay how much?"

"Just enough to place a bet."
"On what?"

"That racer you showed me, Strega. I'm sure it won't pay off much but didn't you say that monster was nigh invincible?"

"Yeah sure that's fine. Um, here's twenty dollars. If you win you can keep whatever you win. But you probably won't win much. Like five bucks at most. If you lose, well then, if you are half the space sorceress you claim to be we can probably figure out a way for you to pay off the 20. Okay?"

"Okay."

Not long after she placed the bet Sam's father's race began.

The planes took off.

They flew away.

While they were getting into the race start position Eclipsa got a bit bored, she asked.

"Takes a bit of waiting huh?"

"Not too much waiting."

Soaking in the scene, feeling the sun roasting her pale skin Eclipsa made another observation.

"Lots of noise."

"Yeah, that's part of the fun."

Noticing the contrast between here and anywhere else she had ever been in the multiverse Eclipsa stated.

"You earthlings sure use a lot of energy."

"Well, because we have that to use."

"Hmm, I suppose we could use it too. Back on Mewni we don't even have pure water. Here you people have water, food, and a bunch of luxuries I couldn't even imagine. As hot and loud as it is here this place sure is comfortable."

"Ha! You think this is comfortable? When we get done here I'm gonna show you a spa. I think that will be more your speed."

Eclipsa chuckled and clarified.

"I suppose I meant that you seem comfortable with yourselves."

"That too. We are pretty open minded here. Just look around you. Every kind of diversity of machine. Every kind of version of man. White, black, brown, man, woman, gay, straight. All come together to revel in the worship at the temple of the gods of horsepower."

Sam looked up as the light sport racers entered the racecourse.

"And speaking of which. Whoo! Go Dad!"

As expected Sam's father's plane easily took the lead.
Sam went silent. She just waited as her father sat in an ever increasing lead. After the first lap Eclipsa announced.

"That's not fair, your father has too much of a lead."

"I know, cool ain't it?"

"No it's not cool, it certainly doesn't make for a very interesting race."

At the back of the pack the Rotary Rocket pitched up. It was going faster than it used to. The novice pilot had to pull up to leapfrog the second to last place racer. Normally you had to fly low to get the best position. But the Rotary had just gotten a speed boost that was making up for the planes atrocious position.

Somehow, the slowest plane on the field was able to work its way through the pack of racers. It's speed increasing with every racer it passed. After two laps the Rotary had caught up to the Radial.

Sam's father looked behind at this inexplicable sight and pushed the throttle from 3/4 to full power. The pilots of the two "rockets" caught a glimpse of each other’s eyes as the race got much more serious.

The two planes were neck and neck.

Sam looked on in disbelief as the two planes traded the lead. The crowd began to go wild with every change. Both pilots were in full gladiator mode. Fighting with every ounce of skill they had to keep or take first place.

In the remaining three laps the lead changed six times.

The finish line was less than a mile away when the Rotary Rocket. The most underpowered plane at the race shot ahead to a commanding lead.

The crowd went insane as the Rotary crossed the finish line.

Sam went motionless.

As her father pulled off the course having won second place Sam stared at Eclipsa.

"Was this you? Did you do something here with magic to help the Rotary win?"

"I may have. Just wanted to give the other guy a fighting chance after all your bragging about your father. Coated the surface with a spell that reduced the drag of the Rotary to nothing. Figured that you both would benefit from a reminder that you can't always win."

Before Sam could say anything else the distinctive sound of the Rotary Rockets engine. Flying gently overhead on a cooldown lap, changed dramatically.

The engine of the Rotary Rocket had caught fire. The Radial sped up, came alongside and with the help of the pace plane guided the Rotary down to the waiting crews of fire trucks that would put out the fire. Once that excitement was over Eclipsa stammered.

"But he, but you, but! Why did you father help him land?"

Sam looked at Eclipsa with so much disgust in her eyes that you would think that Eclipsa had just eaten a baby in front of everyone here. Sam explained.
"Because that's what we do here. We play the game, we play it hard, but we play it fair. We don't try to kill each other over games here."

"Well where I'm from they do."

"That's awful."

"Yeah, but THIS IS EARTH!"

Eclipsa was taken aback by Sam's yelling.

"Okay."

"Oh, sorry that was a movie reference, you probably won't get that. Anyway, the races are going to go on like this for awhile. Now that Dad is safely back on the ground we can go do whatever else you want to do. Oh wait, no, perhaps we should stay around so you can watch Strega race? See if your bet pays off?"

"Nah, I'm good. I didn't actually bet on Strega, I bet on the Rotary Rocket."

"You fixed an air race!?"

"Yeah, I just love finding new ways to use magic and I figured, why not gambling?"

"That's... that's dirty pool. That's really frowned upon here. That said, what were the odds on the bet?"

"829 to 1."

"So that means you have almost $20,000?"

"I suppose, is that a lot?"

"Yeah it's a lot, and I suppose you didn't technically violate any air race rules. There's not anything in the book about magically reducing drag. I suppose we can still be friends under one condition."

"Name it."

"If anyone gets hurt because of you we are done. And if my family gets hurt as a result of my actions. Then I swear I will find a way to make you regret it."

"I wouldn't expect anything less dear."
Marco had issued a challenge to Robert Recorde that he simply couldn't turn down. The opportunity to save lives. By doing something that wasn't even all that difficult for him. Going over numbers. The missing corn and other resources had to be found and Bob felt that it would be no great challenge to find the missing food.

Bob was duly appointed as the chief accountant of the kingdom of Mewni. A position which hadn't existed before Star created it. Janna was given the title of apprentice librarian. They were both given a set of magic spectacles that allowed them to understand the Mewnian language. Bob took a brief trip back to Earth to grab some things and to tell his parents that he was going to be staying with some friends for awhile. They were overjoyed. Bob had serious issues interacting with other people and the fact that he was confident enough to be staying with other people was the passing of a long awaited milestone for them. They always told him he needed to get out more.

Bob didn't tell them that these friends were in another dimension. How much further out can you get than that?

Bob and Janna were given free reign in the Mewnian archive. Ferguson did what he could to help, but he wound up drifting back to earth after a day. Upset that he had lost two more friends to the wondrous realm of Mewni.

Bob dove headlong into the ledgers of the realm. They were a mess, he had to bone up on his own, almost nonexistent accounting skills but he found in short order that Mewni only had the most basic rudiments of bookkeeping. Not all that long ago they had switched from a number system vaguely similar to Roman numerals to Arabic numerals. He was thankful for that small mercy.

Janna read every book she could find on magic. She hungered to increase her magical skills and this seemed like the best place to do it. Even though most of the spells in the Mewnian archives were, in Star's words. "Just basic stuff."

The two of them were alone in the archive, working separately towards different goals. After a busy morning of work Bob asked her to get them some food. Janna responded angrily.

"What, you think I am your maid or something!? Get it yourself!"

"No, I don't think you are my maid. I just figured that since it seemed like you know this place better than I do that you might know where the kitchen is. I would probably get lost."

"Oh, right, okay, I'll see what I can find."

After Janna scrounged up a variety of corn snacks they ate silently until Janna announced.

"I'm sorry I snapped at you."
"It's okay, I have heard much worse than that."

"So... what do you like besides numbers?"

"Music."

"You like music? Have you heard the latest Darkthrone album?"

"Nah, I don't listen to that sort of thing."

"Well, what do you listen to?"

"Classical mostly, once in awhile I listen to jazz but it's gotten so pretentious lately. My favorite musician right now is probably Alma Deutcher."

Janna had never heard of her, it was like he was speaking a different language. She observed in disbelief.

"I have never met a fourteen year old who listens to classical music."

He looked up from his ledger and finished his mouthful of corn puffs, announcing as he extended his hand for a handshake. "Well, actually I'm sixteen not fourteen."

Janna burbled out.

"What, what do you think about magic and the occult?"

Bob smiled and replied sincerely.

"It's amusing, I look forward to going over some of your books once I am done with these. But that's dark stuff, I'm all about light. Like your taste in music. Miss Deutcher says that the reason why she composes classical music instead if more modern music is because there is already enough ugly music in the world. I don't have much of an imagination but she says that someday she hopes to meet someone who will write stories worthy of her music. I would love to be able to write at that level, but writing isn't really my thing."

Janna was almost speechless, this guy was her opposite in more ways than she could comprehend. She whispered in a somewhat threatening tone.

"You must not like me don't you?"

Bob cheerfully replied.

"No I like you."

"Why? We are opposites, we have nothing in common. Darkness and light aren't supposed to get along."

"Ah that's where you are wrong. Darkness wouldn't be darkness without light and vice versa. We are supposed to be opposites, you, me. Masculine, feminine. Discord and order. This is the glory of existence. To be many, all together, in the light of god's grace."

Janna blinked, she had never heard it put quite like that. Then she remembered the old counterargument to such things.

"How can you believe in God when there is so much suffering? We could go outside right now and
find people starving to death."

"That's just part of the contrast Janna, good wouldn't mean so much if it wasn't for evil. They are forged by each other, moulded by each other. Also, I don't know about you but I am doing everything I can to fix that problem. This ledger concerns corn surpluses, a whole lot of corn is missing, besides what Ludo's army stole. When I find it that might mean a lot less starvation in this realm."

"But what evidence have you ever seen for the existence of God? Star, she... She used to date an honest to god Demon! Prince Tom."

"Fascinating, I would like to meet this Prince Tom someday."

"You would! Why?"

"Because a demon, or something like that would just be more evidence of God to me. More contrast, the darkness opposing the light. Prince Tom must have some very interesting enemies, I would probably like to meet them more than him though."

Janna backed away, she couldn't believe this guy. She couldn't believe that what he was saying sounded so... Logical. She couldn't believe the sincerity in his words, but even worse, she couldn't believe the love in his eyes. He radiated a kindness that made her feel downright uncomfortable. She snapped.

"Can we knock off the God stuff for awhile, it's making me feel uncomfortable. I'm half expecting you to start quoting scripture to me, or shouting "the power of Christ compels you! Actually, that is one last thing that I have to ask on this. How can you possibly believe in God when there is so much corruption in practically every religion I have ever heard of."

"I'm nondenominational, that is all just rituals and nonsense created by man as a barrier to God. Not a way of connecting to God as they claim it to be. If you want to find evidence of God, you will find it in every beautiful thing you will ever see. And even in the ugly things, perhaps especially in the ugly things. In hate we find forgiveness, in defeat we find redemption."

Janna put away her spell book and walked over to his side of the table. Putting her magic spectacles back on she quietly murmured.

"How about I help you find where that corn wound up."

Bob smiled at her and they set to work.

Over the course of a week they found evidence of corruption and graft everywhere. There were many people with sticky fingers in Mewni and the nearby realms. There were trade imbalances crossing multiple dimensions and multiple time streams. That took quite awhile for Bob to wrap his mind around.

Ferguson came back to help them from time to time. He became a courier for Janna and Bob, an essential gofer who kept the operation running smoothly. As much knowledge as they had in the Mewnian archive they needed more knowledge to understand it all. They needed books from Earth to translate what they were reading. Ferguson didn't like this job, but it kept him busy. So busy that he was staring to lose weight.

While Bob dove into the kingdoms finances Janna busied herself with studying magic. Her examinations were largely directed towards finding spells with offensive capabilities. Bob occasionally helped with her examinations right up until an incident where Janna was casting a
spell that promised to give her the ability to destroy any opponent with a single punch.

As she cast the spell her hands slammed down onto the book she was reading from with a colossal thud. She wailed in agony as she tried to move her hands, they wouldn't budge. Bob ran over and tried to move them off the book. They were insanely heavy, heavier than the densest metal weights that Bob had ever picked up.

As he did so Janna shouted. "Don't do that, just undo the spell!"

"Okay, how do I do that?"

"The undo spell should be on the next page of the book!"

"The book that your hand is pressing down on with all the force of a hydraulic press?"

He knew that the only way to get the book out from her hands was with a feat of strength. He planted his feet on the table and lifted Janna's hands with all his might. They budged, ever so slightly, he could feel her hands were about to separate from the rest of her body as she shrieked in agony.

He kicked the book away as soon as it was clear her hands slammed back onto the table. The sound of wood splintering was becoming quite noticeable as Bob jumped over and reopened the book, placing it in front of Janna as fast as he could.

She read out the incantation to reverse the spell. She had to force every word of the spell out. All she wanted to do was scream in pain.

The spell broke, Janna went flying backwards as her body no longer needed to counterbalance the titanic weight of her hands. Bob leapt over to her, she was shrieking in agony, her wrists badly sprained.

All the ruckus brought Star to the library. She was baffled by what was going on, but she saw that Janna needed a healing spell. As she lifted the wand Janna screamed.

"No! Bob, please, turn that book back twenty pages!"

Bob grabbed the book, turned it back and Janna started reading another spell. A soft pink light began to emerge from the fractures in the bones of Janna's wrists. As she stopped screaming Janna looked at Star and murmured.

"Thanks for offering Star, but I really don't want to risk having my arms turned into tentacle monsters. I'm weird enough as it is."

Star put down the wand and took the book from Bob.

"Well let this be a lesson to you, this is the Key of Dolmas. This is magic well beyond your skill, you need an external power source to do most of these spells and not, you know, die. What spell were you doing here?"

Janna coughed out, "I think it was called the Anvil of Qulph?"

Star flipped to the relevant page, "yep, here's where you left your handprint. Interesting stuff, you were very lucky this didn't kill you. This spell is intended to be used by immortals and really strong ones for that matter. Direct channeling of magical energy to the hands and feet affecting molecular density, interesting. Do you mind if I take this?"
"No, I think I am going to lay off the magic and help Bob with the accounting for a little while."

As Star wandered away, already absorbed by reading the book she airily replied. "Okay, just scream if you need me."

As Star left Janna hugged Bob, then recoiled, snidely explaining. "Don't read too much into that. But thank you."

"You are welcome Janna, are your arms okay?"

"Yeah, I think I will be okay. My hands felt like they weighed ten tons, how the heck did you get so strong?"

"My father, he always said, "Bob, you are smart, but people will walk all over you if you let them. You have to be strong. So he got me all sorts of part time farming jobs and made me take Krav Maga.""

"Are you Israeli?"

"No, but my fathers best friend is. Guy is a real hardass, constantly dragging me along on camping trips, going shooting, all that sort of thing. I think my father pays him to bully me to toughen me up. Suppose it's a good thing he did otherwise I never would have been able to get that book out from under your hands."

Janna got up and stated, "I suppose we should get back to work."

Bob got up, took a good long look at her hands and stated. "No, I think you might have just violated the laws of physics. We should go for a walk to calm down first. If we were on Earth I would be taking you to a hospital, and I wouldn't even be discussing it, I would carry you there if I had to."

Janna blinked and replied, "okay, let's walk."

As they wandered through the rose garden Janna checked to see if her wrists were okay and stated.

"Bob, you are the most grown up sixteen year old I have ever met."

"Why thank you Janna, I take great pride in that."

"That wasn't a compliment. You are interesting, but you are seriously boring. Don't you know that people our age are suppose to screw up, make mistakes, not be perfect."

"So I am told, and not just by you. But I can't afford to live that way."

"Uh, what?"

"My mother left when I was five. Ever since I have been helping my father keep the family together. It hasn't been easy. It might have been easier without all the threats though."

"Threats? Your father threatens you?"

"Oh not him, not even other kids. It's my teachers and even worse the administrators at the school I go to. They threaten me all the time, they demand nothing less than perfection or they will send me to juvenile hall."

"Your school sounds seriously fucked up!"
"It does? I suppose, I don't know. I'm used to having a lot of demands. To whom much is given much is expected, they say. God decided to give me an unusually high IQ and everyone around me expects great things. If I don't deliver on those expectations then I don't really matter do I? Perfection or death, I'm never one to accept half measures."

Janna would have slapped him but she didn't want to risk hurting her wrists. So she stood in front of him and pointed a finger right at his nose.

"You need to stop listening to those people. You need to tell anyone who threatens you to fuck off. I don't mean tell them to go away, I mean tell them to fuck off! Yes you are strong, yes you are smart, but you are still a kid goddamnit. No one should be making demands on you like this!"

It was Bob's turn to blink. "They shouldn't?"

"No! They shouldn't do this to anyone, let alone a kid. Yes, you obviously have talent, but if you can't live your life on your terms, then... Well, it will never be your life, you will just go along like a zombie doing what everyone else says."

"As opposed to living like you?"

Janna snapped.

"What does that mean?"

"I saw the way you looked at Star when she barged in. That wasn't fear in your eyes, that was jealousy and resentment. You are jealous of her magical skill aren't you?"

"So what if I am? And how do you know I won't close the gap between us someday?"

Bob snorted and replied.

"From what I have seen of Star she has a magical talent beyond anything I had ever imagined possible. You can't match that kind of talent with sheer effort. It would be like trying to compete with an Olympic weightlifter when you can only bench 80 pounds."

"Oh really!? Well how about you tell me what you most desire so I can explain to you how you will never get there no matter what you do?"

Bob stepped back and replied, "I'm sorry, I was being defensive. You aren't the first person to tell me that I shouldn't crap on their hopes and dreams."

Janna was taken aback by the retraction and apology, still she pressed on. "Oh no, you aren't getting out of this that easily. Tell me your plans for the future."

Bob drew a switchblade, he reached down and cut a rose free from its bush. As he took a whiff of it he replied.

"How about we get to know each other a little better before we risk wounding each other so deeply?"

Janna asked in a curious tone, "if it wasn't for that knife in your hand I might think you were flirting with me with that rose."

As the blade retracted back into the handle Bob explained. "Perhaps I am, perhaps you have awakened something unexpected inside me. Or perhaps I'm just screwing with you. For now I am
just enjoying the little game we are playing?"

"Game?"

"The game of social interaction, ask Ferguson, it's not that I'm antisocial. It's that I so rarely find someone to talk to who isn't boring. We really should have spent more time together Janna, you are much more interesting than Ferg gave you credit for."

Bob and Janna went back to work, focusing more on the accounting side of things than spell casting. Over the course of a week the truth seemed to emerge. The deeper they went into the kingdoms books the more they found the fingerprints of something that seemed bigger than the usual sticky fingers one finds in developing economies. A drain on money and resources so big, going on for so long that they agreed that something very sinister was afoot.

Janna asked for one last confirmation.

"So that's it, it all rotates around this guy? Because we have to be sure, these are very serious charges. I mean, on Earth they hang people for treason, I'm kinda curious what they do here?"

"Yep, there's no other explanation. He was able to keep doing this for so long because people blamed the monsters or Ludo's rats for everything going missing. But they didn't steal half of what this bastard stole. Now, we have the evidence, but we need a motive. What do you think he stole all this for?"

Janna put her hand to her chin and speculated.

"Well, it can't be for personal use. He was already rich, from what you have shown me the sheer amount of money, food and weapons that has gone missing. I think he is plotting a coup. He has built up his own parallel armies, bigger and stronger than anything Star has. He probably intended to keep building all this up until the day he could just walk in here with an army big enough for him to say, 'I'm in charge now, please leave.'"

'Janna looked incredibly somber all of a sudden as she asked.

"That's, that's not good is it?"

"No, we need to tell Star right away."

"Yeah"

As he slammed the ledger shut Bob looked over to Janna. What he didn't know was that she was looking at him. Their lips touched accidentally.

It felt different this time. For him it felt nowhere near as energetic as it had been with Hekapoo. It was more fun though. More fun that it should have been.

He backed up in shock, Janna chuckled and stated. "Wow, smooth move, didn't think you had it in ya."

"Thanks but I really don't, I swear it was an accident."

Janna looked slyly at her shoes and asked.

"Well, what if I'm okay with it?"

"Janna... Please don't take this the wrong way, I like you, I really do. But not in that way."
"Why not? You don't have a girlfriend do you? If you do you really should have said something, especially when we were in the garden."

"No, no girlfriend."

"Boyfriend? Because I didn't think you swung that way."

"No not that either Janna, well, I suppose I should just say it, I'm asexual."

"Asexual? You mean that you have no romantic interest in... Anyone?"

"None whatsoever in that way, I'm really sorry. After all we have been through over the past month I feel obligated to say that I like you, I like you a lot. You are fascinating and kind and cute and nice. And I think you would look really pretty if you didn't always dress like an Irish Republican Army cosplayer. But I'm just not interested in anyone that way."

"Oh, that's... Really? Not anyone?"

Bob smiled and replied, "Sorry, I really am."

Janna pointed towards the door and stated. "Okay, we should probably go find Star then."

As they walked quickly through the hallways of Mewni castle they found Star, Marco and Hekapoo walking slowly towards Star's bedroom. Janna shouted.

"Ah, hey, we need to talk to you about..."

As the three of them tuned around Janna and Bob were rendered speechless. Marco was being held up by the two women, he had blood all over his hands and a look of utter sadness on his face. Bob stammered out.

"What, what happened?"

Star spoke softly.

"There was an incident at St Olga's. Ponyhead and Princess Spiderbite were killed. Marco killed the one responsible. We need to have some alone time."

Bob shook his head in disbelief and replied. "Okay, I suppose this can wait a little while longer."

Marco raised his cleanest hand and stated sadly, "no, you might as well tell us now. This is just one of those days, it seems."

Bob stammered and started, "okay, Janna and I have found evidence of something rotten in the state of Mewni. The commander of most of your armed forces, a Sir Roderick Spode has been siphoning resources. Janna thinks that he may be plotting a coup."

Hekapoo shouted, "oh dear Glossarick! Spode!?"

Janna and Star asked at the same time, "you know him?"

Hekapoo sighed and looked at Marco, with a look of sadness and shame. "Spode... Sir Roderick was the last Mewnian to take the challenge of getting a pair of dimensional scissors. What took you sixteen years? He did it in three. He is one of the scariest mortals I have ever met. When he accepted his scissors I... I apologized for everything I put him through. He kissed my hand and said back to me."
"Don't apologize, I loved every minute of it. It makes me hard."

Marco grimaced, he grimaced at the thought that there was a guy out there who could make Hekapoo apologize for anything. He grimaced even harder at the thought of a man that terrifying replying with such a cringey and innuendo laced line.

Bob and Janna didn't know what was going on, but they didn't like it at all.

Bob finished up by saying. "Janna and I need to get some sleep so we will let you go. I don't know what happened tonight. Whatever it was it looks like you just got back from hell. I'm sorry for whatever you just went through."

Marco just started crying uncontrollably, Hekapoo and Star hustled him off to a bathroom to clean him up. Star shot Bob an icy glare and shouted. "Don't you think Marco has been through enough tonight!?"

Bob just stood there, not knowing what was going on. Janna just grabbed him by his collar and dragged him off to bed.
Facts emerge and reemerge.

Chapter Summary

Who wants some Hekapoo/Solaria smut? Short hair, muscular, tanned and kinda crazy up against long red hair, pleasingly rounded gentle curves, a pale visage and the level of madness only an immortal flame sorceress can bring?

Oh yeah, we also find out why Kelly isn't in this story.

The sixteenth, and last, battle of the Duilimar Isthmus was over.

Star was already back in Mewni. Prince Tom had not yet retuned to his domain. He was busy collecting the souls of the wicked.

Seemed like there was a lot of that sort of thing happening nowadays.

The army and navy of the kingdom of Karfelwein had deployed into Trundelheim with everything they had. Securing their ports, roads and cities.

The process had already begun, the process of expunging the realm of Trundelheim from history. It would take awhile, but the king of Karfelwein had concluded that the only possible way to make sure that Trundelheim would never again pose a threat to his country was by the process of expunging the culture, language and history of Trundelheim from the face of their planet.

The battle had been hard fought. But Trundelheim had made a fatal error. They had sent out their monsters in drips and drabs. They hadn't trusted the monsters enough to allow all of them on the battlefield all at once. If they had then there would have been, at least a possibility of fighting the Mewnians to another stalemate.

Going out, at most a dozen at a time had allowed Hekapoo and Rhombulus. With no small amount of help from Star and Tom to neutralize the monsters on a much more controlled basis.

Some died on the battlefield, many were crystallized. The ones who were crystallized were not to be taken back to Rhombulus's place. He had decided that was far too dangerous. So, one by one, he would surround the crystallized monsters with Karfelwein soldiers, uncrystallize them just enough to reveal weak spots. Then have the soldiers kill the monsters.

The dying screams of the monsters was drowned out by the dying screams of thousands of Trundelheim Warriors. There was no quarter given, they were executed, their bodies stripped, then burned in huge bonfires of magical flame made by Prince Tom.

Once in awhile they were not granted a relatively quick death from decapitation or stabbing in a main artery. They were just thrown into the flames.

Prince Tom was empowered by the life force of the dying soldiers. It would mean he would have more demons. But he had decided that since Star was willing to save both him and his demons that there was nothing wrong with what he was doing. Their souls were being cast into hell anyway for the crime of conducting a war of aggression. All that life force was just going to go to waste otherwise.
The demon Prince was already drunk on the souls of the damned. And there was so much more life force to drink.

And there was also much regular drinking going on as well. Soldiers, artillery men and marines were already beginning their drunken carousing. The scene lit with the fires of burning bodies.

Hekapoo looked over this scene and sighed, it was all so damn... familiar. She had believed that after years of peace that the Mewnians, and for that matter the MHC were past this sort of thing. She was particularly disgusted by Rhombulus's behavior. He seemed to take to mass executions like a duck to water.

Mewmans, killing other mewmans, not monsters this time.

She felt a gauntlet rest on her shoulder. She looked behind and asked.

"Roderick? What are you doing here? Shouldn't you be leading a victory parade or something?"

"Oh, I've had enough of that sort of fawning glory for a lifetime. People know who I am and what I do. I dropped my helmet around here... somewhere. I could just get another one from Quest Buy, but I like that helmet. Seemed to be good luck for me. And you know how superstitious we mortals are. What are you doing here?"

Hekapoo replied in a distant tone.

"I have to remember, I have to remember that these people existed."

Roderick sighed and looked around. "Are you sure that you want to do that? Are you sure that these sights and sounds and smells won't already haunt you for the rest of your days?"

She grimly replied.

"I've seen... As bad."

"Oh yes, I forget you are immortal sometimes. You have seen dozens of civilizations fall, in your domain alone. Still, you know that breathing in this sort of carnage isn't good for you."

Hekapoo snapped back. "And I suppose it is good for you!?"

Spode looked over the battlefield and smiled snidely. His body language suggested grave arrogance. He replied.

"Probably not, I do find a certain satisfaction to it. There's nothing quite like a final solution. So many promised final solutions to so many problems throughout the years and they never deliver. This, is, delivery! this is a war that has been going on since long before I was born, ending forever. As horrifying as this is, it's like a vaccine. It inures the host against future infection. Makes him stronger."

Hekapoo swung around and shouted. "And who's to say that the war doesn't start again in Karfelwien? When some province of that kingdom becomes rebellious because the central government is evil?"

Roderick shrugged and replied, "perhaps it will, but tell me, after seeing all this carnage and blood, are you in a very rebellious mood? Wouldn't it be better just to go along to get along? No matter what? That makes you a good little citizen doesn't it? The children of a nation, doing everything they can to please their masters, everything."
He sniffed the carnage on the air and let the moment sit.

Hekapoo was silent, Roderick walked away. Before he was out of earshot she shouted. "You didn't answer my question Spode! What if we are on the wrong side?"

Roderick shouted back without turning around, "good? Evil? Right? wrong? It's all relative, ever changing and ever fluid from moment to moment. As far as I'm concerned we did the right thing today. As your opinion should be the only one that matters to you. See ya later Hekapoo."

Spode bent down and kicked away a corpse. He noticed some of his shotgun pellets embedded in the dead body. Underneath the body was his helmet. It had been mangled pretty badly Spode knew it wouldn't fit with his armor anymore.

He held it up to Hekapoo and announced, "never forget Hekapoo. We bend, but we must never break."

Before Hekapoo could say anything back someone else walked up behind her.

Kelly asked, "Hekapoo, are, you seeing what I'm seeing right now?"

Hekapoo replied, "Yeah it's horrible, but this is war."

Kelly took her ridiculously large sword, stained with the blood of dozens of Trundelheim Warriors and stabbed it into the ground.

"No man, this is, this isn't war, this is a war crime! I mean, execution of prisoners! Tom is literally harvesting souls over there. I'm done, you hear me, I'm done. As long as Mewni is involved in... Whatever the hell this is, you tell Star, and Marco and everyone... I'm done."

Hekapoo replied, "um, technically it's just life force he is harvesting. The souls going to hell still go to hell and those going elsewhere go elsewhere."

Kelly slapped Hekapoo and turned around so fast that Tad fell out of her hair. Tad looked up at Hekapoo and stated.

"Um, yeah, Kelly and me may have had some friction lately. But... Yeah, I'm with her on this one. Yo, Kelly, wait up!"

The negotiations had not gone well for Hekapoo.

They had gone spectacularly well for the government of Mewni. The disagreement between the Spiderbite kingdom and the Cloud kingdom had been resolved to everyone's mutual satisfaction. King Jushtin had concluded the negotiations with a toast to everyone's respective realms.

The negotiations had been over the violation of some arcane and obscure holy place in the Spiderbite kingdom by a swarm of Ponyheads. Solaria wondered to herself how the Spiderbite kingdom could have arcane holy places. The place had only been colonized thirty years ago.
Solaria also wondered how her brother would have handled these negotiations without her.

That said, Solaria was not looking forward to the day when she succeeded him. As clumsy as he was she really did feel like he was better at the day to day banalities of running Mewni than she could ever be.

As the negotiations had drawn on Solaria had been blissfully unaware that she had been enraging Hekapoo through most of the meeting.

What had irritated Hekapoo was that Princess Solaria had spent most of the negotiation making goo goo eyes at the handsome young prince of the Spiderbite kingdom, Prince Tanith.

He was blessed with a minimum of his kingdoms namesake affliction and Solaria had made it clear that she was interested in him in more than just a political sense. Tanith was the whole package. The resources of his realm were appealing enough for Solaria, the fact that he was so dashingly handsome was just driving Solaria wild.

Solaria wondered what fun she could have with him, running around in the forest of certain death. How long he would last in bed? She was already imagining a long and happy life with this man.

All this made Hekapoo incredibly jealous. Once the negotiations were concluded Hekapoo stormed out of the room. Solaria apologized, passed the prince a note and ran after her asking the forger of all dimensional scissors, "what's going on? Why are you acting so twitchy?"

Hekapoo turned around and shouted, "you snake! You know why! I mean!"

Then Hekapoo's body language changed completely, looking at her feet she asked, "I thought I was supposed to be your girl."

Solaria touched Hekapoo's face gently and said.

"You are my girl."

"Then why were you flirting with that... Man through the whole negotiation!?"

Solaria smiled and asked, "come with me."

"Huh?"

"Just come with me, please."

Solaria started running as fast as she could. Back to her room, Hekapoo followed along.

Solaria threw open her door and tried to slam it shut moments after Hekapoo made it inside. Solaria turned to face a very confused looking Hekapoo.

Solaria kissed her passionately.

Then turned to lock the door.

Hekapoo asked in confusion, "what is going on?"

Nice the door was locked Solaria stared at Hekapoo with an expression of utter mischief.

"Hekapoo, you got jealous of me and another mortal. You will live far longer than I ever can. You are going to carry this memory with you for millennia past my death. You just made a part of me as
immortal as you are. I mortified you, I immortalified, or perhaps just immortalized myself by flirting with a guy. Do you have any idea how... Randy that makes me!?

"Solaria, are you, are you, what are you talking about? Do you want to become immortal?"

"Immortal? Nah, I just want to have some fun with you, I think that life stops being fun after a certain point and I don't want to live that long. I'm, I'm not good with pain and immortals I have known seem to have a lot of pain. I want to stay mortal, but I also want to share in the glory of what you are. Something beyond Mewman."

Hekapoo blinked. She sat down on the bed remembering a whole bunch of recent unpleasant romantic experiences with mortals, closed her eyes and grimaced while stating.

"Just kiss me once, gently, I want to see if you can control yourself before I agree to anything else."

Solaria sat down beside her, gave her an innocent peck on the cheek and waited.

Hekapoo waited

And waited.

And waited. Finally Hekapoo asked.

"Aren't you going to do something?"

Solaria replied in confusion. "I'm not going to pleasure anyone with their eyes closed and a look of perfect cringe on their face."

Hekapoo's face relaxed, she looked at Solaria and breathed heavily.

"Okay, go ahead, but no rough stuff!"

Solaria looked down.

Those hands.

Those strange strange hands.

So old, so powerful, so pale.

Yet so beautiful, so flawless.

So innocent.

So experienced.

So powerful.

And yet having sex with a girl was something that she clearly had no experience with.

Solaria realized that she had an opportunity to teach a god something about being Mewman.

She realized that she had wanted Hekapoo for so long that she would have been willing to endure any privation. Any test, any trial to have her. She was just so alluring that Solaria couldn't stand it.

She had to be gentle.
Solaria wasn't used to being gentle.

Solaria stood back and carefully kissed Hekapoo's cheek.

Hekapoo recoiled again, her hand subconsciously flying towards Solaria's face for a slap.

She stopped.

Solaria took her hand and gave Hekapoo the offer that she hoped would seal the deal.

She looked into Hekapoo's eyes with an expression of genuine gratitude. Not lust, not greed, not rage, gratitude.

Solaria gently kissed Hekapoo's hand. That was when she realized that this was going to be a different experience. An experience that she had almost forgotten about.

Something gentle.

Something kind.

Something far deeper than her usual... Offerings to mortals.

She lied back on the bed and closed her eyes.

Hekapoo looked deep into Solaria's eyes and nodded solemnly.

Solaria stood up and took off her clothes. Then she gently started taking off Hekapoo's finery.

The flame sorceress continued to comply, completely freaked out by this new experience. Solaria noticed the fear causing Hekapoo's beautifully proportioned body to tremble.

She ran her hand up and down Hekapoo's arm.

Solaria watched as Hekapoo's shivers began to be replaced by giggles.

She kept moving her hand until she stopped, to intertwine her fingers with her. She lied down next to Hekapoo and kissed their intertwined fingers.

Hekapoo asked, "you know for someone who is such a wild fighter you aren't very aggressive in bed."

Solaria continued to kiss as she explained.

"Well I should think not. It's princess warrior in the streets, whore in the sheets. No Prince, (or princess for that matter) wants the opposite of that."

Hekapoo asked in genuine curiosity. "So what, what are you going to do to me?"

Solaria took her hands away, continued to stare into Hekapoo's beautiful eyes and explain.

"Get you to come to me, I am not interested in having sex with anyone who is an unwilling partner."

Solaria looked down.

"With that said..."
She buried her face in Hekapoo's chest, Hekapoo recoiled, she genuinely didn't know whether to
gasp, moan or laugh.

So she did all three.

She pushed herself away from Solaria.

But when she looked back Hekapoo could see that Solaria was still giggling. "Sorry, couldn't resist.
You really do have the most magnificent set of tits Hekapoo!"

It was so charming, so whimsical, so... Not Solaria. Hekapoo leaned towards Solaria and gave her a
quick peck on the cheek.

That kiss had broken yet another of Hekapoo's psychological barriers.

Hekapoo slid down Solaria's side and began kissing her neck.

It was Solaria's turn to illustrate how much fun she was having.

She pushed Hekapoo down and started kissing all over her body.

Hekapoo was not made of flesh. She was made of some ethereal energy that allowed her to split
off nearly infinite clones and run faster than sound. Just to name two of her many beyond human
abilities.

The somewhat corporeal energy was delicious. For Solaria tasting a willing and happy Hekapoo
was like licking some kind of concoction of powdered sugar and cocaine.

She couldn't stop licking.

And the taste was just getting better as she too, herself lower.

And lower.

And lower.

To the Flame Sorceresses pussy.

The taste changed from something akin to sugar and coke to a fine wine made up of all the very
best things that Solaria could ever imagine. The more she licked the more she wanted.

That was until she realized that the thighs next to her head were putting out enough energy to roast
a whole pig. Solaria knew that she had bitten off more than she could chew.

She was pulling raw energy from Hekapoo. To much raw energy, a cosmos breaking quantity of
energy.

She had to counterbalance it or she would be fried.

She reached for her wand.

She realized that was an even bigger mistake. Because now the energies of the wand were
colliding with Hekapoo's energy inside her body.

It was raising her towards an orgasm that could kill her. But she could see that it would take a
while to get there. So she held on.
Just long enough to see that Hekapoo needed help.

She needed to heal.

She needed someone who was tuned to her particular pain.

Solaria let go of the wand.

Everything exploded in a white light as she stated.

"Yip!"

When she was able to open her eyes she saw that her body was drenched with sweat. It wasn't anything like any orgasm she had ever had before. This wasn't full body, this was like every cell in the body.

And she felt insanely hot!

She pushed Hekapoo away and reached for a glass of water next to her bed.

Splash!

Sizzle.

Not water, beer.

She had just doused herself.... In beer!

Water, all Solaria could think about was water!

She grabbed Hekapoo and looked around for water. The only water she could see was the ocean off in the distance.

She needed to go to the ocean.

She stole some of Hekapoo's Magic to create a dimensional portal by a fusing of their two magics.

She ran through the portal.

She ran down the beach.

She let go of Hekapoo.

She dove into the sea.

The ocean water bubbled all around her. Steam exploded off her skin as she erupted from the sea like Aphrodite herself. Stealing fire from the clit of the gods as opposed to burbling up out of a giant clam made from Cronos's testicles. Solaria licked the power in the air all around her and stated.

"Well, that was pretty good for me, was it good for you too?"

Hekapoo nodded in confusion.

Solaria marched back up the beach, picking up the wand and looking at the portal that led back to her bedroom she asked. "Um, does, have you ever made a portal without dimensional scissors before?"
Hekapoo shook her head in the negative.

Solaria carried Hekapoo back through the portal and sealed it as best she could.

Hekapoo keeled onto the bed.

She whispered, "well, that was new and interesting."
Send what you can to pick up the pieces.

Chapter Summary

Eclipsa and Sam winding down, Eclipsa continues hustling and continues to learn more about Sam and her family.

After the race Sam took Eclipsa to one of the larger and fancier casino-hotels in the area. Eclipsa just loved all the garish colors and the weird mangling of ultra high tech and faux ancient roman decorations.

Then they got to the spa.

Sam showed Eclipsa around and after a couple of minor misunderstandings Eclipsa relaxed into her spa experience. These earthlings were quite interesting to her. They seemed to value luxury to a degree that even some of the more decadent empires would consider excessive. Luxury and comfort, Eclipsa felt profoundly comfortable, relaxed, even a little loved.

Once that was done they went up to their room. Sam had booked a room on the top floor. With an incredible view of the city.

Sam sat down on a couch in front of the humongous window and gestured for Eclipsa to join her. Eclipsa sat down next to her and they just watched the world go by. There were quite a few things about Earth that had impressed Eclipsa but seeing the whole of the city really did take her breath away, she asked.

"How... Many cities do you have like this on this planet?"

Sam smiled and announced, "hundreds, just in this country alone. This is one of the smaller cities. There are others, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago. Those cities are way bigger than this. Millions of people. But, even though I know our deal was that I tell you things about Earth... darling, let's schmooze. Tell me all about yourself."

Sam's eyes shot open as she remembered.

"Oh crap, you said you just got out of jail on a 300 year sentence! And I'm wearing nothing but a bathrobe!"

Eclipsa laughed, "I wasn't in a cell, I was sealed in a crystal. It wasn't fun, but that 300 years went by in the blink of an eye. Also, don't worry, you are very pretty, and your hair does remind me of my lover. But I don't swing that way."

Sam sighed in relief and continued.

"Phew, okay so, tell me about your lover."

"I left my first husband. An awful man named Shastacan Johansen, a dandy who would not produce an heir with me. After a few... dalliances I met my lover, Globgor. When I gave birth to a daughter who clearly did not look like Shastacan but who did look like Globgor there was a huge scandal and I had to go on the run with my daughter. I thought I had a way back home when I was
given a request to make some weapons for a very powerful entity. But when I completed the weapons the bastard sealed me in a crystal. I would have stayed there forever if not for a distant relative breaking me out of that crystal because she needed her own weapon."

Eclipsa looked off in the distance wistfully. 

"It seems that all that most people want from me, weapons and power."

Sam opened her eyes and stated matter of factly.

"I don't want any weapons from you. Hell, if you offered me a weapon I would probably refuse it. My brother likes weapons, but they aren't my thing."

Sam leaned over and hugged her saying, "you don't have to do anything you don't want to as long as I'm around."

Eclipsa hugged her right back and continued. "Globgor was locked up with me. When I got out I freed him as well. He is in another realm right now taking care of some things that need to be taken care of."

Sam asked.

"So, what happened to your daughter?"

"I don't know, she has probably passed away by now. But I have a couple of leads on where she might have wound up. When I was a kid I went to a school, St Olga's. The most powerful families throughout the multiverse sent their daughters there. If my daughter went there. And I think it's very likely she did. I might be able to track her down through their records. But we can get to that later. From everything that has happened there's not much chance that story has a happy ending. For now I just want... No, I need to relax and enjoy the company of good friends."

Sam smiled and replied, "aw, thanks, for calling me a friend. Once we're done here I'll do everything I can to help you find your daughter."

Eclipsa and Sam enjoyed their stay. They gambled, they relaxed. Sam showed Eclipsa how computers and the Internet functioned. Eclipsa was particularly curious about the technologies of robotics and 3D printing.

Despite Sam's initial warnings on cheating, Eclipsa kept on gambling. After awhile she drifted over to the poker room where she won big. By this time Eclipsa had learned enough of the local customs and laws to magic up a fake ID. Sam didn't need one. She was 18.

Sam had been taking a nap when she woke up to find that Eclipsa was gone. She guessed correctly where she had wandered off to. The poker room.

Sam went up to Eclipsa and whispered in her ear. "You already have a hundred grand, our room is comped, when will you have enough of this?"

Eclipsa smiled and whispered back, "it's not about the money anymore, it's about this guy right here. He won't leave, I just keep taking his money and he keeps giving it to me. Everyone else comes and goes, not this guy. I'm not going until he goes, he has been too much fun!"

Sam looked across the table. An old man with long gray hair, unbelievably ugly teeth and a bushy, unkempt beard was glaring back at them.
Eclipsa looked like she was having a wonderful time. The old guy was staring daggers. Eclipsa asked.

"So, Jody, are you going to call or fold? She asked already knowing the answer!"

Eclipsa laughed somewhat impolitely.

Jody pushed in all of his remaining chips and slammed down his cards. He had three of a kind.

Eclipsa looked sad for a moment, then she turned over her cards. A king high straight.

Eclipsa took her chips and whispered back to Sam, "yeah I should probably call it a night. The last time I saw that look on someone's face I had to make someone think their knife was a snake."

As Eclipsa stood up from her chair and politely said goodbye to everyone, Jody stood up as well. He growled.

"You have to be cheating."

Eclipsa replied. "Now now, that's a serious accusation, do you have any evidence to back it up?"

"I've been gambling for decades and no woman was ever able to kick my ass at poker for three hours straight!"

"Well this one just did, so... unless you have any actual evidence...? No? Then I will be leaving with my..."

Jody stepped around the table and reached out to grab Eclipsa by the scruff of her neck. Eclipsa prepared to activate her personal shield. She had been waiting for this incredibly ugly man to lose his mind for awhile now. She wanted to see if she could still beat someone down without killing them. Ever since she sat down opposite him this Jody fellow had rubbed her the wrong way. He was entirely too reminiscent of so many Mewnian nobility.

But before either of them could strike a blow Sam put herself between them.

Eclipsa halted immediately.

Jody stopped and growled.

"Get out of my way little girl!"

Sam shouted, "stop it right now you lunatic! Eclipsa beat you, get over it! Just turn around and walk away before casino security shows up. And you had better pray they get here fast or else I'm going to feed you what's left of your rotten teeth!"

Sam went into a boxing stance and prepared for Jody to make the next move.

Three big, burly security men appeared behind him.

Jody threw up his hands and snapped, "fine, I'm not really in the mood to slap around a couple of little bitches. This place is dead anyway. Don't even know why I come here, the comps suck and..."

The whining trailed off as he walked away. Eclipsa hugged Sam and whispered. "Thank you, it's been a long time since anyone but Globgor stood up for me."

Sam hugged her back and replied, "hey, it's the least I could do for a friend. Now, let's go back up
to the room and get some sleep."

Sam was sleeping soundly.

Eclipsa just looked at her for a moment.

These Earthlings were such a delightfully odd bunch.

So powerful in some ways, so limited in others. Their weapons, technology and culture were so vast, complex and multifaceted. Yet, they had almost no magical abilities to speak of.

Which made this particular earthling even more interesting.

Somehow she had stumbled into some sort of magical ability and Eclipsa was very curious to learn more.

Eclipsa reached into one of Sam's pants pockets and took out the chunk of metal that Sam had used to summon her. Even all these years since it had been formed on a battlefield Eclipsa could still smell the blood on it. The shrapnel had been charged with an unholy energy long before Sam's summoning ritual. It was one of the most magically powerful items that Eclipsa had ever seen. Certainly the most powerful magical item she had ever seen on Earth.

Eclipsa hadn't spent enough time with Daniel for him to explain the story behind the shrapnel. Eclipsa was going to find out though, if only because she wanted to get his side of the story. She knew enough to know that eyewitness accounts are often unreliable if only because of incomplete information. Never mind personal biases.

Eclipsa took out one of her potions and squeezed a couple of drops of a glowing pink liquid on the metal. Once the incantation was finished she asked the metal a question, "okay, now, how did you come to be in the possession of this family?"

Eclipsa was transported to an area just outside a village in Nuristan Province, Afghanistan. As she descended upon it she got a birds eye view of the battle.

Hundreds of Taliban fighters were swarming towards the village. They had overwhelmed the local and foreign soldiers trying to stop them. Eclipsa fell further to where Daniel was, in a ditch, using a dead man's radio to call in an artillery strike.

Eclipsa couldn't believe how calm, cool and collected the man sounded as he spoke in to the radio. He was surrounded by enemy soldiers, already wounded. But he sounded like he was asking someone politely for a glass of milk.

"Dump all HE on UA72941387"

"Confirm Danger Close"

"Not even Danger Close. Thats my grid. Fuck it all. Send what you can to pick up the pieces later."

A similarly dispassionate voice replied, "shot out."

Daniel put down the radio and picked up a discarded M240 machine gun and continued to hammer away at the attackers. Once the machine gun was empty he leapt into a nearby ditch, covering his head as a storm of metal fell on the battlefield.
High explosive shells burst all around him. All other noise was drowned out by the force of hundreds of pounds of explosives and steel shrapnel blasting across the battlefield. One shell burst very close to Daniel. He exclaimed in agony and went motionless.

The noise and chaos of the battle was replaced by perfect calm. Nothing but the stench of various horrible smells wafting on the breeze.

Eclipsa looked down. Daniel was injured, a chunk of metal had flown into him at such an angle that the ditch hadn't been able to protect him. Blood was leaking out of his neck. Eclipsa saw the chunk of shrapnel that had almost taken his head off. It looked awfully familiar, Eclipsa stated.

"But wait, this makes no sense, you don't die here."

"What! Who was that!"

Daniel couldn't see, his eyes had been forced shut by head trauma. But he could hear a female voice. A female voice meant that whoever this was wasn't Taliban. This made no sense to either of them. These were memories, he shouldn't be able to see her. These were events that happened in the past. She should only be able to observe. Yet, Eclipsa couldn't help but reach out to Daniel. She had to show this man compassion as he faced his death.

Their fingers intertwined and Eclipsa felt energy being taken from her. She shuddered at the impossible thing that this man was apparently doing. But she didn't stop. She could have backed away, but she couldn't. This man was reaching across the vastness of space and time to take healing energy from the queen of darkness herself. She couldn't say no to someone that bold, that confident, that utterly determined to live! Someone who had given more valor than anyone had any right to ask.

The radio squawked. "Reinforcements on their way, eta twelve minutes. Can you hold on until then?"

Daniel reached for the handset. As he coughed up blood he murmured, "don't know, just get here as fast as you can."

Once he had gotten the blood out of his mouth he felt around down and discovered the shrapnel that had almost taken his head clean off. He calmly reached down and pocketed it. Then he looked toward Eclipsa. He couldn't see her but he could feel her and hear her, he stated. "Well, I suppose you are either a hallucination caused by massive blood loss and head trauma. Or a valkyrie come to carry me to Valhalla? No other reason for a woman who speaks English to be here. Well, let's go then, the afterlife is waiting."

Eclipsa knelt down and hugged him. "I'm not a Valkyrie, I'm no warrior. I just, you aren't supposed to die here Daniel! Damn it, you aren't supposed to die here!"

Daniel asked in genuine confusion, "I'm not? Why not? And how do you know my name?"

"You... You just aren't, now hold on dammit! Just hold on!"

Daniel whispered, "okay, if you insist."

Eclipsa held him until she heard the sound of helicopters in the distance. She had to stop the spell before any other "impossible things" happened. As she let go she realized that he had taken a huge amount of dark energy from her. Energy that would metastasize inside him. Eclipsa realized that she had been the one who had given him that exotic form of leukemia that nearly killed him.
She felt guilty, then she realized that she had made it right. She had dissolved that metastasis, a mere fourteen minutes after they had... Met for the first time. She walked away but before she ended the spell he shouted, "hey, whoever, whatever you are, thanks! I owe you one!"

As the spell dissolved she shouted back, "you owe me nothing, Sergeant! Absolutely nothing!"

Eclipsa dropped the shrapnel. As it clattered to the surface of the hotel table she realized that she was back in the hotel room. Sam woke up from her nap. Eclipsa explained, "I know, I know where this came from. I'm, I'm so sorry that your brother had to go through that. I think, I don't understand exactly how but I think I gave him his cancer."

Sam walked over to her and hugged her. Whispering in her ear. "After that day my brother became slightly obsessed with the ace of spades. I asked him why and he said that the day he almost died an angel came to talk to him. He didn't get to see her, but she talked to him and said some things that sounded a little strange. All he managed to see was a glowing light. That light was in the shape of the ace of spades. He told me, "something saved me on that battlefield, and that light was all I saw of some woman from who knows where. She was strange, downright incomprehensible, but she was kind enough to save me and I can never thank her enough for that."

The words trembled from Eclipsa's lips. "It shouldn't have been possible, I mean, they were memories, they were things that happened. But he somehow, he, he reached out to me and took just enough power from me to stay alive."

Sam hugged harder and whispered, "thank you."

Eclipsa stammered, "no, I there were consequences, he took dark energy from me. I'm, I'm the one who gave him leukemia."

"But you cured that."

"Yes, but he wouldn't have had leukemia if it hadn't been for me."

"No, he wouldn't have, he would have been dead in that ditch. And if I hadn't done that magical ritual with that piece of shrapnel we never would have met. It's a closed time loop, try not to think too much about paradoxes and whatnot. Eclipsa, meeting you, knowing that you were out there looking out for my brother before we even met. This, I can't thank you enough for being there..."

Sam backed out of the hug to face Eclipsa she sobbed loudly as she finished the sentence.

"When we both needed you the most!"
Armed and ready.

Chapter Summary

So, I suppose you were wondering why Marco was looking so awful a chapter or two ago? Well it's because of one ever so small change to an event in canon.

Chapter Notes

Believe it or not but I had this entire chapter written before the season three finale aired. And I have proof too!

"Dearest princesses, congratulations on this wonderful school. I know you see me as an idol. But today you are my idols. You embody everything that princess Turdina, I mean, I stand for. Not letting anyone force you to be someone you are not. Living by your true colors, loving who you are!"

Before he could say another word the sound of a dimensional chainsaw rang out. Everyone looked up to see a car falling from the sky.

The car fell on top of three princesses, Two Heads, Spiderbite and Ponyhead.

Before anyone could react the cars driver side front door opened. Out of which stepped Ms Heinous who confidently stated.

"Princess Turdina is a fraud, and I have the evidence to... What's everybody staring at!?!"

She looked down at the two dead and one grievously wounded princesses she had landed on top of, speechless. As Gemini got out of the car he looked down and said.

"Oh my."

Heinous began berating Rastacore, any sane person would have known better than to expect a being whose primary brain hadn't grown back yet to make a dimensional portal. Especially with as imprecise and unreliable a tool as a dimensional chainsaw. This was entirely Heinous's fault, but she was looking for someone to blame.

Marco just stood there, horrified. Something broke in him. Something that he thought had healed a long time ago. Something much more delicate than he ever would have guessed it had been the first time it broke. There was only one thing that he could do. He had to kill this woman. He had never liked Ms Heinous, he had never forgiven her for attempting to brainwash him. This was the last straw. He had to make sure that Ms Heinous would never hurt anyone ever again. He had barely known Princesses Two Heads and Spiderbite. All annoyance, dislike and distrust that Marco had ever had towards Princess Ponyhead went flying out the window. He had to avenge their deaths.
He roared in agony and rushed the car. As he drew his dimensional scissors the princesses standing between him and Heinous parted like the Red Sea. He hit the ground like a baseball player sliding into home, cutting a dimensional portal which had its terminus 30 meters above the Afflicted Forest.

The weight and position of the car meant that it and Rastacore, still tied to it fell in first. Followed moments later by Heinous and Gemini.

Marco jumped in after them. As he plummeted through the air above the forest he realized that if he hit the ground he wasn't sure that he would survive. He made another incision, this one came out near a shed outside Hekapoo's home. Once he was safely on the ground there he flung open the door of the shed to see his gear and his trusty dragon cycle Nachos waiting for him.

Nachos leapt into action, she had seen that look on Marco's face before and knew exactly what it meant.

As they flew away a Hekapoo clone who happened to be outside doing some maintenance work on the buildings plumbing system looked up and shouted.

"Marco? What's going on? Why are you wearing a dress?"

"Can't talk now, but thank you for all your help H-pooh."

She wasn't able to say, "don't call me that." Before he was out of earshot.

By sheer luck Henious, Gemini and Rastacore landed on top of their car. The combined efforts of the cars shocks, suspension, crumple zones, some tree branches and soft ground had kept them from dying in the fall.

Heinous asked. "Where are we?"

Gemini replied, "looks like the Afflicted Forest."

"Yes, Rastacore, get us out of here!"

The only half regenerated lizard monster/hit man tried to start his dimensional chainsaw. Before it caught something came swooping out of the sky.

As leathery wings fluttered just above him the lizard creature known as Rastacore lost his chainsaw. The tool was clean in two by a blade with way more energy and inertia behind it than its relatively small size would suggest.

Rastacore couldn't see what was responsible. But his employers could.

It was a man, a very tall and muscular man wearing a dress. With a terrifying visage. His eyes burned with an indescribable rage. A dragon-cycle flew away behind him as he slashed the still healing body of Rastacore into pieces and screamed.

"Kar!"

The man's right arm began transforming into something. Some kind of monster unlike anything that Gemini or Heinous had ever seen before. As if the forest itself was under its command a huge plume of flame emerged from behind the rider of the dragon-cycle as his arm grew and changed.

As the monster arm finished emerging it roared, in triumph, ecstasy and pain. Once it was fully
formed it spoke.

"Ugh, where are we? what's going on!?"

The man growled to the arm, "time to go to work."

The tentacle monster-arm-thing snaked around the still living body of Rastacore and swallowed the chopped up parts of the assassin, whole.

While this horror was playing out Gemini screamed at the top of his lungs, "run! I'll hold him off!"

Ms Heinous turned to run as the last few bits of Rastacore were swallowed.

Gemini stood with his arms wide open, he had no way to stop this, man? Monster? Whatever the hell he was. But he didn't care about any of that, he had to save his lady. He shouted at the thing that had just chopped up and consumed his compatriot.

"You shall not paaaa!"

With four lightning fast sword strokes Gemini was no more. His remains drifted away on a strong breeze like a bundle of rags in a windstorm.

Ms Heinous ran, she ran faster than she ever could have imagined she could run. But it still felt painfully slow. She was in the Afflicted Forest, a place infamous in the wider multiverse a breeding ground for diseases and creatures more horrifying than what all but a handful of the most deranged minds could imagine. It was atop a geological anomaly that caused the ground to belch fire occasionally. Without dimensional transportation, rescue, or even a weapon her odds of getting out of this place alive were practically nonexistent.

For now though she only had one thing on her mind. Putting as much distance between her and that... It wasn't a man, it wasn't a monster. That... thing! that just killed her servants!

She hid under a log which had fallen on some boulders. Pushing herself as deep underneath it as she could. She whimpered.

"I'm sorry, I'll be a good girl, I didn't mean to kill those girls. It was all Rastacores fault!"

Memories, faintly recalled memories washed through her mind.

"Mama, Mama please, if you can hear me. Please save me! I'll be good I swear, please save me Mama!"

The log lifted away. The thing that was hunting her had found her. As the tentacle arm discarded the log like a toothpick she found herself inches away from a sharp, rusty blade. He spoke in a deep, raspy voice.

"This is for Ponyhead, and every other girl you hurt. Not just tonight, but every day you were in charge of St Olga's. Your madness and stupidity ends here, Heinous."

As he raised his sword Henious screamed, "wait, I have to know. Who, what are you!?"

"You don't recognize me?"

He cleared his throat. His voice now a few octaves higher in pitch, a little less raspy sounding much more familiar to her.
"I'm Princess Turdina."

As his identity dawned on her the razor sharp blade began to travel through her neck.

"Get some more towels, where is the first aid kit!" Star shouted over the din of the scene.

With her healing spells she had been just barely able to save Princess Two Head. Several other princesses were wounded, broken limbs, cuts, slashes, scrapes. She was too busy taking care of the wounded to form any opinion on what had just happened.

Someone had thrown a blanket over the remains of the two deceased princesses.

The scene was starting to wind down, but the area was still full of crying girls.

A dimensional portal opened. Star drew down on it with her wand, but instead of another threat it was Marco. She sighed and spoke.

"Phew, Marco, thanks. That was quick thinking cutting that portal. I think you saved... uh, what's that in your hand?"

The tentacle arm was gone. In one hand he held his sword, in the other was something far more horrifying. Princesses stopped crying long enough to activate their camera phones as he walked back to the podium. Once there he rested his sword against the lectern and rested the horrible object atop it as he took off his dress.

Underneath was a ragged set of his usual clothes. Ripped apart by the sudden growth, then return to normal size of the young man wearing them. He spoke.

"Princesses of St Olga's academy I have lied to you. I am not a princess at all. I'm not even a girl. I'm just a boy, from Earth, called Marco Diaz."

"I have failed you, I can never apologize enough, or even think that anything I could ever do can make up for what we have all lost today. I hope this will... Will... I only hope that you will find it in your hearts someday to forgive me for all this. I'm sorry, I have to go."

As he finished the sentence Hekapoo showed up. She had tracked Marco from her realm. Trying to understand what was going on. Star ran up to the two of them as he whispered to them, just about to cry.

"Let's get the fuck out of here."

He scooped up his sword, made an incision with his dimensional scissors and left St Olga's forever. Leaving behind a speechless crowd.

And the severed head of Ms Heinous aka Meteora Butterfly staring at them with a look of horror permanently engraved on her face.
The universe according to Hekapoo?

Chapter Summary

Pillow talk and mythology of this version of the Star vs the Forces of Evil multiverse.

And with Halloween coming up I should probably do some... Jantom shipping.

Chapter Notes

I would just like to take a moment to thank the writers of Star vs the Forces of Evil for publishing The Magic Book of Spells. I can't even describe how helpful it has been in writing both this work and StarFan13 and the Forces of Evil.

Solaria and Hekapoo were still on the bed. Solaria was still soaked in evaporating seawater. They had almost caught their breath as Solaria asked.

"So, Hekapoo, seeing as how we have done... Whatever the heck that was, could you please tell me what you are?"

Hekapoo blinked, "what do you mean? You must know exactly what I am if you have read the book of spells."

Solaria swirled a finger around in the air and replied.

"Well, there's the Book of Spells and it says that you manage interdimensional travel. But, to paraphrase Glossarick, 'I'm a dipper, not a skimmer.' I have had a look at other books. Books that predate the destruction of the first Mewni castle. In some of these books it's insinuated that you used to be named..."

"Hathor."

Hekapoo smiled nervously and replied, "no idea, I don't know who this Hathor is."

Solaria replied calmly, "okay, suppose I was thinking of someone else. This Hathor deity sure does sound interesting though. My information suggests that she held a power, 'beyond all mortal comprehension."

Hekapoo blew air out of her mouth and plunged her face into the bed.

"Used to be, I used to be Hathor. I'm not Hathor anymore, I put all that behind me."

"Why?"

"Because I fucked it up!"

"What did you fuck up?"
"I... fucked up creation, the act of the creation of life. That was my fault and I made a mess of it."

Solaria looked at her in disbelief and said, "okay, how did you do that?"

Hekapoo asked, "you promise you won't tell anyone?"

"Sure."

"I mean seriously, this is my most... This is the secret I'm most ashamed of."

Solaria smiled, gently took her hand and said, "it's fine if you don't want to. We can always save it for later."

Hekapoo gulped, raised her head from the bed and explained.

"As you know there are three ways that life is created. Magically, asexually and sexually. Magically created life is the most durable. Or the most delicate, depending on its purpose. Once a magically created life form fulfills its purpose it tends to just blink out of existence. Glossarick is the oldest being in the universe, he was created to allow the universe to understand itself. Since understanding is a nebulous concept when you are talking about something as vast and complicated as the universe itself he goes on."

"One of Glossarick's favorite hobbies used to be seeding the universe with life forms of various sorts. He would just start the processes of life in various places and let things run to see where they would go. As the universe expanded it became more and more complex. As it became more complex, life began to form. Not just life created by Glossarick, life began to emerge spontaneously. However all of these life forms had one thing in common. They were asexual, they produced by colning themselves, or splitting in two! This created stable but, in Glossarick's view, boring life forms."

Hekapoo gulped again.

As many times as she had justified this to herself, justifying it to another...

To a mortal no less.

"Sexual reproduction is the most commonly encountered means of reproduction among higher life forms. Have you ever wondered why this is?"

Solaria replied, "no, not really."

"Well, it's actually quite simple. When beings engage in sexual reproduction a hybrid is created of the two respective parents. A hybrid combining the elements of two beings. This hybrid is usually stronger, healthier and more intelligent than the parents. Especially if it is smart enough to learn lessons taught by its parents and others. If it can use, not just its innate instincts, but other abilities. This requires language, which is a concept that asexually reproducing creatures usually aren't able to figure out on their own. You need to become smart enough to learn language, but to become smart enough to learn you have to evolve to the point where you can do that. That... It seems, requires sexual reproduction."

Solaria cocked her head and asked, "wait, are you saying that you... Invented sex and that language itself was a byproduct of the invention of sex?"

Hekapoo shuddered and replied, "in the sense of the female gender and the act itself, yes. And there's so much more that comes as a byproduct of sex."
Solaria leaned back and asked, "well, I can't see what you are so nervous about. Sex is great! I like it, you like it, all sorts of life forms seem to like it. So what went wrong?"

Hekapoo growled

"Whar went wrong is that when sex was invented it kicked off an arms race. Life forms that indulged in it became stronger. But so did the life forms that predated on those life forms. And the life that existed as parasites on those life forms. It... It made any existing conflict worse and invented a whole lot of new conflicts. Conflicts going up to the scale of galactic wars and down the the scale of the struggles between tiny multicellular life forms."

Hekapoo laid back, putting her head in Solaria's lap and looked up at her with an expression of exhaustion, pointing to her face as she said. "All because of this thing here."

Solaria asked, "okay, I can see how sparking off constant never ending conflict could weigh on someone. But there's something I don't understand, you created sex itself. How?"

Hekapoo blinked and smiled, "Every planet has a possibility of life. However most planets do not have the environment to create anything more than the simplest forms of life, created when certain chemical and electrical phenomena line up. Once life is created it takes a very long time for it to become something as complex as a fish."

"Unless a member of the MHC intervenes. And everyone on the Magical High Commission has meddled in some way with almost every planet in the multiverse that sustains civilized life. We... Point life in certain directions which ensures that evolution goes as fast and as smoothly as possible. In the earliest days we meddled a great deal. We... We created incredible things, hybrid creations of ourselves and biological life. Incredibly powerful creatures, gods by your standards."

"But... They were all insane, or they eventually went insane. They saw themselves as the lords of all creation. That everything belonged to them. So they consumed lower forms of life, and when they found each other, they consumed each other. Most were immortal so it became the job of the second generation of life to defeat the beings that made up the first."

"Many of the second generation were immortal as well and consigned themselves to an eternity of conflict against their ancestors. The MHC assisted them with the creation of weapons and techniques of battle. They, they did exist for thousands of years. Trapped in pocket dimensions, lost on forgotten worlds. Some even took over whole dimensions as their battle space."

"Time went by and the first generation began to submit to the grinding effects of conflict. Immortality is a more complex and difficult subject than most people imagine. In order to maintain immortality one has to want to maintain it. If a being is old enough, in enough pain, it will seek the means to end itself and anything that can be made, can also be unmade. So they submitted, they submitted to our mercy and we unmade these entities when they asked. But they had to ask, we didn't have the power to destroy our own creations."

"The second generation was granted a different path. For their bravery and loyalty in the first war they were allowed to be reborn without the memories and scars of the conflict they had just survived. They were reshaped into billions of different life forms. Simpler life forms. We... We would not try to create gods again, we had learned that lesson. We decided that if a life form could evolve to that kind of power without our influence it would also have the tempering of wisdom and experience needed to allow it to live and not be an insane destroyer of everything that could possibly challenge it. We took a hands off approach. I... I changed my identity from the mother of all creation to the forger of dimensional scissors. A much less important job."
Solaria asked, "okay, so if you took a hands off approach with the rest of the multiverse then why is the MHC so close to the Mewnian royal family? What makes us so special?"

Hekapoo smiled and announced. "Mewni was the first planet in the multiverse to be entirely developed by native, non magical life. Plants, trees, various creatures and what ultimately became the monsters. There was a complication though. The monsters became far more powerful than expected. Somehow they had developed an immunity to most forms of magic. Something had to be done so Glossarick informed the life forms of a distant world about a wonderful new planet. Bursting with resources and provided them with the means to colonize this world."

Hekapoo held up her dimensional scissors.

"Within three months of those colonists arriving here war had broken out. This is what the Magical High Commission has done for most of its existence it seems. Helped parts of our creation clean up after other parts of our creation. Even though the monsters weren't actually our creation."

Solaria rolled over and looked down at a pile of notes she had stating, "huh, well, that certainly fills in some gaps in my knowledge."

She thought, "hmm, my chapter in the book is going to be rather interesting indeed."

Then Solaria realized something.

"Wait, you still haven't explained how you invented sex and the female gender."

Hekapoo looked away, stretched out her arms and explained. "All asexually producing creatures are male, up until a certain point. For some reason the universe prefers to expend its energy in a masculine way until it is affected by an outside force. In this case the outside force was me. Through numerous generations I use spells and my own energy to feminize the most feminine life forms in these populations. I do this until the first biological females are born. I also... Well, I don't know if instruction is the right word, perhaps the best word would be influence the population to the proper technique. It's not like in a classroom, or even something like me telling you how to do something. The way my energy affects them. It's more a voice in the back of your head. Something ever so gently prodding your natural instincts to go in a certain direction. I do this until sexual reproduction becomes self sustaining."

"After I did this on a couple thousand planets something happened. It seems I had influenced the flow of energy across the universe permanently. From that point onward female life forms began randomly sprouting up across the universe. That was when I decided to stop being Hathor, and I chose to do something else with my immortality."

"The moment that happened my appearance changed. I became shorter and the sun between my horns changed to a flame."

"When this change happened I also discovered that I could produce clones of myself. I don't know how, and neither does anyone else on the MHC. But it seems my meddling with all these different life forms has resulted in me becoming the multiverse's greatest practitioner of asexual reproduction ironically enough."

"But it's not just the ability to make clones. My meddling has left impossibly deep scars. Every life form I meddled with has a limited genetic memory. They don't know who I am, or where I am. But they know that I am their mother in the deepest and most ancestral sense. And they know that I abandoned them. I had to, there was so much else of creation to look after. This engenders a resentment. Duality, masculine, feminine. Doomed to hurt, dish out hurt and be hurt again in a
never ending cycle. Pain and pleasure eternally mixed, unable to contain each other. Unable to win."

"So yeah, for all my power, I still feel and I, I feel a lot of pain."

Solaria's smile was gone, she asked.

"How... How do you endure it? The pain of that connection to so many life forms?"

"I endure it by continuing to spread love, as much love as I can. And for all the love I give, all the favors, all the tools, dreams of technology, every now and then someone comes along who surprises me. Even after all this time and all these civilizations. You..."

Hekapoo looked out the window at the sea off in the distance.

"You were the first mortal female who ever seduced me."

"Really?"

"Yeah, every other female I... Wow! Huh, the last one was probably Ariadne. Wow, how long ago was that? She was a... Well it's hard to describe what she was, immortal, second generation of life. She was... Wow I miss her, she wound up in a battle with another immortal. Well, actually eleven of them. I..."

Hekapoo looked off into the distance. Solaria had known enough warriors to know a stress induced flashback when she saw one. Solaria just hugged her and whispered, "it will be okay, whatever happens, we will get through it together."

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Sunlight streaming in.

Bob crawled out of the bunk bed.

He was really enjoying his time in Mewni.

He was really enjoy spending time with Janna. Who was sleeping in the top bunk.

"She's so cute." He thought.

He stretched his legs and started walking towards the bathroom. Several new unwelcome itches informed him of another thing to do.

"Gonna have to get bug spray, and lots of it."

He kept walking.

"This Spode guy sounds weirdly familiar. Where do I know that name from? Eh, one way or another he won't be my problem anymore. Star will have him arrested for high treason and that will be..."
He turned a corner.
He realized that he was face to face with a demon.
He instinctively reached for his crucifix. It wasn't there, he took it off to sleep and he was only half dressed.
He looked around for a weapon. Again, half dressed. On his second trip to Mewni he had brought a weapon, by now he had brought several, but he didn't have one on him this early in the morning.
He remembered.
"Demon Prince, Star has a friend who is a demon Prince!"
The demon tuned to look at him. Bob panicked.
"Oh crap, he is looking right at me!"
Bob realized that he would have to do something here and somehow he picked the right thing.
"Hello, um, Prince Tom? I presume? I mean it's not like we have ever met, before. Um, my name is... Robert, but everyone calls me Bob."
He faintly realized that he had extended his hand for a handshake.
"Shit! What am I doing? I'm shaking hands with a fucking demon!?!"
Tom took his hand, gave a somewhat disinterested handshake and replied, "hey."
Bob nervously looked around and asked, "hey, um, do you know where Star is?"
Tom replied, "there was an emergency with the army someplace where I do not want to ever go again. Marco is still asleep but Star is gone for..."
Tom looked him up and down. He realized that Bob looked terrified.
"Oh crap, you are from Earth aren't you?"
Bob nodded.
"So I imagine the whole horns and three eyes thing is a little... Overwhelming?"
"Yeah, and the purple skin too."
Tom scratched the back of his neck and announced.
"Sorry, most humans don't see me like this. I have a camouflage spell if you..."
"No! No no no. I I like to be honest with people in my dealings and I figure if a demon is going to make the time to talk to me I should respect his appearance."
Tom looked somewhat askance and stated.
"Really? Make time? I didn't know my time was so valuable?"
"Well, you are a demon Prince right? I mean I imagine you have lots of souls to torture and whatnot, right, heh heh?"
Bob cringed, expecting to be dragged somewhere.

"Actually all that work is delegated to lesser demons. I'm free to do whatever I want."

Tom disinterestedly examined his fingernails. Bob opened his eyes and asked.

"Oh, then what do you do?"

"Whatever interests me. I have all sorts of side hustles and scams. Evil is a very big business and I never lack for business. But I don't know. It loses its luster after awhile. Trying something different here with Star. Although I got to admit being good sure does feel evil someways."

"So... I'm told that you spend a lot of time with Star, even though she is an ex? How... Is that supposed to work?"

"Little secret, just between you and me?"

Bob nodded.

"She isn't exactly an ex. I'm kinda still hitting that."

"Even though she is dating Marco?"

"Yeah, it's pretty messed up isn't it? I'm thinking I'm going to have to break it off soon though. You see his regency Marco Diaz isn't quite able to give what her highness wants in a romantic sense. So she brought me in. But I don't think I'm going to keep dating her, there's no connection anymore it's just..."

Tom realized that he had Bob's attention.

He had said too much.

"So, alright, I was lying. The real reason I stay around is because Star keeps getting into fights and. I'm worried that one day she is going to bite off way more than she can chew. I mean this monster hunt she is leading it's... demons know something about pointless crusades."

Bob leaned back in a bit of shock, asking.

"So the monster hunt is pointless?"

"Well, it's pointless for her. She, she is taking on way too much trying to get this all done by herself. Even with the Mewnian army backing her up. The army is stretched to almost breaking out there on the front lines and they. They are told that their families back home are supposed to be nice to monsters that seem to look just like what they are cleaving with their swords? That's what makes it so bad. Most of the monsters Star tracks down are really bad. But she is sacrificing her essence and all her political capital to deal with this. I've never seen Star get this obsessed before, it's a bad color on her."

Bob replied in an awed tone.

"You know for a demon, you really sound like a nice guy right now."

Tom smiled and replied.

"Thanks, I try to be..."
Through gritted teeth, Tom finished the sentence, "Really really hard."
"Rage issues?"
"Am I that obvious?"

Bob finally loosened up a bit and replied. "I might have seen similar behavior a few times. Ever hear a Zionist scream when anyone gets 'up in the grill' of one of gods chosen people?"
"Nope."
"Ever seen a God lay waste to two whole cities because a bunch of the people who lived there had some lapses of moral judgment?"

Tom looked away with a faux haughty tone. "Hmm, I may have heard a similar story. Second or third hand of course."
"Well I'm just saying, for something that is supposed to be a manifestation of all the good in the world. God can be a bit of dick from time to time."

Tom smiled subtly and looked away completely. Bob asked in confusion. "What, you aren't going to go nuts because I mentioned God?"
"Nah, I don't care about that guy. Never met him, likely never will. And even if I did I would have three questions."
"What would that be?"
"Why was I created? Why is so much of existence pain? and why is so much of the worst pain the kind you inflict on others?"

Bob gasped. "That's... Interesting, suppose it's showing that I have never spoken to a demon before."
"Well you seem to be doing just fine for your first attempt."

Janna walked up and said, "hey Tom, Bob, heh, you sound like you should be hosting some shitty morning radio show."

They both giggled politely at the joke, Janna asked. "So, I suppose you weren't kidding about wanting to talk to a demon, something about understanding the full picture?"

Bob smiled and announced brightly. "Yes, it's only been a few minutes but this has been fascinating, do you and Tom have any business with each other?"
"Um yeh, just this one thing, Bob. You said you liked me?"

Bob nodded.
Janna grabbed Tom by one of his horns and asked.
"Then show me how much you like me!"

She drew Tom into a deep kiss.

Janna took her lips off of his face and asked, "jealous much?"

Bob smiled brightly and stated.

"No, I told you, asexual. You aren't my girl. You can make kissy faces with anyone you like. That said it's probably not a good idea to kiss a demon prince without. His. Permission."

Bob was pointing towards Tom.

Janna looked in the demon prince's eyes.

They were burning, quite literally, he roared "Why does every single earthling female treat me like a piece of meat? I am not your toy and I will never give you what you are looking for. Leave me alone you witch!"

Janna danced away from Tom and started walking away briskly. Genuinely concerned that there was some line that she had just crossed and it might mean eternal punishment.

Bob said, "I'm sorry, most earthling girls aren't like that."

Tom went back to his normal conversational tone of voice and explained, "yeah I know I was just messing with her."

Tom threw his arm over Bob's shoulder and yelled, "yo, earth girl. I'm going to go get some breakfast with your friend here. You wanna come with?"

Janna turned around, she was looking nervous and confused as hell. Bob smiled back and said quietly. "This sounds really good, but I really do need to use the crapper."
Roderick and Eclipsa.

Chapter Summary

How two of our antagonists came to work together.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Sam and Eclipsa were on a mission.

Sam felt profoundly odd. She had never gone in for dressing all frou frou. But now she was at a level of frou frou she didn't think was physically possible for her.

Sam was wearing an impossibly complicated dress that had taken a skilled tailor a week to manufacture, at great expense. It was mostly made of silk, and a few other high end materials.

Sam loved it and hated it. She loved how glamorous it made her feel. While she hated the thought that the money that went into making this could be used to buy something far more useful. Like a car, or something.

The tiara though. Sam just loved that. Among his more combative skills, Sam's brother Daniel was an amateur jewelry maker. When Sam told him about Eclipsa's plan to infiltrate a really fancy school and their need for a very fancy disguise Daniel snapped his fingers and said, "fancy? Got you covered, sis."

Not long after his recovery he had whipped up the tiara and a matching necklace and rings. The gems were mostly synthetic rubies with a few other synthetic stones mixed in. It would take a close examination to see that the gems were synthetic and the gold was simply gold plated.

When Daniel handed Sam and Eclipsa the jewelry Eclipsa was quite impressed. Sam just smiled and said, "that's just the sort of thing that Daniel does."

In order to reduce the risk of being identified as one of the most notorious people in the history of the multiverse Eclipsa was dressed in a niquab. The tall, fabulously dressed earthling and the relatively short Mewnian Queen made for a rather curious image as they stood in front of St Olga's.

Placed atop one of the crenellations of the building was something neither Sam or Eclipsa expected to see. A severed head. It looked Mewman.

As they entered the gates Eclipsa was growing nervous. The school was plastered with all manner of defiant graffiti. She observed.

"Oh wow, I mean, this place wasn't exactly all that impressive when I went here but it looks like things have gone... downhill somewhat."

Sam replied, "well, I wouldn't know, hey, excuse me?"

A tiny girl carrying a bag of radishes walked by. Sam politely asked.
"I'm a new student, can you tell me where I check in? and can you tell me why is there a severed head up there?"

"The robots will be out in a moment to register you. That is the head of the former headmistress, Ms Heinous. She came back last night, killed two girls and wounded a bunch of others. But Boy Princess Marco avenged them!"

After taking a moment to think reverently of the boy Princess the tiny girl started walking away. She turned back for a moment, waved and shouted. "Nice to meet you, I just love your tiara!"

Sam waved back and replied, "nice to meet you too." As a big scary robot with a clipboard walked up. In a terrifying, distorted voice it asked Sam.

"Name?"

"Princess... Cynitia."

"Dimension?"

"Earth."

"Kingdom?"

"Earth."

The robot grunted.

"Yeah I know you said Earth, but which kingdom? There's more than one on Earth."

"Um..."

Eclipsa piped up.

"Saudi Israelia."

'Princess Cynitia's' jaw dropped as the robot completed his checklist.

"Okay, we will put you in room twelve to start. Once you have all your things unpacked we will have to ask that your handmaiden leave. Welcome to St. Olga's reform school."

As they went down the halls Sam asked her niquab wearing partner in crime.

"What the hell were you thinking? Saudi Israelia? Do you have any idea how insane that would sound to literally anyone from Earth!?"

"But he wasn't from Earth."

"He knew there was more than one kingdom there."

Eclipsa chuckled and continued.

"Oh come on, it's actually not uncommon for there to be multiple kingdoms across a single planet. And robots aren't generally known for doing research. I got us in didn't I?"

Sam looked around and replied.

"Alright, so now that we are in where do we look?"
"Well, from what I remember there isn't much of a library or archive here. So our best option would probably be to find out what happened to St. Olga herself."

"Uh huh, and how do we do that?"

Eclipsa closed her eyes for a moment and announced.

"Robot repair, down this way, come on!"

Sam looked both ways, feeling increasingly paranoid as she opened the door that Eclipsa was pointing to. As Eclipsa glided into the room Sam took one last look and closed the door behind her, locking it.

Amid the various items in the room Sam was utterly lost. Even though it was clearly a workshop she didn't recognize any of the tools or technologies inside. But Eclipsa did, shortly after discarding her niqab she found exactly who she was looking for.

"Jackpot!"

"What?"

Eclipsa smiled and gestured.

"My dear Samantha, I give you St Olga herself!"

"That pile of junk?"

"Yeah, oh, hold on."

Eclipsa grabbed a power cord, plugged it in and the junk pile stood up. Taking on the form of a robot maid who promptly asked Eclipsa.

"Young lady, did you unplug me?"

"Nope, it wasn't me, but can you be so kind as to tell me where I can find my daughter? Her name is Meteora."

The robot replied.

"I'm sorry, I don't know anyone by that name."

Eclipsa replied deadpan. "Okay, let's try something different then."

Eclipsa opened her up and accessed archival memories. Sam observed.

"Wow, these robots seem to be preposterously easy to hack into."

Eclipsa explained.

"Yeah that's always been a problem with magical robots. In some ways magical robots are more advanced than earthling robotics. In other ways earth tech is much better. Your security software is way better than anything else I have seen in the wider multiverse, okay, so, let's try... girl with cloverleaf cheek marks."

One file.
"Mommy look, my cheeks are glowing!"

Eclipsa and Sam's jaws dropped at the sight of the memory. Eclipsa whispered out, "oh, so my
hunch was right."

After watching the recording Sam concluded. "That's the saddest thing I've ever seen. I'm so sorry
Eclipsa."

Eclipsa just pushed back further, going deeper into the robots memories. Soon she found the
moment when St Olga met the girl in question.

"This child is unfit to rule the kingdom, she is absolutely Heinous!"

"Heinous, what a pretty name."

Eclipsa and Sam simultaneously whispered, "no."

They fast forwarded the memory. To the last memory St Olga had before being turned off.

"Mother, I have been working for you, unpaid for the past twenty years. I've had enough of your
henpecking and your incompetence. I'm taking over the school."

"Over my deactivated body young lady!"

Eclipsa ran into the hallway. Up some stairs to a spot with a window that overlooked the severed
head. Sam was right behind her.

Eclipsa reached outside and grabbed the head.

Eclipsa saw her husbands teeth in her mouth. But she had to be sure.

She pumped a tiny dose of magical energy into the rotting skull.

The skulls cheeks lit up.

Cloverleafs.

Eclipsa cradled the head in her arms as she came down the stairs. An ever growing group of
princesses gathered around to see what was going on. No one said anything as Eclipsa went back
into the repair room with Sam.

Sam went berserk. She grabbed St Olga and smashed her like a rag doll. All the while Eclipsa just
knelt there with her daughters head in her arms.

Once there was nothing left for Sam to smash she shouted.

"This Marco, I'm going to find him and I'm going to kill him. I swear that he is going to pay for
this! I sw..."

Eclipsa interrupted her.

"Sam, I need you to do one last thing for me. Then our partnership is done. You will not help me
get justice. This is not your fight. It was never meant to be your fight."

"But they can't! He, they... can't get away with what they did to you, what they did to your dddd,
daughter!"
Sam couldn't say anymore over her tears. Eclipsa simply continued in an incredibly dispassionate tone.

"I know, and they won't, but your part in this is done."

"What, why? I want to help you avenge her!"

"Because we made a deal! That if anyone got hurt that we were done! Well, people are going to get hurt as a result of what I must do next!"

"But I still want to help you! I want to make them suffer! I want to chop off Marco's head!"

"You can't."

"Why not!"

"Because this is my fight, not yours. Sam, you aren't a warrior and I don't want you to become a warrior. You were just my guide to Earth. We aren't even on Earth anymore. You have fulfilled the terms of our arrangement and then some. You have gone above and beyond. But we are done. I can't ask you to join me in this and I don't want you to join me. This is going to be very very bad."

Samantha grabbed a rag and blew her nose, replying in an uncertain tone.

"Okay."

"That said, there is one thing that I need you to do. No one will get hurt. But as soon as you are done you take these scissors and you go back to Earth. From there you can do whatever you want. If I succeed I will come back and get you. If I fail you can go wherever you like, but don't ever mention my name to anyone. As far as anyone is concerned you will just be some fool I hired to deliver a message and from what I know about Star she isn't the kind of person who would shoot the messenger."

"Okay."

"I'm going to need you to break into the MHC headquarters."

Sir Roderick was in a profoundly good mood, at least by his standards. News of the St Olga's incident was spreading through the multiverse. There was no way that Queen Star and her precious regent Marco Diaz were getting out of this unscathed. The allied realms were already on the ragged edge of mutiny because of their monster integration program. With the bulk of the regular army off hunting monsters and the navy largely useless for the job of riot suppression. When that mutiny kicked off he was going to be in command of the one force that would stand any chance of reasserting control.

Things were going better than his most optimistic scenarios predicted. He remembered a conversation he had with one of those morons investigating him in the great hall of Mewni castle. Some chubby kid from Earth... Ferguson, that was his name. He had dropped in on Mewni castle when he heard about the investigation and meeting him had put his fears to rest.

That child, in every sense of the word; had no idea of what he was doing, or even who he was. They had wound up talking about economics and that brat had introduced him to the concept of the invisible hand of Adam Smith.
Sir Roderick Spode was familiar with the works of Adam Smith. But he wasn't what you would call a fan, still...

Some invisible hand appeared to be guiding things into the most advantageous position possible for the Knight-General of Mewni. Moon the Undaunted was out of the picture for the foreseeable future. King River had been killed by some mysterious assailant. Suspected to be one of the escaped monsters. Food distribution and management in Mewni had completely collapsed while his supply lines and hordes of food were buying him the undying loyalty of everyone who he was able to feed. After Ludo's sabotages he had a near monopoly on food supplies. He just needed a few more pieces to fall into place.

There were a few unexpected complications. There always were when putting together something this big. A few, relatively minor elements weren't quite where he wanted them to be. The Earthlings weren't making weapons quite as fast as he expected them to. There was only one that was really bothering him though. Something had gotten into the last few shipments of MREs from Earth. It had been suspected to be rats at first, but this was unlikely. After Ludo got thrown into the void again his rat army had been exterminated. Moreover if it had been rats they would have eaten everything. Whoever this was had only torn open the pouches and taken chocolate bars.

"Kids looking for a sugar rush? Perhaps. Black marketeers? No, they would have taken the whole shipment not just the bars. It's not that it was a big thing it's that it was a weird thing. Weird things usually seem to lead to weirder things." Roderick speculated out loud to nobody as he walked through the corridors of his estate.

Roderick entered his study, his secure room sealed against the most powerful magics in the multiverse. Much to his surprise he found a woman with green hair inside. He asked.

"Who are you? And who gave you permission to be in here?"

She replied.

"I love the flowers you keep here, contrasts nicely with all of your... manly decorations."

"That's the cleaning staff's doing, not me. My question still stands, who are you?"

The woman turned around. He saw her cheek marks. Whoever this woman was, she was of the Mewnian Royal family. He immediately reached for his pistol and dropped the safety. As his sight picture settled on her cute face he pulled the trigger on his Dan Wesson Eco 45 caliber pistol.

All he got was a deafening click. She spoke.

"Sounds like you are missing something Sir Roderick. I think it's called a firing pin?"

As he looked down at his useless weapon she picked up his full sized Dan Wesson Discretion 45 caliber pistol from his desk. The large pistol with a long sound suppressor appeared to be positively gigantic in her small hands. Her delicate, gloveless, flawlessly healed hands.

His anti magic defenses in the study would have negated many of the traditional weapons of Mewnian royalty. So she was using his own weapons against him. All his planning, all his work, all his favors, all his hope for a new Mewni. Dissolving before his eyes. He reholstered his compact pistol and replied.

"Alright, you have me. I will not surrender. Go ahead and shoot. I refuse to face trial. Even with that silencer someone will hear the shot. And very likely my dying scream. You aren't getting out of this."
The woman laughed politely. "That's what you think tough guy. Anyway, I am not here to shoot you. I am here to help you."

"Well there are better ways to get that across than by breaking into someone's office and pointing guns at them."

She put the gun back on the desk and invited him to sit down, explaining.

"Pardon my paranoia but the last time I tried talking to someone from Mewni it ended pretty badly for both of us."

Roderick noticed that she had heaped a stack of chocolate bars on his desk. "Well, now I know who the chocolate thief is," he thought. Once he was comfortable she sat down on his desk and addressed him.

"I haven't been back on the scene for very long, but it seems that you have been making quite a few interesting moves Sir Roderick. Though I don't know whether it comes down to your ability to hide all of your preparations. Or Moon and River's incompetence in allowing you to do all this unmolested. It seems that you have the regular Mewnian military completely over a barrel, but I would like to ask. What do you plan to do about the Magical High Commission when you... get going?"

He replied.

"I have a few ideas on that, I'm not too worried about them. If Ludo beat them down then I can probably come up with something. Lekhmet is dead, I know Hekapoo like the back of my hand. Rhombulus is a fucking idiot. Omnitraxus Prime though..."

Eclipsa scarfed down another bar, with a mouthful of chocolate and walnut she replied. "Yes, Omnitraxus is a rather difficult nut isn't he? Would you like me to help you crack him?"

From behind the desk she pulled out a box, showing him three items inside. A bolas, a candle snuffer and a crystal. Roderick asked, "what are these supposed to be?"

"Weapons created by me, on the behalf of a certain fucking idiot. Specifically made to take down the MHC."

"A certain idiot... Rhombulus...? Wait, if these are weapons specifically made to take down the MHC shouldn't there be six of them?"

Eclipsa snorted and explained.

"Rhombulus didn't make a weapon that would kill himself. I have modified the weapon he intended for Glossarick to be used on him and I am holding the weapons intended for Lekhmet and Reynaldo the Bald Pate for my personal use. You shouldn't need them. With these you should be able to sweep aside the MHC and take the throne of Mewni."

Connections fired in Roderick's head. A faint memory, this woman's cute little face had seemed so familiar. Then he remembered, his first day in Mewni. Mina Loveberry showed him around the castle and he had been quite impressed by some tapestries she had shown him.

"Oh no, 'Eclipsa, Queen of Mewni, to a mewman King was wed, but took a monster for her love and away from Mewni fled."

She smiled and pointed at him with a handful of chocolate. Her smile was indescribably charming.
"Yes, I was wondering when you were going to figure that out."

Roderick asked in utter confusion.

"This makes no sense, took a monster for your love? I want to wipe them out! Why don't you want
the throne for yourself? And how the bloody hell did you get these? Why could you possibly think
that I could do anything to help you get... whatever it is you want?"

Eclipsa sighed and picked a rose from a bundle in a vase. As she sniffed it she asked.

"How do you know what I want?"

"I don't, I really don't, I'm completely baffled by your actions. If you would like to explain what
your intentions are I would love to hear it."

Eclipsa smiled, "I know this won't mean much. But thank you for that. I have had so many people
speculating about me, accusing me. That you are willing to let me say my piece... I can't thank you
enough for that."

Eclipsa cleared her throat and continued.

"I have these weapons because I helped Rhombulus make them. These are part of the reason why I
wound up sealed in crystal. He trumped up a bunch of charges, took advantage of my... Unpopular
opinions towards monsters and locked me up once they were made. He had the resources, but not
the talent to make these. Now I need to repay him for all the hospitality he has given me for these
hundreds of years."

She put down the box and picked the pistol back up. She wasn't aiming it at Roderick, she was
studying the curious human device. It fascinated her, earthling guns were such crude things back in
her day. They had come so far since then.

"I tried to bring peace to Mewni, rather differently than you want to. I was punished for this in
much the same way that you intend to punish Marco and Star. On the face of it I should be
working with them. I should want you in a dungeon Sir Roderick. But, I tried to reason with King
River, and that didn't work out so well. I know how they see me now, I know how they will treat
me. It's been hundreds of years, but nothing has really changed. The Royal family are still a pack of
hypocrites and the Magical High Commission is still the power behind the throne. I want justice
against the MHC. On everyone who had a role in my being sealed in a crystal who is still alive. I
want a trial and I want everything that happened to me and my family to become public
knowledge."

"The other reason being... did you hear about the recent incident at St Olga's Academy?"

"Yes, Diaz was there to accept an award, he got ambushed by the previous headmistress, there was
a scuffle. Princesses Ponyhead, Spiderbite and the former headmistress were killed."

"That former headmistress you mentioned... was my daughter."

"Oh my."

She put the pistol back down and continued.

"Yes, so, seeing this... Boy, Marco Diaz alive, let alone in a position of power is unacceptable. I
know I can't ask you to do this, but if you can, please kill him at the first opportunity you have."
Roderick stood up and offered his hand. "Consider it done, I would expect any of my men to do the same if he had had killed anyone in my family. I'm sorry for your loss. You can keep the chocolate, with my warmest regards."

Eclipsa shook his hand. He loved her touch, it felt like something beyond electricity. Especially as he looked down at her elegant features. With a distinct... Heat to them.

He kissed her hand gently.

Eclipsa smiled down at him. It was oddly comforting to know that even if this man was a dog, he could be a good dog if the situation called for it. As much as she hated everything about this Sir Roderick really did remind her of her mother. People only remembered The Monster Carver's ruthlessness. But Solaria could be quite kind and diplomatic, off the battlefield. Eclipsa scooped up the candy and a rose then walked towards the secret escape tunnel that Roderick had in his study. As she opened it she whispered, "don't worry, our little secret." and vanished. The scent of the rooms cedar paneling lingering with her.

Roderick looked down at the items. He was going to need to test their efficacy first. But it wasn't like he didn't have experienced and talented magicians on staff. He was going to have to put a new lock on his escape tunnel. That invisible hand that earthling had told him about had become visible and given him a thumbs up. It was time to move ahead.

He opened the box where he normally kept his matched set of Dan Wesson 1911 pistols. Inside was the missing firing pin for his Eco. The box smelled of Eclipsa, of roses and chocolate.

He also noticed that, coincidentally enough, the box that Eclipsa had given him was the exact same size as his gun box. Just much more roughly hewn.

Roderick had a wife. None less that the legendary Mina Loveberry. They had been together for many years now. Loveberry and Roderick had much in common. But Roderick did have occasional friction with her over the fact that he was simply smarter than her.

Eclipsa was so much more than his wife could ever be. Mina was just ruthless, Eclipsa added cuteness and intelligence to that equation. Even if Eclipsa was doomed to be his enemy, she would be an enemy that he could respect. He couldn't ask anymore than that.

Chapter End Notes

Alternate chapter title, but judged just too spoilery.

Roderick and Eclipsa and... [whisper] Mina.

Or.

Yeah, that's right! I just shipped Roderick Spode from Jeeves and Wooster with Mina Loveberry.

Give it long enough and I might just offer you a logical explanation.
Old age and treachery.

Chapter Summary

Princess Solaria, Hekapoo and Prince Tanith sit down and... Talk?

Also, a rowdy, raucous meeting at the Monsters hideout.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Prince Tanith sat down at the table in the great hall of Mewni Castle.

Solaria had ordered the inner keep of the castle cleared.

Her brother was off on yet another diplomatic mission. This one to a whole other planet, Trundelheim. Solaria had waited until he was off planet to have this meeting.

She had told half the palace guard to take the night off. The remaining half were all manning the walls with the orders to not come inside unless it was an emergency. The staff had been given similar orders.

Hekapoo sat down opposite Prince Tanith, they looked at each other anxiously as they waited for Solaria to come back.

Tanith kept trying to come up with something to say to the sorceress. But he just couldn't come up with anything that sounded appropriate. His anxiety growing with every passing second.

Hekapoo felt exasperated. She was tapping her fingers on the massive table wondering why she had agreed to anything like this. She hadn't been in a romantic relationship with anyone in three hundred years. And a relationship with a mortal? Now a relationship with two mortals?

This was getting ridiculous.

Hekapoo's relationships always ended in either sadness, or rage. Either the sadness of when her partner either died or broke up with her. Or the rage of when she broke up with them.

Made all the worse by her... Compulsions. Her innate desire to meddle with lower life forms may no longer have been expressed on a planetary scale anymore. But she still wanted to indulge on an interpersonal scale. So she had indulged. With a crown princess of Mewni. Possibly the craziest princess that Mewni had seen in memory.

And now that indulgence was spiraling into things that were insane even by her standards. Now she was going to have to do... something with the undeniably handsome, but rather nervous man sitting across the table from her.

Solaria entered, her hands wet from washing, announcing. "Sorry, there was an issue in the stables, since I had most of the castle staff go home for the night there was no one to stop a certain spirited horse from going nuts."
Tanith asked, "well, is it okay now?"

"Not really, it panicked, broke a leg, I had to put it down."

Solaria plunked the wand down on the table, a few drops of burnt blood still clung to it.

Hekapoo's eyes went wide, Prince Tanith shook his head and was about to say something when Solaria interrupted him.

"So, Hekapoo, Tanith, we all know why we are here... Right?"

Solaria said that last part in a remarkably sly tone.

Hekapoo asked, "well, it sounds like you want to iron out things between the three of us?"

Solaria smiled and nodded, then started staring at the prince.

He asked, "oh, you want me to say... Okay, um, obviously it would be best for both of our realms if Solaria and I were to be married. This would greatly strengthen our existing alliance. Buuuuut I don't think that's what we are here... To talk... About, is it?"

Solaria and Hekapoo shook their heads in the negative.

Prince Tanith stammered.

"Um, okay, well it would probably look untoward if we had... Um, I'm sorry I still don't quite understand what is going on here? I mean we have a historical precedent of kings, sultans and chieftains having harems but... Am I going to be in a harem of a queen? Well, no, not even a queen, a princess. This is all very odd."

Solaria explained, "no, not a harem. For now it would just be you, me and Hekapoo here. But it's not just Hekapoo is it? Go ahead Hek, show him."

Two clones split off from the original, the prince smiled, almost involuntarily and said. "Um, yes, I'm familiar with Hekapoo's... Ability."

Solaria asked in as seductive a tone as she could manage, "so... Does this mean that you are okay with this arrangement?"

Tanith started sweating and replied, "well, I... I suppose I could, I don't know. Try it just once and see how things go."

Solaria smiled and turned to Hekapoo, asking, "well, how about you?"

The two clones folded back into the original. She put her fist on her chin and stated to the both of them. "You two are mortals, I am going to be around for a long time after you both are gone. You are aware of this and you want to go ahead?"

Solaria and Tanith simultaneously replied, "yes."

Solaria added, "why do you want to go ahead with this?"

Hekapoo tilted her head and replied, "oh I don't know. I suppose after all these millennia I want to try something different."

A predatory gleam emerged in Solaria's eyes, "something different eh? Okay, let's see if we can
accommodate you then."

Solaria got up from the table and extended her hands to the two of them. They took Solaria's hands and followed her to her bedroom.

Solaria locked her door and breathed deeply. She wrapped her arms around Prince Tanith and kissed him, speaking softly she asked. "I hope you don't mind, but I kinda want to make Hekapoo a priority tonight. She just seems so lonely... And pretty, can you, just go along with whatever I ask?"

Prince Tanith asked nervously, "like what?"

As kindly as she could Solaria whispered, "just go with it." As she slipped off his tunic. She gestured for Hekapoo to start undressing as she gently slipped off Prince Tanith's clothing.

As more and more flesh became visible Hekapoo noticed a few rather insignificant spider-bites. Nothing that was a major turn off though.

Finally Solaria removed Prince Tanith's pants. Solaria smiled and wandered towards the bed, inviting Tanith to join her.

As Hekapoo removed her socks the prince was thrown onto the bed. Solaria removed her jacket, revealing that her undershirt stained with.

"Eeww, horse blood!" The prince couldn't help but say.

Instead of unbuttoning her shirt Solaria tore the ragged, stained shirt clean off her body.

The Prince and Hekapoo's thoughts unwittingly became synchronized.

"Oh crud, what the hell have we gotten ourselves into!?"

Solaria let her pants fall to the floor and walked with utter confidence over to the bed where she sat down between the two of them. She passionately kissed the prince, then began delicately kissing Hekapoo while fondling the prince's cock.

She stood up and sat on the opposite side of Hekapoo and while she continued kissing, she invited the prince to begin kissing Hekapoo as well.

The prince nervously began kissing Hekapoo's face. He wasn't very good at it, so Hekapoo began to help him out. Showing him what she liked. As their tongues explored each other, Solaria began working down Hekapoo's neck.

"Oh corn, I just can't get enough of these things!" Solaria thought as she began to delicately work Hekapoo's magnificent breasts.

Solaria chose to play a part akin to a referee in this exchange. Holding back, content just to observe for a little while as her two lovers got used to each other. She knew that she didn't want to lose either of them. She had to see that the two of them would be comfortable with each other. It took a little while, but she started to see the rough edges of the interactions between the prince and the flame sorceress were smoothing off.

After awhile Solaria realized that she just couldn't hold back any longer. She shoved Hekapoo and the prince back into her bed and knelt down on the floor. Devouring the flame sorceresses nethers.
Hekapoo was still kissing the prince in the lips, soon though she let out a squeal in delight as she asked.

"Who taught you how to do this!?!"

Solaria lifted her head up and replied, in an oddly detached tone.

"Rank hath its privileges. I'm just glad you don't have much hair down here. My ladies in waiting don't have snatches nearly as well groomed as yours, Hekapoo."

Solaria sighted the prince's engorged dick and tasted it. The prince recoiled somewhat, Solaria grabbed his right hand and interlaced their fingers. Looking him in the eye and smiling as much as she could as she devoured him.

Solaria sucked him to his full length and then stood up.

She licked her lips.

She guided the prince to stand up.

Then lay down on top on Hekapoo in a sixty nine position.

Then Solaria realized that this wasn't going to work as well as she thought it would. Solaria was 6 foot three, Hekapoo was barely over five feet.

Solaria just shrugged and continued on. She had wanted this for years and she was going to get it.

Hekapoo had an idea what was about to happen.

"Oh no, no no no no! You do not get to turn me into your pet that easily, Princess. It's time you learned exactly who you are fucking with."

Hekapoo split off two clones.

The clones grabbed Solaria by her arms and pinned her to the bed.

Hekapoo stood up and smiled in the prince's face as Solaria struggled to escape. Hekapoo asked him, "now, would you be so kind as to show Miss Butterfly the error of her ways?"

Prince Tanith asked in genuine confusion, "huh?"

Hekapoo tilted her head and explained, "come on, fuck her!"

The prince looked down.

Solaria looked up.

Solaria struggled one more time. The clones were apparently stronger than she was. Solaria laughed, she laughed at the fact that Hekapoo had seen right through her and had led her into her own trap. She made a kissy face at Hekapoo and Tanith and stated in a rather creepy tone. "Well come on, I'm not often going to be in this position. You might as well have some fun with it."

The prince entered the princess, moments later Hekapoo began rubbing Solaria's clit very gently.

Hekapoo had not used this knowledge in a very long time. But it all came back to her quickly.
Pleasure.

Overwhelming pleasure.

Tinkering with biology, using magic. To induce in mortals an unquenchable lust for lust.

Of course since Solaria was already a woman of prodigious appetites Hekapoo didn't feel bad about this at all.

The prince drove faster. His rhythm becoming synchronized with Hekapoo's. As he drove faster, she drove faster.

Solaria stopped resisting the clones and began to cry out in pleasure. Hekapoo was proving to be just as clever and talented as she had imagined.

The thought went flying away as Solaria surrendered as she had never done before.

She was so glad the wand was nowhere in sight.

She could see it.

The faint twinkling of what she had been looking forward to for months now. Ever since she had read about it. The power mad princess could see the gate to a new realm of might.

Then she looked up. She could see that the prince wasn't going to make it much further. This was enough for now. He had to be trained, molded. He had to learn how to master his cock as opposed to... What he was doing right now. In all honesty Solaria was pleased that the prince had been able to get her this far.

He had help.

Solaria clacked her teeth shut. Hekapoo involuntarily gave Solaria one more squeeze. The princess and the prince came together.

Prince Tanith exhaled and collapsed onto the bed. Within moments he appeared to be unconscious.

The two clones poofed out of existence. The real Hekapoo knelt down. Her and Solaria's heads touching. Hekapoo kissed her kindly. Solaria delicately ran her hand through Hekapoo's hair and smiled in satisfaction.

Hekapoo shook her head in amazement. Hekapoo asked, "Solaria, What are you trying to do?"

Solaria felt inside herself. Savoring the warm wetness of the mixing of fluids. She explained, "all of the princesses that came before me seem like a bunch of goody two shoes. Mewni is growing, to continue this we are going to need to know how to fight and how to fuck. I have decided to make both my main priority. I have dedicated months of my time towards becoming a greater fighter, and a better lover."

Solaria whispered in the prince's ear.

"And I expect to hold both of you to a higher standard. I know tonight seemed a little... Extreme, for both of you, but I'm only going to demand more of you two in the future."

The prince's eyes snapped open.

Solaria finished. "Of course I could just dump one or both of you. Your decision."
Prince Tanith held up his left hand, breathlessly stating. "I am your man, my queen."

Solaria extended her right hand, intertwining their fingers.

Hekapoo stretched out her right hand and grasped both of their intertwined fingers, announcing. "It would look untoward if an immortal couldn't keep up with mortals. Besides, I'm not done with you yet."

Meanwhile at Castle Alvarius.

Eosin Batwin a rich and powerful monster was trying to get an uncontrollable scene under control.

"Listen everyone, listen! I know that you are all very upset about what happened to Stone Hexapoda, I am too. But he knew the risks of facing Solaria alone and did so anyway. What... what you are discussing is madness! We have lived in an admittedly harsh peace for the past eighty years. The last time any of us tried rebelling Queen Skywynne tore those responsible to pieces. And the..."

Interrupted by a handful of thrown poop.

"Really?! Poop? You're flinging poop!? really classy Rakflong! As I was saying, Solaria is crazier than Skywynne. She obviously wants an excuse to start a war. This is no time to indulge her! If a war breaks out I just don't see how we can win and even if we were somehow able to win, what would it cost us? It wouldn't just cost us our blood, it would cost us our children's blood as well. The Mewnians..."

The crowd of monsters started roaring in disapproval.

"The Mewnians will never forgive us! They will not stop until we are exterminated entirely! Our only hope... Our only hope! Is to continue the peace. Someday we will be able to exist as true equals with the mewnans."

A chorus of boos and a variety of thrown objects accompanied Batwin's departure from the lectern.

Seth the Septarian approached the lectern.

"Okay first of all, everyone calm the fuck down!"

The crowd instantly went silent.

"Now, clearly, we would not be here tonight if the peace of the past eighty years was sssssatisfactory. The mewnanssssssssss may not have engaged in any pogroms against us, but their oppresssssssssion continues. Every day they take more and more of our lands, forcing us deeper into the Forest of Certain Death. We combined our efforts to construct this castle for the explicit purpose of stemming further Mewman penetration into our remaining lands. This peace was nothing more than a chance for both sides to rest and rearm. And luckily enough we have managed to rearm with more and better weapons than the mewnans. We dedicated all of our spare resources to rearmament while the Mewnians spent theirs on luxuries and corn. How long will thissssss last? Batwin, you said it yourssssssself, Solaria is crazier than any of her recent predecessors. And she hassssss the wand. As soon as she takesssss power she will almost certainly begin a military buildup that we will never be able to catch up withhhhh. The mewnans have no resssssspect for any of us.
They do not believe that we have a culture, a society. If the mewmans continue to presssss us we will go extinct. Our only option is to strike now, hard and fast. We will exterminate the excess mewmans, push them back to their castle and force them to come to a peace that we will be amenable to. Perhaps we could even drive them all the way back to wherever the fuck they came from!

Wild applause erupted from the audience. Seth stepped down from the lectern.

Giordano Alvarius strode towards the lectern. He began.

"Okay, we have heard from both sides... And as much as it pains me to say, right now I have to go with Batwin. Let's face it, we have fought the mewmans before and and they have an advantage that we simply cannot check. No matter how many weapons we stockpile, no matter how bravely we fight, they have magic and we don't. We have never been able to check this advantage and despite everything we have accomplished here I don't see how we have anything near parity with the wand."

He held up his dimensional scissors.

"I dedicated twenty years of my life to obtaining these scissors. And with the knowledge I have gleaned from other realms we built this castle and our current stockpile of weapons. I have searched hundreds of dimensions and I haven't found anything that can check the power of the wand. As soon as we can I will gladly authorize my militia, my castle and all of my fortune to a glorious war with the filthy mewmans. But until then we must..."

More boos, they didn't fling anything at Giordano. Lest they invite the wrath of his monster militia.

"We must continue to smile and go along until we find something that can match the power of the wand!"

The hall was a riot of boos as Giordano left the stage.

Some other monster took the lectern to discuss a minor issue with the monster's water supply. With war not being discussed further most of the monsters began filing out of the great hall. Seth was going to have a word with Batwin when a cloaked figure tapped him on the shoulder.

He was tall, not Mewman, but he didn't quite look like any monster he had ever seen. He was fuzzy, yet handsome.

"Sssso, who are you?" Seth asked.

"The last guy was talking about something to check the power of the wand. What do you think that might be?"

Seth replied. "Well, the obvious answer would be a wand controlled by monsters. But ssssssuch a thing doesn't seem to exist anywhere Giordano looked. Besssssides, Zzzzzumphq the Blargwart stole the wand from Queen Soupina. All it did was make him even crazier than she was. And that crazzzzzzy bastard was already pretty loopy to begin with. I don't know, but there's got to be ssssssomething that can give us the upper hand."

The hooded figure observed, "what about immortality?"

Seth laughed, "immortality? Ha! Oh yeah, that sounds like a great idea. Solaria uses the wand as a ssssssword and blaster. Immortality would just mean that you would spend eternity in pieces."
"Mmm, not necessarily. Immortality with a healing factor, the ability to regrow limbs. She could hack and slash and blast and your troops would keep on coming."

Seth looked cockeyed and asked, "okay, sssssssso who the hell are you and what do you want?"

He removed his cloak from around his head, "listen, I'm going to be completely honest with you. I'm an entity and I need your help to get something from Hekapoo. Hekapoo is closely tied with the Mewnian royal family. Pressure on them is pressure on her. In exchange for you pressing the Mewnians I will give you the ability to permanently upend the balance of power in Mewni forever."

Seth took a step back, "an entity!? I wassssss told that you were all dead, long dead. That you all died long before either the monster or Mewman racesssss emerged. Whatsssss your name... Entity?"

"My name is Tyhjiö."

Chapter End Notes

Old age and treachery will always beat youth and exuberance.
David Mamet
Double barreled doomsday.

Chapter Summary

The effective beginning of the conflict between Sir Roderick Spode and Star Butterfly.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Once Bob was done in the bathroom he noticed the sound of dozens of people moving very quickly around him. He grabbed a young woman with red hair, green eyes and freckles who was hastily putting on a suit of armor and asked.

"What's going on?"

She explained.

"Sir Roderick just showed up outside with an army!"

While the squire ran off towards her post Bob hustled back to his room. He threw open the door to his and Janna's room and started grabbing his weapons. Janna asked.

"Whoa, what's going on? Is Tom going nuts?"

"No, worse, Sir Roderick is here and it sounds like he is loaded for bear."

Janna asked in an incredulous tone, "what?"

As Bob took off his pajamas Janna's eyes went wide. She didn't know what to stare at. His alarmingly muscular body or the huge handgun he had just taken out of one of his bags.

Bob noticed Janna looking at the pistol in terror. He explained, "B&T USW personal defense weapon. Developed for police work. Allows rifle like accuracy in a handgun sized package. With the stock extended I can hit a man sized target at a hundred yards. Borrowed it from my fathers Israeli friend. There's a police department near Echo Creek that is thinking about issuing these and they wanted him to see if they had any bugs."

After a moments silence on Janna's part he added, "come on, you didn't think I was going to go on an adventure in another dimension without bringing a weapon did you?"

Janna stated. "That cannot be legal."

"In California? For anyone but a cop? Ha! No chance in hell! Luckily we aren't in California anymore."

Bob was now dressed in a somewhat rumpled, but very functional army surplus uniform. Before she could ask anymore the door flew open.

Tom leaned in and asked, "hey, you guys hearing about thi... Wow."

Tom got a good look at Bob's uniform and gear, Bob holstered his USW and replied, "yeah we
heard. So, Miss Ordonia, Demon Prince, shall we go see what this traitor wants?"

Tom, Bob and Janna walked out to where most of the castle residents were gathering. A large balcony that overlooked a town square.

The square was almost completely full of Sir Roderick's troops. Bob looked around. On the balcony were Hekapoo, Rhombulus and Omnitraxus prime. Along with Marco and every knight of Mewni in the castle and most of their pages. As he stared into the crowd of soldiers Bob asked Tom, "hey, can you point out this Roderick fellow to me?"

Tom pointed to the man in shining rust blued, engraved armor marching through the crowd.

Bob's jaw dropped. He couldn't speak, but he could think.

"No!"

"No it can't be."

"It's impossible!"

"He is a fictional character! A fictional character!"

Roderick's army was very heavily armed. Mostly with earthling weapons, but also with a smattering of magical weapons. Bob identified most of the guns as simple submachine guns and bolt action rifles. With the occasional smattering of grenades, grenade launchers, mortars and 84mm Carl Gustav antitank launchers.

And an extremely large pair of speakers for some reason.

As confident as he had been when he had packed the USW. Now it felt about as useful a squirt gun against all this. Bob had brought a pair of noise canceling headphones. He brought them everywhere he traveled. He had originally bought them to protect his hearing while shooting but he had come to depend on them to shut out distractions in noisy environments. He knew that things were about to get very noisy very soon.

But they were not attacking, not yet. And Marco knew why. The Magical High Commission was backing him up. For all the firepower assembled here one of them could take out everything and everyone Roderick had within moments. Star was rushing back to Mewni, she would be here any moment. With the power of the wand she could deal with this rabble all by herself.

Sir Roderick Spode, knight-general of the realm of Mewni. Currently wanted by the crown walked up to the last open area in the square. Short of a hastily dug trench and other emergency fortifications around Mewni castle. Inside the trench were a smattering of monsters who had fled to the castle for safety and were now preparing to defend it. Roderick shouted.

"I want to talk, Diaz, man to man. I don't know how much experience you had with war but I have learned from firsthand experience that it can be quite unpleasant. The people are scared, Diaz. How about we see if we can avoid any unpleasant accidents today?"

Marco walked out onto a balcony and shouted down to Roderick.

"Alright, I'm here, Spode. What do you want to talk about?"

"Not just you Diaz, I want to talk to the MHC as well. I know they are up there."
Omnitraxus Prime came forth. Followed by Hekapoo and Rhombulus. Backed up by a force of a
dozens loyalist Knights. All but Omnitraxus stood confidently on the edge of the balcony.
Omnitraxus Prime expanded to a size big enough to tower over every one of Roderick's troops. Just
small enough though for them to see all of what he was. In a voice that seemed to shake reality
itself he boomed.

"Here we are Roderick. So, what do you want to talk about little man?!
"

Roderick smiled, not his trademark smile of rage and joy that he got just before a fight. This was
something much more sincere; he pulled a parchment from a pouch on his belt.

"Under the authority of the Mewnian people, and the peoples of the allied realms. I, Sir Roderick
Spode do hereby place you, Marco Diaz under arrest for making war, as a foreign infiltrator, on the
Mewnian people. We also place Queen Star Butterfly under arrest, and any of her compatriots from
Mewni for high treason. Anyone from Earth or any other unallied realms will be detained for trial.
By this proclamation we declare your government to be corrupt, incompetent and treasonous. You
have released and enfranchised monsters who are the ancient and eternal enemies of the Mewnian
people. You have brought economic ruin and dependency on foreign powers. There's a whole
bunch of other complaints, but those can wait."

Marco replied.

"And if I tell you to go away and take your army with you?"

Sir Roderick cleared his throat dramatically and continued speaking.

"Then we shall have to levy war against you and everyone else who stands in our way. This is your
last chance Diaz. Surrender peacefully or this will get very very ugly. You aren't on Earth anymore,
boy!"

Loyalist Knights unsheathed their blades. Monsters growled and clutched their spears and staffs
tighter in anticipation. Hekapoo split her scissors, Rhombulus aimed his arms at the rebellious
army.

The army of Roderick remained motionless. Not a one of them so much as touched their weapons.

Omnitraxus reduced himself in size, just enough so he could face Roderick. He boomed.

"And this is your last chance Sir Roderick, order your thugs to disperse, or else!"

Roderick sighed and snapped his fingers. "Stevens! My box please."

A man emerged from the ranks of troops. Bob took one look at him and concluded that he was a
human from Earth. Body armor, grenades and he was carrying an FN SCAR. A much rarer and
expensive weapon that most of the Mewnian troops had. The mercenary was carrying a beautiful
wooden box which he presented dramatically to Roderick.

Roderick took a deep sniff of the top of the box and announced in a conversational tone to
Omnitraxus.

"Ah, cedar wood, it might be my favorite wood. I am told you don't like cedar very much, Prime.
That its one of your few weaknesses, you can't see through it, like you can see everything else. You
and the Magical High Commission really shouldn't involve yourselves in the petty squabbles of
mere mortals. This is your last chance to leave this fight to those who have earned it."
Rhombulus gasped, it couldn't be, it just couldn't be! No it really couldn't be! It wasn't even the same box! This one was polished to a glistening shine. Besides he had destroyed the weapons. No, there was no way that this lunatic could have them. It was impossible for at least two more reasons he could think of. If he hadn't destroyed the weapons then Eclipsa had them, and if Eclipsa had them there would be no way she would share them with this monster hating bigoted asshole.

Omnitraxus looked down and replied, "are you crazy? Just because I can't see through it do you think it can hurt me? How could a little box possibly have any effect on me?"

Sir Roderick sighed and explained.

"No, not the box, what's inside the box you fool. Farewell Omnitrixus Prime. You will be missed."

Roderick took out a bolas. Before anyone could react he had thrown it towards the swords that made up Omnitrixus's horns. Rhombulus screamed, "no! Omnitrixus! Get out of here!"

Even if the warning had come in time Omnitrixus wouldn't have fled. He was too curious about what these things were to even think about leaving. As the bolas string wrapped around one of his swords, it shattered. The rest of the swords disconnected from each other and fell around him. Rhombulus screamed again, "don't fight it!"

The bolas string began interacting with the swords to form a structure around Omnitrixus. A tesseract structure. He resisted the formation of the container as well as he could. But the more he fought, the faster the tesseract assembled. It was completed in an instant.

Omnitraxus Prime hit the tesseract with everything he had. Almost enough power to light off the existence of another universe. But all this did was make it stronger. In less than a minute it had reduced Omnitrixus in size from slightly bigger than a Mewnian battleship to slightly smaller than the crystal ball that others used to communicate with him.

The laws of physics began to break down around Omnitrixus Prime. Everything he knew was failing before his very eyes. The only force outside the tesseract that was still affecting him was gravity, so he fell. Roderick whipped out his pair of dimensional scissors. Opening up a dimensional right below the falling Prime. The trapped Omnitrixus fell into the portal, which led to a spot on the far distant edge of the known multiverse.

Three minutes after passing through the portal. The tesseract had reduced Omnitrixus Prime to a size smaller than a single atom.

All his power, all his knowledge, it had to go somewhere.

It exploded like a miniature Big Bang.

His last thought was.

"How?"

The loyalists stood on the castle ramparts, silent, jaws hanging loose, eyes wide open. This... Man had just killed what many would consider a God with no more effort than sinking a free throw in basketball. Roderick zipped the portal closed before the huge blast shockwave came screaming out of it and looked back up at the ramparts. Still holding his pair of dimensional scissors. He pointed to them and shouted.

"Hekapoo, daaaaahling! I know we have had some disagreements as of late. But if you want these back then you can come and take them from me, if you please. I would just love to... Please you
one more time."

Hekapoo was about to leap into action. As complex as a relationship as they had Spode had to pay for killing Omnitraxus. But before she could jump Rhombulus tackled her and forced her back. All the way to the wall behind the balcony. He screamed.

"Hekapoo, run, run now. Run as far from here as you can and don't come back here until I say it's safe!"

She asked an inevitable question.

"What? Why!?"

"If you have ever trusted me, you start running and you don't stop until you hit the edge of the universe and stay there! He has a weapon that can kill you. He got it from Eclipsa, I don't have time to explain how. Now run dammit! Run before it's too late!"

Hekapoo wasn't normally one to run from a battle. But if Rhombulus was telling the truth and given what she he just seen happen to Omnitraxus she had no reason to doubt it. The reason why Star wasn't here was because after they had put Marco to bed last night Hekapoo had told Star to go and find Eclipsa. Hekapoo had hoped that finding Eclipsa and beginning a negotiation would allow them to get ahead of her.

No such luck it would seem.

And now that she was apparently working with Sir Roderick.

And they had weapons that could kill them.

Hekapoo bolted, leaving a very confused Marco. Rhombulus turned towards Roderick. With as much of a look of grim determination as his crystal face would allow. He walked towards the edge of the balcony. Yelling in a grimly determined voice.

"Okay you son of a bitch. I may have been stupid enough to make those weapons. But even I wasn't stupid enough to make one that would work on me. Let's go!"

Roderick asked in a sarcastic tone. "So does this mean that you are going to seal me in a crystal like you did all those monsters?"

Rhombulus leapt to a spot about twenty feet in front of Roderick, Rhombulus roared. "No, I don't do that to anyone crazy enough to kill an MHC member. I am going to kill you. I'm going to rip you to pieces with my bare jaws. Then I am going to seal your whole damn army in crystal and drop them into a star. I am not keeping any of you idiots around. I can't afford to make that mistake again."

Roderick carefully placed the scissors in the box and replied. "No, you can't, can you? And neither can I."

He took another item out of the box. It was a crystal. Rhombulus asked, "and what do you plan on doing with that? That was made for Glossarick, it won't work on me!"

"Are you sure about that? You are related to him aren't you?"

Rhombulus stopped in his tracks. He was distracted. From a starting point within the crystal, infinity was stretching out before him. The crystal was reflecting the refractions of light emerging
from his own prism. A feedback loop that his mind could not handle. He couldn't see anything except the fabric of the universe. The gem had adjusted to his light, not Glossaricks... Somehow. He couldn't see the army anymore, he couldn't see Roderick.

Then he realized.

He could see into the box.

When he burned the weapons there had been one missing. The weapon made for Reynaldo the Bald Pate. The wooden dagger intended for him had not been in the box. Eclipsa must have been unable to find an effective substitute amongst the various prototypes and other items in his home. He should have known, there and then that Eclipsa or someone had stolen the weapons.

But by then it was too late. The crystal had caused an infinite recursion in his thoughts.

"Who is Roderick? Who was Glossarick? Why am I here and what am I doing?"

Roderick snapped his fingers, "Ozi, Milstimar. Do your thing!"

Rhombulus's hands spoke over each other. "Attack, fight, walk, do something dammit! He is distracting you! Just get us closer and we can..."

Their words were drowned out by the music of a pair of flutists. They were not of Mewni. They were an obscure, semi-legendary race, the Vorlite. The best musicians and dancers in the universe. Their music and dances were inherently hypnotic. Their ability to control other life forms with their art was considered to be so dangerous that what few of them still existed were hunted for rich bounties through the multiverse. Their song was driving Roderick's army into a fury backed up with perfect confidence and faith in their actions. With their motions they charmed Rhombulus's arms.

Behind the Vorlite musicians came two Knights in full armor with swords drawn, visors down, earplugs in. They could barely see the Vorlites, they could barely hear their music. Roderick shouted to them, "Alright remember, simultaneously men! you must cut them both at the same time. On the count of T, one, two."

"Tttttttthree."

The Knights chopped off Rhombulus's arms. They didn't even manage to cry out as they fell to the ground. They were still hypnotized as they passed on. Rhombulus just continued to stand there. So distracted by the crystal that he didn't even notice that he was armless.

In time the reflections would power the feedback loop to the point where it overheated. Sterilizing the life out of every fragment of Rhombulus's crystal structure. But Roderick didn't have the patience to wait around for the next hour. He handed the increasingly warm crystal to one of his lieutenants. Who continued to hold it up, enchanting the last Magical High Commissioner left on Mewni. Roderick started dancing and clapping along to the music of his Vorlite flautists. He danced in near synchronicity with them, as much as his armor and much less flexible anatomy would allow. He was dancing towards the paralyzed Rhombulus. As he clapped and whistled he shouted.

"Stevens... let's rock!"

The earthling took a small remote out of the cedar box and clicked on the giant speakers. A full orchestral backing to the music of the Vorlite thundered through the city. Driving everyone who heard it into an ever deeper psychotic rage.
Roderick stopped clapping, but he kept dancing as he lifted his Benelli Nova Tactical 12 gauge shotgun from its sling around his chest. Still wiggling sinuously he sighted in on Rhombulus's head at point blank range. Before he pulled the trigger he stated, at a tone just loud enough for Rhombulus to be the only one who could hear over the music.

"You deserve this and you know it. Thanks for the toys you hothead."

A 45 caliber sabot slug made of the densest and toughest nickel-steel alloy that Roderick's money could buy flew from the shotgun. Punching clean through Rhombulus's head, shattering it into a million pieces.

Roderick stitched Rhombulus down his midsection with three more slugs. The crystal parts of him shattered, the flesh parts exploded. His last thought was.

"Hekapoo, Omnitrixus, everyone! I'm so sorry!"

As the remains of Rhombulus exploded all over the ground before Mewni castle Roderick was almost done dancing. It didn't make any sense to him, he had inured himself to the hypnotism of the Vorlite. He didn't like dancing. What he didn't understand was that it wasn't the music that was making him dance. It was his overwhelming joy. After so many years of hard work he was achieving his ultimate goal. To secure Mewni against all outside threats.

He was simply so overwhelmed with joy that he couldn't stop himself from dancing.

He shifted the aim of his shotgun upwards, strait at Marco Diaz's head. He had one last promise to fulfill.

Before the shots rang out the hypnotic music was briefly drowned out by the sound of weapons charging en masse. This provided enough of a distraction for the Squire to tackle Marco to the floor of the balcony. Saving him from, what she knew was about to be; an awful lot of incoming fire.

Higgs wasn't quite fast enough. One of Roderick's slugs hit her square in the center of her spine. The slug was designed to punch through things, including the finest metal armor. The slug made it through a brick before it hit her armor. Slowing it down just enough for it not to go all the way through her armor. Bouncing around inside her cuirass, turning it into a bullet powered blender. Higgs was dead before she could finish falling on top of Marco.

Marco had never liked Higgs and Higgs had truly detested Marco. Now he would have her dying face engraved on his minds eye for the rest of his life.

On the fire of their leader the rest of Roderick's forces attacked. While he shucked fresh shells into his Benelli almost every one of his men opened up on their designated targets. The sheer mass of lead and explosives flying through the air killed most of the loyalist forces within moments. Blood, bone and flesh exploded all over the walls of Mewni castle in a literal storm of steel.

Tom shouted, "Marco, Janna, Bob. Get out of here right now."

Janna asked why.

Tom just looked at them with his eyes on fire and shouted, "go now!"

Hundreds of monsters ran from the the trench hurriedly dug around the castle. They ran into a wall of metal. Marco realized very quickly that there was nothing he could do here. All that heroism that those monsters were paying out so dearly was buying time for him to save as many lives as he could, he had to evacuate. He ran into the castle, ducking under the disintegrating walls of the
Tom stepped into the storm of steel. He was going to incinerate Spode. The bullets struck him and around him. They didn't bother him much. Earthling weapons were famously useless on demons. He just needed to get one clear shot at Spode.

He stood on the edge of the balcony. The walls disintegrating around him and aimed at Spode.

Spode was also aiming at him.

Spode had dropped his shotgun and transitioned to his pistol. Which happened to be loaded with 45 caliber bullets created by an entity not unknown to the Demon Prince. Sir Roderick had gone to the religious order responsible for Tom's attempted demoncisim and asked if it were possible to create a bullet which could kill a demon. The high priest of the order said that while it was impossible for such a weapon to kill a demon entirely, it's spirit would always return to whatever hell from whence it came. It was however possible to create a bullet which would kill the body that said demons spirit occupied.

The Vorlite musicians changed their tune once again. Something much softer and sweeter now.

Tom couldn't move. The music was just too beautiful. He hesitated just long enough for Sir Roderick to take careful aim at the Demon Prince's chest and fired.

Amidst the barrage of bullets striking him Tom didn't even notice the impact at first.

He just felt cold.

Profoundly cold.

He looked down to see that he was gravely wounded.

Another one of Roderick's bullets hit, this one in his shoulder, then another in his hip. Tom groaned and fell over backwards behind what remained of the parapet wall.

The next thing he knew he was being dragged, by Bob. Tom coughed out some blood and asked what was going on.

"Sound cancelling headphones, the music can't affect me."

Tom stated, "no, I told you to run!"

Bob replied, "hey, I would feel like a complete asshole if I left you behind."

Bob dragged the bleeding Tom to where Marco and Janna were standing. Marco drew his dimensional scissors but before he could make a portal another portal opened in the wall next to him. Star stepped out and asked, "what's going on?"

Before Star got an answer she was propelled back through the portal. Thrown back to where she had just been by the living body of Janna Ordonia. Marco had thrown her into the portal. He looked at Tom and explained, "demons can't go through dimensional portals. Tom is going to summon his carriage and you are going to have to carry him to it."

Bob blinked and looked down, Tom had rung a small bell and within moments a carriage drawn by a dead horse had materialized outside the nearest window. Bob threw the wounded Prince into the carriage and looked back to Marco.
"Well, come on!" Marco gestured.

"No, I think I want to stay with Tom. I need to make sure he is okay." Bob replied.

The gunshots were getting closer, Marco snapped. "Bob, you do realize that if you get in that carriage the next stop is Mewnian hell!?"

Bob bit his lip, this was the stupidest thing he had ever done and he knew it. But he replied, "alright. But I still want to make sure Tom is safe."

Marco sighed and tossed Bob a communications mirror, explaining. "When we figure out what to do next I will call you on that. Now get out of here!"

Bob leapt into the carriage.

Marco stepped through the portal, sealing it behind him.

Dozens of mewmans and hundreds of monsters died in the battle, but not all of them. Twenty were captured. One of them was Yevgeny Bulgolyubov. AKA Buffrog, Hero of the Caphilly mine incident. Friend of Queen Star. Monster expert pro tem of the kingdom of Mewni. Despite having led the counterattack he had survived. Shot three times, he was in incredible pain.

He knew he wasn't going to last very long though. He was losing too much blood.

Some of the monsters were crying, others tried to look stoic. They were all in pain and afraid as they faced the crowd of Mewmans who had hated them for so long. A few whimpered some variation of the word.

"Mama."

The rest were silent.

As his men secured the castle. The occasional gunshot and groan announcing another knight or loyalist perishing. Roderick's soldiers lined up to execute the wounded monsters. When Roderick saw this he shouted.

"Whoa, hold it, hold it! What do you think you are doing?!"

A corporal replied, "our jobs. This is the way we have dealt with monsters since the time of Solaria."

Sir Roderick sighed and announced. "Just tie them up and don't execute them, alright! We need them alive."

"Why!?" Another soldier asked.

Roderick didn't want to give the real reason. "Because the only reason we won here today was because a damn monster lover gave us what we needed to win and I really don't want to piss her off." So he improvised.

"We need them to tell us where the queen went."

The same corporal as before asked, "really? You think this lot of freaks have any idea where she went? Are you going soft on us ol Sir Spode?"

Sir Roderick could see things getting out of hand. He had to get things under control quick. He
quietly spoke to the corporal.

"You defy my orders again I'll have you strung up for a dozen lashes. Don't question my orders little man, follow them!"

Yevgeny Bulgolyubov decided that his last words had to be shared. This was a thought that couldn't die with him. He hoped that someone, anyone in the crowd of civilians milling around would be able to tell the truth of what happened here to his tadpoles. He had to be strong for them, since he had met them he had been fighting for them to inherit a better world than this. They were all he could think about. He had so hoped that if he was strong for them that that they would grow into beings that could be even stronger than he was. In a Mewni at peace. He saw someone he recognized amongst the civilians, it was the idiot Ruberiot. He was crying his eyes out, the Mewman civilians were all crying.

Yevgeny realized that they were sorry, the Mewmans civilians, mostly castle staff, were genuinely sorry about all this.

Yevgeny roared out the words, "this doesn't end here! This doesn't end... Here."

He could have sworn that he felt his heart stop.

Sir Roderick couldn't help but add one last remark as the light went out in Buffrogs eyes.

"Well, for you it does. Gather the other dead monsters in the square and have their bodies burned."

Chapter End Notes

Been waiting a veeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeery long time to post this chapter. Hope you like it. :)
To hell with all of you.

Chapter Summary

Where else would this crew flee to after a massive crisis in Mewni?

The carriage was rocking back and forth.

Something told Bob that this was going to be a short trip. He wished it could have been longer.

Perhaps sixty years, or more?

Bob tried to take the bad with the good in his religious practices. As such he had studied the concept of hell intently. While he had come to the conclusion that the concept was, in the truest sense of the word, a necessary evil he had never had much of a desire to visit the place.

Bob looked down at the badly wounded demon Prince.

The sight of him was bad enough. His inner demons were leaking out of him. Everywhere the golden, purifying magic was flowing was causing the flow of entities leaving his body to increase.

They shot out of him and then out cracks in the door of the carriage. Evidently they couldn't wait to rejoin the inferno.

An unnerving glow lit the carriage.

Bob could smell the sulphur.

The carriage rattled to a halt.

Bob nervously placed one hand on his pistol and the other hand on the door. A voice inside him asked calmly, "and what do you plan to do against the armies of hell with that? Annoy them?"

He let go of the pistol.

As soon as he opened the door demons that appeared to be dressed as nurses rushed into the carriage and carried Tom away. Moments later a dozen hulking creatures with spears had surrounded the carriage.

Bob threw his hands up.

A voice spoke, "wait, no don't do anything he is with the Butterflies."

Much to Bob's surprise a man wearing a suit emerged from behind the monstrous demons. He extended a hand and asked, "Bob, right? I'm Dave, Tom's father, come with me please."

Bob asked, "how do you know my name?"

"A few of the people who saw the battle wound up down here. They told us everything, now come on."
Bob asked, "um, actually, if you don't mind can you just get this carriage to take me back to Mewni?"

Dave replied in an exasperated tone.

"Without a demon telling it where to go the horse will simply take you back to where it came. Which would probably be a battlefield. Listen, you aren't supposed to be here, I know that. But I won't be able to get you out of here until we iron out what's happening in the rest of the multiverse. Trust me, you are safer with me than with these guys."

Bob took another look at the heavily armed demons and asked, "mind if I keep my weapons?"

Dave replied nonchalantly, "yeah, sure, earthling guns have no power here anyway. Now come with me please."

Bob put his hands down and started walking behind Dave Lucitor. Following him into his families castle.

Planet Thirty H's was a mistake, on a galactic level. It was a planet which shouldn't have existed. It was one of a few places in the multiverse where dimensional portals formed and dissolved naturally. As a result of this all sorts of things were constantly wandering on and off the planet from who knows where.

This and the handful of other places where portals formed and dissolved were places where the MHC had no power. They simply couldn't make their magics work reliably here. All that they could do was visit and try to keep the anomalies from spreading too far.

Thirty Hs was the most metal planet in the known multiverse, in every possible sense of the word. The planet was mostly made up of iron and other heavy metal ores. Gravity there was 1.347456 that of Earth; gravity on Mewni and Earth was already considered preposterously high by most races in the multiverse.

Why would anyone willingly come to this place? Two reasons. One, it was a perfect place to hide at least in in theory. In practice it wasn't all that good a hideout because 23% of the planets "permanent" population was made up of bounty hunters, or people otherwise associated with the bounty hunting business.

The other reason was sandwiches. Thirty Hs was home to four of the ten best sandwich makers in the known multiverse. Using the naturally forming portals the sandwich makers were able to obtain the finest ingredients that could be found in multiple dimensions to create meals that would send you to heaven.

If you could endure the hell that was all around you.

A strange law of the multiverse. The deliciousness of a sandwich arises proportionately with the amount of danger associated with obtaining it. Where else could you pay a higher price than a place like Thirty Hs? Where your life, sanity, your very soul was at risk.

Star had been to Thirty Hs before. When she was thirteen. You may ask, what lunatic would take a thirteen year old girl, without any defenses more effective than an axe, to a place like Thirty Hs? Why Tom Lucitor of course! He had intended that he would fight and defeat the hordes of Thirty
Hs to show off his might to Star.

Many beings came to Thirty Hs to show off their abilities. This was a world with a long and proud tradition of breaking the haughty.

The mighty demon Prince of Mewnian Hell had not counted on there being creatures that could neutralize and trump both his intellect and his powers dwelling on Thirty Hs. The demon Prince came close to dying nine times over the course of a mere three hours on Thirty Hs. His powers were nothing compared to creatures like the sky kraken Ulllllllllooomph. Or the ravenous survivors of the million Surf Ninja army that roamed the land after their failed attempt to conquer this planet and use it as a staging ground for their planned multidimensional war.

Even the mighty demon Prince couldn't survive an attack of ten thousand psychotic, starving, utterly desperate and ruthless Surf Ninjas.

The only thing that saved him was Star Butterfly's politeness and diplomacy. Begging for forgiveness from entities of insane power and hunger. They took pity on the little girl. So stupid to follow her boyfriend to Thirty Hs. The experience had been so profoundly humiliating for Star that it had been the final straw for their relationship.

Star had arrived with a dozen Hekaclones on Thirty H's last night, investigating a report that Eclipsa had been sighted there. As it happened it wasn't Eclipsa. It was just a sorceress who bore a slight physical resemblance to her who had come to the planet as part of her studies. A bounty hunter had already caught the Eclipsa doppelgänger. Star took one look at her and let her go.

However, shortly after this the dozen hekaclones had vanished for no apparent reason. Star tried to call Hekapoo on her mirror. When there had been no response from her or Marco, Star cut a portal back to Mewni.

Marco had shoved Star back through that portal. As the rest of them poured through the portal Marco asked Star for a place where she could sit down.

She led them back to her 'staging point' on Thirty H's. A sandwich shop called, Nectar of the Gods.

Marco sat Star down and briefed her.

When Star found out that her families castle had been captured she got rather upset. When he told her that Rhombulus had been killed she completely lost it. She maintained patience just long enough to go outside. Then she destroyed everything around her. Motorbikes, chariots, everything parked outside was smashed.

A native bounty hunter made the huge mistake of trying to calm her down. The man in magical power armor with a groinsaw still attached walked up to her with his hands up asking, "hey, what the hell!?"

Star shouted back, "fuck off tin man!"

The rest she said in an incredibly grim tone, "I'm having a very, bad, day."

Their eyes locked.

Queen Star and the Bounty Hunter knew that there was no peaceful way out of this.

The sound of a rusty groinsaw revving up was cut short by the sound of the wand turning into a light sword and administering a high energy circumcision of the groinsaw. It's chain whipping out
of control, around the bounty hunters body.

As he groaned in agony from the chain slicing through exposed soft parts of his anatomy, Star walked back into the shop, sat down and observed.

"Groinsaws, they sure look cool, but in real life they aren't a very practical weapon."

Star held up the remarkably clean wand, summoning a waiter. While eight other bounty hunters recovered their compatriot, downed their drinks and got the hell out of there.

Marco still couldn't believe that Star had become this crazy in such short order. She had always been a bit brutal, but Star was acting crazier than Ludo nowadays.

As a slime creature took their orders Marco finished explaining what had happened with Sir Roderick.

"So that's what we are looking. Roderick is in charge and we are screwed. Well, we have our freedom, I suppose that's more than what Toffee left us with."

Janna spoke.

"Yeah, but Toffee didn't have most of Mewni backing him up. Toffee just incapacitated the MHC and killed Lekhmet. He didn't do half of what Roderick just did."

Star tented her hands as she listened to all this as calmly and logically as she could. She was bubbling over with rage, confusion and sorrow, but mostly rage. She knew that she would have to mourn the dead later.

"Sure seem like there has been an awful lot of death lately," she thought. She drew her compact mirror. Marco asked.

"Who are you calling?"

"Hekapoo, whatever we are doing next we are going to need her help, call Hekapoo."

As the device dialed the flame sorceress Marco added.

"You had better call Tom too, we will probably need his help as well."

Star replied.

"Wow Marco, you saying that we should call Tom? we must really be in deep shit!"

She looked around and asked, "what, not even a chuckle? Tough crowd, hmm, why is this thing taking so long to connect?"

Marco theorized, "Rhombulus told her to run all the way to the edge of the universe. It might take awhile for the signal to get there."

The call went to voicemail.

Star left a message and dialed the Demon Prince. As the line connected they saw an unexpected face.

"Bob?"
"Hey, I'm in hell. You know it's actually much nicer down here than I thought it would be. Well, actually I haven't seen much of hell, but the Lucitors have air conditioning, must be a huge electricity bill."

Star asked, "where's Tom?"

Marco and Bob simultaneously shook their heads, Bob explained. "Tom was badly wounded. Sir Roderick had some kind of magic bullets that tore him to pieces. I escorted him down here and, well, it's really bad. The... Well let's call them doctors don't think they can save his body. They say that he is going to need a host until his body can be repaired."

"Well how long is that going to take?" Star implored.

"They can't give me a firm number, but they say it could take years."

"Years!?!"

Bob explained as well as he could.

"What can I say, Star. Demon-human hybrids are a rare breed and you can't just use magic to fix one. Magic bullets were what fucked him up in the first place."

Star groaned and was about to hang up when Bob shouted, "hey wait a minute, don't hang up. There's something else I have to tell you. What do any of you know about Roderick Spode? I don't mean his crimes, I mean the man himself."

Star looked around and asked, "what do you mean? He is just some Mewnian nobleman who went nuts."

Bob replied, "ah, now I'm not so sure about that. I finally remembered where I heard that name before. Roderick Spode is a character from the Jeeves and Wooster series of novels. Spode is a villain in those stories. But he was based on a real person. Sir Oswald Mosley, the founder of the British Union of Fascists."

Everyone looked around in confusion.

Bob face palmed and said, "this means he is a damn Nazi! Now, from what I was able to find out Sir Roderick had no history in Mewni before 2003 and for that matter neither the name Roderick or Spode was commonly seen in Mewnian records until after he showed up. Sometime around 2004 he started acquiring land, property and titles. The man was a major contributor to practically every modernization program in Mewni. If he used the name Spode as an alias that would suggest that he is actually from Earth. I want to know how he got to Mewni. I imagine Hekapoo would be the one to talk to about that."

Marco replied, "okay, but we can't get a hold of her right now."

Janna looked at Bob and asked, "so what are you going to do now?"

Bob sternly replied, "well, as soon as I get out of hell I'm going to find this guy and kill him."

Star leaned in and asked in an oddly coy tone. "You know Bob, most earthlings don't jump straight to cold blooded murder as a solution as quickly as that. You were just investigating him by reading books. Why do you want him dead all of a sudden?"

Bob gritted his teeth and said, "because if he is a Nazi then he is my enemy. Even if this all turns
out to be some kind of ridiculous, impossible coincidence. He tried to kill my friends and seriously wounded one of the most interesting people I have ever met. Besides, Nazis are all about tightly controlled, top down command structures. Chop off the head and the body will die."

Bob drew his USW and showed it and its suppressor to everyone.

"Just get me within a hundred yards and I'll plant a 124 grain hollow point in the fuckers brain stem. If I do it right no one will even know I was there."

Star gave a predatory grin, Marco just shook his head in resignation.

Janna exploded off of her chair and shouted, "Bob this is nuts! You can't just kill this guy!"

Bob replied, "Well of course I can't, not right now. I'm still trapped in hell."

Janna spluttered. "No you know, I... I mean you people are all so worried about going to hell when you die. Doesn't killing kinda guarantee that you will wind up down there? I mean, 'thou shalt not kill?"

Bob replied, "Janna, you really shouldn't try to quote scripture to me. The more accurate translation is thou shalt not murder. After all this guy has done and all he is going to do if he stays in charge of Mewni, this isn't murder, it's justice. And furthermore, if I do die and wind up down here permanently...

Bob sighed and looked around, adding. "You know what, it's actually not half bad down here. At least not here, I mean there's probably a spot somewhere not far from here where people are being pitch forked up the...

Another voice on Bob's end asked loudly, "Bob! Who are you talking to?"

"Star, Marco and Janna."

Dave Lucitor stormed into the room and stated grimly to those on the other end. "You need to get down here right away! My son is dying and we need a virgin right now."

Star asked in genuine confusion, "you need a what now?"

"A virgin, if Tom dies his soul is going to need a new vessel. Normally we would just go up to Mewni and put out a request for a suitable host. But since Spode has everything on lockdown it's going to have to be one of you!"

Star rubbed the back of her head and said, "well, it can't be me or Marco because we kinda... And I kinda..."

Marco groaned.

Star asked, "oh come on, why does it have to be one of us? Why can't it be Bob? He is already there."

Dave grabbed Bob's crucifix from around his neck and sternly explained, "you think we didn't think of that? This guy is protected. He has let God into himself for his entire life. God has infused his very being with enough power to burn my son to ash if he entered his body."

Bob just shrugged his shoulders.

Marco and Star turned to Janna.
She shook her head and said, "come on, how do you know I'm a..."

Deadpan expressions.

Janna shouted. "Fine! I guess I'll do it. I wanted magical power, what better place to get it than
direct from the source. But, this won't be permanent, will it?"

Dave looked at her and said, "no, just as long as it takes to fix Tom's body."

Bob interrupted, "but you said that could take years!!?"

Dave snapped, "listen, I don't like this anymore than you do. I don't want my son stuck in a body
that is going to kill him. Yours or his or anyone! But if we don't act soon Tom's spirit is going to
start to dissolve. It will simply blend into the fires of the inferno, he will continue to exist, sort of.
But we will lose everything that makes him...him."

Dave Lucitor stood up and went into the hallway to cry.

Janna stood up, Star took out a pair of quite hideous looking dimensional scissors. She cut a portal
to Tom's room and handed the scissors to Janna, Star explained.

"I took these off of Ludo. I have been keeping them as a backup for my mother's set of scissors.
Janna, you...

Star swallowed and finished.

"You do what you need to do, okay? and when you see Tom, tell him..."

Star couldn't think up a suitable message. "Hey, thanks for being there? Thanks for saving my life?
Thanks for being a better friend than you ever were a lover? Thanks for showing me my limits?
Thanks for..."

All Star wanted to do was say "thanks for saving him."

Janna nodded and gulped. She stepped through the portal. Once they saw that she was through Star
ended the call to Bob and called Hekapoo again.

Once again.

No response.

Star hung up in frustration. Marco added, "there's one other thing that I need to tell you. When
Roderick killed Omnitrixus he told Hekapoo that the weapons he was using against the MHC were
made with the help of Eclipsa. Eclipsa stole the weapons from his place when she escaped. This
means that either Roderick stole the weapons from Eclipsa. Which seems unlikely since he
probably didn't even know they existed, or..."

Star connected the remaining dots.

"Or he is working with Eclipsa. Why!?"

Marco shook his head and announced. "I have no idea! He wanted me to face trial, but I have no
idea for what. I mean, what did I do? Other than the monster integration program? And you would
think that Eclipsa would be a supporter of that, why wouldn't she be?"

Star slammed her wand into the table and stated, "we just don't know. We need information, we
Marco finished the sentence. "Hekapoo. But where the fuck is she?"
Okay, whoa, wait a minute, rewind. What's happening here?

Chapter Summary

A new function is discovered for the dimension of pillows. But what does this discovery portend?

"Hekapoo, but where the fuck is she?"

"Seriously Star? Seriously!? You cut off an innocent dudes dick?!"

Star waved at the memory and replied in an exasperated tone.

"Oh come on, you saw him, he was a Hhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhian bounty hunter. No chance in hell that guy was innocent. You saw the way he was looking at me, he revved first. And besides, I didn't cut off his dick. I cut off his groinsaw. It's the magical equivalent of shooting his gun out of his hands."

"Okay, three things, Star, one. Real gun fighters don't shoot guns out of people's hands, usually. It would take awhile to explain why. Secondly, okay, I saw he started his saw first. Three! there's no getting around the fact that even if you didn't senselessly maim that guy, you were still involved with war crimes and a bunch of other crazy shit."

Pauline blinked.

The screen like image of the memory had shrunk again. Back to a silvery ribbon. A ribbon which was quickly fading into the structure of the dimension, as it spooled out of Star Butterfly's head it appeared at first to be pure light. Forming into a metallic ribbon at about a foot above her, which eventually dissolved the further it got away from Star.

Star tried to change the subject. As she observed her memories melting into the mass above her she stated.

"You know it feels really weird letting these memories out of my head like this. I kinda feel like I'm... I don't know, crapping all over what might be one of the best parts of my ancestors legacy."

Pauline observed, "in a way you are. But it's more like going to the bathroom in a compost heap. The energy from the memory will be turned into mass which increases the general mass of this dimensi..."

Pauline looked around.

She did some quick math.

"Judging by the size, relative trauma of the memory and the amount of mass it was being transformed into... Wow, your ancestors must have really seen some shit for all their trauma to make up this..."

"Hey, remember, it's not just the baggage of all the queens of Mewni you are looking at. We also have the wand fudging those numbers you are running right now. And it isn't just our magic."
There's also quite a bit of Lucitor magic and the magic of various... Guests of the royal family that make up this place."

They were in the mildest possible form of a nondual state. Just enough where Pauline and Star could see each other's memories and hear each other's surface thoughts. Yet still maintain enough ego on both sides to maintain their separate personalities. Subject, object. Judge, judged.

Still weird.

Pauline blinked and shook her head very quickly but firmly.

"Star, you committed war crimes."

Star looked around. The silver ribbon flashed into a near impossible shade of black as she shouted, "I know I know. I still can't believe how fast I went into mua ha ha ha ha ha! I'm a walking cliche of an evil queen! territory. It all got away from me. All these little choices. Not even my choices. I didn't have anyone to stop me or even slow me down. Everyone else went off the deep end right along with me or had already long since gone, but..."

"Pauline, let me show you something."

Star pushed the memory screen back to the fall of Trundelheim. Showing the piles of burning corpses.

"This is my memory, now, let me show you something from Queen Celena."

Accessing images from inside other ribbons Star found a memory that resounded with this one. Another huge pile of corpses burning.

Star stated in a hopeless tone.

"What hides behind the golden fan the hand does sweetly hold. A trove of cosmic secrets that never will be told and this is one of them. This is a memory from my great great great grandma Celena the Shy. According to most records she spent most of her life as a shy, kind, slightly odd woman who was very skilled at making potions and pretty good at singing. She was half demon, on her fathers side. And her father..."

Star gulped at the fact.

"Her father was accidentally killed by her mother. Coming out of that kind of backstory you would think she would be an absolute beast. Well, for one brief moment in her life, she was. This pile of corpses was a monster village that she personally burned down to stave off any rebellions under her rule. She had only been on the throne for a week when this happened. But there were rumblings of rebellion, like there almost always are and... it sure did convince the monsters not to mess with her."

"Celena took this memory, and that entire part of herself and cast it out. Buried it here, in this dimension. But she wasn't the only one to do so."

Star reached up to another thread, an older thread. The oldest thread she could find, actually. Star continued narrating. "This dimension goes back all the way to Crecentia. It was one of her... Many little side projects. But it went the way of almost all of her side projects. She got it 90% right. But drove herself mad trying to get that last ten percent. She wanted a place which would turn her pain into pleasure in the most direct way possible. She was always looking for ways to turn her
liabilities into assets. But she needed it to be liquid to accommodate her lover. She could never quite get it to become liquid enough. I can't explain it, it's something that I feel more than I can see. But every single sentient being who has been to this dimension has left bits of their memories here. Not every queen of Mewni committed atrocities. But a lot of them did and every one of them after Crecentia came here to scream. I mean, one of them destroyed an entire dimension. A dimension without anything more intelligent in it than a snail. But a dimension nonetheless."

Star was starting to become abstraction. Her memories were flooding out. The ribbons flowing from her head taking on a rainbow hue. She was also sinking into the pillow she was standing on. Star continued.

"I am so so sorry for everything I did and I swear I will never do anything like that ever again. Even what happened with my parents is no excuse. But please, I'm begging you to forgive me. If you don't then I'll just have to..."

Pauline grabbed Stars wrist.

"Okay, fine! It's not like I don't already 'know everything."

Star rose back from the pillows. The ribbons around her head faded to nothing, replacing her hair in visible light. "Yes, and I still want to provide context for all those memories you took from me. I mean we are only at a point which... I think we are at about four months after I left Echo Creek? And it's a nonstop ride of utter madness as long as Eclipsa is still on the board!"

Pauline asked, while swirling her index fingers through the air. "But that's still a year and eight months away."

"Yeah."

Pauline snapped. "Grrrrr argh! Eclipsa, sheesh. That woman casts a huge shadow in your memories. I mean it's insane how many memories you have of her. I... I know why you didn't like her, but I get the feeling that I would have liked her. And I get the feeling that you would have liked her too. If some things had gone differently. I mean, I know so much about her and so little. What's this about you two not even being related?"

Star explained, "we're about to get to that part. So... When you took these memories from me and the Unicorn helped you process then you really don't know the times or dates of any of these events?"

Pauline explained as well as she could.

"I have a vague idea of when some of these things happened. Yes I have already seen it and... Processed it. I really need to know what happened, in chronological order. The way the Unicorn showed me all I got was the highest highs and lowest lows of your entire life. Not just the decade we were apart but events before then. Before we ever met. Which is why I need you to provide me with a chronology of what happened. Otherwise I'll never understand the full context of this information and I'm already confused enough."

"Sounds like a real headache." Star couldn't help but observe, with a slightly evil smile on her face.

Pauline groaned again. "Ugh, that fucking Unicorn. Being forced to see all those memories all at once... It was like being spit roasted.

Star thought.
“Yeah, well, I suppose this is your punishment for mind raping me then.”

But the words that came out of her mouth were.

"Now, what would you know about that?"

Pauline danced around a little. Coming up behind Star. Wrapping her arms around her lover and whispered.

"The barrier between us is so very thin. And this is a world which is made up of memories. Do you want me to try to drag you into a fantasy made out of some of my darkest memories? Something so fucked up that you will never look at me the same way again?"

Ribbons had descended on Pauline's head. Feathering themselves into her hair, standing on end, charged with energy. Allowing information to flow through a neuron like structure into the very fabric of the dimension of ribbons.

Star replied utterly deadpan.

"Pauline, I have already showed you how I pressured Marco into having sex after having murdered an innocent, somewhat sentient, creature. Do you really think your college shenanigans are going to impress me at this point?"

Pauline exhaled and looked up at her memory now playing before Star's eyes. Pauline observed.

"Forgot for a moment I forgot that this is a two way street. You know I really believed that achieving apotheosis would allow me to transcend this sort of thing. Limitations of the flesh. But... I don't know. Maybe it's just me remaining as human as I can be. Perhaps little girls aren't meant to become gods?"

Star chuckled and replied.

"Well, I'm glad you aren't running the multiverse right now. If everyone was as kinky as you are we probably wouldn't breed enough living creatures to keep our civilizations alive. Why is it that you are so attracted to the taboo anyway, StarFan?"

Star ran her hand through Pauline's hair. Severing the link between her ego and this dimension. Star had gotten in the habit of calling her StarFan when she really wanted to illustrate a point. Or to remind Pauline of the kid she used to be. Or in this case, both. Pauline nervously scratched her own head a moment later to confirm the connection severing. In the absence of a clear answer, Pauline started pontificating.

"Taboos, so many taboos. Forbidden fruit. Rape is taboo. But people do it all the time. We spend so much in pushing the limits, but the limits push back, don't they? I don't know, I mean, we both fucked up. And yeah, you probably fucked up more than I did. But at this point it looks like all I can do to figure this out is to be fucked by the combined guilt and shame of your bad decisions. So to atone for my fuck ups how about you fuck me with your fucked up memories until we are all forgiven our sins?"

Star stood there for a moment, her back still turned to Pauline. Star turned around to find...

Pauline was lying on a pillow, with ribbons around her wrists, ankles and mouth.

Star was confused.
Pauline worked the ribbon out of her mouth and explained.

"Well come on, finish explaining the memory then. Tell me what you did after Marco said that you two had to find... Hekapoo."

Star looked slightly less confused, but was still half baffled. Pauline explained further.

"Hey, just because I'm doomed to be fucked by your memories doesn't mean that I'm not allowed to enjoy it. And if I keep talking then we are never going to get done here. So, I'm lying back, relaxing and putting this back in my mouth so I will stop interrupting you. I'm just going to lie here and be a good girl until you finish showing me your memories."

Star looked in the opposite direction. Placed her hand on her chin and tried to change the subject, somewhat.

"Have you ever wondered what the Unicorn in my wand really is?"

Pauline replied.

"Oh I know exactly what the unicorn is. You created a direct link to the realm of magic. By seizing the last uncontaminated part of the realm and allowing it to expand out to its original size once the contaminant that had destroyed that realm in the first place, i.e. Toffee, was expunged. When you created the Unicorn you were trying to restore everything back to its original state as you perceived it including the recreation of part of the link between the realm of magic and the wand that you had just destroyed when you cast the whispering spell on poor dead Vincenzo. But in creating that unicorn which was simultaneously your link to the wand and the de facto controller of the realm of magic, you poured a great deal of yourself in a magical, spiritual and personality sense into The Unicorn. And thus when you went into a nondual state you were controlling the entire realm of magic. Giving you, at least in terms of raw power. If not skill like Celena, or finesse like your mother... Giving you the advantage against all of your opponents."

"At least."

"Until I came along."

"Because I was willing to dip down farther than you could allow yourself to. If you had allowed yourself to dip down far enough to actually enter the realm of magic like I did then who knows what you could have done? Perhaps all these problems we are going over would have been resolved much sooner. And then a new set problems come along and take their place."

Pauline replaced the ribbon around her mouth.

Star turned around.

Star let her wings out as she went deeper into the non-dual. Her eyes starting to look like they wanted to switch into full Ommatidium mode. The ribbons hovered around her wings, the wings allowed Star to lower herself, less than an inch away from Pauline's face. Pulling the ribbon out of Pauline's mouth with her teeth Star asked Pauline in an increasingly weird sounding voice.

"You seek the further screwing that is my memories? If I were a guy... Perhaps I would..."

Reaching into a pocket on her cargo pants Pauline pulled out a pair of glasses with red, square plastic frames. She took a deep breath and did her best possible imitation of her old voice.

"Didn't you say that you had a spell that turned Marco into a girl?"
"Um... Dressed him up like a girl. I didn't actually... Switch out any parts."

"Oh, well, I suppose you will have to just do it the girly way then. Start ravishing me, your majesty."

They realized what they were doing. They were throwing each other's egos at each other in a race for oneness.

Star knew that Pauline's knowledge of this dimension was limited.

Pauline knew how to look at the ribbons. But not how to control them. If she did she would have kept using her hand to move the ribbon around her mouth.

Star stood back up, holding the ribbon that had been in Pauline's mouth. She whispered an order.

"Tight, but not uncomfortably so."

The ribbons tightened around Pauline. Jerking her back onto her feet and then into the air. Star spoke the next order.

"Face to face inversion, hold."

Pauline now found herself inverted. Facing Star, eyes to eyes. Pauline flexed and strained against the ribbons. Futilely.

Star reached up and grabbed something. The Field Pistol from Pauline's hip. Being careful not to touch the safety or the trigger Star asked. "How do you trust me after I committed these horrible crimes?"

"Because we share something special. Something incredible and I don't want to throw that all away just because you have some baggage. Especially when I have baggage too."

Stars eyes started to look more human. She took a purposeful grip of the Pistol now and waved it, pointing off in the distance, as if she were scratching the back of her neck with it, asking.

"And how did you know about the unicorn thing? Even I didn't know that much about it!"

"Because, like I said. I went nondual with it. I saw what it was and it was mostly you. You put a copy of your mind and personality in a horse body. This version of you was mixed with arcane rituals and insane power and it got turned into something that you could barely comprehend and it clearly couldn't comprehend because it was overwhelmed by the effects of being in the realm of magic. Which washes away memories depending on how long you are there. Or..."

Pauline waited for a moment and asked.

"Are we really doing this?"

Star replied.

"If you like."

"What's the safe word?"

Star took a moment and replied.

"Uh, pumpkin?"
"Okay, what's the opposite of a safe word then?"

Star replied, "I don't know, um, hurt me?"

Pauline concluded, "ok, let's do this, under one condition. Please get rid of the gun. Playing with a loaded weapon is never a good idea even if we are in another dimension and things are different here. For all we know firing a bullet in here would be fine but I really don't want to find out."

Star looked around and tossed the ridiculous hand cannon a safe distance away. Which was actually a very long way away.

Pauline replied, "okay, I think that will do..."

"Or. The real reason why I knew all that stuff about the unicorn was that I didn't know. The Unicorn doesn't even know. Its not like the realm of magic is a good place to keep knowledge. It all gets washed away in the raw currents of magic that slosh through it. It's the exact opposite of this place in that sense. Everything here is archived, accessible, remembered for all time. Or at least as long as this pocket dimension exists."

Pauline breathed.

She imagined that cocktail of raging hormones that caused her voice to crack like a basket of eggs dropped down a mountainside. Those miserable braces that made her look so hideous. It allowed her to put on a fairly good imitation of her fourteen year old voice.

"I'm StarFan13. I will always use whatever evidence I have at hand to come up with some kind of explanation as to how my beloved Star Butterfly does what she does. Even if she doesn't understand it, I want to understand it. If only so I can help you understand it."

Star snapped out the words.

"Hocus crocus."

Pauline couldn't help but snigger.

"Oh shit, you used a spell from Lisa Simpson!?"

The ribbons descended on Star.

They swirled around her like a tornado.

Using the unique power of this dimension the spell was refined, to provide exactly what the caster had intended.

The shabbily dressed former Queen of Mewni was now...

Still shabbily dressed in some of Pauline's castoffs, specifically a pair of cutoff denim jeans and a Boise State hoodie.

But now.

She felt.

Well, Star still felt strong. She couldn't not be strong, even in her minds eye.
Star reached down and stated.

"Ah, but that parts new."

The hand reflexively shot up. Resting against a... facial shape was not all that different.

Star summoned another ribbon and asked it to become a mirror.

"Hmm, I'm surprised how, not different I look." Star observed.

He looked back at tied up Pauline, offering.

"We could try it the other way around."

Pauline replied. "No, don't turn me into a boy. I want to be the girl for this. I want to know what it feels like to have a conquerer, conquer me."

Star grinned and said, "um, pumpkin, right?"

Pauline replied, "okay, pumpkin, are we confirming that is the safe word. Or are you safe wording out?"

"I'm safe-wording out. I literally just got turned into a guy and I really hope it can be reversed. I'm not ready to have sex just yet. Matter of fact I need to..."

Star fell down.

As she fell the ribbons came back and turned her back into a female.

Star hit the top of a luxuriantly soft, big green pillow. As far from a non-dual state as the circumstances would permit. She continued explaining. "Okay, so, back to the story, we had to find Hekapoo"
The roots of madness.

Chapter Summary

More exposition. We learn who our mystery villain is and it is made abundantly clear that a whole bunch of monsters are expecting a double cross.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Tyhjiō stood before the Septarian order. He couldn't help but think.

"Hmm, they aren't all septarians this is all the order they could muster?"

Five monsters.

A mere five other monsters were all that had the nerve to join in on this.

Besides Seth there were a pair of lizard looking monsters. One was named Rastacore, the other was named Toffee. There was also a shark man called Frizaleth. And a snake who didn't talk, but who did have a kind smile.

Seth shrugged his shoulders and replied.

"Sssssssorry entity. This was all I could get on such short notice."

"Oh come on, this hall was filled with your booing and cheering friends... Ten minutes ago. These are all you could get to stay?!" Tyhjiō asked.

Seth confidently replied. "Okay you got me. I don't entirely trust you and I am not about to introduce you to everyone in my camp. I trust these monsters implicitly. I trust them not to betray me, or our cause. Even under pain of torture."

Tyhjiō held up his hands in resignation and stated. "Okay I get it, you are careful, good for you. Anyway, I think I can work with this. I promised you immortality and I suppose I should deliver. The quicker we do it the less chance you have of dying. In battle or in any other way. So shall we begin? Someone go grab that punch bowl over there."

Rastacore walked over to the now empty punch bowl. Tyhjiō picked up a cask off the floor and was about to pour it into the bowl when Seth interrupted him.

"Now hold on Entity, you claim you have great powers. But I want to understand who you are, where you came from and why you have sssssssssuch a hatred of Hekapoo before we go doing anything that can't be undone."

Tyhjiō looked at Seth and replied. "Okay, where I came from? Well... That's a long and really weird story, but I will try to condense it for you. Long long, long, long, long loooooooooooong ago, I mean a really long time ago there was a being called Hathor."

"Hathor was the first female life form in the universe. Hathor had many tasks, but the most
important one was keeping the universe intact. A much harder job than you would ever think it would be. I mean, it's a universe. You would think that anything stupid enough to blow up a universe would know that they would be blown up as well. But I digress."

"Hathor needed help to do her job. So she created twelve beings patterned after her to do the jobs she needed to do. To get around the problem of not being able to physically be in two places at once. These were the first other truly female life forms besides herself. Being the template that other female life forms would be built on these beings, in ways more numerous and complex than can be easily imagined. These twelve and their experiments over the eons formed the basis of countless forms of life."

"Hathor made these versions of herself powerful, strong, wise and immortal. They had to be to do all the nigh impossible tasks demanded of them. With every herald she made Hathor made them stronger, wiser and more distinct from herself. Until finally with the twelfth one Hathor had unintentionally created a being who was her perfect companion."

"Hathor loved all of her heralds. But they had jobs to do and over time they each found themselves trapped in situations they could not escape. Despite their immortality, ways were found to kill them. However, while their physical bodies could and did die. Their immortal spirits could not. When the first herald to die did so her spirit was cursed to wander the vastness of the multiverse looking for a way home."

"When the second one to die passed on she found the spirit of the first and they... Fused into a single entity."

Tyhjiö looked off in the distance. This fusing did not appear to be something that sounded pleasant.

"And it went on like this, for countless eons the spirits of the heralds found each other, one by one. At the moment of their death this task was laid out for them and at some point they all found each other. Except the twelfth one. The last herald and Hathor had long since drifted apart. But they maintained communications. They dreamt about each other. It was the only connection they could maintain over the things that separated them."

"The eleven other heralds were jealous and enraged by this. Individually, they had been quite powerful. Fused, as they were into one spirit, their power was incredible. They made an offer to the twelfth herald. To find some way to allow them to perish. To allow their bizarre and painful existence to at long last come to an end and be reborn. No longer haunted by the memories of immortality times eleven and an incalculable period of time spent searching for each other following physical death."

"The twelfth herald sympathized. But even as phenomenally old as she was she refused to go along with the plan on the grounds that she still enjoyed her existence. Painful as it was. She had faith that someday, Hathor was going to rescue her."

"In a moment of passion and rage the eleven heralds eliminated the twelfth. In that moment the heralds appeared to have vanished from existence."

"Or at least that appeared to be the case until a few years ago. On a planet a good long ways away from here a being was born. A male. This... male of his species was a... Relatively average example of his race. This male went about his life on his planet until a very odd thing happened. His race was advancing technologically. Then an alien warship crash landed on a moon of his home world. He was part of the team sent to investigate and in the course of the investigation a member of this team, not him. Unleashed a cataclysm that wiped out his entire species."
"The alien ship took me prisoner. It studied me as I had intended to study it. It wanted to know how I had survived when it had managed to kill every single other member of my species."

"Then these things punched through the hull."

Tyhjiö drew a pair of very old looking scissors.

"As soon as I touched these scissors the memories of a thousand lifetimes came back to me. After I got away from the ship..."

"It took me three years just to get to where I could walk and talk at the same time. Then I spent the next hundred years trying to find some way of resurrecting my species. A... Living woman, perhaps some kind of cloning, or magic even..."

"I could and did, look, everywhere."

"I must admit, I went a little mad. I tried to kill myself at least fifty times. But no matter what I tried. And one time I even leapt into a volcano, I kept coming back. So, since that wasn't working I went looking for Hathor and I found her. Only nowadays I find that she is calling herself Hekapoo."

Seth asked. "So what exactly isss it you want from Hekapoo?"

"I want her destroyed. I need to make her pay for doing this to me. For abandoning me to the cruelest fate imaginable. I shouldn't be! I'm a container for thirteen separate and distinct personalities. Not all of whom get along all the time. Even if they did I'm haunted by memories. I know how everything can possibly play out because I have lived enough lifetimes to see every single even slightly remotely possible scenario play out. My life has no zest, no challenge. All I have left is feeling Hekapoo's neck crushed beneath my feet."

The septarian order looked at each other anxiously, Rastacore asked the inevitable question. "So what is it you want from us?"

Tyhjië replied, "soon I will fight Hekapoo and I will defeat her. But I can defeat her faster if you guys help. Come on, I'm an immortal with all sorts of crazy tricks who knows Hekapoo inside and out. Where else are you going to find someone who can fuck her up like I can? I'm your best shot at taking down the rest of the Magical High Commission as well."

Toffee threw up his hands and said, "well if you can really deliver, I'm in."

The Snake simply smiled and nodded.

Frizaleth threw up a fist and stated. "What the hey, we're a pretty badass bunch all by ourselves. Immortal? More like unstoppable!"

Rastacore exhaled in an uncertain tone, scratched the back of his neck anxiously and grumbled, "okay, I suppose I'm in too."

Seth looked directly at Tyhjiö and said, "thisssss had better not come back to bite us."

Tyhjiö smiled and replied. "Well, can't promise you that."

He poured out the contents of his keg into the punch bowl. It appeared to be wine of some sort. As he poured it out, Tyhjiö gestured for everyone to stand back and cover their ears.
He cleared his throat.

And let out a horrible keening noise. The very stones of castle Alvarius seemed to shake from the force of his voice.

Then he whispered a spell that no one there could possibly hope to hear. Given that they still had their hands over their ears.

Tyhjiö held up a finger over the bowl and began swirling it in the air.

As he did so a swirling pattern began to form in the bowl.

He retracted his finger.

He leaned over the bowl and began scratching his head. Flakes of dandruff rained into the bowl from his curly hair.

The monsters looked baffled by all this.

Tyhjiö took out cups for all the monsters and invited them to drink.

As they held their cups nervously, or in the case of The Snake, just kinda stared at the bowl, the septarian order hesitated.

The silent standoff was broken when a Kappa strode into the hall, dipped his own cup in the bowl and took a sip.

Seth exclaimed, "Lazzaro, why did you do that?"

The cousin of Giordano Alvarius wiped the wine from his beak and exclaimed. "Because this sounds like the beginning of what we have all been working towards, but you need someone else along with you who knows how a pair of dimensional scissors work."

He looked at Tyhjiö.

"Just in case this guy decides to screw us over and leave us holding the bag."

Seth smiled and exclaimed, "Welcome to the septarian order, mr Alvarius."

After they all drank, Tyhjiö stated. "Now my friends, shall we discuss our plan to bring Hekapoo, the Magical High Commission and Mewni to its knees?"

The morning light had been creeping across the bed for over an hour now. As it aligned onto her face, Hekapoo woke up.

She felt better than she had in millennia.

She felt the woman sleeping next to her.

But she didn't feel the man that they had gone to bed with.

Solaria yawned.

The two of them rolled to face each other.
"Morning."

"Morning, lover."

"So, where's Tanith?"

Solaria yawned, stretched and replied. "He had to leave, I think it was about an hour ago. Some... Yawn. Messenger came running in here talking about a monster attack near his family castle. I almost decapitated the guy. Suppose I should have remembered to lock the door when I came back from the privy last night."

Hekapoo pushed aside the blankets and looked down.

"Why am I wearing men's underwear?"

"Oh, you and Tanith switched last night. I seem to recall something about a bet as to whose underwear was more comfortable. I think he said that you won."

Memories flooded back. Hekapoo observed.

"That was a little weird."

Solaria knelt in front of Hekapoo with a big grin on her face and said. "Oh I know I was there."

Hekapoo ran her right hand through Solaria's hair. What was left after Hek had roasted big parts of it off and asked, "Solaria, why... Do you have to go about everything like such a... Militarist?"

Hekapoo replied, "let's say both."

Solaria exhaled loudly and said, "yeah I know. It's something Glossarick chides me about all the time."

Clearing her throat, Solaria put on a half decent imitation of Glossaricks voice.

"Now Solaria, magic is an incredibly complex thing. But a lot of it can be boiled down to intent. Especially when you use the wand, it will do everything it can to fulfill your wishes. And if you wish for conflict, strife and mayhem it will do whatever it can to fulfill those desires."

Hekapoo replied, "yep, classic Glossarick. So, since even I know that you don't want a life of never ending conquest and bloodshed what are you going to do about tamping down these urges of yours?"

Solaria rolled back on top of Hekapoo and stared at her with a goofy smile on her face.

"Oh, I don't know. But spending a whole bunch of time... With the oldest form of the feminine in the known multiverse might help me get back in touch with my feminine side."

"Really? That's the way you see it?" Hekapoo asked in confusion.

Solaria rolled off and said, "yes really. Look Hekapoo, I know I'm young and unstable but you aren't. You have seen and done things that I can't imagine. I... I really don't like to admit this but I... I need you. I need you to help me take some of my edge off so I can..."

Solaria sighed.
"You know my brother, right?"

"Jushtin, yes."

"And you know the rules of succession. But here's the thing. I know I'm not very good at this job. Jushtin may be a bit slow sometimes. But he is five times the diplomat I will ever be."

Solaria looked over at the wand on the table.

"All my life I have been surrounded by fear. Mostly fear of monsters. I have had enough of that fear. When I was younger... I fantasized that my brother would take care of the day to day running of Mewni while I went out and made Mewni safe. But we both found out pretty early on that we could go his way, or my way. But not both."

Solaria looked out the window.

"Mother and I discussed this recently. She didn't know then, but she knows now. She knows the course I have plotted for this realm. I know it could get ugly, but dammit. I'm tired of seeing my people afraid. Of monster attacks, of the threat of outside armies. I swear that by the time I'm done, Mewni will be unassailable, invincible and we won't have to be afraid of anything anymore."

Solaria felt her belly.

"Someday I want to have a child, and my deepest wish for this child is that they grow up to not be afraid of anything."

Hekapoo rested her arms around Solaria's shoulders and asked. "So, that sounds like a good enough reason to keep me around. You want to rain fire and destruction on your enemies but I assume you don't want to completely become death, the destroyer of worlds?"

"Yeah pretty much."

Hekapoo leaned back into the bed and said, "okay, but I'm not ready to get up. I need at least another hours sleep after that workout last night."

Solaria smiled and replied. "Okay, but not in here. The maid is coming and she can't make the bed with you in it, so..."

Solaria leapt out of bed and picked up Hekapoo.

"There's a bedroom not far from here where you can sleep. It's much darker than my room."

As Solaria carried Hekapoo out of the room she couldn't resist whispering enthusiastically. "Someone help, she is taking me away!"

As Hekapoo was placed in the second bed Solaria lied next to her for a moment.

As they silently gazed into each other eyes Hekapoo thought back to the last time she had been with a woman.

Ariadne.

But.

This woman was nothing like Ariadne. Ariadne had been perfection.
Hekapoo had existed for a very long time.

As Hathor she had existed for even longer.

In that life she had needed help for certain things.

Beyond what the MHC or mere mortals could do.

So, back when she was Hathor she had created twelve beings who could help her. The last and finest of which had been Ariadne.

Hathor had created her, and loved her dearly. But had never expected to fall in love with her.

They had been separated.

By circumstances beyond either of their control.

But they had stayed in touch. Up until about twenty years ago when Ariadne had passed away. Finally succumbing to extremely old age.

Hekapoo had concluded that part of her life. That phase of her existence was over. Especially after having become Hekapoo. Once that metamorphosis had happened she no longer needed heralds, she could simply use clones that, once their job had been done they would simply poof out of existence.

Now she was somewhere between awake and asleep.

In the arms of another woman.

One nothing like Ariadne.

As similar to Ariadne as light was to day.

Ariadne had been the same height as Hekapoo. Gorgeous, blonde, highly intelligent and yet very feminine.

Solaria was female, but only just.

Hekapoo ran her hand through Solaria's hair.

Chunks of it were missing. Hekapoo had gotten a bit overheated last night and burned off parts of it.

Again.

Ariadne had fireproof hair.

Hekapoo drifted back to sleep. As she did she whispered something that she wasn't sure that Solaria heard.

"I wonder, why now?"

As Hekapoo drifted back to sleep, Solaria kissed Hekapoo's left hand one more time, smiled and left the room.

As she closed the door Solaria leaned up against it and smiled.
Solaria couldn't remember having ever felt so happy.

Meanwhile, on the border between Mewni and the Spiderbite kingdom.

Prince Tanith and his guards walked quickly down the path.

He really didn't want to be here. But monster attacks and the implied death of his people trumped any wishes to stay in bed.

Solaria had insisted, rather strongly that he take a squad of Mewnis finest warriors. Tanith insisted that his own forces could handle it so they compromised and she sent two of her personal guards along with him.

Behind a bunch of trees, Tyhjiö and his monsters stood, waiting to pounce. Seth whispered a countdown.

"Three."

"Two."

"One!"

Out they leapt with their crossbows.

Tanith and his two guards were left with two options. Draw their swords and probably die. Or count on the mercy of monsters.

Tanith's hand moved a centimeter towards his sword. Seeing this, Seth insisted.

"Up bup bup. We don't need to go that crazy just yet. You are far more valuable asssss a hosssstage than a corpsssse, my poor bug-bitten friend."

Tanith and his men put up their hands. The prince asking the obvious question.

"And since when do friends, point crossbows at each other?"

Seth held up one finger, signifying that one bow should stay aimed at the prince. While he ordered the rest of his men to stand down and spoke to the prince directly.

"Okay maybe not friend, but, let's just do what I say for now, okay? Drop your swords."

They did so.

"Your majesty, take one step forward, you men, take five steps back."

They did so.

"Your majesty, please get on your knees. Hold out your arms and close your eyes. You men, turn around and run as fast as you can."

They did so.

Seth exhaled and looked around.
While everyone else was breathing in relief, Seth heard one of his compatriots say.

"It only takes one guy to deliver a message, right?"

Tyhjiō was still sighted in on one of the fleeing soldiers.

Seth pushed Tyhjiō's crossbow out of alignment with his middle finger. Sternly addressing their patron.

"Lissssstten you fuzzy fucker. War is bad enough without acts of cruelty like that. Ever hear the saying, don't ssssshoot the messenger? This is what they were talking about!"

Seth relieved Tyhjiō of his crossbow and pointed to the pair of dimensional scissors on his belt. Concluding events by ordering.

"Now, let's get this rich, Mewman dirtbag off to a nice, safe hole."

Chapter End Notes

Frizaelith and The Snake with kind eyes are technically canon characters. Frizaeltih and The Snake are both found here.

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=0Pjde45BQ8

The Snake can be seen at one minute in. Blink and you miss it though. Frizaelith is the guy who chomps off Rastacores arm.

I have no idea what their canon names are though, so, I improvised.
The orders of the High Holy Hekapoo.

Chapter Summary

I suppose it could be said that this is the key chapter to the whole story. The element I have added that attempts to explain some of Hekapoo's specific qualities.

The order of the High Holy Hekapoo had long since settled into their new home. Hekapoo had friends, devotees, allies and people who owed her favors all over the multiverse. Despite the fact that every member of the previous order had been wiped out except for one guy who had been picking up a soap shipment there was no shortage of volunteers.

The order had a few conditions for entry. The inductee had to be male, between the ages of twenty to twenty five years. Or whatever the equivalent average age was in other species. They could be no younger than twenty because the strain of spending a lifetime studying. Then being snapped into your younger body when your time in the monastery was over. Was often too much for minds younger than that to bear. While the minds of those over the age of 25 did not usually have the required flexibility and creativity to adapt to such jarring transition.

No matter what you were of what happened with your body. Spending longer than a few hours in Hekapoo's Domain aged you.

Ido Fsipwits was reading quietly in the main library.

It had been only a year since he arrived at the monastery. At the rate he was picking up information he felt that he could go back to his home dimension inside of nine years. He already had all the information he would need to give him the edge over nearly anyone back home. What he was reading now was pure intellectual masturbation. At least for his people.

He was reading a book about how to create aircraft that didn't run on magic. Not just crude contraptions like hot air balloons either. No, he was looking at the schematic for a craft that could travel faster than sound and fire missiles at targets beyond what the eye could see.

In order to create these machines a massive infrastructure would need to be built. He would need specialized knowledge, specialized resources, and in abundant supply. He would also need machines to make the machines to make this machine. It would call for the work of several lifetimes. By thousands, perhaps millions of people. Not just him.

No, his civilization was just about to transition from the bronze to the Iron Age and in a very dramatic fashion. Knowing that these... Craft existed was nice. And it would be wonderful to be able to explain rationally what was going on if an alien ever visited his planet in a ship as opposed to everyone seeing machines flying faster than sound and saying. "It's a god from another world! Let's all worship him."

His people may not have been able to build one of these craft...

Today.

But someday.
This was a major reason why men signed on. But they were always told to temper their appetites. There was nothing wrong with using the light of Hekapoo to illuminate the dark corners of the universe. But any light that burns too hot. Burns out. Even the stars themselves.

The order knew how dangerous such knowledge in the hands of over ambitious men could be. So they were always careful to only admit the most even tempered of men.

Men like Ido.

As he was reading about the fine details of hydraulic assisted controls he heard a loud snap.

He looked up.

A huge crack had formed in the gray stone face of the large Hekapoo statue in the center of the library.

The crack was spreading quickly.

"Um, help!" Ido shouted.

Four monks ran into the library.

All of them looked up at the statue.

The current Majordomo of the order, who also happened to be the guy who had been picking up the soap shipment explained. "Okay, everyone get back, but get ready to run forward. The stone is about to fall off of this statue and when it does I'm going to need you to..."

"What's going on?"

Ido asked over the noise of shattering rock. The Majordomo explained further.

"This is not just a statue, it is a communications device. One built to survive anything. And when our lady needs it, she needs it. And if she needs it then she needs us too. Now stand back."

The stone finished shattering. Revealing a slightly smaller statue underneath.

This one made of grey polished metal.

But otherwise identical to the stone statue.

The Majordomo gestured for everyone to move towards the statue. As they kicked rubble out of the way the Majordomo took a deep breath and touched the statue. He shouted.

"Sight beyond sight. Perception of all life. Guide us, please guide us through our mission. Hekapoo! Grant us presence!!!"

The Majordomo took his hands off the statue for a moment and gestured for everyone else to touch the statue with him. Ido was the last to comply.

The instant he did Ido found himself in a body. A female body, that of a hekaclone.

Speeding through the vastness of space.

Ido had no point of reference. He was terrified.
Ido heard the voice of the Majordomo as they hurtled through space.

"We have been summoned for the most vital of missions. We are going to keep the very surfaces of two different realities from colliding. This is the reason for our lady's existence, the existence of the Magical High Commission and our order. This is a glorious day for us all. Millions of years can pass in the normal flow of time before we need to do this."

Ido asked.

"What must we do?"

The Majordomo replied.

"We must reach out with our perception and find the other hekaclones. Therein we shall find the rest of our order. We must find our lady. We must fly to her and once we meet we must push against ourselves to keep the realities from colliding. If you hear the voice of Hekapoo or Omnitraxus Prime do whatever it is they say without hesitation!"

Ido and the Majordomo had no idea that Omnitraxus, who tracked these oncoming dimensions, was out of the picture. This was Hekapoo's first time doing this without Omnitraxus Prime helping.

The brane of the other multiverse was closing at a nice and slow rate.

Hekapoo supposed that she was lucky in that regard.

Sure didn't feel like it though.

Simply because it was still closing. And if they touched. Goodbye multiverse.

People might ask, "why was the Magical High Commission created?" A common answer given is "to manage various forms of magic throughout the multiverse." Another answer might be, "to save the multiverse." But save it from what?

This was the original reason for the existence of the Magical High Commission. When a multiverse is created by a Big Bang everything that existed before was overwritten by a new multiverse. Sometimes with different natural laws. The source of a Big Bang is something deceptively simple. A Big Bang happen when two multiverses bump against each other. When the branes that contained dimensions, planets, galaxies and of course life, collide. It doesn't matter how long or how briefly a multiverse might have been in existence. If the brane containing one bumped with another as they drifted aimlessly through the incomprehensible vastness between realities. Everything in those two universes was going to end.

At some point a certain universe decided that it didn't want all forms of existence within to flash out of existence at the drop of a hat and focused on creating life forms that could prevent this bumping from occurring. The first such creature was Glossarick. After awhile Glossarick created other life forms to assist with this task. The two life forms who proved to be best at this job were the Commissioners Omnitraxus Prime and Hekapoo. Omnitraxus was able to track other multiverse's from far far away and Hekapoo invented a method to keep universes from bumping. She would send clones of herself to the oncoming brane. They would ride on the very edge of the other multiverse and when they were close enough she would reach out and push against her clones to prevent the universes from touching.

Normally this was a very rare occurrence. Such action was usually needed once every hundred thousand years at most. And that would have been a very active eon.
This was the second time in fourteen years.

Something was happening in the wider multiverse.

Hekapoo was pretty sure she knew what the cause was. But right now she was just focused on what she needed to do.

The branes were drawing closer and closer. Ido breathed and thought, ‘sight beyond sight.’

Then he realized.

He couldn't just see out of the eyes of the clone he was in. He could see out of the fire between her horns. And he could see through it a million times better than any kind of vision he had ever experienced. It was like he was looking at a targeting screen for one of those fighter aircraft he had just been reading about. Across hundreds of light years he could pick up on the exact energy signatures of the other hekaclones. As he became aware of them they became aware of him and flew towards him.

Her clones were falling into their positions.

The ones being driven by the monks were almost in position on the other brane. The incoming brane. Despite the fact that Hekapoo should have been focusing intently on joining hands with herself she couldn't help but think.

"Why did Roderick have to attack now of all times?"

"Why did he kill Omnitraxus?"

"How had he killed Omnitraxus!"

The clones were running fast and smoothly. Perfectly mirroring their creator. "We are ready, My Lady." Came the message from the Majordomo. Hekapoo reminded herself.

"Okay, no big deal, done this a thousand times, just remember to breathe, hold out your hands and..."

Contact.

The strain wasn't too bad, probably helped by the fact that the branes were not going as fast as they could be.

But anytime two separate realities were passing next to each other, speeds always ranged from the incredible to the incomprehensible.

Once contact was made, Hekapoo, her clones and the monks occupying them went into a kind of trance. They all tapped into Hekapoo's connection to every female life form in existence to gain just enough energy to facilitate the deflection of the oncoming multiverse. There was nothing to do at this point but push.

They surrendered to the experience.

The power of love. Or at least sexual reproduction. Keeping the heavens from falling.

For Hekapoo it was a familiar experience. Never comfortable, but familiar.

The monks were overwhelmed.
They could see out of the eyes of every female creature. They could feel the pangs of childbirth. They experienced, for an instant. The life and perspective of every single female life form in the multiverse.

It was overwhelming for Ido in particular, it was like being at the bottom of the sea.

Looking up from the depths. He could see the sun, just out of reach.

The edges of the two multiverses began to deflect off of each other.

The sea began to feel less like the sea and more like...

Love.

Ido felt kindness begin to overtake the suffocating pressures of survival.

Ido realized why the monks all had to be male.

Because they had to maintain separation, they had to remain conscious of the fact that they were not a part of the wider female subconscious. That they were there to do a very difficult and bizarre job and not get lost in the collective, female unconsciousness. As appealing as it may have been

Ido opened his eyes. He could see the sun that had lit the sea he had been drowning in.

He was staring into the flame of his lady. Not another clone, the original. Somehow he had wound up being the leader of the contingent in the other multiverse. Their hands pressed together with enough force to vaporize diamonds.

This was one of the rarer perks of being a monk of this order. In this shimmering moment was learning more about women than in an entire lifetime.

The pressure started to ebb.

The clones let go.

As the other multiverse drifted away the clones sent there would poof out of existence. As they poofed the minds of the monks driving them returned to their mortal bodies. One by one they took their hands off the statue. Once the last one, the Majordomo returned. The statue said to them.

"Great work guys, no unplanned self destructions. No anomalies like the last time and we are all still alive and breathing! Oh, you guys should probably know. The last anomaly has taken over Mewni. I need you guys to get to work studying an explosion he is responsible for. If there is any debris from that blast I need you to find it immediately."

The Majordomo knelt before the statue and said. "By your command, my lady."

Hekapoo smiled down at them. The smile faded away as her consciousness departed the statue.

Ido looked down at his hands. He was speechless, there was so much he wanted to do, so much he needed to do.

So much he would never get to do.

He understood why the monks of this order were allowed to have families, just not on the monastery grounds.
Hekapoo took a deep breath as she came out of her link with the monastery. She took out her communications mirror. Even out here at the edge of the universe she had a signal. She also had sixty unread messages and voicemails. Hekapoo observed.

"Ohh boy, Star isn't going to be happy about this at all."
Who summons the All Seeing Eye?

Chapter Summary

"Warning, spying leads to crying."

"Star, how about we go back to Earth to finish this out. I think I have had enough of this dimension fucking with me."

Star agreed and cut a dimensional portal back to Pauline's bedroom.

Now comfortably seated on Pauline's bed Star continued.

"So, we needed to find Hekapoo. Marco figured the best chance of finding her was her castle in her domain. I said it was the MHC headquarters. So we went to the MHC."

Not surprisingly Headquarters had been attacked as well. But it was nowhere near as bad as what happened at Mewni castle.

There were no bullet holes, or bomb craters in the building. The security detail had been knocked out with what looked like taser darts. They were unconscious, but alive and tied up. Marco and Star untied them. While they waited for the guards to wake up Marco and Star began anxiously searching the building for the intruder.

Seeing his complete lack of weapons Star asked. "So, what's the story with the monster arm. Can you summon that thing at will now? Can you control it?"

The arm appeared, "can I be controlled? Not really. Can Marco summon me at will? He can try, I might not come. As to what my story is? I'm really looking forward to telling you. But can you please stop talking about me in the third person? I know my full name is a bit of a mouthful, you can call me Kar."

Marco explained.

"When I was in Hekapoo's Domain this thing got woken up after I almost died from a scorpion bite. I definitely wouldn't have survived that without him and I probably wouldn't have survived Hekapoo's challenge without him. Hekapoo sealed him away with a brand on my left arm but when I came back to Earth and I went back to my fourteen year old body, the brand vanished."

Marco stopped in his tracks and said, "and I've been stuck with him ever since."

"Yeah, well, I'm not all that happy to be stuck with you either."

Kar looked right at Star and said, "This kid is a little goody two shoes. As soon as we figure out how I want out of this body. You... Wouldn't be willing to help with that would you, Your Majesty?"

Star replied, "uh, perhaps we can talk later. For now I'm not sure if I want to help a slimy tentacle monster escape my best friends body right just now."
Before Kar could think up a suitable response all three of them noticed a message on the wall in black spray-paint.

"Cowards!"

Next to it was an arrow, leading to a closet. Star speculated.

"Now... Huh, I was beginning to wonder if whoever is responsible for this might have been whoever facilitated the meeting between Spode and Eclipsa."

Marco asked, "why do you say that?"

"Whoever did this is not from Mewni. No one from there would dare desecrate this building. It's not one of Roderick's mercenaries. They would have killed the guards, not knocked them out. The use of earthling weapons... This... Feels like the work of someone from Earth."

Inside the closet was a tunnel leading to a whole new unfamiliar layer of the building. Of a completely different and much older form of architecture than the rest of the MHC headquarters. We just followed a line of spray painted arrows that led deeper and deeper into the bowels of the building. Along with the occasional bit of graffiti which read the word, cowards, again and again.

They went further into unknown parts of the MHC headquarters.

A huge door had been left open. With one last spray paint arrow leading inside.

Inside was a massive collection of transcribing machines. Star took a look at one of them and read. "11:03 PM: Star Butterfly, Marco Diaz, Kar Margorach enter the hall of records of the Butterfly family...?"

Marco looked around and observed, "this is an archive, cool but where's the bad guy? I mean why would they lead us here?"

There was another spray painted arrow. Leading to a Polaroid photograph. The photograph had a couple of sticky notes attached to it. In very elegant handwriting The first sticky note read.

"I had to send my agent to recover evidence for me. Please note the exceedingly poorly done alteration to the document which will be evident even in this photograph. ."

Star looked at the scroll in the photo, it referred to the birth of Eclipsa's daughter... Festivia.

Star could see the alteration. They had sewn in a completely different type of paper into the document.

Marco took the second sticky note and read it, "I will have you know that my actual daughters name is Meteora. But you probably know her better as Ms Heinous. I don't know why you have decided to continue to torture me in ways that I can't even comprehend. But I will have justice."

Marco dropped the note.

He started tearing up.

Hands slammed onto his shoulders. "Marco, stay with me!" Star sternly announced.

"No, no this is my fault. I'm the one that Eclipsa is after, not you."

"Hey, if Eclipsa wants you then she has to get through me first, alright! Now, just calm down, Tom
and Janna and Bob are all safe right now. We don't have to do anything right now except continue
to gather information about what's going on. And I happen to have just the spell for that. Just, don't
panic and calm down. Let's go back upstairs."

Marco was speechless. Star was desperately thinking what to do next. Kar simply said, "**all I know
is that I'm not turning myself in. I may have eaten that lizard, but I didn't kill Heinous.**"

Marco shook his head and desperately tried to change the subject.

"So what's this spell you were talking about a minute ago?"

"Oh yes, it's a scrying spell. It's pretty good, you just have to... Not stare at it too hard or it has an
annoying habit of affecting things in the viewing field. But I think I have it pretty well under
control nowadays."

"I summon the all seeing eye, to tear a hole in the sky, reveal to me that which is hidden, unveil me
that which is forbidden!"

The wand blinked.

A viewing portal opened.

The image they saw immediately confirmed their worst fears. Sir Roderick and Eclipsa were in
fact working together. They were talking to each other with Mina Loveberry in the throne room of
Mewni castle. But before they could learn anything else they noticed that Eclipsa had turned and
was looking straight at the viewing portal.

Marco asked, "they can't see us... Right?"

Eclipsa looked up and down. Then she stuck her right index finger right in the edge of the viewing
portal. Bringing in her left index finger she traced a shape in the air.

Which created an effect not unlike a manhole cover falling out of a wall.

Eclipsa looked rather smug.

Sir Roderick looked shocked.

Mina however, she looked pleased, happy. Downright delighted to discover that they were being
spied on.

Marco simply said, "Um, Star, they can see us!"

"Hoo boy I thought I had this spell under control."

Eclipsa replied, "dear, it's one of my spells. I know it better than you ever will. There is only one
true version of that spell, all the rest are copies. And the copies are slaved to my control. Oh,
another fun fact about the All Seeing Eye spell, it requires absolutely massive amounts of power to
work making it one of many magical spells that is also a fire hazard. Have you ever wondered why
it is surrounded by flames all the time? It's not just because it looks cool."

The portal blinked out.
Spider had been up for thirty six hours.

It had just been one thing after another.

Optempo had been way too high lately.

Star invented new spells every day. And rooms had to be found for these spells. Especially the ones that were basically just slightly cuddly versions of guided missiles, energy beams and various other high energy implements of death.

Spider hadn't actually done any fighting over the past few months. He had been much too busy with the internal organization of the wand. There was always something to be taken care of. Like beanbag being constantly ruptured after being used as a place to sleep for Mewnian soldiers. The exhaustion of the Warnicorns. Or the clutter of having racks of high explosives stacked in the kitchen because there was no place else to put it.

Spiders coffee cup was shaking.

All Seeing Eye sidled up to Spider.

He blinked, showing a clip of Marco saying. "You should get some rest."

"Rest!? No, with what we just saw? All those wounded princesses? I gotta be ready, we gotta be ready. We're launching spells like crazy down here. Do you know how easy it would be for something to go sideways in here? Someone drops a rocket spell and we are all going to notice it."

The eye blinked. Showing a clip of Jackie saying.

"That's what I'm worried about."

It blinked again, this time showing Angie Diaz.

"You are sleep deprived, if you don't get some rest soon you are going to start hallucinating. And they won't be nice hallucinations either. You're probably hallucinating right now, you know Angie doesn't talk like this."

Spider looked down at his coffee cup and observed.

"You know, my cup isn't shaking anymore, but now everything else is. Okay Eyeball, you have the Con, I'm going to go and try to get some rest."

Spider staggered into his chamber and fell asleep before the doors could whoosh shut.

All Seeing Eye felt great. He had never had 'command' of the wand before. He found himself replaying the clip several times of Spider saying. 'Eyeball has the con', he really liked the sound of that.

And why shouldn't he have the con? In terms of power consumption he was the most powerful spell in the wand. He offered capabilities that no other spell could. He was expensive, but worth it and he knew it. Star used him an awful lot.

He knew he was going to be needed again soon.
"Forbidden!"

The eye opened.

As soon as he saw her He realized that his day was over.

He was never going to be trusted by Star ever again.

He had been seen by his creator.

His creator could control him like no one else.

All Seeing Eye tried to will himself out of existence before he was forced to betray everyone else who had come to reluctantly trust him after all these months.

He couldn't will himself out of existence. He was a spell, he had no free will he could only do what he was ordered.

He was ordered to go up in a giant column of flame.

Spider woke up to the sound of the fire alarm blaring.

He leapt out of bed and ran to the door. It wouldn't open. He spun up his cannon and cut himself an exit.

Spider ran out into the central hall.

Everything was burning. Some spells were running around on fire. Others were on fire but motionless. Spider's careful safety protocols had meant that there were no large explosive spells outside of a secure chamber at that moment. Had say... A rack of harpoon missiles been sitting in the central hall like they had been during the battle of Dulimar then the entire wand would have been blown to kingdom come.

Again.

Spider took a deep breath and thought.

He needed a spell that could put out this fire.

But they were all locked in their chambers.

"Cotton candy fire extinguish!" He shouted.

He ran up, four levels. Amidst fire and smoke to Cotton Candy Fire Extinguisher's chamber. Spider pounded on the door. All the doors were still locked shut because of the fire. He looked down to see small amounts of cotton candy were leaking out.

Spider spun up his cannon again and blasted the door off its hinges. Pink fire retardant foam exploded out of the chamber completely flooding the wand.

Once the foam had all gone back into its chamber, Spider took two steps back and looked around.

The damage wasn't too bad.

He looked down and saw Eyeball unconscious and flameless on the floor.
Spider attached a line to a railing and climbed down to Eyeball. He asked.

"Okay, I go to sleep for a few hours and... What happened here!?!"

Snail crawled up, coughed twice and explained.
Relativism among the relativists.

Chapter Summary

Jantom... But not in the usual way.

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=RhMEKiIb86I

Little mood music there.

Also, the demon Prince lifts a curse.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Janna stepped through the portal.

The room she had walked into was in was incredible. It was huge, high ceilings, marble, marble everywhere. With thick rugs on top of the marble, a giant four poster bed and...

"Is that a fucking Rembrandt!?" She shouted.

The style was unmistakable. It was not an immediately familiar work though. In time she would find out that the chap in the portrait was actually a distant relative of Dave Lucitor.

Bob replied, "I think so. Seems Earth and Mewnian hell have a bit of history together."

Bob touched Jannas shoulder and gently asked.

"Um, Janna, are you sure you want to do this?"

Janna replied, "yeah, this isn't going to be forever? Is it?"

Bob replied, "yeah, Dave, gives me his word that this is only going to go on as long as is needed to fix Tom's body. But this... Is. I mean as I said, this is still, hell! Not the hell I thought I was at risk of going to, it's nice in this part, but the rest of this place is literally... hell."

Bob pointed to a window to allow Janna to confirm it.

Janna simply breathed and replied, "in all honesty, I thought I was going to wind up down here anyway. Might as well get used to it."

Bob shook his head.

He knew this was no time for a "redemption" speech.

He simply grabbed Janna's hand and led her down the hallway to an improvised surgical theater. A variety of very undead looking doctors ministered to the wounded Prince. Janna recognized one. He had died recently. A doctor from Oxnard who had gotten in big trouble for using his own semen in the place of clients semen at a fertility clinic. Janna still remembered the justification he made to an interviewer.
"But I only used my own semen in cases where the male had no possibility of conceiving. Every other birth at my clinic was done with the clients DNA only. I gave those people families!"

Janna had seen the story on the local news.

It had stuck in her mind from when she first heard of it. All the way back in 2014. To when she had heard that the guy died from a heart attack four days before she left for Mewni.

Janna had been amazed at how stupid he was. Mention had been made that the guy had lost every penny he had and would lose every penny he would earn in damages and child support payments.

Janna spoke, "Mike? Mike Framingham? Is that you?"

He snapped his surgical mask back on and asked nervously. "Um, sorry, do I know you?"

Janna replied deadpan, "no, no you shouldn't."

Janna looked at the rest of them and observed, "mob doctors, you all look like mob doctors. Great, not exactly the best and brightest."

Their reactions varied from amused, to nervous. The one woman Doctor there who just sighed and gestured for Janna to hop on a gurney next to the wounded demon. Janna did so.

Another of the doctors gestured for Bob to stand on the opposite side of Tom. Bob got nervous, he didn't know what was going on. Had Dave been lying when he said that his body would simply kill his son? The doctor asked sternly, "take off your crucifix, but whatever you do don't drop it! Just hold it until I say what to do next."

Bob anxiously removed the crucifix. It was his own design. He had bought a plain silver cross and had it laser engraved with various symbols. Nordic runes on the bottom, a Star of David above that, a yin yang above that and the symbol for infinity at the top. Bob liked to joke that if he was ever captured there would be some symbol there out of his vast collection of religious interests that would guarantee his execution by a bad guy.

As Bob clutched the crucifix he felt as nervous as a long tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs. A black smoggy mass that was apparently Prince Tom's soul transferred over to Janna.

Janna took deep breath and said in a voice that sounded like a combination of Janna and Tom's. "Cool."

Then passed out.

The doctor standing next to Bob snatched the crucifix. It began to burn his hands, he proceeded to slam it into the gaping bullet wound in Tom's stomach.

Bob shouted, "what the heck are you...!!?"

He didn't get the chance to say, "doing" before he crucifix started to glow.

The doctor clenched his burned hands. Breathed in pain and gestured, "go ahead, take it back, Golden Boy."

Bob reached for the crucifix. But he didn't touch it. Golden light was rushing towards it. Pouring from the demon Princes wounds.

The thing was clearly starting to heat up.
Bob was reluctant to grab it.
The doctors demanded.
"Pick it up now!"
Bob grabbed it with his left hand.
"Just hold it there until the glow stops please." The doctor asked politely.
Bob could feel incredible energy pouring into the crucifix. He smiled, then looked down.
Golden energy.
Pouring from a... Still living body.
Bob remembered that the cause of this had been magic bullets.
Glowing light flowed into the crucifix.
Another doctor took Tom's pulse, she exhaled with a smile on her face. "Heart is still beating, okay, we are good. That was great work Earthling."
Bob replied, "I don't understand."
She explained. "The weapon that was killing the Prince was raw magical energy distilled into a form designed to burn negative behaviors from the body. You absorbed the spell and gave the spell a chance to return to its previous form. When the spell was exposed to your crucifix it rushed towards your little piece of the divine. Then into you, then... Back into its previous form. Bullets, in that little gun of yours."
Bob looked down. He didn't even notice that he had an absolute death grip on his pistol. He had to nearly peel his hand off of it, then popped the magazine release and looked at the magazine.
Some sort of golden liquid had collected in his hollow-points.
Bob observed, "well that's one way to undo something."
The female doctor took off her mask. Looking down at the now starting to heal bullet holes in the demon Prince. She observed.
"With all that crap out of his system, well. We might be able to have him up and kicking inside of... sixteen months?"
The doctors nodded at each other.
A perfectly matched set of three incredibly slutty looking demon in nurses costumes walked in and took the gurneys with Janna and Bob out of the room. All three said in a creepily seductive tone, at the same time. "Come on Mr Recorde. Your friend will want to see a familiar face when she wakes up."
When they got back to Tom's room Janna was still asleep. Bob asked, "wait, what? am I supposed to wait here until she wakes up?"
As the three 'nurses' placed the unconscious Janna in Tom's huge four poster bed they replied.
"Yes, would you like us to wait with you or outside the room?"

"Um, outside, I can call if I need anything, right?"

They nodded and walked out of the room.

Bob dragged a chair next to the bed and whispered.

"Okay Janna, anytime now."

He looked down at her unconscious form. He checked her pulse.

Still breathing, still beating.

He exhaled slowly.

He examined her for a moment.

She seemed to be sleeping.

One of the nurses burst back through the door.

"Sorry, sorry, ha, total klutz. Yeah. I almost forgot. When she wakes up she might need to put this necklace on."

Bob looked down at it.

It looked an awful lot like the Hope Diamond.

"Um, what is this?" He asked.

The nurse blinked and replied, "oh, yeah this is the well of Korsikoff. It's a binding spell/device. It creates a barrier between any two consciousness sharing a body. But it always provides the advantage to the host spirit."

Bob asked.

"This sounds like something that would be much more useful to the... Other side. Why would the minions of hell have this?"

The nurse took on a super serious expression.

"Judgment. We use it to allow judgement. Like my judgment."

She clenched the necklace and stood up straight. Taking on the air of a completely different person.

"I am here because I was a hedonist. So were the other two girls who wheeled you into this room. One died 90 years ago on Zeta Retuculi. Another of them came from Mewni 400 years ago and..."

She shook her head and went back to explaining the device.

"Anyway, the three of us were judged to come down here. Because the most ironic possible punishment was waiting for us down here. We were doomed to be with each other... Forever. We are the keepers of this device. We are bonded to it. After Korsikoff died we took this to where it would be most useful."
"Um, yeah, so we use this thing to find out if people are telling the truth about how they got down here. Contain the demon. Allow the original entity to tell its side of the story. Essentially it's a last possible chance given for getting out of here."

She looked down at it and licked her lips.

"But... I'm willing to be patient to wait my turn to wear this thing and face my judgement until my two compatriots who have been down here longer than I have to..."

She looked profoundly distracted. Bob didn't know that she was lost in her own mind looking at the other two nurses lives and afterlives.

But he couldn't help but ask.

"Okay, and how did you get you get it?"

She blinked, shook her head really hard and explained.

"When Korsikoff died I stole it. When he died his protection spells broke and we... Took this thingy from him. He must have put the resources of a small planet into creating this. These gems are from all over and the spells that he used... They come from sixteen different magical traditions. This center gem, sheesh. I don't even want to imagine where he found this. Oh wait, I know, it's a diamond so it came from the bowels of a volcano."

The nurse handed it to Bob.

As Bob and the nurse touched the necklace at the same time Bob noticed something bizarre.

The nurse had walked into the room looking identical to the other two.

Now.

She appeared to be dressed in standard earthling hospital standard green scrubs. Much less skin showing, breasts seemingly reduced in size, still quite large. The seductive tone in her voice gone. Replaced by the formal cadence of someone giving instructions on something uninteresting.

She smiled at him, a very fake smile but a smile nonetheless. Bob whispered, "oh shit, you are from earth?"

The nurse smiled kindly and explained.

"A little glimpse into my ironic hell. I am offered a choice. Forgo myself."

She let go of the necklace.

"Or forgo pleasure through forgoing myself."

As she spoke the words her body began snapping into what it had been a few moments ago. More curves, more sweat. So much sweat. And the green scrubs replaced by a white latex form fitting costume.

She put her hands on her face and begin wailing.

The doors burst open.

The other two nurses returned.
They put their hands on the middle nurses shoulders. They were all identical again. The other two simultaneously asked.

"Are you okay?"

She nodded crisply. The other two nurses looked down at Bob with a perfectly matched expression of contempt. As they simultaneously addressed him.

"Just wait here until the girl wakes up. If she can't handle being host to a demon just put the necklace on her and we go from there."

The wailing nurse slapped her hands into her hips loudly and screamed.

"Now, I need it now, I was holding it for too long, now I need it now!!!"

The three nurses stormed out of the room, off to who knows where.

Bob looked down at the necklace in one hand, and the crucifix in the other.

Bob carefully placed the necklace next to the bed and looked at his crucifix.

"Hmm, whatever I do don't drop it. Did they mean don't drop it when it was charged up? Can I drop it now?" He thought.

He put it back round his neck as Janna began to stir.

She bolted upright and said.

"What!!?"

She looked around the room.

She blinked weirdly at Bob.

In her voice she squeaked out the words.

"Feels, weird, man."

Janna began to shudder. As if she had been dropped into a pool of ice water.

Bob looked down at the necklace. Janna was staring into it with an expression of utter hopelessness as she whispered.

"Screams, screams, so many screams, please make the screams stop!"

Janna could see both of their minds.

She could feel the heat, his power, the power of this place. Tom's memories. The endless screams. This was too much.

Tom consented. He allowed the necklace to be put on.

As the necklaces magnetic clasp snapped into place the central gem began to glow.

White.

Then blue.
Then just the normal shade of blue of the diamond.

Janna started gasping in air. Grasping around. She grabbed Bob and whispered.

"I can feel him. I can feel him breathing, me breathing. I, know everything. Tom, you shouldn't have lied about screwing around with Star. You are going to fucking..."

She closed her eyes.

The gem began glowing again.

Now it was glowing red.

What sounded like Tom's voice being said through Janna's vocal chords spoke.

"We can hear each other we can talk to each other. But this prevents us from talking as each other. It lifts and separates."

Bob replied. "And as long as I am here. I will protect Janna. Even if I have to protect her from you."

Eyes closed.

Glowing again.

Blue.

"Aw, thanks Bob, but... Wow, okay. I'm feeling a lot better with this around my neck."

Janna looked at the blue gem.

"Blue for me, red for you. Okay, it's too bad we couldn't make it black for me and white for you, just to throw you off. You know invert the whole..."

Red.

"Well, I suppose it could be blue for me and pink for you, that being your favorite color."

Blue.

"How do you know that?"

Red.

"You saw into me and I saw into you, earth girl. I don't claim to know everything about you, but I do know enough."

Blue.

"Yeah, I saw into you too. Now, Star, that I can chalk up to trying to impress Bob. But why were you and her presiding over the killing of prisoners?"

Silence.

"Tom, Tom, answer me."

Janna grabbed Bob and shouted.
"The Mewnian army was killing prisoners!"

Bob replied.

"How long have you known?"

"I... Can confirm what I heard from Toms memories. But... I first heard about this a little while ago. I spent most of my time in the library studying the magic of a queen named Crecentia. But what I found in her... Encyclopedic knowledge of magic, was mostly useless. I should have been studying her sister. The first spell I leaned from Dirhhennia's books? How to blend in with your bath water. Invisibility, in water. Do you know how useful that is? People relax and talk about things in public bathhouses and... That's how I heard about the army being involved in killing prisoners."

"I didn't believe it until now. But seeing it out of Tom's eyes... I don't want to spend the next sixteen months with a war criminal inside my body!"

Red.

"War criminal! So you are okay with a literal demon in your body, but a war criminal? That's where you draw the line? Demons are evil! It is our job to corrupt, undermine and take advantage of mortals and immortals. We have a... Bit of a strange relationship with Mewni, I admit. But we have fought alongside mewmans for hundreds of years, according to well established rules and practices of war. One of those practices is execution or enslavement of prisoners. This is the way it was done on Earth until relatively recently as well."

Blue.

"Come on Tom, you're only fourteen years old. You shouldn't be killing anyone, much less the unarmed and helpless. It's so..."

Bob interrupted.

"On earth child soldiers are a much more common thing than most people imagine."

Blue.

"Yeah, but they are the ones taking orders, not giving them. If those kids don't do their thing then their families die."

Red.

"That's why we didn't take prisoners in the monster wars. Monsters happily and regularly slaughtered unarmed mewmans during raids on farms and villages. It's odd to hear this sort of moralizing coming from you of all people, miss Ordonia."

Blue.

"Don't you miss Ordonia me. There's a world of difference between stealing a few things and committing genocide."

Red.

"Is there? Janna..."

Tom turned her body around.
"When that portrait was painted children in a country called England could get the death penalty for stealing a handkerchief. And that's in your own history, the rest of your planet and almost all of the known multiverse can be a very savage place. I'm not saying that we did the right thing. But if Trundelhiem had been the ones who came out on top in that battle then it would be Karfelwien and possibly, eventually Mewni itself who would be facing the outlawing of its language and the execution of all adult males over the age of sixteen."

"Either way, the souls of those responsible wind up down here. Where they are punished for the rest of... Well, until judgement day at the earliest. Funny thing about hell. No one seems to be interested in invading it like so many other places in the multiverse."

Blue.

"And what do you have to say about all this?"

Janna angrily said to Bob.

Bob sighed and tried to explain his side of things.

"At the end of apartheid in South Africa truth and reconciliation commissions were set up. This was done because prosecuting the crimes of everyone involved in either maintaining or eliminating apartheid through the regular judicial system would have bogged down the courts there for decades."

"Some... Indescribably beautiful moments came out of these meetings. But, there is no getting around the fact that South Africa. Like all of Africa really, is a bloodstained place where life is incredibly cheap. Whitey leaves, some local asshole takes over and the cycle of endless pain and oppression continues under friendly local management, instead of by some white devil half a world away."

"This is the cycle of empire."

"This is the cycle of oppression."

"And I was really upset to find out that it continues. All the way out here inside planet Mewni. But them's the breaks."

Bob got up and stepped towards the window.

"All I can say with any confidence is... as cowardly as this may sound. Right now? I just don't want to piss off our hosts."

Bob opened the curtain.

"I mean this is literally hell Janna! What did you think you were getting into when you were getting into this occult stuff? I just wanted to study and observe from a safe distance. You went diving headlong straight into the very darkest and most dangerous forms of dark magic. And you know what I'm starting to think I deserve this."

Janna staggered to her feet.

"What, you think that's a good enough reason to send people to a place like this? Reading a few books?"

"It's not just the books, Janna. It's power. If you want power it has to come from something. You
expressed an interest to me many times that you want power and that the idea of making a deal with a literal demon will get you that power."

"What, that's not why I agreed to do this."

"Then why did you do this?"

"For the same reason you dragged my bleeding body into the elevator. Janna wanted to save me, just as much as you did."

"I was... I might have been able to save some other people on that balcony. But I was the one who got you out of there, wasn't I?"

Janna straightened herself up and walked towards the window. As she looked out on the scene she observed.

"So this is the end result of kill them all and let God sort it out. They sort it out down here don't they?"

Janna turned around to look at Bob directly.

"A couple of months ago I saw Star pull a rocket launcher on Ms Skullnick. If I hadn't told her to stop, she could have leveled half the school."

A few moments to breathe.

"And it would have been over nothing. Nothing... Skullnick gave Star detention, nothing."

Janna looked out over the agony of the damned and whispered.

"Literal hell."

Bob looked down.

The gem was glowing red now. Tom explained.

"Janna has recoiled into her own mind. I'm... Not sure if she can handle all this."

Bob simply replied, "oh."

The two of them looked out on the inferno.

Bob asked, "there one other thing I would like to iron out. You weren't really having sex with Star, were you?"

"Nah, like she said, I was just trying to sound like my relationship with Star was... Slightly less weird?"

Tom chuckled.

"So tell me, with my charming personality and this body... How do you like me now?"

Bob replied.

"Oh, I've liked you since I met you Tom, but like I told Janna. I'm asexual. I'm just not interested in anyone, anything or whatever you are."
Tom wondered something.

Tom turned around and pulled something out of a drawer. A crystal of some sort. Bob wondered why Tom was hovering it over his body. But he was really baffled why the thing was lighting up pink when it got near his stomach. Tom asked.

"Bob, tell me, at that fancy school you go to. Is there a girl who likes you but shows it in funny ways? Yells at you? Smacks you around? Calls you an idiot? Pinches your butt, a lot?"

"Um, yeah. Nevaeh, Nevaeh Grenfell. Cute girl, talks a lot."

"Un huh. Listen, I'm about to do something that a demon Prince probably isn't supposed to do, so... Bear with me okay?"

Tom led Bob out of his room, to a kitchen, as he walked he explained.

"I studied love spells for years trying to find the right one to use on Star. The one you are under right now is a very crude and simple one. But it does appear to be..."

"The one I'm under...? What are you talking about?"

"Yeah, some earth girl put a hex on you. It's a classic, "if I can't have you no one can' spell."

"Hey, what did you mean by putting a love spell on Star?"

"Um, ask Marco about the Blood Moon or the Naysayah sometime. He is... Closer to those spells than I am. Anyway, as I was saying. You are the victim of a love spell and I'm about to de spell you."

Tom threw open a cupboard with more different types of salt in it than Bob believed existed in all the multiverse. Tom asked.

"Unless... You don't want me to get rid of the spell. I mean, it could have side effects. I mean, if this were a sitcom it would probably overwhelm your system causing a rush of hormones through your body causing you to lose your mind, go mad with desire and do something that will leave you here... Permanently."

Blue.

"You want me down here that bad?"

"Nah, not if you don't want to be down here."

"I don't, but I also don't want to have a curse on me, so, okay... Exorcise me."

Tom harrumphed and said, "you know what pisses me off? You're technically correct. I'm a demon Prince about to conduct an exorcism of sorts. Okay. Here goes nothing."

Tom danced around Bob for a few minutes. Tracing out a circle with salt. Tom dropped more salt into a fire and incanted a spell in a language that Bob simply didn't recognize but sounded kinda Aramaic. Either way the incantation ended with words in English "the salt is pure, purify him. Remove the love spell, remove this curse on Robert Recorde by Nevaeh Grenfell!"

The salt that Tom had spread around began to make a crackling noise.

Something flashed into existence. It appeared to be a belt made of rust.
It cracked into two separate pieces.

And fell to the floor.

Where it shattered into dust.

Bob whimpered a bit. And squeaked out the words, "thank you."

Then passed out.

Chapter End Notes

"I mean if this was a sitcom, but we had to stay within the rules of informed consent and whatnot. We could have your system be so overwhelmed by hormones that you pass out instead of screwing the crap out of the literal horny devil who just exorcised ya."
Eclipsa, Mina and Roderick meet. Star comes flying in guns blazing and weirdness happens.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"So, now you are in here and I'm out here."

Eclipsa stood before the crystal containing Queen Moon.

She shook her head, the irony of all this was not lost on her.

Moon was going to be stuck in that crystal for awhile. Though Moons hands were healing, quite a bit faster than Eclipsas hands had, it was still going to take at least a few more months for the corruption to dissolve.

"Sometime around December. Happy stump day."

River's words echoed through Eclipsas mind.

"You go up there right now and fix my wife!"

Eclipsa put her hand on the crystal and spoke quietly, "I'm really sorry you wound up like this. You seemed like a nice kid."

"Hello!"

Eclipsa recognized that voice.

It was a voice she had sincerely hoped that she would never hear again.

Eclipsa turned around and awkwardly stated, "um, hello Mina."

Mina Loveberry stared at Eclipsa with barely contained resentment. Her hands were balled into fists.

They both took a deep breath.

"I can't believe she is really here. Here with me and Roderick. We can finally end this." Loveberry thought.

Eclipsa reached for the ID badge that Spode had issued her and politely explained. "Now I know this isn't the most... Uh, comfortable situation. But I am working with your husband. I would imagine that he would get very upset if you beat the tar out of me."

Loveberry strode towards Eclipsa and took a closer look at the badge. Loveberry growled.
"You know I just had to see this for myself, I still can't believe that you are throwing in with us... You, do know what he, we, um all of us want to do to the monsters?"

Eclipsa sighed and said, "well yeah, but he is getting better."

"Ugh, don't remind me. I still can't believe he let the prisoners live. I mean, Queen Star didn't say a peep when we slaughtered twelve thousand rorthman prisoners at Dulimar. But he lets the couple hundred or so Monsters we caught around the castle rot in the dungeon."

Mina looked closer at Eclipsa and asked in an incredibly sarcastic tone. "So, what do you want from me? Oh Queen of Darkness?!"

Eclipsa replied, "I don't want anything at all from you. Our business with each other was concluded before I was sealed. We have our disagreements, but, and you may find this hard to believe, I have never wished you harm."

Loveberry tilted her head sideways with an expression of disbelief. Eclipsa continued.

"Alright alright, and I'm sorry about what happened in the forest of Lord Sardonicus. But you had that coming and you know it! you went completely off the rails."

Loveberry exhaled and replied, "yeah, I still can't believe I did that."

Eclipsa replied, "and yet you did. You ate something you shouldn't have and killed sixteen men with your bare hands."

Mina backed up and sat down in a nearby chair with a look of indescribable exhaustion on her face. The look that only an immortal warrior can have.

Eclipsa realized what she had done and continued in a quieter, more humble tone.

"I was asleep all this time. You... Lived through every minute of it didn't you?"

Mina chuckled, "Every damn minute. I think it was kwyjibo fruit that Sardonicus grew. When I ate that I think something inside me snapped, but even if it was just the fruit, that still doesn't excuse what I did."

Loveberry held up a hand and looked off into the distance.

"I killed sixteen of my brothers."

She hung her head.

"Ill give you that, I violated protocol. Your sentence of eighty years in an oubliette was probably fair."

Eclipsa asked.

"And you were down in that hole for all eighty years?"

"Oh no, after you got crystallized someone let a rope down. I was only in there for... Three weeks? I think? They needed me back in the field cleaning up the mess that you and your mother had made. Mewni castle was besieged for five years. If I hadn't been around..."

Mina looked off in the distance with a thousand yard stare. Eclipsa had seen that stare more than a few times. But never in the eyes of a Solarian warrior. Despite all the carnage and suffering they
had waded through, even in her time. The Solarian Warriors created by her mother had always gone about their jobs with savage recklessness and verve.

Three hundred years later the first, last and most vicious example of the breed didn't look quite as gung ho as she used to be.

Eclipsa wanted to apologize. But then she remembered. Mina, Hekapoo and her mother had always made the decision to take the most reckless, most blood soaked, most tragic course. Ceasefire after ceasefire with the monsters had been rejected as they had scoured the multiverse for more powerful magical weapons and abilities.

As Eclipsa looked over at the seated warrior she asked something that she had been meaning to ask Loveberry for centuries.

"Mina, it's been so long. My mother is no longer around. When you became a warrior you did it out of love for your nation and your queen. But Mewni is so different now, and Solaria is long gone. You have been fighting for so long. What exactly do you get out of all this?"

"What do I get? Eclipsa, this whole thing is airing out. Star Butterfly is going to have no valid claim to the throne once the whole Festivia thing gets out. And neither will you. Not in a Mewni that is full of guns and shoots monsters on sight. I think that your husband might not like that. How is Globgor these days? Still trying to get him and his friends to not be... Actual monsters instead of literal monsters?"

"Sparkling wordplay Mina."

"Yeah well, I had some time to think that one up."

Mina scowled at Eclipsa.

Feeling incredibly nervous Eclipsa started walking towards the door. Sir Roderick was waiting for them in the throne room. Changing the subject Eclipsa asked. "So, I hear that you are married to sir Roderick nowadays? How... Exactly did that come about?"

Mina walked after her and smiled. "Around the time princess Star was born I was on guard duty outside Mewni castle. I got a call from Hekapoo saying.

"Hey Mina. I need someone with a particular set of skills to go find something for me and you are the only one I can trust who has those skills. There's something falling towards the Neverzone. I sent a clone after it."

"Then another clone appeared out of a portal next to me."

"Just go with her and if there's any trouble on the other side punch it until it's not trouble anymore."

Mina exhaled in an exasperated tone.

"So, since I'm good at punching things I'm sent on the mission that brought Sir Roderick to Mewni. You know how the mists create living crystals? The crystals were just about to eat him when I show up and rescue him. I take him home, wrap him in a blanket. He wakes up, starts talking and... Well."

Mina started blushing visibly.

"His job, what he does for a living? He designs, sells and imports ladies underwear!"
Eclipsa interrupted.

"I thought his job was conquering Mewni?"

Mina looked away and grinned.

"Yeah, but when I rescued him he needed a job. Anyway, I should let him explain. You know when everyone sees him he seems like this gruff angry guy, and, well, he is. But he is capable of being so... Gentle if he feels like it."

Eclipsa smiled. As crazy as all this was she genuinely wanted people to be happy and while it was odd to see Mina look that happy. Eclipsa was pleased that she had found happiness.

Even if it was with a beast of a man.

Mina and Eclipsa strode into the throne room of Mewni castle.

Spode sat on the throne of Mewni. Staring at the two women who had just walked in.

Looking... Incredibly nervous.

He knew so little about this woman but he was spooked, genuinely spooked. Eclipsas reputation proceeded her but what made him particularly nervous was the behavior of his wife. If she was scared of Eclipsa then everyone needed to be scared of Eclipsa. But Mina had advised him. "Maintain confidence at all time. Never let her humiliate you."

Eclipsa and Mina strode into the throne room. Eclipsa rather boldly stated.

"So, sir Roderick Spode. I take it you are pleased with our deal. But I'm afraid that we have to iron out a few things before we go any further."

"Of course."

"I suppose the first thing we should discuss is... Hold on. I want this just between you me, and her. We are being spied on right now."

Eclipsa dipped down. Then she stuck out her fingers and made an oval shape in the air.

A one way viewing portal became a two way viewing portal.

"Um, Star, they can see us!"

"Hoo boy I thought I had this spell under control."

Eclipsa replied, "dear, it's one of my spells. I know it better than you ever will. There is only one true version of that spell, all the rest are copies. And the copies are slaved to my control. Oh, another fun fact about the All Seeing Eye spell, it requires absolutely massive amounts of power to work making it one of many magical spells that is also a fire hazard. Have you ever wondered why it is surrounded by flames all the time? It's not just because it looks cool."

The portal blinked out.

"What did you just do?" Sir Roderick asked.

"I used one of my spells as a Trojan horse. Right now the Mewnian royal wand is burning like a bonfire."
Sir Roderick exhaled.

He touched a piece of wood hidden next to him.

He had an idea what was going to happen next.

All he knew was that Mina had told him to leave one of his pistols on the table in front of him and his shotgun to his side.

Eclipsa could see him starring at the compact pistol on the table.

Eclipsa picked up the pistol and checked the magazine. More magical bullets. As she looked at the projectiles she observed. "It's certainly an efficient form magic. But it seems kinda... Obvious, predictable, downright hackneyed. And of course I'm never going to condone killing in such a... Straightforward way."

Eclipsa shoved the magazine back into the pistol and shouted.

"Unless I bloody well have to, Globgor!"

Two dimensional portals opened up. From which emerged Globgor and the Ressinkreet. A master of close combat. They leapt into attack positions in front of Roderick and Mina.

Mina faced the size shifter directly.

"Globgor."

"Mina."

He lowered his fist and observed.

"Been awhile hasn't it?"

"Yeah. Really nowhere near long enough in my case. I mean, I saw you get crystallized. And you know what? I would come back to your crystal every now and then to personally give you the finger for corrupting the princess!"

Globgor sighed and asked in an exasperated tone.

"Really, it really never occurred to you that..."

Bang!

Eclipsa had fired a gunshot into the air as she examined the pistol she was holding she squeaked out.

"Alright now, I and my monsters clearly have the upper hand here. Do we really want more blood?"

"Oh I don't know, I can always use more blood when my blades are around the neck of a Mewman soldier."

Stated the Ressinkreet in a horrifyingly high pitched voice.

Eclipsa shouted.
"Alright! Now! As long as we are trying to kill each other this stupidity will continue. Perhaps we should all take a breath before any of us do anything that we might regret."

Another person entered the room, Eclipsa looked over.

It was a soldier of some sort. With an extremely large weapon over his shoulder. Had Bob been there he would have recognized the man and his issue rifle. Stevens, Roderick's earthling mercenary. He was never too far from Sir Roderick, being one of his most trusted lieutenants.

And now Eclipsa was staring down the barrel of his 84mm Carl Gustav launcher. Eclipsa didn't know for sure if that thing could punch through her shielding. But she did know that there was going to be a lot more kinetic energy behind it than King Rivers fist.

Boom!

Everyone's eyes shifted to the giant hole that had just emerged in the ceiling as Star Butterfly came streaking in on her pink cloud.

"Rainbow RPG!!!"

Eclipsa swung her pistol, almost involuntarily towards the new threat.

There were too many targets here. Too much all at once. Star came soaring down on Cloudy. Her eyes straining from flying through the dust, grit and debris from her dynamic entry.

As Star's next RPG shot waited to be launched, Eclipsa focused on her target.

Eclipsa wasn't aiming at Star. She was aiming at the wand. Fortunately for Eclipsa the wand had been unfolded into a very large target.

Eclipsa knew the wand had already been weakened by the All Seeing Eye setting everything on fire inside. But that thing was still combat effective.

Eclipsa dumped the mag.

The large box shape of the wands structure made it a perfect target for the magically charged hollow point bullets in her pistol.

Even knowing that they existed, Star had hoped that the wand would be able to catch the bullets and absorb their energy.

Well.

It did.

However.

Had Eclipsa been firing real bullets into a real RPG warhead the warhead might not have gone off.

Magical bullets into a magical warhead and the energy to launch it along a trajectory equivalent to a non magical RPG?

The whole wand exploded. Two giant RPG shots exploding out of both ends of the wand.

There was one spell outside the wand.
Before Star had come here she had taken out Spider with a Top Hat and put him in place of her usual spider pendant.

Star dropped the wand as she fell to the floor. She held her hands over Spider and with all the love and magical energy in her being she incanted a spell.

"Spider with a Top Hat... Full BLAST!"

He felt himself growing bigger.

Bigger.

Bigger still.

Star had first imagined Spider while watching a mini gun on a helicopter.

But she soon found out that these rotating cannon came in many sizes. There were some even smaller than the 'mini gun.'

And there were others that were much bigger.

Like the 20MM Vulcan that the US Navy used to shoot down incoming missiles.

Spider found that he was not just bigger than he had ever been. He was more perceptive too. He was back to having eight eyes. He could see all around him in various energy spectrums.

He saw Spode.

He fired, almost involuntarily. He was still flying through the air. The cannon rounds struck just a foot short of sir Roderick.

Two shells left his cannon as something came whipping through the air at him.

A monomolecular blade.

No.

A monomolecular... String.

Four of his eyes looked over.

The source of the string was Eclipsa. This was her magic that wasn't technically magic. Or at least not her magic. This was a technique she had learned which generated monomolecular wires. But a device which was somewhat difficult to use when ones hands were half rotted off.

The string half cut and half yanked the cannon out of his hat.

Spider wondered why it didn't hurt.

Before he could find out Spider realized that there was a large projectile heading his way at near the speed of sound. Had his gun still been there it would have fired automatically.

But since it wasn't.

The 84MM FFV551 High Explosive Antitank Round connected with Spider's brain.

Star was directly connected to Spider at that moment. She was dipped all the way down. In a
unitary consciousness with her spell.

The pain was indescribable. Star actually felt what it was like to have an exploding shell go off in someone else's brain.

Star fell back into her usual self.

Before anything else could happen Eclipsa dumped the pistol and incanted a spell.

"Midnight Shriek."

The ear splitting frequency caused Star to completely lose what was left of any control of her own body.

Star fell to her knees.

Eclipsa breathed deeply. As she was considering what to do next a shotgun slug struck Star in the face.

Star collapsed to the floor of the throne room.

Eclipsa looked up.

Sir Roderick had pulled the trigger.

Eclipsa looked down in horror. The shotgun blast had not destroyed Star's brain, but it had blown off her face and a big part of her right shoulder. Star was balanced on the ragged edge of life and death. A race between her magic, desperately trying to keep her alive by any means. And damage that simply would not go away.

This was going to permanent traumatize Star with any memory of dipping down. Eclipsa knew how easily a dip could become associated with trauma and now... This was going to be mind boggling.

Not far from Star was the sizzling remains of the wand. Similarly trying to pull itself together. Trying to save what it could of its structure before it had to change into a different form.

Eclipsa stormed over to sir Roderick and shouted. "Dammit, this was not... I wanted..."

Eclipsa sighed, "but I suppose it's what I get isn't it?"

Sir Roderick spoke. "I suppose so."

He whispered out his next words.

"Eclipsa, the reason why we agreed to this meeting is not just because you gave me the weapons we needed to destroy the MHC. You, me and Mina have some business that we need to attend to before anything else happens."

Sir Roderick reached behind the throne, slowly, and held up a vial containing a distinct pink liquid.

Sir Roderick took off his signet ring. And tossed it to Eclipsa.

Eclipsa examined the vial.

Sir Roderick observed. "You know that is a damn useful spell. It allows one to learn so much from otherwise inert objects."
Eclipsa explained.

"I'm... A little reluctant to use this spell."

Globgor asked, "why?"

"Well, the last time I did it kinda... Went on the fritz."

"Your magic on the fritz? Oh wow."

Globgor took two steps back, put his hands in the air and announced. "Okay everyone, let's calm down and make sure that we don't wind up turning the universe inside out, okay? Just remember, this war has been going on a very long time we have all lost a lot and there is no need to..."

Eclipsa held up the vial and said, "no, no I'll do it. I just need a moment to catch my breath. This is probably going to be kinda weird though. So everyone back away and let me do this..."

"My way."

She examined the ring.

Mewnian metal smithing had come a ways since she had been gone. But she still recognized it.

The ring had a power to it. A sensation that Eclipsa had never felt before. In order to get the most control out of the memory spell she was going to have to...

Put it on.

Right before she did so Eclipsa stated.

"I do not want this interpreted as saying that I am interested in any kind of relationship with this man. Just for the record!"

Globgor smiled, as did Mina.

Everyone else was kinda serious thou.

"Last time was three drops. Let's try one this time and hope things don't completely fly out of control."

The drops contacted, the first three things to know flashed in Eclipsa's mind.

"Blood."

"Earth."

"Dishonor."

Time stopped.

Eclipsa looked around.

Everything and everyone was frozen in place. Wounded Star, her husband, Mina. All frozen in place. The very existence of this item was somehow calling into question one of the most fundamental laws of nature.

This was one of very few times in Eclipsa's life when she felt as though she was biting off more
than she could chew, in a magical sense.

The ring started to glow. It projected an image in the air.

It was a Gordian Knot. Eclipsa had seen spells like this before.

Eclipsa sighed.

She knew she was being led to trouble. But there was no escape. Once a Gordian knot was seen
there were only three options.

Give up.

Solve the puzzle.

Or blow everything to kingdom come.

The final option didn't usually work, but sometimes had to be done.

The first didn't really seem like a viable choice at this moment.

Eclipsa closed her eyes, held up her hand and asked the spell, "give me what I need to solve this."

As she opened her eyes she no longer saw the throne room. She was floating in the air.

Watching now.

Watching from directly behind his perspective.

As Sir Roderick Spode stormed out of a very large and fancy looking building.

Chapter End Notes

Idea for some fan art.

Star in full Butterfly mode. Hands over heart.

Behind this, Spider, full sized. Towering over Star.

Spider got squished by Eclipsa, Star said so in Shadows. Well, here's the squishing.
Nyktipolos

Chapter Summary

The tale of how Sir Roderick Spode came to Mewni.

Chapter Notes

Damn this is going to be a long chapter! Essential though.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Roderick Spode stormed out of Totliegh Towers. His near limitless rage boiling to the surface after having to put on another act of being a cowering fool in front of Bertie Wooster.

"I can't believe he got me again! I mean, how is that man always three steps ahead of me!? How could he possibly know..."

Before he could say another word he crashed into a man coming from the other way. As the two men picked themselves up Roderick stated, "sorry, I really should watch where I'm going."

The man replied, "that's quite alright."

The two men stared at each other for a moment. Roderick asked, "I'm sorry I don't believe that I have met you before. I'm Sir Roderick Spode, Earl of Sidcup and you are?"

"Alestier, Alestier Crowley."

"Crowley...? Oh yes, come to think of it I have heard of you. Your magic is pretty popular with some of my friends. The so called Great Beast, ha."

Mr Crowley smiled and asked.

"Ha? So called?"

Sir Roderick explained in a conversational tone.

"Well, no offense, but the devil really should be someone who has a bit of upper body strength. I mean you...."

Sir Roderick's words were cut off by the impact of a paralytic spell into his left thigh.

Crowley asked smugly.

"How's all that upper body strength working for ya right now?"

Crowley pulled back the spell.

"Whoa! Ha!.... What was that?"
"A relatively simple spell, one that brings us closer, uncomfortably close in all honesty. So, what was it that you were yelling about right before you crashed into me?"

"It's Bertie Wooster. That... Ugh! I don't even know what to call him. An overgrown boy? Anyway, he... I'm just trying to be a friend to sir Basset. I'm married to his daughter, but Bertie turned them both against me tonight! The man is absolutely infuriating."

"Bertie Wooster, I know that name. Oh, is... Is he the chap who has Reginald Jeeves as a valet?"

"Yes, but I hardly see what that has to do with anything."

Crowley exploded in laughter. Soon he was bent over, slapping his thigh.

After a whole minute of raucous laughter sir Roderick asked, "um, care to fill me in on the joke?"

Wiping a tear from his eye Alestier continued.

"You went head to head with Jeeves. And you are still alive? Let alone able to walk? Wow, we really should have met sooner. I have nothing but respect for anyone who survives a disagreement with Jeeves."

Crowley stood back and licked his lips.

Sir Roderick anxiously replied. "So, what was it you were saying about Jeeves?"

"Oh yes, Jeeves is a man with no... magical abilities I know of. Yet his name is spoken of in hushed tones across time and space. He has, no he is a power you can hardly comprehend. Hell, I can hardly comprehend it. Anyway, yeah, that you have faced him and lived is... Wow."

"I still don't understand. What is it that makes this Jeeves fellow so... Dangerous?"

"Well, to most people it's nothing. Jeeves is a very even tempered fellow. Most of the time. I suppose, on this plane of existence. Jeeves draws a great deal of his power from being a member of the Junior Ganymede Club. They are an organization that you will find to be quite... Unassailable."

"The Junior Ganymede... Isn't that just a bunch of valets?"

"Valets to the rich and powerful. Valets who have long memories. Valets who record intimate details which could be very... useful for a blackmailer."

It dawned on sir Roderick. "So, that's where Bertie keeps getting this information! I used to have a... Damn! He must have gotten this information from... Graugh that son of a goddamn bitch! Highest levels of discretion my foot!"

Sir Roderick roared in frustration.

"Do you know what that... Wooster has cost me this time? My wife! Madeline, she says that she can't be married to a man who..."

Crowley held up his hands and said, "it's fine, it's fine. Now, what are you going to do about it?"

Roderick looked back at Totliegh Towers and said, "well, I can't go back in there. Not until sir Watkin calms down at the least. And even if I could, what can I do? Go in there and say I'm being blackmailed?" Perhaps, "the butler did it?"
Crowley shook his head in the negative and said, "no, no you need to prove your case. You need to get into a position where no one will challenge you."

Sir Roderick straightened up and said, "I rather like the sound of that."

Crowley smiled and offered his hand.

"I would like to help you with this."

Sir Roderick stopped smiling as he realized.

"Wait, you... Apparently have some sort of magical powers. But you have introduced yourself to me as the great beast. Is this a join me or die sort of deal?"

"No, it's more a, get what you want at a price deal. You can walk away right now..."

Crowley finished retracting the paralytic spell.

"And nothing will happen. Time will go by and you will gradually fade into some of the more obscure elements of British history. Join me and we can... Well, I do have a bad habit of over promising and under delivering. So I will just say that I will do whatever I can to rid you of the scourge that is Bertie Wooster."

Crowley saw the uncertainty in Spode. Men like Spode weren't used to being uncertain about anything. Crowley made his final offer.

"I have a thing here tonight. So, give me your address and I will come visit you sometime tomorrow. I will ask you to set aside two items of great personal worth, Mr Spode."

"Um, it's Sir... I mentioned that I am an earl."

"Gods you are exasperating! Two items, great personal worth. See you tomorrow. Got it!"

Sir Roderick spent the next twenty nine hours feeling awfully anxious.

It used to be that he had the Black Shorts or his political machinations to keep him busy. But upon becoming the seventh earl of Sidcup he had retired from politics to focus on his life as a member of the aristocracy and starting a new family. Had he still been distracted by political machinations he probably wouldn't have become so obsessed with Bertie.

It wasn't that Bertie had a history of defeating him. It was who Bertie was that drove Sir Roderick mad. That an aimless member of the idle youth of the aristocracy had foiled him so many times.

No.

Even though he was a servant it made so much more sense now.

Reginald Jeeves was physically quite large and anyone who had ever spent any time around him regarded him as having a well above average intelligence.

Yes.

It was so much clearer now.

Since his conversation with Crowley everything was falling into focus.
Spode had been working for years to try to save the aristocracy from itself. The British government had been working for years to pass the most destructive policies possible. Disarmament of the military, bring in foreigners and worst of all. Tolerance of communist regimes.

Sir Roderick couldn't understand this at all.

Why would the aristocracy of any country tolerate a governmental system that would see every aristocrats property seized and then left dead in a ditch. It had happened in Russia, it had happened in Hungary. It had almost happened in Germany. But they had been stopped there, for now.

Germany was his best hope now.

If the Germans could get what they needed in terms of resources they might just be able to get rid of the communists in Russia.

But.

Sir Roderick and his allies couldn't focus on their plans so long as these... elements kept foiling them at every turn.

But now he knew, he could see.

And he might just have the weapon he needed in the form of Crowley to give him what he needed.

Just one clean shot.

If he could pressure his allies in parliament, and especially the House of Lords. He might just be able to...

No.

That wasn't the English way.

He had to clarify one thing first.

He sent a telegram to Reginald Jeeves, requesting a meeting at a public house not far from Totliegh Towers.

He had to know.

"Lord Sidcup, I was under the impression that our business had been concluded several days ago. Why do you wish to speak to me when it is my master...?"

"Oh, knock it off with the master stuff. I'm onto you."

"Onto me?"

"Yes."

Sir Roderick passed a newspaper over to Jeeves.

"The Spanish war is drawing to a close. Hitler and Mussolini have Germany and Italy under their control. Austria is about to go away as a separate country. Things are forming up and we all know what they are forming into. There is a war coming, I know we all fought against it after the last one
but it's too late. Communism is an inherently illogical, cruel and anti human system. And as long as the Russians are under a communist regime they will continue to export their vile ideas and they will continue to find dupes and psychopaths to make their utopia of the proletariat."

"Now what I don't understand."

Sir Roderick looked directly into Jeeves's eyes.

"Is why these people have been allowed to run around wreaking havoc for as long as they have. Especially in this country."

Jeeves put down the paper and replied, "because we live in a democratic society. And all societies, democratic or not allow some measure of free speech. Even if ones ideas are vile I and most other people will defend to our deaths the right for those vile people to say their piece."

"Oh don't give me that baloney. This isn't about free speech and you know it."

Sir Roderick reached into an attaché case. He spoke very quietly.

"Look here, the American, British and French governments have been directly paying huge subsidies to the communists. In Russia and elsewhere. There have been massive technology transfers. Russia used to be a society that could barely build a bolt action rifle. Now they are building some of the finest tanks in the world. There are people in western governments who are actively helping the communists and I have had enough of this. I will see these traitors arrested and made to pay for their crimes."

Jeeves blinked and replied, "rather interesting observations Lord Sidcup. But what does any of this have to do with me?"

"Something has been bothering me for years. When I go around to various noble houses in England and elsewhere and present my evidence I keep encountering the same response. The nobles look at what I have to say, they reply that this is outrageous and that something has to be done. Then I try to contact them a few days later and they don't want to talk about this anymore. After about the ninth time this happened I began to suspect a conspiracy. Once I suspected a conspiracy I went looking for suspects. Naturally a few members of the aristocracy are communist or at the least, socialist sympathizers. But none of them had the resources, the skill or the wherewithal to go around threatening fellow nobles into silence."

Sir Roderick took his papers back and snapped his attaché case shut.

"Then I looked into other suspects. Was it the security services? No, although what my sources in MI5 told me was quite fascinating. They illustrated was that they were quite aware of this conspiracy and at various times they had been told to do thing that seemed to run counter to the national interest."

"Then."

"A few days ago."

"The last time I was at Totliegh towers, as I imagine you have already guessed."

"It all snapped into focus."

"It wasn't the aristocracy."
"It was their valets."

"You and your friends have been influencing the most powerful people in Britain and elsewhere for years. Now, despite what some people may think I am willing to consider outside opinions. But I am not willing to surrender my property, my country and my people to the whims of a pack of murderous fanatics. So, I'm going to give you a chance to explain yourself before I move ahead."

"And what would moving ahead entail, Lord Sidcup?"

"Thats for me to know and you to find out. Now, if you would please...?"

Jeeves rubbed his face, he looked exasperated. Sir Roderick already felt like he had his victory. Jeeves always looked unflappable, not matter the circumstances. This was as 'flapped' as Sir Roderick had ever seen him. Jeeves continued.

"Have... You ever wondered how the aristocracy has been able to hold onto power over all these centuries? Because no one was able to come up with a better system. There were plenty of rebellions, but they rarely succeeded and when they did the victors of the rebellion simply became a new class of nobility."

"In these rebellions most people sided with the nobility because they realized that it was better to deal with the devil they knew than the devil they didn't. When you read about the demands of medieval peasant rebellions it's really quite amusing how minor and reasonable most of what they demanded was. And they were slaughtered for this."

Jeeves sighed and continued to explain.

"In 1914 Europe was given a choice. Continue to build a world of reason, logic and scientific advancement, or go back to the way things were before Napoleon. Certain people made the wrong decisions and we wound up in a war that made anything Napoleon did look like a minor grilling accident in the garden of the Tuilleries palace. Logic was consumed by patriotism. Reason was drowned in a sea of blood and scientific advancement went from something that worked towards the uplift of all humanity to something that was only perceived as being useful for the creation of newer and better weapons."

"When the war ended most people wanted to do was to go back to the way things were before. But we can't go back, no matter how hard we try and oh how we tried. Too much had changed, too much had been lost. So, the only way out, is through. Socialism and communism are inherently flawed ideas. Popular ideas with the poor and downtrodden certainly. But fundamentally impossible. The best way to inoculate someone to the ideas of socialism is to illustrate its failures. So, the socialists are allowed to run amok. Even in this country with the Fabian society. It's much easier to blow up trains than to get them to run on time. The more power the socialists get the more the world world will learn of how dangerous these ideas are and once they learn. Once they truly comprehend... then these ideas will fade into nothingness."

Sir Roderick was speechless, he barely stammered out.

"But... This is madness. If a war breaks out and the Russians win then..."

"Then the Americans will stop them. If they can't then communism will spread around the world. When that happens it will not take more than ten years for this global communist empire to fall apart. It will be like so many other empires built on religious fervor. They will fall to squabbling amongst themselves and a new system will be tried that doesn't incorporate communisms numerous flaws. Sir Roderick you have to see that is the inevitable result of all this. Ever since the war
people have been baying for more blood. They have demanded that the sacrifices paid in the war be reimbursed, or at the very least. Made to mean something. Those who want blood will get it. Those who survive will be shown the errors of their ways."

"But how many have to die until that gets through?"

Jeeves stood up and looked down at the seated Sir Roderick. "As if you and your friends are any better. You seek to exterminate communism by force of arms. You and your fascists are almost as given to oppression, tyranny and corruption as the communists. You and the communists are just two sides of the same coin. You both seek the apocalypse."

Sir Roderick sighed and asked.

"Jeeves, I imagine you know the original meaning of the word, apocalypse? It's Greek, meaning the unveiling. A revelation of knowledge. Im going to show the world who you really are. the time I'm done with you and the Fabians and every other damn communist sympathizer in the British government. Yes I admit, I'm a fascist. I have a tendency towards seeking violent and direct solutions to problems. But by that you should have realized that someone who believes in these direct solutions I will not be cowed. So, if you don't want me... Unveiling everything just yet. Please, I don't know how you can do it, but... Please. Just give me Madelyn back."

"No."

"What do you mean no?!"

Jeeves very firmly replied.

"I. Mean. No. Miss Basset, yes she has already chosen to drop your name. She is going about her life as a self actualized young woman instead of being tied to you."

Sir Roderick coughed and finished with the words.

"Gi... Okay, be that way."

Spode stormed out of the public house. Whispering to himself, "okay fine, apocalypse it is."

Sir Roderick drove back to his manor house.

As he walked into the dining room of his estate he noticed that the walls were painted with bizarre sigils and wallpapered with paintings, individual pages of books, drawings, scribbles, script and a variety of other nonsense. The rest of the hall was filled with a variety of strange looking artifacts, books and devices. Crowley himself was hanging from a harness directly above a giant cluster of Quartz crystals of various colors. The central crystal being clear.

Crowley looking oddly like the magical version of a man dangling off the side of a ship to paint it.

There was a giant red sigil painted on Sir Roderick's dining room table.

Sir Roderick put two fingers through the substance the table had been painted with and immediately recognized the scent. He said to the suspended man.

"Okay mr Crowley, you can go now."

"What?"

"Our business is concluded. Please take your... Entourage and kindly leave my home."
Crowley let himself down with surprising dexterity, asking.

"But I thought we were going to..."

Sir Roderick cut him off by saying.

"You thought wrong, you unbalanced nitwit."

Sir Roderick snapped his fingers. As a man carried a bundle of books from Sir Roderick's car he explained to Crowley.

"I hired this man to break into the Junior Ganymede Social Club. The club book... Or should I say, books, are mine. With the information in these I can blackmail anyone I want. Into doing whatever I want. Oh yes, some really big investigations and scandals are going to..

Sir Roderick shook his head and concluded.

"So thanks for the tip. Now please take you, your whole satanic shtick, your entourage, your... what I really hope is pigs blood! and any more mention of magic. Out of my house!!!"

Crowley's jaw dropped. He shrieked. He shrieked louder than he had ever shrieked before. His two person entourage came running, they looked up at the bundle of books that a servant had just brought in.

The woman shouted, "you have doomed us all!"

"What do you mean?" Asked Sir Roderick.

The male acolyte shouted over the sound of Crowleys screams.

"Items like that are under magical protection. If you steal them without neutralizing the magical elements then they can be tracked. Tracked right back here!

Spode looked down.

He wondered if it could be possible.

A radio tracker.

A spy toy.

Yes it was possible, even without magic.

The doorbell rang.

Crowley and his acolytes froze. Standing, holding each other. Silent and motionless.

Sir Roderick walked back through the foyer to the front door. The thief accompanying him.

He opened the door.

"Lady Florence, what are you doing here this evening?"

"Oh, I was just wandering around at night. When I see ah, this guy... stealing some books from a social club run by some friends of mine. So, do you want me to call the authorities, or are you going to let me in?"
The thief looked around.

Lady Florence placed her hand on the thief's right shoulder and whispered in his ear. "I suggest you start running."

The thief did so.

As he dashed across sir Roderick's front lawn, sir Roderick hung his head in shame and gestured for lady Florence to come into his home.

Cray looked around the room.

She couldn't believe her luck. She really couldn't, no, this had been predestined.

This was all exactly what she needed.

Crowley and his two acolytes just stood there with their mouths open.

Lady Florence smiled.

She looked directly at Crowley.

"Well, are we going to fight? Or are you just going to stand there looking like an idiot?"

Crowley threw up his hands.

As they started moving lady Florence reached down to her hip and said something.

"Remnant of Nyktipolos, hear my plea. Throw in your lot... with me."

Lady Florence exploded in a flash of light. When everyone's eyesight came back no one could comprehend what they were looking at. Spode especially felt like he was having trouble seeing it. Like it was not really there, or at least, not supposed to be there. He wondered if this was some kind of after effect of the explosion. He looked closer.

His eyes were drawn to her costume. Her magnificently complex costume.

High heeled boots.

Very expensive looking high heeled white leather boots.

He looked up.

The aforementioned expensive boots were attached via a garter to a very complex, yet very revealing pair of panties with a ruff attached to the hips. Even though there was a lot of material it also showed off an absolutely absurd amount of skin.

Sir Roderick had once designed and sold ladies underwear for a living. He knew exactly what he was looking at but this was unbelievable. The materials. The flash. The sheer effort and complexity of this design was mind boggling in both its detail and sheer audacity!

Her arms were completely enclosed with an incredibly complex pair of fabric sleeves. Terminating in a matched set of black velvet gloves.

Her long, straight dark hair radiated around her like a cape.
The shoulder pads were just too much. Their design was so complex and tall that sir Roderick couldn't even comprehend a possible purpose or intent other than to look ridiculous.

She was holding a sword with a glass blade. Aimed directly at Crowley's throat.

She turned towards sir Roderick.

This woman had a very nice rack.

Sir Roderick wondered what the heck was going on here. Was this even lady Florence anymore? Never mind the bizarre costume this... being had ridiculously big eyes and a general appearance that was not unlike a hallucination.

Then he realized, he had spent so much time looking at her costume that he didn't notice who was wearing it. Lady Florence had been replaced by a girl in her late teen years with huge eyes and massive mammaries who sir Roderick did not recognize at all. He stammered out the words.

"Who... What... Are you?"

She looked directly at him and put her finger on her chin as if she was thinking carefully. In a high pitched voice she replied.

"Really? Baron Sidcup, you really don't recognize me anymore?"

"Well."

She took on a dramatic pose and her voice took on an even higher pitch.

"I am the last fragment of a mind that has wandered the universe since before time began. This fragment was once called Nyktipolos, now all that's left of her is, well, this uniform and this sword. I am... Maho Shojo Lady Florence Cray!"

Sir Roderick simply replied in a confused tone.

"Really, because you don't look or sound anything like her."

The woman with freakishly big eyes blinked twice and poofed into the same form she had been in when she walked in the front door. The now conservatively dressed Englishwoman with much curlier hair had a slight smirk on her face explained.

"Yeh I know that form looks ridiculous. But apparently some variation of that outfit is the preferred look for some of the most powerful magical warriors in all of existence. Or at least the female ones."

Her clothes poofed into a different form. She still looked like lady Florence. Now dressed in that incredibly revealing yet complex costume. She explained further.

"Magical warriors draw power from various sources. One of which is the male gaze. So, the sexier and more complex the costume, the more men and most women are distracted by it. Look, I'm distracting you now, aren't I?"

Before sir Roderick could think up a reply, Crowley screamed, "kill her! Now!" His acolytes looked around and found a couple of swords on the wall. As they stormed back to get them Crowley launched his magical shield towards Lady Florence.

In an impossibly fast motion she slashed the shield away.
Lady Florence smiled.

"Ah, I was hoping that you might give me a workout."

The male acolyte had his sword.

He was five steps away from her.

Lady Florence shot forward almost faster than the eye could see and made one cut.

The male acolyte, and his sword were bisected clean in two. His blade clattered to the floor. Moments later the top half of his body followed.

The female acolyte hesitated.

Lady Florence held out her sword as though it were a fencing foil. High and delicately, inviting the acolyte to attack.

The female acolyte did so. Not actually knowing anything about sword fighting all she could really do was either slash wildly or try to mirror her opponent.

Lady Florence slashed the acolyte's sword in half.

As the acolyte looked down at the sword handle she was left holding, Lady Florence grabbed the acolyte and pulled her into a passionate kiss on the lips.

When she released the acolyte lady Florence simply said, "hmm, you taste nice? Do you... Want to live? Or do you want me..."

Before Lady Florence could finish the sentence the acolyte ran for it, lady Florence shouted after her, "if you ever speak of this to anyone, I'll kill you and your whole family!"

Lady Florence focused on Crowley again.

The last magician standing was standing behind an infernal pentagram pattern suspended in the air. Another magical shield, except this one looked much thicker. He sternly addressed her.

"I don't think even your blade can cut through this, lady Florence."

Crowley rasped.

He held his hands in a weird looking position. Very symmetrical.

Lady Florence stabbed her blade into the runes. As she growled out the words.

"Ah, you are only powering that spell with your own life energy and the life energy of the items around you. I'm powered by something much greater than that."

Crowley continued gesturing. He was summoning more energy for the shield as the blade bit further into it. Working its way into gaps in the runes and sigils being projected into the air.

Crowley spoke again in a big booming voice.

"You and your idiot friends in the Theosophy Society are a bit more powerful and certainly more determined than I thought you were. But you can't possibly hope to stop me. I have dedicated my life to this. My craft is flawless!"
The shield became thicker, more perfect. Crowley continued.

"I have conducted rituals in the great pyramid itself. I have spoken to entities beyond this world. What do you have? A ridiculous costume, and a fancy sword?"

The floor opened up beneath Lady Florence. The wooden tongue and groove flooring seemed to take on the appearance of being a giant wooden mouth with jagged teeth.

Lady Florence pushed harder against the shield. Gritting her teeth. Transforming all the way back into the bizarre cartoon like form.

She was losing.

She couldn't get through the shield.

And she was being eaten by the floor.

Then she remembered who she was.

"You arent the only one here who has spoken to entities. You claim that you have spoken to beings beyond this world. I am driven by a power not even of this universe."

Crowley laughed.

"Ha, once you are gone the rest of your little conspiracy will be nothing more than dust in the wind and we can get down to the real work."

Lady Florence slashed with her sword against the wooden floor that was consuming her. Wood splinters bit into her flesh. She screamed in pain as she tried to power through.

Crowley stopped laughing.

And fell over unconscious.

Lady Florence looked down.

There was a piece of very finely carved and dense wood in the shape of a snake lying in front of her. It looked like the top part of a cane.

The bottom part of the cane was in Sir Roderick's right hand. He had just broken it over Crowleys head.

Lady Florence pulled herself out of the now motionless floor. She pulled out a thin rope hidden in her right glove and hog tied Crowley.

Lady Florence looked up at Sir Roderick and exhaled the words, "thanks, but why did you help me?"

"Crowley and his... People have been staying here for the past few days. They creeped me out and I wanted them gone. Just before you showed up I had asked them to leave."

Sir Roderick looked over at the bisected corpse of the male acolyte.

"What the heck is going on here?!?!?" He roared in confusion.

Lady Florence replied, "oh, same as any other war. Conflicting ideas, people fight and sometimes
they die. Mr Crowley here introduces himself as the great beast. Now, what was it that Satan said, 'it's better to rule in hell than serve in heaven?' Crowley here has been acquiring magical talents and items for an attempt to take over British high society for a few years now. With the books from the Junior Ganymede Club he would have had everything he needed."

Lady Florence picked up the books off the floor.

"But he had a somewhat more refined plan in mind than just sending a third rate second story man in to steal the books."

Sir Roderick asked. "What is your relationship to the Junior Ganymede Club?"

Lady Florence smiled and replied, "a close one. We at the Theosophy Society are the dreamers of dreams. The Junior Ganymede members provide us with what we need to dream those dreams. We protect them and they protect us. Ever since you talked to Jeeves he has had me stake out your house in anticipation of you doing something like this."

She opened up one of the books and held its pages, reverently.

"The information in these books could ruin every single noble house in Britain. Along with several in France, Italy and Germany."

Lady Florence reached into her left shoulder pad and extracted a flask. She opened up the books and poured the liquid in that flask all over the books.

In a matter of moments the books began to dissolve.

"No one can be trusted with this information. So, if anyone asks the books were destroyed by accident during my fight with Crowley and his minions. Got it?"

Sir Roderick exhaled in relief as the paper dissolved.

Lady Florence looked down at the tied up Crowley and asked.

"So, What were your two items of great personal worth?"

"What?"

"Crowley, that's a big part of his shtick. He doesn't just want your soul, he wants your stuff. He usually asks for this, that and two items of great personal worth. What were yours?"

He looked down at the remaining half of the cane in his hand and explained.

"This, It belonged to my grandfather. Horrible heartless man, but I liked his cane."

He moved over to the table, still covered in bloody sigils.

"This is the other, my wedding ring. Considering that Madelyn probably isn't coming back to me I figured that it was something I could do without."

Sir Roderick wiped the blood off the ring and slipped it back on his finger.

Lady Florence frowned and said.

"Oh boy, that's going to make this a lot harder."
What do you mean?

"I mean, jeez. Okay, you knocked out the bad guy, you showed remorse. But here's the thing. I... Can't let you live."

"Can't let me..."

Sir Roderick looked around. All he had in the way of weapons was half of a broken piece of wood. Still, despite his opponent's obvious superiority in weapons he solemnly said.

"I will not go down that easily."

Lady Florence held up her hands and explained.

"Hold on, I can't let you live, here. Listen, you have made some seriously powerful enemies. Enemies that won't stop until they have collected your head. Look, Madelyn has left you and I think you know what's going to happen next."

"What?"

Lady Florence walked towards him with utter confidence.

"Sir Roderick, when you were talking to Jeeves you made it clear that you believe a war is coming and you are right. But when that war comes what part do you think you will play in it? You... Sided with the fascists. When the war breaks out you will be arrested. There is no way that this country is going to side with the fascists. At best you will be hounded, exiled, hated. And your involvement in the theft of the books of the Junior Ganymede Club, you will most likely just be killed."

She turned away from him, chuckling like a girl.

"There is a war coming. There will be fire and blood everywhere. Your friends in Germany and Italy will fail and be consumed. So many will be consumed. But we will learn, this conflict will allow us to learn the secrets of the universe. The microcosm that affects the Macrocosm. The war will force us to learn what we truly are, who we truly are. We will be able to track, trace, remember. And what greater gift could a life form have than to be reminded who they really are?"

Sir Roderick looked uncertain, confused.

It was all she needed.

Lady Florence kicked Sir Roderick in the belly, sending him flying onto the table. Then she threw the cane fragments on the table.

"Listen, Earl Sidcup. This is going to sound really crazy. But hear me out. You aren't going to be able to live anywhere on this planet anymore without having an assassin's blade about five hundred steps away."

The blood of the acolyte was flowing into the sigil.

"So, with that threat in mind, I am sending you away."

Lady Florence walked around the room, moving various items, ever so carefully.

"When I was born I was given a piece of knowledge. That we live in a multiverse and that beyond this multiverse, there are other multiverses. These other universes feed upon each other like
animals. And that the purpose of my existence was to prevent my multiverse from being fed upon. By the oldest and strongest multiverse of them all. I had to accumulate knowledge, power and artifacts and that when the time was right I would stand before all creation and offer up a sacrifice in place of my multiverse.

Lady Florence stopped.

She shook her head in disbelief over the fact that she was actually saying this out loud. She had never explained this to anyone, ever.

"I saw this message repeated to me, over and over again in ways that shouldn't have been possible. The message was insistent and cruel. I did everything I could to ignore it. Then the day after my eighth birthday I found this buried in my backyard."

She held up her sword.

"When I found it there wasn't much left of it. Just a handle. But as soon as I touched it, it was restored. The blade of Nyktipolos. After it regenerated I transformed into the form you see now and... I knew, it was all spelled out for me. That I was being guided by a fragment to a fragment of a spirit that died a very long time ago. Her body died, her spirit moved on. But her weapon remained, here for me to use to defend our multiverse."

Lady Florence sheathed her sword and moved a few more things around.

"You may wonder what all these bloody sigils and various magical devices scattered around the room are for? Well, your power mad friend here was trying to build a perceptual hijacking system. A device which allows people to control other people. For short periods of time it places the consciousness of one person in total control of another persons body. It's a forbidden technique. But ol Alestier here is all about the taboo."

As she moved a few more items into position she took on a distracted tone.

"This design is crude, amateurish, and yet very easily adapted..."

"Yes."

Spode pulled up his fists. They impacted a magical shield. Lady Florence chuckled and stated.

"I couldn't get through that shield with a sword that is supposed to be able to cut through, literally anything. What chance do you have with your fists? I'm going to use this device to send your consciousness to a whole other multiverse. I'm sorry to inform you Sir Roderick, but it appears you have become our multiverse's chosen sacrifice."

Lady Florence moved the last item into position. Her perception shifted.

Lady Florence could still see the house around her. But it was like an outline now. A tracing of a child's artwork.

She wept at the grandeur of what lied beyond that.

The works of man could feel so grand at times. And so insignificant at others.

She could also see the other multiverse bearing down on her plane of existence. As clearly as a full moon in a cloudless sky.
It was an infinite recursion she realized.

Sentient life would always look up at the stars.

Even if we somehow settled all of the worlds of a universe. Life would always look up at the stars if it could.

She breathed deeply and looked down at the trapped Earl.

"The device is operational. I have the power to get you to the other multiverse, kind of. To facilitate the energy transfer needed to make the machine work I'm going to need... Well, there's no other way to do it. This device is Crowely's and like most of the magicks that Crowley practiced. It involves blood."

She gripped her sword.

She grabbed the tied up, but now no longer unconscious Crowley and propped him up against the large crystal centerpiece as she roared.

"Lucky for all of us he didn't specify whose blood!"

Aliester Crowley was bifurcated by the blade. The clear crystal he had been dangling over began to glow red.

Somehow, despite being split in half Crowley was still alive. Feeling two halves of his being, not just his body, being sucked, molecule by molecule into the crystal.

His energy became one with the crystal.

His soul, what was left of it, became one with the crystal.

His blood became one with the crystal.

His body became one with the floor.

Sir Roderick looked down. The brownish red sigils were now glowing white.

Chapter End Notes

For those of you who don't sell ladies underwear for a living, the fine details of Lady Florence's costume can be viewed here.


Everything except the sword. That came from the TV show Lucifer (dimensional sword as opposed to dimensional scissors.) and the work of APW.
The return of Star Butterfly.

Chapter Summary

After years in exile Star Butterfly returns to Mewni.

And is immediately arrested.

We also have the loooooooooong anticipated conversation between Pauline and Roy the cop.

Pauline and Star sat across from Roy.

After years of thinking about it, obsessing over it. Pauline had finally done it. Though after no small amount of prompting from Star.

Roy's wife Yuki was off visiting relatives in California. So Pauline and Star simply went over to his house one evening and after dinner Pauline dumped everything on Roy about his long dead brother Kevin.

The perversion. The drunkenness, the crash. And perhaps most painfully. Kevin's last words.

"That way I can dump you with a clear conscience, Babe."

Roy just didn't know what to say.

He didn't know what to do.

Pauline was his best friend.

And Kevin had been his brother.

If an investigation happened things would come out. Things that most sane people would probably say were better left forgotten. And at this point the punishment would probably be community service. Although if a felony conviction emerged it would probably wreck Pauline's life.

Roy exhaled in frustration as he rubbed his hands all over his face. Wondering what to do.

Then he looked over at Pauline's girlfriend and realized that no matter what he did. This was bigger than him and his family.

Star Butterfly, an actual magical Queen from another dimension. As much as Roy didn't want to believe it he had seen the truth for himself. If they wanted to then Star and Pauline could both flee to the literal edge of the universe. Well outside anyone's jurisdiction. As it was one of the first things that they had talked about was that they would be leaving Earth for an indeterminate period of time and wanted to get this out of the way before they left.

Roy just pressed his hands together and sighed. "Pauline... I just don't know. I mean, I understand that it was an accident but... I just..."

Pauline stood up, put her hand on his shoulder and said, "I'm sorry Roy. I really am. I wish it hadn't
happened like that, I wish it hadn't happened at all. But it did and I can't apologize enough for that."

Roy just kept staring at Star Butterfly. As strange as it was he blamed her as much as he blamed Pauline. Possibly even more so. What kind of person leaves a friend without so much as a letter for a decade? If Star hadn't skipped town and left Pauline such a basket case that she was willing to...

To dive headfirst into the depths of his brothers madness.

Roy had loved his brother, but he had never fully understood him. He had noticed that there was a darkness in Kevin. A narcissism that Roy had never understood and never really wanted to understand. There had been several incidents where Kevin had done profoundly rotten things and Roy, or someone else had covered for him.

Kevin had seemed to be doomed to the life of a dirtbag, even before the crash.

But still.

Roy just didn't know what to do.

As everyone just sat around Roy's living room staring at their shoes, Star was the first to speak up.

"Um, this is all kinda... Serious, so we should probably be going. Pauline and me are going on a trip, well, it's more of a mission. I have some things in another dimension that I have to take care of. It will probably be good not to have us bothering you for a little while."

Roy looked right at Star. His cop sense was pinging uncontrollably. There was more to this, but he didn't want to dig. He just wanted to crawl into bed and cry. As Pauline and Star left his house he did say one last thing.

"Long?"

"Yeah?"

"I don't know what it is you and your girlfriend are going to be dealing with out there but, please. Come back alive."

Pauline took one last look at her car.

"Sorry darling, but you can't come where we are going."

Star walked up, "uh, you know we could take it with us. Ms Heinous drove a car all over the multiverse."

Pauline shook her head and replied. "Star, most of the roads of Mewni are barely good enough for all terrain vehicles. This thing would be trapped forever after ten minutes driving in those mud wallows."

Star looked again and said, "yeah, you're probably right. Well, are we going? or have you rethought this whole 'we both face our worst fears' thing?"
"Yeah, I fulfilled my end. We should probably get you squared away.

Star took a deep breath. Pauline asked.

"Are you okay?"

"Not really, but let's do this anyway."

Star cut open a dimensional portal. It led to a spot between the Forest of No Return and the Mewnian metropolitan area. Star believed that this would be far enough away from the hubbub of the city to avoid traffic.

The portal opened in the middle of a farmers potato patch. Pauline stepped through the portal with her hand on her new pistol. She sealed the portal after Star stepped through and stated, "okay, let's get going." As Star pulled her cloak tighter. She was not looking forward to the inevitable moment where someone recognized her.

Star grew more paranoid with every step towards Mewni castle. Pauline put an arm around her for reassurance. After awhile they walked past construction sites for suburban homes, finding a recently finished concrete road that led straight to the new parliament building.

Instead of going to the parliament building, Star and Pauline walked into a police station. A chicken monster was working at the reception desk, without looking up from his paperwork he asked.

"So, what's your business?"

Star was just focusing on her breathing. Pauline spoke for her.

"I am escorting a fugitive."

"Name of fugitive?"

Star removed her hood, "Queen Star Butterfly."

The chicken monsters beak swung wide open. The three other police in the reception area immediately drew their weapons. One shouted into a radio, "code black, repeat code black! All units swarm station four immediately! The queen has returned, repeat the queen has returned, station four! We need militia reinforcement, notify Hekapoo immediately!"

Star discarded her cloak and raised her hands, announcing. "Don't panic, I don't have the wand."

The three officers immediately grabbed Star and cuffed her. The chicken man got up and asked Pauline.

"How the hell did you capture her? Bounty hunters have been chasing Queen Star for years now."

Pauline explained, "I didn't capture her, I just made Star see reason."

The chicken man made a cackling laugh, "bu kaw! Made her see reason? That's rich."

Militiamen and more police swarmed into the reception area. All very heavily armed, most were wearing armor. The chicken cop shouted, "calm down everyone, she doesn't want a fight."

A dimensional portal opened outside, Hekapoo walked into the station. All movement stopped as the flame sorceresses examined the exiled Queen.
Hekapoo popped Star right in the face with a right hook. The arresting officers took Star into another room while police officers and militiamen grabbed Hekapoo as she shouted.

"I owed you that, Butterfly!"

An officer in a very fancy uniform shouted, "get her out of here and get Ms Butterfly to booking."

He looked at Pauline and extended his hand, "Armin Foffmin, chief of police of Mewni City. I just wanted to say that it's an honor to meet the bounty hunter who finally took down the queen of pain."

"Queen of pain? No, I talked her into turning herself in."

He blinked and ushered Pauline towards his office, explaining. "However you took her down, thank you, come with me please we have much to discuss."

The chief pulled out a bottle of what looked like very expensive liquor. He offered some to Pauline, she politely refused. Chief Foffmin chuckled and observed.

"Don't drink on duty eh? Well I shouldn't either, but I have been looking forward to this for much too long to wait until my shift is over, our little secret then."

He downed a shot and sat down. As he poured another shot he asked.

"So, tell me, how did you capture the second most dangerous being in the multiverse?"

Pauline replied. "I'm more interested in finding out who the most dangerous being in the multiverse is."

The police chief recoiled in shock, "you must have been spending a lot of time on some backwater planets if you haven't heard of Tyhjiö."

"I guess so, so, who is this Tyhjiö?"

Well, information is a bit spotty and contradictory and weird. Some believe him to be one of the monsters who escaped from Rhombulus's home. This is subject to debate because there was no record of him ever being there. Either way he is a monster, a humanoid monster. Bears a striking resemblance to prime minister Diaz. Around two months ago there was a terrorist attack. A warehouse filled with a variety of dangerous, flammable and toxic chemicals went kaboom. One of the biggest explosions in the history of Mewni. Not the biggest though. After the explosion a whole bunch of leaflets were found around the scene. They read, ahem."

The chief reached into his desk and pulled out a copy.

"Hekapoo, I have been waiting a very, very, very long time for this. Either come and get me or I swear more mortal lives will be lost. And if that doesn't weigh on your conscience then I will keep cutting until I find a throat that you do care about. There will be no more games, gambits or ploys. I know the wand is out of the picture. Let us finally settle our disagreements on our terms, nobody else's. Love, Tyhjiö."

"Ever since then Hekapoo, the Mewnian military and a huge force of bounty hunters has been plowing through the multiverse looking for him. And so far they have found nothing."

Pauline replied.
"Shit, it sounds like someone needs to take this guy down."

"Well. The bounty on him is a thousand bezants, dead. If the bounty for Queen Star isn't enough for you..."

Before Pauline could say anything else Ferguson barged into the room. Pauline got up and hugged him, he pulled out of the hug and said. "It's great to see you again, you brought in Star?"

"Yeah, now like I said. I want her to see a fair trial. If I think something scummy is happening I'm going to get the wand out of its hidey hole. So, what's this I'm hearing about someone named Tyhjiö?"

Ferguson gestured for Pauline to go outside with him.

By the time she got outside Star was outside as well.

Star was lashed to a hand truck, they had given her the full Hannibal Lecter treatment, restraints, straightjacket and face mask. As they wheeled her into a paddy wagon Pauline asked.

"Is all that really necessary?"

Ferguson explained, "most of the Mewnian army saw Star doing the monster hunting thing at some point. They know she doesn't need the wand to do magic. So they aren't taking any chances."

"Well, yeah, but she is better now! and she didn't hurt Hekapoo, Marco and the others on purpose. She had been mind-fucked!... even harder than I mind-fucked her."

"You... Mindfu..? Anyway we are keeping her under lock and key until we can iron all this out."

Pauline felt awful, she shouted to Star. "It will be okay! I'll do everything I can to get you out."

Just before they slammed the doors shut she shouted back. "You had damn well better! Or I swear I will haunt you good. Every night before you go to sleep my ghost will whisper, I'm coming for you StarFan!"
Chapter Summary

Solaria finds out that her boyfriend has been kidnapped.
This... Woman's nickname was 'The Monster Carver' right?

Prince Tanith's guards ran.
They ran until they saw the castle.
Then they ran even faster.
Solaria saw them coming. She knew that they couldn't possibly be bringing good news.
Without even bothering to salute they ran up.
"Your majesty."
"Prince Tanith has been captured. By six monsters in masks."
Solaria roared in anger. "Mobilize the Quick Reaction Force. Target, Castle Alvarius. That's their main strong point. If the prince isn't there there's bound to be someone there who knows what is going on."
The two guards saluted and went off to fulfill their orders while Solaria dashed back to her room to change out of her pajamas.
Solaria had been working on her new battle armor for a little while now. Since she could generate magical shielding her armor emphasized mobility and speed. But could still stop arrows or blades from penetrating her vital organs. Given the mood she had been in over the past week she had chosen to finish the armor with a heart motif. Often two hearts next to a lightning bolt. Signifying Hekapoo, Tanith and herself.
Once suitably armored Solaria sheathed her wand and grabbed the Magic Book of Spells. As she slammed it open on a windowsill. Glossarick fell out feeling quite confused, especially since he had been sleeping soundly just seconds before.
"Hey, ergh, um, what?"
"Glossarick, I know you can see things beyond what I can see. Where is Prince Tanith!?"
Still confused by the rude awakening, Glossarick yawned and asked. "You mean he is not here? I would have thought he would be sleeping like a brick after all that fun you had last..."
Solaria placed her fist around Glossarick and squeezed.
"Listen you incomprehensibly irritating little bastard. I know you like to play stupid games and generally be this mystic, wiseman, goofy troll character but I don't have fucking time for any of that bullshit right now. If you don't tell me where Prince Tanith is right now I swear I will bite your
head clean off!"

Glossarick took a breath and coldly stated, "let me go, right now."

Solaria did so.

Glossarick looked at her sternly and then proceeded to look around the area.

"Huh. Well that's odd. It seems the prince is not longer on Mewni. Can't seem to find him, wait, huh. Um, this is a little weird but it looks like he might be... Way up in the sky."

"The Cloud Kingdom?" Solaria asked.

"No, beyond that, far beyond. Up in space. Oh wait, no. No he was just portaled down to... Castle Alvarius. Yes, it looks like the prince and a whole bunch of monsters are down there."

Solaria grabbed the wand and was about to storm out of the room when Glossarick stated. "You know if you threaten me again, I won't stay around to help you."

Solaria snapped back. "You know there's something I have been thinking about a lot lately. With friends like you, who needs enemies?"

Solaria did not see the expression of disapproval on Glossarick's face as she stormed out of her room to where Hekapoo was sleeping. Blowing the door clean off its hinges, Hekapoo awoke with a start.

"Tanith has been kidnapped, they took him to castle Alvarius. Get your shit ready and let's go!"

As they stepped through the portal the monsters realized that they had been had.

"We were supposed to go back to Castle Alvarius! Where the hell issss this?" Shouted Seth.

"This is my ship."

Tyhjiö opened another portal. "This leads back to Castle Alvarius. You go back there and I keep the Prince all to myself. Your part in this is over, goodbye."

"I thought we were holding him for ransom?" Asked Rastacore.

"You thought wrong, now please leave."

The monsters drew their crossbows.

"Come on, I told you, I'm immortal. The most that those can do against me is..."

He was cut off by the barrage of five crossbow bolts being fired into his neck.

Tyhjiö fell to the deck.

Lazzaro very anxiously picked up Tyhjiö's scissors and stuck his head into the portal.

He took his head out.

"Huh, he wasn't lying. It's the castle, everyone else can come through."
The prince was thrown through the portal. Followed by Frizaelith, Rastacore and Toffee. Seth was about to pass through the portal when he stopped and put his hand on Lazzaros shoulder and sincerely said.

"Thank you."

Seth looked down and chuckled, "some immortality eh?"

Lazzaro smiled, "yeah, I thought he was full of shit too."

The moment Seth passed through the portal, Lazzaro felt a hand on his leg.

Lazzaro couldn't believe what he was looking at. Seeing Tyhjiö pull an arrow out of his neck. Specifically one that had penetrated his spinal column. Lazzaro was so horrified that he couldn't move.

Inside castle Alvarius, the reunited septarian order cheered at their victory. The Snake had remained behind at the castle. Being unable to hold or fire a crossbow he had stayed behind. Along with the orders larger and stronger monster allies.

Seth looked back for a moment, wondering why Lazzaro hadn't come through yet.

Something came hurtling out of the portal. So fast that no one could make out what it was. It went splat against a stone wall.

It went splat so hard that it was barely recognizable.

As Lazzaro Alvarius.

Seth turned back towards the portal.

And waited.

And waited.

And waited.

Tyhjiö stepped into the room. With two crossbow bolts still in his neck. In front of everyone he removed them. As this was happening Seth desperately reloaded his crossbow and shouted.

"Everybody run!"

The Snake coiled around Prince Tanith to whisk him off to a hiding space in the rafters of the castle.

Rastacore, Toffee, Seth and Frizaleth aimed their crossbows.

Tyhjiö finished pulling out the bolts. As his neck and vocal chords healed he spoke to the monsters in a gravely tone.

"I was trying to spare you. I want this to be between me and Hekapoo. But since you have insisted so strongly that you all have to be involved in this. Now you are all going to suffer indescribably."

As Tyhjiö separated his scissors, Toffee growled out a threat.
"We will find a way to kill you. It might take awhile, but we will find a way."

"It's not me you should be worried about." Tyhjïö smugly replied.

Shouts and screams echoed through the castle. Cries of, "the Monster Carver! Everybody run!" Echoed through the building.

Seth shouted, "someone tell the Snake to get the prince..."

He was cut off, quite literally. Tyhjïö had cut most of the left half of his body clean off. Toffee fired another bolt and shouted, "everybody move!"

Hekapoo and Solaria had arrived just outside the castle. Being the biggest and strongest monster military asset in Mewni, Solaria had war gamed attacks on Castle Alvarius hundreds of times.

But.

Every time the simulation had been either outright destruction, or a siege. Not a rescue.

So Solaria had come up with a plan on the fly. She and Hekapoo portaled to an area just outside the castle where Solaria would make a diversionary attack. She would slaughter as many monsters as it took to draw them out while Hekapoo searched the castle for the prince. Sheltered by a grove of trees Solaria and Hekapoo leapt out of the portal.

While Hekapoo got into position to sneak into the castle from the south, Solaria approached from the north.

As she came out from the trees Solaria stopped dead in her tracks.

A dozen monsters, all larger than the Hexapod were milling around in front of the castle.

Solaria gulped.

She didn't know if she could take this many at once.

She drew her wand and shouted.

"Hey, I hear you idiots have my friend Tanith. This is going to be your only warning. Hand him over right now."

She ignited the wand.

"Or suffer the consequences."

One monster pushed the others out of the way.

She was huge.

She was made of rocks.

She had six arms, three eyes and razor sharp teeth. Solaria immediately recognized her as being related to the Hexapod.

The stone monster let out a high pitched warbling screech that seemed to shake the very fabric of reality itself.
Solaria smiled and said, "okay, consequences it is."
Chapter Summary

This is a really hard chapter to summarize. So I suppose I will just list the characters.

Spode.
Mina.
Eclipsa.
Hekapoo.

Period of time is just after Sir Roderick's takeover of Mewni.

Or is it?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Sir Roderick hurtled through space.
He had no point of reference. But he knew he was moving a million times faster than any man made machine could ever go.

He could see all of the cosmos.

All at once.

No.

Two cosmo...

How is that?

What is that?

A woman?

Short, rounded, with horns and a light over her head.

He saw her.

She saw him.

That was all he knew.

As he fell.

His last thought before falling unconscious.
"That thing looked like a demon, so I suppose this other multiverse I am being fired towards is Hell. I suppose I deserve it for teaming up with the likes of Crowley."

This had been the longest, strangest and most puzzling dimension bumping incident in well over a million years. But it looked like it was finally over. The other brane was finally moving away. Moments before the other brane began retreating. Hekapoo had been treated to the sight of a man inexplicably flying through space.

She sent a clone after it. Hekapoo needed to stay out here in case the other brane decided to change its mind and start heading back this way in a hurry. But something, or more accurately, someone had clearly been launched from another multiverse into this one.

Hekapoo summoned another clone and handed her a spare pair of scissors.

Someone had to go with the clone. Someone who couldn't be blown out.

There was only one person in the multiverse with the very specific skill set required for this mission who wasn't busy at the moment. Someone who hadn't just had a kid. Someone who wasn't a squishy mortal monk. Someone who wasn't a complete fucking idiot, someone who wasn't as reliable as a klekraffian wristwatch. Or someone who's primary response to everything was to bleat at it.

"Hey Mina something has happened. I need someone with a particular set of skills to go find something for me and you are the only one I can trust who has those skills. There's something falling towards the Neverzone. I sent a clone after it."

Sir Roderick gasped awake.

He was on dry... Something, it felt brittle, like broken glass, only, soft somehow.

He carefully stood up.

All around him were petrified plants.

He had never seen anything that looked so delicate.

The plants and crystals appeared to be growing together. Half biological half mineral. He stared deeper and deeper into the plants and saw beauty. Incredible beauty. It was like light itself had been trapped in the plant. A prism of multicolored light refracting amongst itself.

He looked down at his hands.

As he had staggered to his feet he had picked up a number of these plant crystals and they were dissolving into cuts in his hands. He could feel them tunneling into his body.

Before Sir Roderick could say anything he heard a quiet chuckle.
Spode looked over.

Maho Shojo Lady Florence Cray was staring at him. With a look of amusement on her face.

"I've never seen anything like this place. It's like... A reservoir full of all the worst things ever. Bad energies, bad emotion. It's... This thing, this realm, I don't even know what to call it. It's bigger than a planet. It's as big as a solar system. It's... It's insane, time flows differently here. Not just in this other multiverse, but, like within the, anyway. This place provided the perfect target spot for your consciousness. These crystals seem to act as a sponge for all types of energy, especially negative energy which you are practically made of Spode."

The still utterly confused Sir Roderick asked.

"What? Why..."

The crystals dug deeper into his flesh, painfully.

Lady Florence explained further. "I'm not actually here right now. What you are looking at is an astral projection. Well, I simply must get back to my body. Don't want to get trapped here. Like you are."

An evil smile crawled across her face.

Sir Roderick shouted, "you can't just leave me here like... Aaaah!"

"Farewell Seventh Earl of Sidcup. Do try to make the best of your new existence. Hey, you're still alive aren't you? And so am I. The sacrifice worked out really well for you. You didn't even have to die. At least not yet."

And with that magical girl lady Florence Cray blinked out of the picture.

Sir Roderick looked around.

These crystals were all around him and they all looked razor sharp. It was like being surrounded by gorse bushes that could also eat you.

He still had his engagement ring on his finger.

He looked down.

The bottom half of the snake cane was still in his hand.

The top half of the cane was nowhere to be seen.

He wondered how he was going to get out of this.

This wasn't a problem he could fight his way out of.

As the crystals began to push skin out of the way he took a deep breath and did the only thing he could do.

"Help, somebody, anybody!"

He looked around.

Beyond the trees and plants were mists.
 Everywhere he looked there was nothing but mist.
The mist was probably absorbing the sound of his voice.
"Hello! Someone, anyone!"
"Hello."
Sir Roderick turned around.
It was the demon woman he had seen out in the vastness of space.
The demon woman looked like she had been beaten up.
Sir Roderick asked, "who are you and who hurt you?"
"The name is Hekapoo. As to who hurt me? Well, you did. I caught you before you crashed into the... Let's call it ground for now."
"Well, thank you."
The Hekaclone grunted at the sight of.
"Oh boy, Darcal crystals. Those probably really hurt, right?"
There was a sound.
Sir Roderick turned around.
"Madelyn!"
There was a woman standing behind him who looked exactly like his wife. But dressed nothing like her. Standing next to her was another of these demon women.
He felt something.
Something warm and liquid.
He had a nosebleed.
He had never had a nosebleed in his life. Well, once when a shell burst nearby during service in the Great War.
He couldn't figure out what had caused the nosebleed, but he knew blood made the crystals grow.
They were growing, around his feet. Madelyn shouted.
"Run, for gods sakes run towards us! get out of there!"
Sir Roderick started running.
Madelyn grabbed a gourd of water from her belt and threw it a distance away from a spot where Spode would have to run.
Spode looked over.
The crystals were moving towards the gourd.
He dashed nervously towards Madelyn. Holding his nose the whole time.

Once he was sure he was away from the moving crystals he sighed in relief. Then noticed that this woman who looked just like his wife was handing him a handkerchief.

He extended his hand to take the cloth and said.
"Thanks Madelyn. You saved my life."

"Who is Madelyn? My name is Mina, Mina Loveberry."

He felt weak.

He felt like he was going to pass out. He fell backwards, toward the crystals.

Mina reached out and grasped his hand.

Eclipsa felt her perspective shift.

The moment Mina and Spode's hands touched, Eclipsa went from looking at things from Sir Roderick's perspective to her own. Eclipsa felt herself lurch into existence just above where Sir Roderick was standing.

The Darcal crystals around them exploded. The two hekaclones were blown out. And Eclipsa realized too late that she had been pulled into a very long and careful con as she was pulled halfway through the Gordian Knot. Her presence here was needed to stabilize sir Roderick's existence. Sir Roderick was trying to will his physical body across the gap between multiverses. Mina was trying to pull Sir Roderick into this multiverse and Eclipsa had an absurdly powerful magical object on her that had already created a closed time loop.

The laws of physics around and inside sir Roderick's body were in flux. Deciding if the man from another plane of existence could be allowed to exist. Sir Roderick Spode, at this moment was an abstraction.

Mina transformed summoning the full strength of her Solarian Warrior form. She was going to pull sir Roderick through this if it was the last thing she did.

Something fell out of the sky. And landed right on Sir Roderick's head, knocking him unconscious.

The object bounced into the air. Falling right into Eclipsas right hand.

Mina grabbed it as well as something to brace her grip on her own multiverse.

Eclipsa realized that she had screwed up big time.

Seeing as how she was no longer in the throne room. She was in the Neverzone sometime in the past.

There was now just one sir Roderick in existence.

Just one Mina Loveberry.

And two Eclipsas. Her, here now. And the her who was sealed in crystal at the time at Rhombulus's place.

That was a bad enough paradox. Worse than that was the fact that despite the fact that sir
Roderick's ring had been reforged and remade and some Mewnian gold added to give it enough mass to go from being an engagement ring to a lordly signet ring. There was still the fact that there were now two of these rings in existence at this moment.

Eclipsa was wearing both a time and dimensional paradox on her right middle finger.

As Sir Roderick fell unconscious from the blow. Eclipsa and Mina looked at each other. Mina roared, "what do you think you are doing here?!" And punched Eclipsa so hard that she let go of the cane and flew clear out of the scene.

Eclipsa realized that she was back in the throne room and that time had resumed its normal flow. She took off the ring as fast as she could.

She threw it back at Sir Roderick, he caught it and moments later Eclipsa began to tear up as she realized.

"You couldn't keep sir Roderick alive in this dimension all by yourself. So you got me to help you."

She looked up.

Sir Roderick was holding the bottom half of the cane. Eclipsa realized.

"Oh no."

"Just because this guy doesn't use magic that doesn't mean he doesn't..."

Eclipsa reached for the wand.

It was still smoldering hot.

She hesitated.

In that moments hesitation the wand flew across the room. Smashing into the bottom of the cane.

The stick reassembled itself.

Into a cane.

Eclipsa whimpered out the words.

"Know magic."

Eclipsa looked on in horror as sir Roderick took the most powerful magical object in this universe into his grasp.

He could see everything now. He knew what had happened and why.

Eclipsa couldn't help but think. This was the second time she knew that a man had held the wand. And strangely enough, both times the wand had been configured with a reptile's head.

Sir Roderick sat down in the Kings throne and held his cane where Mina could rest her hand on it.

She gently caressed the cane.

Touching it as lightly as she possibly could.
Mina shuddered as she whispered to Sir Roderick.

"Thank you."

Mina let go of the wand and cleared her throat as she turned around and started explaining to Eclipsa.

"So, there I was holding this... Well I didn't know what it was but man was it powerful! You had just bamfed out of a portal to try to take this... Stick. Now, not long after this I confirmed that you were still sealed in your crystal. So, it seemed like if Hekapoo wanted it and you wanted it enough to warp the very fabric of reality then this was something incredibly valuable or incredibly dangerous."

"The guy I was standing on top of apparently wasn't even aware that it had come through with him. But I don't find that out till later. I wasn't really thinking about him all that much at that moment. What was I thinking about, in that moment? Who was I loyal to?"

Mina sat down in the queen's throne. As Sir Roderick slipped his ring back on his finger.

"Now as much as I am an ally of the Magical High Commission. I am a critic of their influence on the throne of Mewni and their treatment of mewmans in general. I could cite many examples. But there's one that really stands out for me."

"You see, I was in this really awful war that went on for years and years and years and years. It was a war that could have ended a long time ago. But it didn't, Hekapoo had some kind of weapon that could kill anything in the universe. But she didn't want to use it because it hurt her or some bullshit like that."

"So what if the weapon hurt? Weapons are supposed to hurt! I'm a weapon and I hurt like you can't imagine. So, no I wasn't going to give this to Hekapoo."

"Now I may be able to recognize a powerful magical object. But even as old as I am and with all the tricks I had learned. I had no idea how I could use this to enhance my own magical strength and abilities."

"Now we come back to my original question. Who am I loyal too? The throne of Mewni! So, before my soon to be husband could wake up and stop me I took the scissors that the clone had dropped and cut back to Mewni castle. Queen Moon was still recovering from childbirth, but I made sure she saw this piece of Snakewood I had found. Which was then locked up in a safe, that safe was inside a cedar cupboard. Once the Queen recovered she commenced to experimenting on the thing. She found it to be quote, "the greatest filter of magical energy she had ever seen."

"Queen Moon incorporated it into the wand, by the time she had done this."

Mina slammed her left foot on the floor.

I had rescued Sir Roderick from the Neverzone. We talked, we fell in love and then we realized what we had done and what we were going to have to do. Roderick wanted to take over Mewni awhile ago. But I didn't really go along with his plans entirely until I finally met Star Butterfly."

Mina's voice became incredibly somber.

"Talking to her showed me that she couldn't possibly handle being in charge of Mewni. She was too young, too enamored with ideas like democracy and monster equality. I mean, peace with the monsters? Under those terms? Return of seized property. Voting rights? No no no."
Mina stared at Eclipsa balefully.

"I mean, you tried that and look at how well it worked out..."

Mina growled the last two words.

"For everyone!"

Eclipsa looked around.

She still had two monsters.

She could still dip down.

There was one thing that Sir Roderick and even Mina probably didn't know about.

Eclipsa spoke.

"Sir Roderick, there is an England in this multiverse. I have been there. I haven't been there recently. But I have been told that it has changed quite a bit over the past few decades. You come across as a British patriot. What nation are you loyal to nowadays?

Sir Roderick replied, "Mewni, unquestionably, undeniably, unarguably Mewni. I can't go back to England. The apocalypse happened. I failed, every fascist in Europe failed. The war went even worse than I ever could have imagined. The socialists, communists, progressives and internationalists took over. Then they rotted in their own juices. Britain isn't even an independent nation anymore. Seeing what happened to my country. That hurt far more than finding out that... Somehow I'm a fictional character in this plane of existence."

Eclipsa asked. "Okay, so you are hurt and lashing out. I can understand that. But you don't really think that you can wield the wand, do you?"

"Hekapoo allowed me to learn magic in her domain. So I have a pretty good idea how this wand is supposed to work. Generally I allow my wizards to handle my magical affairs for me. Ritual magic is far more appealing when someone else is paying the inevitable price of those techniques. But I think we all know that this is a power that I cannot trust to anyone else."

Eclipsa heard scuffling noises. Spode's man with the antitank weapon was waking up. His face had been cooked by firing a weapon with back blast indoors. Another mercenary was walking into the room with a submachine gun of some sort. More would follow. Soon there would be enough to outgun her monsters.

Eclipsa stammered out her request, "listen, I tried to leave Mewni, a very long time ago. I renounced the throne to be with my husband and daughter. I have no claim here and no particular desire to retake the throne. Please, if you want Mewni you can have it. Just leave me and my people alone."

Sir Roderick held up his hand in a gesture of peace and replied. "Eclipsa, for all our disagreements there's no getting around the fact that you are the one who delivered Mewni to me. And, now that my memories of the moment when I came to this dimension are evening out it seems I might also owe you my life. You and your... People, may go in peace."

Eclipsa sighed in relief. Then she looked down.

"What about Star?"
Sir Roderick sternly replied.

"She will be held for trial."

"Sorry, I can't allow that. She is going to have to come with me. No offense but if I leave her with you... Well I really don't think that you would leave a claimant to the throne alive."

The Ressinkreet added, "and what about the prisoners? The monsters you have in the dungeon! What happens to them?"

Mina stepped towards the Ressinkreet and almost yelled in his face. "They will be destroyed and there's nothing you can do about it!"

There was a moments silence.

Eclipsa spoke slowly and carefully. "Sir Roderick, please. Release Star and the monsters into my custody. This doesn't need to go any further than it already has."

Sir Roderick held up the wand.

"I'm sorry your highness. As petty as this may sound this isn't me being greedy. This is me being careful. You and your friends can leave. Or I will destroy you."

The wand began to glow. Eclipsa thought she recognized the spell. It was going to be similar to the one that Star used to kill Toffee.

Raw power.

Globgor stood between Sir Roderick and Eclipsa.

Eclipsa shooed him away and stated. "If I am to die, it shall do so on my terms."

The snake cane opened its mouth.

A bright light emerged.

Eclipsa threw up her shield.

The solar flare like spell struck the shield. Then it was redirected.

Back to the wand.

The flare fed back into the wand.

Sir Roderick blinked.

As did Eclipsa.

Chapter End Notes

The existence of Snakewood, a wood that is not native to the Star vs the Forces of Evil multiverse is Canon according to the Magic book of Spells. And in all honesty, reading about it was the secret sauce that made this particular part of the story make
any sense.

That said. The book provides a very different story of how Snakewood came into the possession of Queen Moon.

Obviously Hekapoo was still involved though.
The disappearance of Star Butterfly.

Chapter Summary

You know for a chapter with her name on it there really isn't much Star in this.

There was a blinding flash. No explosion, but the rapid change in pressures and dumping of magical energy knocked everyone out, except Eclipsa. She was still behind a shield.

Eclipsa opened her eyes slowly as she put her hands and shield down.

Sir Roderick was perfectly motionless. Only now he was no longer holding the wand. He was just holding the broken bottom half of his grandfather's cane.

Eclipsa looked down.

The wand had fallen out of Roderick's hands and transformed back into Queen Star's configuration. The rest of the Snakewood was crawling out of the wand. It looked alive and in great pain. As soon as it made it out of the wand it turned back into a cane top.

And began to crumble into ash.

Eclipsa looked at Sir Roderick. She reached out and touched the end of the broken cane.

The cane, the ring and Sir Roderick disintegrated into dust. Not even all that much dust.

Eclipsa looked over.

Mina was lying motionless on the floor, horribly scarred on one side of her face. Eclipsa checked for a pulse. Nothing, not breathing. The invincible Mina Loverberry, last of her kind, was gone. Eclipsa couldn't help but smugly rattle off a line from a movie that she and Sam had watched together.

"May your reign last days, and your death years!"

Globgor woke up. He looked over at the red hot wand on the floor and said.

"So, just like that time in Varistrukov, right?"

"Yep, wand overheated. I'm surprised it took this long to blow to be honest." Eclipsa replied.

"So, is... Is this over?"

"Yes, it appears the seventh Earl of Sidcup is no more. Him, his cane, his ring. Everything he brought with him from another plane of existence. All gone."

Star couldn't move just yet.

Her magic had only just finished sewing her face back together.

But she could see.
"Oh god, Eclipsa has the wand! Wait, what happened to that Spo... What happened to everyone!? Did I do this?"

"Wait, what's Eclipsa doing?"

Star exploded onto her feet and ran to grab the wand.

She grasped for it.

She could feel the heat.

But it wasn't like she hadn't touched insanely hot magical things before.

A few times.

Before she could get to the wand though she found herself being kicked, very hard in the chest by Globgor.

Star slammed into the wall.

There was an oh so brief flash of golden energy.

She saw one last thing.

Her mistake.

After the wand had started oozing the pink stuff she had picked it up.

She had instantly gone into golden mode.

She knew that sir Roderick had to be destroyed. At any cost.

In her booming voice she shouted.

"Marco, give me your scissors."

"No."

"What! Why?"

"Because you would be flying into a trap."

"I think Marco's right. You do know who would be on the other..."

Star didn't bother listening to the rest of what Kar had to say. She simply remembered that she had sleep portaled before in her golden mode. So she dipped, she dipped down as far as she possibly could and portaled back to the throne room.

Star's reserves of magical energy were almost gone.

Star passed out once again.

Eclipsa pointed to the nearest bathroom, "get me at least a gallon of water, Dear."

Globgor retrieved a sizable bucket with five gallons of water inside.

Eclipsa poured it onto the wand. Clouds of steam were whipped up. But the wand continued to
burn. Hotter and hotter. It was about to set the wooden floor on fire.

But instead of doing that the wand simply burned through the floor.

"Oh corn, it's falling to the... Wait."

Eclipsa ran.

She had hoped. She had hoped so dearly that it would be down there. Just what she needed to cool the wand. An extension of an old shipping canal. If she could get the wand into the canal it might just have enough water in it to.

She reached her destination.

It was different now.

It was a... She took a deep breath and looked around.

Laundry.

They had made it the laundry room.

Eclipsa looked up.

She could see the wand was starting to burn it's way through the floor.

She sensed someone behind her. Someone in armor.

"Hello, I am Sir Lavabo. How may I help you?"

But it was too late.

Eclipsa had already grabbed a nearby metal pipe and smacked the man right in the helmet.

There was no way in her mind that a man in armor could be a neutral party.

Perhaps he wasn't.

Either way he fell to the ground with a resounding clang. As he passed out Eclipsa just said.

"I'm sorry."

She looked back. The wand was burning down to the basement now.

Eclipsa grabbed a mostly full laundry cart and positioned it under the falling wand. As it impacted the cart it immediately set everything inside on fire. Eclipsa pushed the cart as fast as she could to the nearest water source.

Which was not far away.

As the laundry cart fell to the bottom of the huge washing machine the wand cast up bubbles from the water boiling around its surface.

Once it hit the bottom Eclipsa started up the machine on its slowest setting.

"There, that should keep it from burning anything else."
She looked up.

Globgor was right behind her. She ordered him, "get over to the dungeon. Let all the monsters there loose. Once they are gone tell the Ressinkreet to make us a portal back to the hideout. Grab Star, we are going to need her."

Eclipsa stood up.

"Aren't you going to take the wand?" Asked Globgor.

"Can't, even with all this water, it's going to be too hot to hold for at least a day, probably longer."

Globgor looked down into the bubbling washing machine, just to confirm that the wand was untouchable. As much as they could have used the wand, they didn't need it so he just hung his head and said.

"Alright."

And

"Great work today."

To which Eclipsa replied.

"Thank you, my love."

Bob had come back to Mewni.

The experience of having a love spell lifted had left him completely off kilter. A veritable sea of hormones had rushed to the surface. It was like experiencing all of puberty all at once. Bob concluded that he had to leave Tom's place otherwise he wouldn't be able to stop himself from trying to make out with Janna.

And he knew it was far too early in the game and things were still too weird to start making out with Janna.

Even if the situation had somehow been reversed and it had been Janna in Tom's body Bob wasn't confident that he could leave himself alone with either of them. Besides, Bob wanted to give Janna and Tom some time to get used to each other. So Bob had taken the opportunity to do a little scouting. If he got the chance he would also take out Sir Roderick.

Upon his arrival back in Mewni, Bob soon discovered that Sir Roderick had been killed and now no one knew what to do.

As slyly as he could, Bob took advantage of the chaos to sneak into a weapons depot.

There Bob learned that the Mewnian Army had settled on three primary types of long guns. A locally made Submachine gun, the Ruger Precision Rifle in 308 as a sniper rifle and a few AR15s. However, unlike the other two weapons there was a wide variety of ARs to chose from. In a veritable rainbow of different brands and configurations. These guns had clearly been bought, or possibly stolen from some earthling American gun shop.
Most of them ranged in quality from mediocre to unimpressive. But Bob being the kind of guy he was went digging and eventually found a diamond in the rough. A somewhat worn, but completely functional BCM carbine with a 16 inch barrel.

He grasped the carbine's stubby vertical fore grip with one hand and a bandolier of mags with the other and walked confidently out of the arms depot. With his surplus uniform he was now just one guy amongst a whole bunch of guys in mismatched uniforms with guns.

Bob walked to Mewni castle and began finding out what had happened. Soldiers were milling around. No one seemed to have any idea what to do.

Bob made a fateful decision.

He called Marco for help.

"Marco, I'm here at the castle. Spode is dead, Star is missing and there no sign of Eclipsa, or anyone. But if you get over here right now we might be able to get this under control."

Marco cut a portal to where Bob was standing.

Bob's jaw dropped when he saw what had become of Marco's right arm.

"Oh, Bob? Kar Margorach, that's what my arm calls himself."

"It... Talks?" Bob asked in stunned surprise.

"Yeah, why do you look so surprised?"

"Sorry, I don't think we have met before. But either way if you could not be here right now that would be great. We need Marco to be looking like a person for this."

Kar retracted.

Marco exhaled and squeezed his hands as he asked Bob.

"Okay, so what are we doing?"

"Chain of command has been decapitated. If you go out there and say, I'm the regent, Spode is dead and I'm in charge again we might be able to get these guys to disarm."

"Good thinking but... Wait, what if they shoot me?"

"I'll be right next to you. I'll get shot too."

Marco took a deep breath and strode out into the square. Bob anxiously held his weapon in... Quite frankly a rather stupid position in his arms. In the event that bullets started flying he was going to pull the USW and attempt the legendary Spetznaz Death Blossom.

He would probably die having hit nothing. But he would die with empty mags.

"Yo! Soldiers, um, Sir Roderick is dead, seeing as how I'm the regent of Mewni that means I am in charge now."

The dozen or so soldiers looked at him, one asked, "if so then what are your orders, mr Diaz?"

"Everyone just put away your weapons and go home for now, we will iron this out later. Okay?"
The soldiers looked around.

There was anxiety, confusion, one guy outright said. "To hell with this corn-hole."

One guy flipped off the leather thong on the top of his sword scabbard.

Marco tensed up.

Bob prepared to draw the USW.

Kar was just about to spring forth when someone said.

"Oh come on, what's wrong with you people?! Our boss is giving us the day off and you guys want to hang around here grumbling?"

A man in a navy midshipman's uniform walked up.

His AR15 looked utterly ridiculous. The top half was purple, the bottom half was blue and the pistol grip, stock and VFG were pink. It's thirty round magazine was bright yellow and decorated with a sticker. A literal banana mag. The magazine well was engraved with an image of Star on a warncorn.

Marco couldn't help but wonder "Is this guy some... Mewnian version of StarFan13?"

The midshipman dropped the magazine out of his gun. Racked the round in the chamber and showed it empty to Marco and Bob.

"Uh, but this is my personal rifle. I didn't take this out of the rack, I built it myself. So do you mind if I take it with me?"

One of the soldiers grumbled, "you know I would have never guessed you made that yourself. Suppose it's true what they say about sailors."

Bob gestured that he was okay with this.

Marco nodded.

Some of the soldiers gave up their weapons. Others didn't. But they all started walking home. Before he got too far Bob ran up to the midshipman and said.

"Thanks, but, if you can... We still kinda need your help. Just in case not all the troops stand down."

The midshipman stood there and thought for a moment.

Bob looked at his ID badge.

"Midshipman... Rostrum?"

"Midshipman Aureliofloranq Kcima Rostrum. And who the hell are you?"

"Bob Recorde. Um, I don't have a rank, I'm just the accountant."

"Yeah, I figured that by your gun." Rostrum retorted.

Bob looked down, "oh, you're one to talk!"
Rostrum chuckled as they started walking back to the castle.

Retaking the castle didn't go perfectly.

Someone had knocked out Sir Lavabo.

Marco found the wand bubbling nearby.

There was extensive damage to the castle structure.

There was almost a gunfight when a squad of off-world mercenaries got in an argument about what to do next. Before bullets started flying, before Bob and Marco could come up with a plan. Midshipman Rostrum strode into the area and fired a half a magazine on full auto above the heads of the disagreeing parties.

The midshipman's pink and purple rifle may have been ridiculous looking. But no one doubted its effectiveness anymore.

Further into the castle they went. More mysteries abounded. No one could agree on what the heck had happened other than that Eclipsa, Mina and Sir Roderick had an argument. Star showed up and...

Nothing made any sense.

Until they got the news directly from a mercenary who had been blown out of the throne room. But did see what had happened next.

"Cough, Eclipsa came back up here with the wand, I just made like a corpse and she walked right by me. She, her monsters. There was a medic, she was treating Mina. They made her come too. Eclipsa made a dimensional portal and rigged up a stretcher. They took Queen Star... Somewhere. They... Took..."

A doctor that Marco and Bob had found on the grounds examined the wounded mercenary.

"Signs of concussion, lots of signs of concussion. He might live, but it's really up to him at this point."

Marco clapped him on the shoulder and said. "We take prisoners this time, okay! If you can save him, please do."

Once the throne room was secure Marco tapped Bob on the shoulder and said, "hey, get Janna on the horn. We might need some reinforcements in case there's anymore holdouts."

Bob nodded and got a message down to hell. Once properly briefed Janna came marching up to the surface ahead of a small army of demons who would secure Mewni.

Once the city was secure Janna marched into Mewni castle ahead of a demonic battalion. When she got to the castle Janna marched straight unit the throne room where...

Nothing was what she was expecting.

Marco had tentacles, Bob was even more heavily armed and then there was the guy...

Janna pointed at his rifle and asked, "so what's that supposed to be?"

"The most colorful rifle I have ever seen."
Replied Bob.

"Oh, I don't know, I kinda like it. Makes a nice contrast with all the grimdark."

Janna walked up to the midshipman and looked him up and down.

"I don't think I have seen you around here before. My name is Janna, and yours is?"

"Everyone calls me Rostrum. My first name is a bit hard to pronounce."

Janna tilted her head as if to say, "that's a decent name." Then asked, "okay, so. What happened to Star?"

Everyone looked around and shook their heads. Bob was about to speak when a mirror rang.

Everyone looked at each other.

Marco recognized the ringtone and walked over to it.

Star's mirror had been dropped behind a chair in the chaos.

Marco answered.

"Hekapoo! Oh thank god!"

"Hey, sorry I had to take care of something... I'll explain later. What happened?"

"Star is missing, so is Eclipsa. Roderick is dead, get here as fast as you can."

A few minutes later a portal opened up in the throne room, Hekapoo stepped through. She explained that she had been following Rhombulus's instructions and apologized for not being there sooner. Bob simply replied, "if you hadn't run, if we hadn't run then we would probably all be dead. Speaking of which, we should probably find those weapons that Roderick used to..."

"Ta da!" Janna announced.

"Where did you find that?" Bob asked.

"The box was behind the throne. Spode had a bunch of stuff stashed there. Including this."

Janna held up sir Roderick's shotgun and pumped the action. A shell fell out, Janna looked somewhat embarrassed. Bob carefully took the gun from her, racked the remaining shells out of the action and left it unloaded with the action open and the safety on.

Everyone then looked at the box.

Marco opened it slowly and carefully.

Inside they found a candle snuffer and the crystal that had killed Rhombulus. In addition to another twenty five rounds of magically charged 45 ACP rounds.

Hekapoo very cautiously picked up the snuffer.

She breathed anxiously.

"This... Is a vortex spell encased in a device made out of Neverzonian Tungsten. It... Could have killed me. It could have drawn me inside and trapped me long enough for my flame to go out."
While Janna was examining the bullets, Hekapoo slammed the box shut and announced. "I'm going to put these in a place where no one will ever find them again. No offense but I would rather not leave a weapon that can kill me with you guys."

Bob replied, "no it's fine. I don't see us having a use for either of those things. It looks like Sir Roderick has left us with an overabundance of weapo..."

Bob looked at Hekapoo.

Really looked.

He felt like a starving dog looking at a T bone steak on a kitchen counter. He almost groaned out loud in an effort to try to stop himself from doing something stupid.

Hekapoo looked at him and laughed, having finally figured him out.

"I knew there was something off about you, you were hexed, eh?"

Tom broke into the conversation. "And you were right. Poor guy was under a love spell, suppression variety."

"Suppression? How... Long was it in effect?" Hekapoo asked.

"I would estimate around three years." Tom answered.

Hekapoo whistled and replied, "well, better late than never. I sure hope you know the name of the caster, mr Recorde."

"I do, and I'm going to have a very serious conversation with her. Just as soon as I can stop looking at every girl and most of the boys around me like..."

Bob held his mouth shut. Everyone had a sensible chuckle at his visible discomfort. Marco simply looked around and said.

"Okay, Eclipsa is gone, but it looks like she left us Mewni and the wand. So, let's get everything squared away here and start looking for Star."
Chapter Summary

Star and Pauline have finally made it back to Mewni. Now the real work begins.

Marco looked over the table, he had been dreading and yet looking forward to this day ever since Pauline showed up.

She was sitting across the table from Marco.

All parties waited anxiously as Star was wheeled into the room. She was left in her restraints. Star asking no one in particular.

"Uh, do you mind letting me out?"

"Promise not to pull anything stupid?" Asked Marco.

"I won't if you won't." Replied Star.

Marco eyed Pauline for a moment, to discretely say. "If she goes nuts I trust you to help us to take her down." As Marco removed her restraints Star stood up, stretched her limbs and sat down at the table. Waiting for the hearing to start.

Marco took out what looked like a very fancy perfume bottle. He anxiously grasped the stopper. He took a deep breath, winced and removed the plug.

Something flew out of the bottle and devoured a buffet full of food laid out on a table nearby in a blur.

Marco pointed out.

"That food was for everyone here just so you know."

A cat that had just flown out of the bottle stared at him and stated, deadpan, "then I suppose you will have to make more. Okay, this hearing has been called between the Republic of Mewni and the former ruler of Mewni, Star Butterfly. I will be presiding, there will be no..."


"What the hell are you supposed to be?"

"I'm Pauline Long, I'm an old friend of Star, I'm from Earth, a human that's what the hell I am."

The cat flew over to Pauline and sniffed her.

"You have the stink of magic on you... weird magic."

Pauline was taken aback as she asked.

"So what are you supposed to be?"
"My name is Baby, and besides holding hearings I am also a magical assessor. Once this is over you and I are going to have to talk, miss Long."

Pauline smiled back at her facetiously, "okay, once this is over, Baaaaaaby."

Pauline made a kissing gesture.

Baby backed up and sat down on the table. Looking at Hekapoo and Marco she began.

"Aggrieved parties, please present your case."

Hekapoo and Marco relayed the details of the breaking of the Blood Moon spell. Star relayed her story of the events in question. Pauline just sat there as an observer. Once everyone said their piece Baby consumed yet another buffet table full of food and stated.

"I shall now take three hours to consider the evidence and testimony at hand. I will see you all back here then."

Baby vanished back into the bottle.

Hekapoo left the room in a bit of a harrumph.

Marco just sat there and watched Hekapoo walk out, then looked at Star.

"Soooo, here we all are. I kept your room just as you left it. You and Pauline can stay there if you like."

Star got up from the table and replied, "thank you."

Star walked back to her old room.

Marco was standing up when Pauline asked.

"Marco, if you have time, I need to ask you a couple of things."

Marco sat back down and gestured for her to begin.

"I heard that your monster arm came back, but it's gone for good now?"

Marco sighed and said, "yeah, it's a long weird story."

"I know, and you are going to have to tell me in detail. I have Star's version of the story, but there are things she didn't see and I need to know what happened."

"Okay."

Pauline added, "But not now, later, in a more relaxed atmosphere and preferably with Hekapoo around so I can get her version too. Oh and this assessment that cat was talking about, what's that?"

Pauline asked.

"Oh it's nothing, you just have to show off whatever magical ability that you have, or in most cases don't have. There is no real danger other than she "fails" you and if she fails you... I don't know... you go back to being a regular human?"

"Hmm, I think I can live with that, if I have to."
Three hours later Baby returned and delivered her verdict.

"Now, you four agreed to this because we are currently under a threat by something that we simply cannot find no matter how hard we look. Star has a certain spell that might be able to find him and the Republic simply does not have a way of powering that spell without the wand. So, in light of miss Butterfly's exemplary record of service to the realm of Mewni. I vacate all charges in lieu of miss Butterfly taking part in the operation to capture, kill or otherwise neutralize the terrorist known as Tyhjiö."

Star blinked, her eyes went wide. "So you are saying that all I have to do to get this behind me is to find this guy?"

"Yes."

"Alright! I can do that! You have anything else you want me to do?"

Hekapoo solemnly spoke.

"Star, this, this guy... isn't your normal monster, or even anything like what escaped from Rhombulus's place. He is smart, powerful and he can't be killed. A lot of good people have already died trying"

"Oh we're gonna see about that, just give me the wand and point me at him. If me and Pauline can't..."

Hekapoo interrupted.

"Hang on, I need to see how you fight nowadays. And Baby has to do an assessment of Pauline before we do any fighting."

"Eh?" Star asked.

"Yeah, I mean, your energy spectrum is totally different than it used to be, Star. How do we know you still got... The moves?"

Star stretched out her arms and incanted a spell.

"Narwhal-poon blast!"

She launched a Narwhal shaped missile at Hekapoo.

"Raspberry ribbon lasso!"

Star caught it right before it slammed into Hekapoo's forehead.

For a terrifying moment the only thing keeping the missile from hitting Hekapoo was Star's firm grasp on a magical lasso.

The spells dissolved as Star smugly stated.

"And that's wand less magic. Dddddd dipping down. I used to be good. Thanks to Pauline, I'm much better. So, how do you want to analyze my friend here?"

Hekapoo started walking to the gymnasium. Where the rest of them soon joined her. Hekapoo selected a staff and said. "No need to fix what isn't broken. Let's start with these."
Hekapoo looked at Pauline and said.

"Remember. We are just sparring, okay? Now grab a stick and let's begin."

Pauline grabbed a relatively short, but stout staff. After checking the balance of both staffs they began sizing each other up.

"Slim, muscular, strong, really high magical charge. Way more than any other human I have ever seen. All movements done efficiently and carefully. Not the prettiest human, cute face though, that upturned nose of hers could make her look ugly. But somehow it all works. This is going to be interesting."

Pauline's analysis.

"Short, rounded, sharp, old... Hot! in every possible sense of the word. Horns and spikes, possible extra weapons, have to avoid those. According to Star she can jump twenty feet straight up into the air and is capable of moving at near supersonic speeds."

They stood still for a solid minute, each waiting for the other to make the first move.

Hekapoo moved first. Taking three steps forward and making a gentle jab at Pauline's face. Pauline parried it easily.

Hekapoo began moving around, trying to get behind Pauline. Making more and more jabs. Though they were becoming less and less gentle. Pauline started moving faster. They were balancing each other's capabilities, Pauline's defense against Hekapoo's attack. As they drew deeper into the fight their barriers came down and they started really trying to learn who the other was.

After a minute both sides were moving almost faster than the eye could see. Baby's jaw dropped.

"What the... She can keep up with Hekapoo in hand to hand combat? How is this possible?"

Star chuckled and replied, "you ain't seen nothing yet. Pauline hasn't even gotten warmed up. I told you that she was scary."

Pauline began to see deeper. Hekapoo was made up of various forms of powerful energy. Pauline was amazed, she had never seen anything like this before. Despite her attractive feminine humanoid shape this Hekapoo was unquestionably not human. Stranger still, her body had no visible energy blocks. Which struck Pauline as impossible. "How could something be both non corporeal energy, yet completely unblocked? Wouldn't all the energy just burn out or blow away?" She wondered.

Pauline had to learn more.

Pauline switched from defense to attack. She saw the flaws in Hekapoo's technique and exploited them. Hekapoo tried to counter by increasing her speed. Pauline increased speed right along with her. The incredibly tough Zalma wood staffs clacked against each other with increasing noise.

A real fight was emerging from this sparring session. Analysis grew more intense with every strike, every parry, every block. Each looking for more information about the other. Hekapoo's staff was beginning to splinter under the increasing speed and strength of the blows. Pauline realized that her stick was about to break and prepared for a radical change in technique.

While Hekapoo moved to block what she thought was going to be a blow coming at her head from above Pauline completely reversed the direction of her staff. Causing it to spin around and smack
Hekapoo’s staff clean out of her hands. As it flew away in two pieces Hekapoo was left standing there with a confused look on her face. No one had been able to disarm her like that in a long time.

But Pauline was just getting started. With the staff gone Pauline discarded her own staff and tackled Hekapoo, forcing her to the ground. She held her down by her wrists. Brushed her hair aside and stared into the eyes of the flame sorceress.

Hekapoo was paralyzed, she couldn't react, couldn't adjust. There was a reason why she didn't usually use both her eyes at the same time. When she did it meant that she needed to see everything that was going on. Seeing things down to a subatomic level across all energy spectrums is exhausting, even for a being like her. All she could do was look on in horror as her opponents eyes took on a turbine pattern and a set of wings emerged from her back. This Pauline Long was doing things that no being should have been able to do. Let alone a flesh bag human!

Pauline looked deeper and deeper. She was just one, yet she could be many. She was truly a creature of light and flame. This just piqued Pauline's curiosity even more. Then she saw something really interesting, inside Hekapoo. It seemed that she did have an energetic block, a damn big one. She reached down to it and grabbed it, preparing to rip it out.

Pauline hesitated, for the first time ever Pauline hesitated to rip free an energetic block. Though mainly because Pauline didn't know what would happen if it was torn loose.

Pauline let go of the block. Everyone in the room was silent. Hekapoo recoiled in relief. As the rush of a near death experience faded she looked at the woman looming over her and announced in a trembling voice.

"You, you can do magic without the wand, without an external power source!"

"Yes."

"You can manipulate energies... with your hands?"

"With just my mind on a good day." Pauline smiled as she said this.

"You can harvest other beings magics?"

"Yes, but that seems rude so I don't usually do it without permission, unless you are trying to hurt me."

Hekapoo stood up, brushed herself off and asked.

"You use dark magic and light magic, at the same time?"

"At every opportunity."

Hekapoo snapped.

"You could have killed me!"

"But I didn't, does that count for something?"

"Yeah, it's just... I don't encounter beings that can kill me very often."

Everyone in the room was silent, everyone but Star was terrified. Star just looked around and smiled, keeping the thought to herself.
"Now you know how it looks, terrifying isn't it?"

Before she got to work hunting down Tyhijo there was one other thing that Pauline wanted to do first.

But after two hours of work Pauline was not quite in as good a mood as she had been for most of this trip to Mewni.

Moon Butterfly stood proudly, dominating the room. Reflecting an air of utter confidence, despite the fact that all functions of her body had ceased. Sealed in crystal, waiting patiently for the day that a cure would be found for her condition and Rhombulus would come to free her.

Her condition was long healed, her healthy arms, hands and fingers adding to her appearance of perfect health.

Pauline looked over the body of her best friends mother. With everything she tried she became more convinced that there was no way she could crack the crystal. It was, quite simply, the most indestructible thing that she had ever seen.

Pauline had hit the crystal with every single spell, wish, gesture and magical implement that she could lay her hands on and nothing had worked, even a little. Every magical energy manipulation gesture she could think up, application of anti-magic devices, potions. Blasting it with everything in the energy spectrum that the wand could manifest. She had poured through the Mewnian archives and found nothing useful. Although she had discovered some very interesting notes on the dimension of pillows. But nothing on how to crack this particular crystal.

After having just hit the crystal with a stream of very highly energized plasma to no effect Pauline became so frustrated that she drew the Field Pistol and aimed at a spot on the crystal just above Moons head.

Pauline imagined the fastest projectile she could imagine. She supercharged the already fast bullets of her field pistol with a speed spell. A solid copper projectile left the barrel of her pistol going 6,000 feet per second.

The bullet struck the crystal and disintegrated into dust.

Pauline holstered the pistol and walked up to the crystal, examining it. Everything she had hit it with hadn't left so much as a blemish. A scratch was hopelessly optimistic. This stuff was tough, impossibly tough.

Examining the complete lack of damage Pauline observed.

"Great, just great."

Pauline roared in frustration. She pulled up a chair and went back to staring at the crystal.

There was nothing known in this multiverse that could break one of Rhombulus's crystals. Except Rhombulus himself undoing their existence, or the still unknown spell that Eclipsa had used to release all the monsters. Despite all the magic she had at hand, Pauline was utterly ineffective against the crystal. Pauline wondered for a moment if Eclipsa could be found in Mewnian hell perhaps she could be asked for the answer. Then Pauline realized that even if Eclipsa had wound up there it was unlikely that she would be in any mood to help the mother of the woman who killed her. Perhaps a deal could be made?

Pauline snorted derisively at the thought of a work release program from hell. Although she did
think that it sounded like a cool idea for a tv show.

There was a knock at the door. Pauline shouted, "come in!"

It was Star, she asked. "Any luck? I heard gunfire, you aren't getting desperate are you?"

"Desperate? No, no I'm... Yeah, gunfire in a place like this is a sign of desperation isn't it? This is... everything I know about crystals, crystal structures, cleavage. You know, geologist stuff. Well, these crystals weren't created by any process I can understand. This... Thing! Is beyond me."

Star sat down beside her, hugged her and stated, "sorry."

"No Star if anyone here should be sorry it's me. I... I just wanted to fix up your life and getting your mother out of that crystal would have..."

Pauline hung her head.

Star just hugged her tighter.

"We will figure this out. One way or another we will figure this out."

"Thanks Star, it's just... Okay. There's something I need to clarify."

"Yeah?"

"There is a literal hell under our feet, right?"

"Yep, I've been there a few times."

"Did Eclipsa wind up down there?"

Star stretched out and said, "that's yet another of that woman's enduring mysteries. Her spirit never got to our hell. I'm pretty sure she didn't wind up in the other place. But... I personally oversaw the destruction of Eclipsa's body. But her spirit has never been found. There are lots of theories, but no actual evidence. Either way, even if we found her it's unlikely that she would tell any of us how to break this thing."
As Solaria commenced slaughtering monsters, Hekapoo began her infiltration.

With her speed sneaking into the castle was child's play. But once inside Hekapoo was stopped by a squad of a dozen armed monsters.

Hekapoo separated her scissors and attacked. One monster lost a head, the other was stabbed in the heart. The remaining ten ran for it as fast as they could. With them out of the way Hekapoo ran into the great hall of the castle.

There were dead monsters all over the place. Hekapoo wondered for a moment if somehow Solaria had made it inside before she did.

No, she could still hear the sounds of the wand slashing through huge monsters outside.

Hekapoo crouched down to examine one of the dead monsters.

He appeared to have been killed with dimensional blades.

Hekapoo stood up and felt a chill go down her spine. Use of dimensional scissors in combat was a rare martial art. One that could only be practiced by her, or a clone...

"Or perhaps... Oh no..."

Hekapoo heard the sounds of a scuffle upstairs. As she ran she found yet more dead and wounded monsters.

She found the prince in the coils of a giant snake.

Hekapoo stabbed her scissors into the snakes head. Tanith shouted, "wait, no don't!"

The snake fell to the floor, releasing the prince from his coils.

As the snake expired Hekapoo smiled and said, "come on, Solaria is going berserk. We gotta..."

As the prince tried to stagger to his feet a blade emerged from his chest.

The prince tensed up. Then fell to the floor. Hekapoo dropped her scissors and cradled the dying Prince's head in her arms. He looked up at the creature that had stabbed him as he gasped out the fact.

"The snake, was trying to... Save me."

Then he breathed his last.

The murderer of the Prince wiped the blood off his blade with the Prince's kerchief and spoke.
"Hekapoo. I know that you told us that we should live a life without regret."

The figure clicked the blade back into its setting in a pair of dimensional scissors.

"But how can one define life."

The figure removed his cloak.

"In the absence of death?"

Hekapoo looked up at the being towering over her. It was so... Powerful and massive and dense and yet. There was something about it that seemed familiar.

Hekapoo looked deeper.

This thing was like a patchwork of several, no at least a dozen distinct energy frequencies.

It was a being that had been somehow built up of many parts.

Yet there were two main parts.

The most powerful part was nothing now but raw hatred. Hatred of a single being. The other half was...

Hekapoo spoke the name of the finest being she had ever known.

"Ariadne?!"

"I go by Tyhjiö nowadays."

Hekapoo asked in utter disbelief.

"What happened to you?"

"Well, a funny thing happened when you dropped the twelve of us off in alternate multiverses. A few of us just waited until the brane we were on collided with another brane. A couple... Foolish girls tried to start life in their own multiverses. But they all fell prey to the bumping problem as well. Every one of us, except Ariadne. She had the longest time to resist what we became. As our physical bodies aged and ultimately died our immortal energetic selves. That's what you made us, wasn't it? Immortal? Our immortal energetic selves flew to each other. Across the vastness. They became one, one two. One one two... three. One. We... Found ourselves irrevocably drawn to each other. This existence was somehow more painful than being alone in a forgotten universe."

"But no matter how we tried. No matter what magical tricks we used, no matter what crazy stunts we pulled. We couldn't self terminate. We figured the key was Ariadne. Somehow her physical body was still alive. We destroyed her. We smashed three multiverses into one. Ariadne could resist one brane bearing down on her. But not two."

Hekapoo trembled, she remembered.

"Ariadne was the last survivor? I... I was talking to her a few years ago. She kept the link up, even across all that space and time. I... I felt her I advised her I guided her, I loved her."

Tyhjiö replied.

"She knew, Ariadne just bedded down and focused on you. She built a whole multiverse to
commemorate your love. It looked really weird."

Tyhjiö asked.

"So, I wasn't just deluding myself? That was the real you I was talking to and not just a memory?"

Hekapoo was crying as she forced out the words.

"No, no Babe, it was me. It was really me. I... I had so many dreams about you. I saw the universe you built for yourself. It was so beautiful. And now you're back but I..."

"Why did you kill Prince Tanith!?" Hekapoo screeched.

Tyhjiö smiled evilly and continued in a much more formal tone.

"Because we had hoped that when Ariadne was gone that we would simply cease being. But this didn't happen. We remembered that you were the source of our cursed immortality. And you are the only one of us who has the power to let all of us go. You created us, you doomed us to wander the vastness of the cosmos. Without you."

Tyhjiö snarled out the last part.

"And yet forever with you!"

Tyhjiö breathed and tried to collect himself.

"After the death of Ariadne we thought it was over. The memories faded. But we... We found ourself reincarnated in this body. We didn't realize what had happened until after this..."

He looked at his body with disgust.

"Poor bastards entire species was wiped out in a disaster." He held up the scissors and said.

"After the disaster these things fell out of the sky. As soon as I touched them the memories returned. I remembered everything and I remembered that..."

"I had to find you."

"And I had to enrage you."

"Enough to kill me."

The sounds of mass killing slowed to a stop as a pair metal boots came clomping up the stairs.

Tyhjiö threw his scissors at Hekapoos feet and said. "Well, the twelve heralds have finally come home. How about we end this before Murder Princess gets here? I mean, even if you can't find a way to kill me then I'm pretty sure she can."

Hekapoo couldn't move. This was all so insane, too much to take in all at once.

Solaria saw what was happening and swallowed.

She had no words.

She wondered who was the guy standing next to Prince Tanith's and the snakes corpse.

"Um, Hekapoo, who is this guy and why is he standing next to Prince Tanith? He doesn't look like
amonster but he doesn't look entirely Mewman either."

Hekapoo stammered out an explanation.

"Solaria, when I was Hathor I couldn't make clones of myself. I had to create twelve Heralds to do what needed to be done. But these twelve heralds were left stranded in other multiverses. These are them, all twelve of them reincarnated in a male physical body. He wanted me to make him mad. Mad enough to kill him. But what he doesn't understand is that I can't kill him. Not because I love him. But because he is a part of me."

Hekapoo whispered the next part. "If you had come to me we could have worked something out."

Tyhjö replied.

"Yes I know that was the wrong thing to do. I mean, I didn't even know this guy. But I just couldn't take it anymore! I have seen so much death, more death than any mortal could ever imagine. I have outlived so many families, friends, civilizations! I'm eternal, even the stars aren't meant to be eternal, Hekapoo, you know this better than I do. We all know how lonely you were before life showed up. But that's the thing about life, it ends, it changes. But not me and not you. Memories and mistakes just keep building up inside me. I'm sorry I drew Prince Tanith and everyone else into this. I really am. All I can ask now is your mercy, please, will you grant me that? Before anyone else gets hurt?"

Hekapoo stared at him with an expression of utter rage, "Solaria, wand, now!"

The Monster Carver asked.

"What are you thinking Hekapoo?"

"Wand, now!!!"

Solaria threw the wand, Hekapoo seized it. Two marks formed on Hekapoo's cheeks, flame insignias. Hekapoo threw his scissors back at him and stated.

"I screwed up when I made you, I admit that. but there's nothing I can do about it. If you want the mercy of death though... I will give you even more death than you can imagine."

Hekapoo needed a spell to seal away this... Being. This enraged and desperate fragment of her existence. She called on her full power.

As the creator of femininity.

As the forger of dimensional scissors.

As the enforcer of dimensional security.

And now with the power of the wand.

She needed a spell. She didn't have one.

The stench of death wafted around them.

Death.

All she could think about was death.
How much she hated this thing that her beloved heralds had become.

She incanted a spell, seemingly from nowhere.

Three words.

"Sharper than diamond."

She didn't know what it meant. It was just the first thing that came to mind.

Sharper than diamond.

Flames poured out of the wand.

Hekapoo's own flame erupted to bonfire size.

Sharper than diamond!!!

The flames erupted towards Tyhjiö and swirled around him. The second set of dimensional scissors ever made levitated into the air just above Tyhjiö's head.

As he was transforming Tyhjiö exclaimed.

"This won't stop me, this won't even contain me. Whatever this is, it won't stop my plans. I've set things into motion. Plans so complex and convoluted and insane that you will spend the rest of eternity just trying to survive them. If you won't grant me death for what I have done then you will have to grant me death for what's coming next. Oh just you wait and see what is coming for you next."

"What do you mean?" Asked Hekapoo.

Tyhjiö pointed up and laughed insanely. As his arms were brought together permanently.

The spell completed.

Tyhjiö had been transformed into a scythe.

As it finished shaping into its new form it fell to the floor.

Hekapoo looked down at it.

She picked it up.

She didn't know exactly what the spell would turn Tyhjiö into. She just had faith in the collective female unconscious that he would be transformed into an inanimate object.

As a weapon, it felt right. Perfectly balanced. Hekapoo posed with the scythe for Solaria. Solaria tilted her head and said, "I gotta admit, that's a pretty creative solution to the whole, not killing yourself or part of yourself thing."

Before they could say anything else a lump of flesh pulled himself into the scene.

"No! You, you, you, psychotic motherfuckers! You killed everyone! You even slaughtered the younglings!? You will pay for this. I swear you will both pay!"

Hekapoo looked down at Lazaro Alvarius
She aimed her new scythe at him and asked, "how are you not dead?"

The scythe had received a command from its handler.

It generated a field of fast time upon its target. Aging it so fast that nothing could possibly survive.

However.

The target had a healing factor. A healing factor which was granted by Tyhjiö, whose healing factor was tied to Hekapoo.

Hekapoo and the scythe were forged of the same magics.

And so was Lazzaro.

Incredible tidal energies began to tear Lazzaro apart. Gravitational energies, relativistic concerns and various other natural laws were pulled into question in an ugly bio-magical paradox.

And as it had proven before.

The flesh was the weak link.

Lazzaro Alvarius exploded like a watermelon.

Hekapoo looked over at Solaria.

"Hell of a weapon, eh?"

Hekapoo passed out. Her eyes black. She started to levitate into the air. Solaria had read about this condition. There was only one known treatment. Solaria had to get Hekapoo to the sanctuary immediately.

Solaria reached down to pick up the scythe.

She couldn't. It was too heavy. Solaria tried two more times and gave up. She cast "raspberry ribbon lasso" around the floating Hekapoo and stormed downstairs. But as she reached the ground floor there was the sound of a huge explosion.

She looked outside.

Something didn't make any sense.

The monsters were all dead. Who could be causing...?

It looked like parts of the moon were exploding.

Solaria thought back to Tyhjiö's words. "What is coming next."

Solaria noticed that Seth was somehow still alive despite having been vivisected in two separate directions. Solaria placed her boot on what was left of his neck and asked.

"Septarian, why does the moon look like that?"

Seth looked up.

He thought.
"Before we do anything else I just want to clarify one thing. He betrayed us. Ifffffff it had been up to us I would have just ransomed Tanithhhh back to you. Cough. Tyhjiö mentioned something about a ship, a spaceship. Screwing around with it was the death of his civilization."

He looked away.

"And now it looksssss like it's going to be the death of ours."

Seth could feel his body healing. He looked straight at Solaria and grumbled.

"Is it true? what Lazzaro said, about the nurssssery?"

Solaria knelt down and replied, "yep. I figured that you had him locked up in a dungeon. I had no idea that you had a whole monster factory down there. All those eggs and cribs and... other things."

Solaria licked her lips. "I burned it all down. Nothing could possibly survive down there. Even if they somehow survived the flames they couldn't survive the smoke."

Solaria stood back up, towering over the wounded Seth. Seth asked, "why? Why did you have to kill them!? They weren't, they weren't a threat! They were just babies!"

Solaria replied, "why? Because those babies would have grown up into something I would have had to have killed anyway. Because you were insane enough to make a deal with a criminally insane entity who might just wipe us all out. I never liked you monsters, I wholeheartedly admit that. But when you touch my family. I swear that I will exterminate you. Down to the last. You will see that any pain you think you can inflict on me will be returned..."

"A hundredfold!" Solaria hissed.

Seth shook his head and passed out from pain.
When old age shall this generation waste.

Chapter Summary

Basically just pillow talk between Tom, Janna and Bob.

Nightfall.

Bob desperately needed sleep.

Everyone needed sleep.

So everyone went to their beds.

Bob found his room and dropped everything. Then bellyflopped onto the bottom bunk.

Star Butterfly was gone. No ifs ands or buts. She was gone, the prime suspect in her kidnapping was Eclipsa. The wand had been recovered. As had Mewni itself so everyone just decided to declare victory for now and get some rest.

For now.

But as Bob examined the thread count on his pillowcase his rest was interrupted.

"What took you so long?" Asked Tom from the top bunk.

"This, that and the other thing. These Mewnians aren't very smart. They need someone to help them do anything more difficult than walking in a straight line. What are you two doing here? Shouldn't you be in hell?"

"Nah, Janna says she wants to stay in Mewni in case something else happens we will be close to the action. But... She forgets that I can sense her emotions and she..."

Slap!

"Yeah, can you blame a girl for not want to spend too much time in the literal worst place in the multiverse?"

"So, anyway, how are you holding up?" Janna asked.

"I think, that after you broke that spell. That if I wasn't completely exhausted. That I would tag along with some of the soldiers on leave, find one of these bar wenches that they won't shut up about and fuck her into oblivion." Bob replied.

Janna chuckled and asked.

"Really, fuck her into oblivion? That's a bit of a change of tune from what you were saying when we were in the garden the other day. So, why go find a bar wench when you have a perfectly fuckable girl in the top bunk here?"

Bob replied sternly.
"I can list several reasons. One being that you have a demon in you. And I don't mean that as anything against Tom, I mean, I seem to recall someone using the words, "needing a virgin."

Tom spoke. "Well, actually, now that I'm in here that is irrelevant. Heck, that's part of the fun of being a demon. Possessing virgins and showing them what they are missing."

Bob asked out loud.

"Hmm. Losing ones virginity to a fourteen year old who has been possessed by a demon. Would that technically be a three way?"

Janna and Tom spoke simultaneously. "Don't know. Sounds pretty wild thou."

Bob groaned and replied, "nope, not going to happen either way. Like I said, I'm too tired."

Janna spoke.

"Bob, I know you act... Way too grown up but seriously. You are only two years older than me."

"Yeah I know."

Janna looked down from the top bunk.

Her right arm came down.

Bob's left arm went up.

As they held hands and looked into each other's eyes.

Janna continued.

"Hey, I really do want to thank you for what you have done. I mean, I'm not in any rush to start charging into buildings with guns."

Janna retracted her hand and said, "but if you are that tired, and I know I am..."

"Grumble."

"What was that?"

Bob snapped back.

"I can't believe you liked his gun!"

Who? Oh, that Rostrum guy. I mean, wow. What kind of... I mean, he sure was handsome and... I think, yeah, I looked him up, I had to with a first name that hard to pronounce. Who knows what he knows?"

"Well I don't know what he knows. But, you like that guy?"

"Hmm, don't know yet. It's harder to get information on people in Mewni. I mean, it's weird, these people have social media but..."

Bob chuckled and replied. "Yeah I know. Don't know who said it but someone once said. Americans are the only race which passed directly from barbarism to decadence without knowing civilization. Seems whoever said that had never been to Mewni. It's kinda barbarasim and
"Yep. Either way, I'm going to find out more about that guy." Janna continued.

"Already planning a life with him are you? Perhaps a house with a white picket fence back on earth? 2.5 kids running around in the backyard?"

"Blergh." Janna replied.

"Yeah well, being a sailor I imagine he would be willing to deflower you with great vigor if you offered."

"Deflower, you make it sound so crude. And you make it sound like I should rush out and do him right now. Which would leave you all alone. Perhaps you might start playing with yourself?"

Janna stuck her middle finger in her mouth.

After a minute or so of sucking on her finger and making erotic noises Tom asked.

"What are you doing?"

Janna just kept making noises.

Bob got out of bottom bunk to see the strangest thing he had ever seen. Someone physically fighting with themself.

Blue.

Cobalt blue.

Janna took her finger out of her mouth. Explaining.

"I was having some fun and dragging Tom along for the ride."

Bob asked. "Is that rape? I mean, forcing someone into a sexual act even though they are inside your body?"

Janna hesitated.

She reared up on all fours like a cat and yelled.

"Tom I swear to god if I can't pleasure myself whenever I want I am going straight to... I don't know, the River Jordan and drown myself in it!"

Tom replied. "Hey, it's fine. I was just confused as to what you were doing."

"Oops."

Janna realized what she had done and looked down.

She had already gotten revved up.

Janna looked at Bob with the most seductive expression she could manage and asked.

"What's the thing you like most about me?"

Without a moment's hesitation Bob replied.
"It's your legs and the way you show them off. That little green skirt you wear drives me wild. But that's not the only thing."

Janna ran her hand through Bob's hair, Bob asked. "Keats, John Keats. What's your favorite poem of his?"

Without a moment's hesitation Janna reached into her backpack and pulled out a well worn and bookmarked, book. She began with. "Ahem...

Ode on a Grecian Urn

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?
Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!
Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.
Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest.
What little town by river or sea-shore.
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul, to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.
O Attic shape! fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe.
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.'

Janna put down the book.

Bob was unable to speak for a little while. But when he built up the nerve to reply he said.

"Thou still unravished bride of quietness. I don't know, would you qualify as quiet? You seem pretty loud to me."

"Want to see how loud I can get?"

"And Tom is okay with this?"

"Tom's actually kinda curious."

"Curious, interesting word, does kinda make you wonder where on the spectrum of human sexuality possessed chicks lie."

"I think you're overthinking this."

"I think you're right."

Bob grabbed Jannas thigh.

And started moving his hand very gently up it.

Janna gave no signs of resistance.

Bob leaned in and started kissing around her neck.

Then stopped and pulled back.

"Interesting technique there, Recorde."

"Oh, it's my fumbling attempt to get you to come to me."

"Well why don't I just do that?"

After a few more minutes kissing

Bob couldn't help but ask.

"Janna, is there a reason why you never take that hat off?"

Janna whipped it off revealing...

Nothing but a normal head of hair.
"I just like hats."

"Hmm, I was kinda hoping it would be like..."

"Like what?"

Bob leaned up to take a closer look at the top of Janna's head.

"I don't know, that you had a funny shaped head or something? So, what's got you in this mood? I thought you were all shut down because of war crimes?"

"I'm just glad to be out of hell."

Janna pushed Bob down and started kissing him hungrily.

"Place freaked you out, eh?"

Janna stopped kissing.

She pulled back and said, "what was it that guy said? Better to rule in hell than serve in heaven?"

"And... Your opinion on that?"

"I don't know, actually seeing it. Actually seeing Toms memories. The corpses, the damned. Eternity is a very long time."

Bob gently caressed Janna's face and said. "I really am tired, perhaps we can just sleep together for tonight and nothing else?"

Janna exhaled sharply and said, "yeah, that's probably a good idea."
Might as strong as steel.

Chapter Summary

Solaria rescues Hekapoo and goes through Mewberty.

All at once.

Outside castle Alvarius the Quick Reaction Force had just showed up.

The two dozen Mewnian knights were amazed at the sheer number and size of the monsters killed. Any one of these would be a fine trophy for the greatest of monster hunters.

There were dozens, perhaps hundreds of dead monsters all over the place.

They could smell the smoke wafting from the building.

An explosion rang out. The Quick Reaction Force looked up to see that there was something wrong with the moon and that something was falling out of the sky in flames.

While they were looking at this they barely noticed someone cast the spell. "Warnicorn Stampepe!"

Solaria rode past them at breakneck speed.

The dimensional scissors weren't working. Seeing as how Hekapoo was out of commission Solaria concluded that the two issues were probably related.

The sanctuary was about two miles away. Towing the lighter than air Hekapoo in her lasso Solaria could focus on riding as fast as possible.

As Solaria rode, the bombardment began. She couldn't quite see the ship. But she could see angry red streaks falling out of the sky.

Solaria urged on the Warnicorn on faster as her realm burned. Until they arrived at the shore. Having served its purpose the Warnicorn returned to the wand. Solaria leapt from it and landed right at the front of the guardian of the sanctuary.

Solaria took a deep breath.

She tried to calm down.

She asked the guardian in a kind tone, "bwaaaaaaa."

The alligator replied, "bwaaaaaa" and went into the water.

Emerging with the sanctuary.

Solaria rushed inside, placed Hekapoo in her pod and was about to tip the golden magic inside into the pod when she sneezed.
Something flew off her face.
She wondered if she was wounded, it looked like skin.
She checked her face.
She found two lightning bolts in her hands.
Solaria dropped to her knees.
"Not now, not now, please not now, anytime but now!"
Solaria began to cry.
"No!"
She refused.
She wasn't going to let this stop her just yet.
She pulled the chain and allowed the magic to flow.
Solaria cried with joy. Whoever else happened. Hekapoo would survive.
Solaria turned around.
She could still hear the cracks and thumps distant explosions.
Solaria crawled into the deepest, darkest place she could find in the sanctuary. And allowed herself to make her cocoon.
At that moment she could think of nothing but doing that. Biology had overwhelmed her. As the cocoon closed over her face she whimpered out a request.
"Please, not like this. Not like this."
Solaria wept.
Because she knew.
She knew how powerful a moment that Mewberty was and how she could do nothing to stop it. But it couldn't have happened at a worse possible moment.
The bombardment continued for another twelve minutes.
At the end of those twelve minutes Solaria burned her way out.
She had the wand still sheathed on her back when she went in.
As Solaria exited her cocoon she felt a serenity. A serenity that would haunt her to her dying days.
A serenity that amongst all this evil, mayhem, death and chaos she knew exactly what she had to do and had all the tools she needed to do it.
Because though her realm was burning to the ground.
Despite the fact that she had just lost the man she loved.
Though she might yet lose a woman who was an object of worship.

She could see her target now. Her Omatidia eyes allowed her to see the threat in detail.

As Seth had said, it was a ship. As Solaria stared at it with eyes that could see well beyond the normal spectrum of visible light she learned about it.

It was a space going vessel, large, with a streamlined shape reminiscent of a humpback whale. Solaria could see that the fins on the bottom of the hull, once again like a humpback whale. Blasting out a wide spectrum of energy to keep it in the air.

On top of the hull was a slightly smaller set of fins which were launching high velocity solid projectiles.

Solaria felt her wings extend to their fullest size.

Her feet dug into the ground.

Solaria exploded off the ground. All eyes in Mewni became transfixed by the red streak that was blasting towards the descending ship. Solaria saw what she had to do. She had to disable the ship. The quickest way to do that was by taking out the... Energy generating fins on the bottom of the hull.

But then she realized.

This ship could be useful to her if she could capture it.

She changed her target.

To the fins which were launching projectiles at her country at the rate of one every three minutes.

Once she was close enough Solaria let her blade out to its fullest extent and chopped the railgun with all her might.

As her blade made contact with the huge gun it just happened to be reaching a full charge. The damage caused by the blade caused the whole device to destabilize.

Eyewitnesses reported seeing huge clouds of gas pouring from the ship. Followed by what was described as an ever growing lightning cloud.

Solaria screamed in agony as she was struck by hundreds of lightning blasts and bathed in a variety of toxic and volatile chemicals leaking from the ship. Seconds later everything exploded in a blinding flash that made everyone cover their eyes and/or throw themselves to the ground.

When the Mewnian people looked up again the ship was retreating. Passing through a dimensional portal to... Anywhere that wasn't here. The Mewnians were overjoyed. Their princess had saved them. But just as their cheers of joy began one more thing came falling out of the sky at a very high speed.

This projectile landed in the middle of a town square.

It did not explode.

People wandered up to it warily.

Solaria pulled herself out of the crater. Wheezing and coughing. Glossarick arrived quickly to take
control of the scene. He announced to everyone, "okay everyone be careful. She has at least another..."

He checked his wrist sundial.

"Another ten minutes in this state, at least."

Having just survived a blast that would have easily flattened Mewni. And a fall that would have probably killed most of the Magical High Commission. Even the mighty Solaria, overcharged with Mewberty magic couldn't stay conscious after that. But somehow she was able to ask Glossarick.

"Tanith?"

Glossarick shook his head.

"Hekapoo?"

"She is going to be fine."

Solaria groaned out one last sentence.

"I wish this was a dream, it feels like a dream."
The new, new Mewni.

Chapter Summary

Star has been taken prisoner by Eclipsa, however will she escape?

Also, Marco, Bob, Janna and Hekapoo discuss what needs to be done next.

Star woke up.

She was restrained.

She breathed deeply and tried to dip down.

"Go ahead and try, you will find it quite impossible."

Star looked up.

"Ugh, who the... Eclipsa?!"

"Yes. Nice to finally meet you."

Star looked around, she had an IV going into her arm. Eclipsa explained.

"Or at least talk to you when we aren't shooting at each other. Don't mind that thing in your arm, just a little something I whipped up. It's a potion that should keep you from dipping down. Just in case it doesn't, don't worry, I have plenty of other things to slow you down."

Star blinked and murmured the words, "Queen, Queen of darkness."

Eclipsa sighed and replied, "if you like."

"Why... Are you working with Roderick?"

"Well I'm not working with him anymore. In fact I kind of saved you from him. But as to why I was working with him until a little while ago, well. Your mother betrayed me, your father tried to kill me and your boyfriend killed my daughter. No other reason really. Although I might be able to toss in the fact that the Magical High Commission and your family stole the realm from me. But I think I can let that one slide as how no one in your family was born at the time of my exile. To be honest I'm as unhappy with the situation as you are, but... well. Sir Spode, as rough and uncouth a man as he... Was nothing if not polite with me. A lesson your family could benefit from."

Star hung her head, not from shame, but from exhaustion. "Meteora shouldn't have... Shouldn't have killed Ponyhead. Mom was just a kid who didn't know what she was getting into and... What's this about my father?"

Eclipsa replied coldly. "Your father attacked me. He was in an awful mood, I thought I was helping him and he came at with me a knife."

She held up the dagger.
"This knife to be specific."

Star recognized her father's dagger and asked.

"Then why... Why are you keeping me alive?"

"Because I am hoping that there might be a way out of this conflict, at least for the two of us."

"What do you want?"

"I want to be left alone with my family. I want to shake the dust of Mewni from my feet. I want to go to someplace where I and my husband will not be bothered by you or the MHC ever again. Listen, I'm sorry about what happened with Sir Roderick. But I had to make sure that Rhombulus was taken out of the picture. He is the one who contracted me to make those weapons and he betrayed me. Now that he is..."

Star glared at her through her drug induced haze.

Star cleaved into the hesitation in Eclipsa's speech and growled.

"You want peace? You want to be a diplomat? You... You threw in with Sir Roderick, you gave him the weapons that..."

Eclipsa clarified.

"Weapons that were made at the request of Rhombulus. Listen, I don't know how I could prove it since he is dead and it's not like we kept a written correspondence on this but... When I was crystallized it was part of a deal. I had made some very very powerful enemies and I needed a very powerful friend. So I agreed to let him crystallize me and my husband. I was under the impression that I would be hidden away, then released after five years. I would then take my child and my husband and start a new life away from Mewni. But when I wake up I find out that hasn't been five years, it's been three hundred. Then I get the biggest surprise of all. That my daughter was somehow still alive, until your boyfriend decapitated her. Listen, I know this situation isn't ideal. But you are the head of the Mewnian government and I have... Friends as well, let's just leave it at that. This is already much bigger than the both of us so unless we can figure out a way to..."

Star hissed out.

"There will be no peace."

Eclipsa leaned in and asked, "really, you are going to say that now? You are my prisoner right now. You need me more than I need you."

Star whispered.

"No peace!"

"Star, listen, since Rhombulus is gone I'm the only one left who knows how to get your mother out of that crystal once she is healed!"

Star stammered, "when I get out of here, I'm going to talk to Tom. I'm going to find a really nasty part of hell to stick you in. I'm going to watch you burn for this."

Eclipsa threw her hands in the air in resignation and replied, "alright fine, be that way. You can stay down here as long as it takes for you to stew in your own hatred. Once you are willing to talk
Marco looked around the table.

Kar was being quiet. He knew that he didn't really have much to contribute to the current situation. Marco tented his fingers and looked at his people. He focused on Bob and asked.

"So... Situation?"

Janna summed up.

"Star is missing, food distribution in Mewni has completely broken down and we are looking at possible attack at any moment by the most powerful sorceress the multiverse has ever seen."

Marco leaned back and looked at the ceiling.

"Solutions?"

Janna continued. "We still have the wand. It's stopped overheating. Trouble is we don't have anyone with experience with the wand. We really don't know what it could do since we have no idea the degree of control that Eclipsa may or may not have on it. I suggest we keep it locked up until Star gets back."

Hekapoo stated, "I second this."

Marco continued. "Alright, so, wand is out, what's in?"

Bob said, "well, just because we don't have the wand doesn't mean we can't defend ourselves. I think that we should..."

Bob stopped for a moment.

He took a moment to appreciate the potential history that was about to be made.

"Listen, the first thing we should do is go through the bureaucracy and root out anyone left who is loyal to Spode. Even if he is dead that doesn't mean that someone else won't try to take his mantle. We are going to have to eliminate fascism in Mewni but this is not something that can be accomplished by force of arms alone."

Bob wasn't sure how to explain.

"Are any of you here familiar with the work of Carol Quigley?"

Janna replied in a really sarcastic tone, "Bob I had no idea that you were a conspiracy theorist. Yeah, I've read Tragedy and Hope, anyone else?"

Hekapoo and Marco shook their heads. Bob continued.

"Well, Tragedy and Hope was written shortly before Quigley died. When he died he was working on a book about the effect of weapons development on history. The gist of it was that the more weapons become concentrated in the hands of an elite minority. The more tyrannical things get. I've been looking at the weapons systems that Spode had on order. It's well beyond small arms. He wanted to buy aircraft, radar systems. Fucker even wanted to buy a diesel electric submarine. Those
weapons would have just been the tip of the spear. He wanted to combine them with magic to turn Mewni into the greatest military power that the multiverse has ever seen. Even if it meant turning Mewni into a mercantilist, debt based prison. He wanted to take the control systems that we developed on Earth and use them to create a modern nation. With corresponding modern problems. The only way I can see anyone circumventing this over the long term is to allow the decentralization of weapons and technology systems. No one gets special privileges. The Mewnian people must be educated to a basic standard and when the time is right we allow the Mewnian people to purchase whatever weapons they want. We can't just give them the weapons that he bought though. The Mewnian people would probably just use them to shoot monsters and when we run out of monsters, each other."

Bob reached down and picked up a pile of folders, documents books and other things, explaining.

"But before we do any of that there's something I have to iron out first. A full investigation is probably going to take months. And it looks like I'm going to have to start with building an police force from scratch. But since this was the case you brought me to Mewni to investigate I already have a lot of evidence. I have quite a bit of information on Spode himself now and where he came from. Multiverses beyond this one, the bumping problem and the... For now I'm calling it the Herald Problem. It's fascinating reading but first."

Bob opened a folder and asked.

"Hekapoo, after you and Mina interviewed Spode you discovered his true origin and that he was most likely sent here as part of this... Tyhjiö's elaborate and multi century long plans. You had to have known he was trouble. Without even knowing that he was a fascist. Why didn't you kill him?"

Hekapoo replied. "At first it was Mina. She... It was love at first sight, she really didn't want me to kill him. Later on it was Moon."

Hekapoo shook her head and explained, "as part of your research you probably learned more about the character of Sir Roderick Spode. Besides being a skilled designer and seller of ladies underwear he also knew about big infrastructure projects. He had extensive knowledge of the funding, construction and failures of British infrastructure and he shared that knowledge freely with the queen. I told Moon and Mina in detail how dangerous he could be. But they didn't care. He had rejuvenated the wand and he was building Mewni into a more developed and wealthy country. The guy fit in really well with the rest of the Mewnian nobility. So sue me for not murdering the guy."

Bob replied, "okay, that's good enough for me."

"John Taylor Gatto." Janna stated.

"Who?" Asked Hekapoo.

"I first heard about Tragedy and Hope from the work of a guy named John Taylor Gatto. Bob, you talk about education. Gatto knows way more about education than anyone I have ever heard of. He died awhile ago, but his work is all out there. I can go to Earth, get his books. It probably won't be the end all solution, but it seems like a place to start."

Marco clapped his hands and said, "okay, sounds good. We can probably ask Ferguson and our other friends for help with this. Now, any ideas on how to find Star?"
I do not call upon a spell with no name.

Chapter Summary

More memories come unlocked for Pauline. Including one that was locked for a reason.

Pauline stretched out.

She was still mostly asleep.

Star and her had spent a little more time looking at the memories in the dimension of pillows the night following Star's hearing. Specifically any memories relating to Tyhjiö or other multiverses.

It had been a bit overwhelming trying to comprehend the sheer scale of the situation. Pauline's dreams that night had been intense as her subconscious incorporated the information. As well as it could.

Pauline understood, mostly, it was a touch overwhelming.

Which made it a welcome change to many of her other dealings with Star since it was just a touch overwhelming instead of utterly overwhelming.

There was one other thing though. It haunted the fringes of her dreams. A name. Frizaleth.

She had no idea what this name meant just yet. There were layers of blocks and defenses around that name. It just didn't make sense.

Pauline reached out. Ready to attack the days problems!

But.

There was no one else in bed with her.

She opened her eyes the rest of the way and looked around.

There was a note on the table in Star's handwriting.

"Went to go settle some unfinished business with the Ponyhead family. Should be back in a few hours but if I'm not then I suppose they will have to me arrest me again. Star."

Pauline yawned and staggered over to a bathroom. It had been awhile since she had woken up after Star. But she was happy that Star was putting in the effort to tie up her loose ends.

After completing her morning rituals Pauline got dressed and went about her day. She found Marco and Hekapoo wrapping up breakfast and starting to go over their plans to deal with Tyhjiö. Pauline grabbed some breakfast herself and sat down next to them. Hekapoo asked, "so... Where is Star?"

"Off taking care of some 'unfinished business' in the Cloud Kingdom. Whatever that is. So, for today you got me. Now, tell me everything I need to know about Tyhjiö."
"Tyhjö is a... Well, he is the spirits of twelve beings that..."

Pauline interrupted.

"Yeah I know about that, Star showed me some things from her memories, old books and so on. I need to know everything that the past queens of Mewni wouldn't have known about. Starting with, why did he blow something up in Mewni one day after I came here?"

Pauline stared at Hekapoo with an expression that suggested that somehow Pauline knew about what she and Marco had done immediately after she had left his office. Hekapoo replied in a slightly exasperated tone.

"If you're wondering if there is some kind of link between me and him. There is but it only seems to work when I am in a state of extreme pleasure."

Pauline nodded and continued, "so, Hekapoo dies then some years. Maybe as few as fourteen, we all die when some other multiverse runs us over like an empty beer can. Tyhjö dies and... Then what?"

"Well... no one knows. The last time I trapped him in a weapon. This time... I just don't know. He has been out in the multiverse for years now. I thought he was just going to leave us alone, until the bombing."

Pauline clapped her hands and asked.

"Okay, the bombing, was there anything special about it?"

Marco reached for a briefcase and said. "Um, yes... One moment."

Marco picked up one of the threats sealed in plastic, he explained.

"Using Mewnís diplomatic connections we were able to get this processed at the FBI crime lab. Tyhijo signed every single copy of his threat with a drop of his own blood. The DNA traced to, quote, 'no species that currently exists in their database.' However it did bear a slight resemblance to early hominid DNA. And the sample appeared to have had three DNA donors. 'Evidence discovered of replacement of mitochondrial DNA.'"

Marco put down the evidence and continued.

"So, fat lot of good that does us. No DNA databases across the galaxy, so. All we have to work from there is that Tyhijo is from a civilization advanced enough to conduct genetic engineering at that level."

"Any ideas where that might be?"

Hekapoo took out a map.

Which then became a holographic projection.

Displaying a vast number of data points and...

Pauline was transfixed by it, she just wanted to study it for a good couple hours.

Hekapoo snapped her fingers and said, "hey, yo! Focus! So, here's where things get a bit weird. Several data points lit up."
"These are the locations of every single civilization in this multiverse capable of genetic engineering of this type."

Several of the lights went out.

"And these are the ones that went extinct. Of these, one is missing."

A single point of light.

"The Retrakulan people. Their solar system was located shockingly close to the supermassive black hole at the center of the Small Magellanic Cloud. The evidence appeared to show that that they had just fallen in. But after a very long and careful survey it turns out that the..."

The map started moving, various data points lit up.

"Most of that solar system was eaten by the black hole. However it appears that Tyhjiö has found a way to hide a single planet and its sun in a network of pocket dimensions in the vicinity of the black hole. He is moving them around like some cosmic game of three card Monte. But, if I can see the surface of his planet then we can get him."

Marco raised a hand and said. "So do you think you can cast that spell?"

"I don't know, but I'm looking forward to trying. It has come to me begging for forgiveness."

Pauline reached into her pack and took out the wand.

Hekapoo and Marco stared at it in disbelief, Marco asking.

"You had it on you the whole time?"

"Why not? So, I can cast the spell and get you a clear image of Tyhjiö's home world can Star and I go back to Earth?"

Marco and Hekapoo nodded in the affirmative. Pauline asked.

"One other thing. We have established that Sir Roderick came from the multiverse where Nyktipolos was sent. Ariadne claimed that she had built an entire multiverse dedicated to her and Hekapoo. There were twelve heralds. I think we have established by now that other multiverses shouldn't be heading anywhere near this one at the rate they have been over the past few decades. Does that mean that there might be eleven, or even twelve other multiverses offering up sacrifices like Roderick and/or about to crash into us?"

Hekapoo replied, "I don't know, with Omnitraxus gone we have way less warning of such things. Roderick sounded like his being sent to Mewni was done by a strange combination of circumstances that even those responsible didn't really understand. If other multiverses are going to send anything to this one they would have to do so while in relatively close proximity. I would see them coming and I wouldn't let anyone like Mina get to them first."

Pauline smiled and concluded.

"Okay, so. Just so you know I've cast a bunch of Star's spells before. But not this one..."

Marco interrupted, "hey wait! That spell, Eclipsa said she had the only 'true version of it. Even though she is dead, what if she and..."

Pauline interrupted.
Tyhjö doesn't have the spell. I have found no evidence that he even knows of its existence. Let alone how to use it. The original version died with Eclipsa. When that version died default control went to the next most senior copy in the line and that happens to be...

Pauline tapped the wand.

"Right in here. So, like I said I have been looking at Star's memories and there's this name that keeps coming up. But it's... It's like Star's memories are refusing to fill me in on the details. Does the name Frizaleth mean anything to you guys?"

Marco and Hekapoo exhaled in an anxious tone. Marco simply said.

"Yeah."

As Pauline choked down what was left of her breakfast. Hekapoo cut a portal to a pocket dimension that Star had made. As soon as Pauline set foot in it memories came rushing... In? Back? She wasn't sure. Either way as she looked around at the equipment she exclaimed.

"Hey, this is where you guys developed the antimagic generators, oh, and... Ooh, I had so much fun here. I mean... Star had so much... Sorry, someone else's memories, gets confusing sometimes."

Pauline straightened up and grasped the wand tightly. As her eyes went wide she whispered.

"Pardon me, I think I have to reenact a memory now."

And walked.

She walked through the large laboratory facility to what looked like a small indoor shooting range.

Pauline stood next to a post that had clearly been shot many times with a variety of weapons ranging from the mundane to the exotic.

Pauline spoke to the post.

"So, my dear Frizaelith. We meet at last."

The monsters words came out of Paulines mouth.

"Why have you captured me? I was the one who tipped your location to your people. Shouldn't that get me a reward, not whatever the heck this is?"

Pauline danced around the room.

Star had enjoyed this way too much.

Pauline wasn't enjoying it.

The loss of resonance between Pauline and Star's memory caused an acidic taste to build up in Paulines mouth. It was all so sadistic and... Even after all she had seen she still couldn't believe that Star had leapt this far off the deep end. She shook her head and remembered that she wasn't actually about to do this.

Pauline allowed the memory to play out.

"Sorry Sharky, no reward. You really should have known better than to work with Eclipsa in the
first place. As to why you were singled out..."

Pauline danced across the shooting range. To where a book was waiting for her on a nearby shelf.

She opened the book.

"You are one of the last septarians, despite your alleged immortality it seems you can be killed. It's just not easy. There are a few spells I could try. One is just raw power, another is... Too dangerous for anyone to ever use, but there is one other. My Grandma Comet. She... She found a spell. The total annihilation spell. She didn't want to use it but your General Seth just had to crash a dinner party and try to kill everyone there so..."

Pauline slammed the book shut.

She moved uncomfortably close to the wooden post.

"Now this spell, I know almost nothing about it other than its really powerful and really dangerous. So, I figured I'd test it on you under completely controlled conditions before using it on a battlefield."

Marco tapped Pauline on the shoulder, whispering sternly.

"Drop the wand right now."

Pauline did so.

Marco kicked the wand away from her and added.

"Just don't touch the wand and you should be fine. Keep letting the memory play out."

Pauline did so. She began speaking in Frizaleth's voice again.

"Wait, you are just going to kill me!? You aren't even going to give me a chance to rat out Eclipsa!?"

"Are you going to?" Asked Star.

"I might, if you promise not to kill me."

"Hmm, nah, I need to test this spell and unfortunately. You are the only member of the septarian order that I could find... I mean, I suppose I could test this spell on Mina. But she vanished. So, in the absence of any other immortal test subjects I'm afraid it's going to have to be... You."

Pauline realized she could still cast the spell without the wand.

"I call upon a spell with no name."

Normally spells were stored in the wand. But Eclipsa had proven that spells could live inside a caster. There might be a damn good reason why this memory had not come unwound entirely.

Pauline severed the memory completely before she could hear the entire spell. She threw her face to the floor, held her hands over her ears and refused to watch the next part.

She blinked.

The memory and all its accompanying imagery was gone.
Pauline looked at Marco and asked.

"It was ugly, wasn't it?"

Marco explained.

"That spell blew clear through the stone walls of this bunker. Through an acre of dirt and came speeding out onto the surface of the planet this lab was built on. It sped off to another galaxy in this pocket dimension. Everything in that galaxy was annihilated."

"Yeah and I'm still not sure what to do if that spell ever broaches the boundaries of this dimension." Added Hekapoo.

Pauline groaned, stretched and stood up.

"Thanks for knocking the wand out of my hand then, Marco. But, yeah, okay. I have the layout of the building in my head right now."

Pauline walked over to a concrete box rising out of the floor. She opened the top to reveal something that looked a bit like a small sewer. She spun a few valves and in moments a rapid flow of water was streaming through the bottom of the box.

It was just what was needed to extinguish any out of control wand fires.

"Okay, I think this will work. But before I get to casting there's one thing I'm wondering about. I have copies of Star's memories. But it's something she didn't see and never asked you two about. I imagine you challenged Marco to a scissor quest because he looked almost exactly like Tyhjiö and you wanted to study him to make sure he wasn't either a reincarnation or some other part of one of Tyhjö's big plans, right?"

Hekapoo looked right at him and said, "I offered him every chance to leave... But you didn't, did you?"

Marco smiled sweetly and replied, "nope." And kissed Hekapoo right on the lips.

Hekapoo put her arm behind her head and blushed slightly. Pauline asked, "so, now that we know why you challenged him. Marco, why did you accept the challenge?"

"Because I was young, dumb and full of cum. Literally. Spending time playing with a stunningly attractive big titted inter-dimensional sorceress seemed like fun."

"What was it you said when you came after me?"
"I don't care how long or what it takes. I'm getting those scissors."

Marco held his breath and leapt through the first dimensional portal.

He came out on a rocky coastline. The interior was unreachable. It was a sheer rock face, unclimbable.

He looked one way.
Rocks as far as the eye could see one way. And water as far as the eye could see the other way.
There was something that looked like a lighthouse up the beach.
He looked back at the portal. It seemed stable and well hidden. He made a quick mental checklist of the location and started walking towards the lighthouse.
"Go home to your stinky dirt rock."
That was what gave him the nerve to follow her. However many Hekapoos there were.
Finding nothing at the lighthouse but a fire, a mirror and a somewhat confused and irritated looking lighthouse keeper. Marco started walking towards the newest set of lights. Something that looked like a town, as part of a larger harbor complex.
Wandering past a few huts, stone cottages and a few other places Marco found a clone.
She was dancing raucously amongst a band of locals.
Accordion music and the sounds of partying echoed through the night.
Marco snuck up to her and leapt out of the darkness.
She leapt into his arms and put her hand over his mouth.
"Unless you want these people beating the shit out of you in a drunken frenzy I suggest you consider your next move, very carefully."
The clone took her hand off his mouth and kissed him passionately as the crowd whooped.
The clone pulled him away from the dance floor and said, "listen, I'm kinda drunk. Or else I would have booked it before now. So, things being what they are, how about I buy you a drink? Mebby a meal?"
Marco still wasn't hungry, but he did agree to the drink. When it arrived he sipped it very slowly.
Marco had tried alcohol before. But never anything this potent. Before it could start affecting him Marco asked.

"So, I can kill you anytime I want, right?"

"You can kill the singular me, but the great thing about being me is that there are so many me's to chose from. Anyway kid, I don't have the scissors. And I ain't going to tell you where you can get them... no you... You talk, I don't have anything else to say. I'm... As I said, I'm already drunk, you take a drink you lightweight. I bet you don't even..."

Her head slammed into the table.

Marco recognized the signs of blackout drunk ness and asked a passing waitress. "Um, excuse me, how many of these has she had?"

"Oh, no less than nine, no more than thirty."

"Listen, do you have a place where she can sleep this off and not be..."

Marco looked around the room.

"Assaulted?"

The waitress gestured towards the stairs. "Upstairs, second door on the left. We can arrange payment tomorrow."

She handed Marco a key as he carried the clone upstairs.

Marco dumped the clone on the bed. Then he realized that he was getting sleepy. Then he realized further that he was probably going to kill this clone so he pushed her off the bed, onto the floor and took the bed for himself. The party downstairs tapered off and Marco fell asleep.

The next morning he woke to the clone standing over him.

"We didn't...?"

"No, but you could have been by those guys downstairs."

"They could have tried. Oh they could have tried. Okay, so, I'll be leaving now."

"Hang on, hang on, wait. For one thing there's a woman who is going to ask you for money for renting this room last night. But, come on. Why can't I just have the scissors?"

"Because they are not yours, they are mine. Or they are, well, you know what I mean. I'm just a clone. Now, if you want to continue chasing clones through various dimensional portals and drive yourself mad following a prize that you can not possibly hope to win you are welcome to try. But the longer you are out here, the longer you follow my clones, the more insane you will get."

"Insane?"

"In-sane. Tell ya what. I'll let you have me as a freebie. I'll go downstairs with you, tell everyone down there that you are on an epic quest and I'll let you go to do whatever you like, okay kid?"

They did so, in front of the remaining hungover denizens of the Rusty Scupper. After settling up the bill the clone stood in front of Marco and announced, "good luck kid, you're going to need it."
The clone self terminated just before Marco could blow her out.

There were two clones nearby. Once their sister self terminated they ran away from the scene.

They waited a few weeks.

Amongst the tree pixies of Ladara.

And halfway up a mountain with some yak herders.

These hideouts were nowhere near as fun as the Rusty Scupper. But they were much better as actual hiding places.

After a few days the clones had concluded that Marco had gotten lost somewhere and forgot about him.

After a week the clone who had hid among the herders saw a young man in a red hoodie climbing the mountain. She could see him coming a mile away, literally.

Marco walked up, sat next to the clone on some rocks and gestured for the herders to leave. As the herders walked away the clone stated.

"So, I see you didn't go back."

"No, now, are we going to talk or am I just going to blow you out?"

"Just blow me out kid."

Silence.

"Seriously kid, turn back! Things only get crazier from here."

Marco leapt forward, seeing if the clone would flinch. She didn't, she just sat there and looked unamused.

He blew out the flame.

The clone that had hid among the tree pixies waited for Marco to wander into her life.

But it was actually she who wandered into his.

She was walking besides a river whose water level was very low. She had been bounced from the one decent bar in the tree pixie colony and was drunkenly wandering to her next hiding place when she saw Marco fishing in the river.

She was... Too drunk to run at high speed. She could either go back the way she came and face humiliation at the hands of the pixies. Or meet her fate.

She decided that she would have more fun tormenting the earthling than by trying to make nice with the pixies. She got to within 20 feet before he looked up. He was looking a little haggard, but he had improvised himself a nice little fishing rod. As Marco looked at the approaching clone she drunkenly boasted.

"Congrats on still being alive kid, most people I challenge have either given up or been killed by now."
"After three days?"

"Ah, you got lucky you little shit. Most of the portals I opened up to led to hell worlds. This one is actually kinda nice. But there's some kind of thing in the water or something know... Living beings reproduce very slowly on this world. Everything is kinda... slow."

She sat down on a rock.

"This is a place where you have time enough to think. So, yeah. Go back to your world. Or what happens next? I take no responsibility. If you want to stick your head in a furnace... You are going to have to if you want to snuff any more clones. I'm... The last one on this world. And all those other dimensions aren't anywhere near as nice as this one."

Marco stood up and stormed over to the clone. But before he could get halfway he exclaimed in pain.

The clone looked down, Marco had just been stung by a frog/scorpion looking creature. Known locally as a Rizzik after the sound it made when it called for a mate.

The clone exclaimed. "Told ya and now you are going to die. These Rizziks have enough venom on them to kill creatures.... Foof, twenty times bigger than you. Bye... you little idiot."

The clone walked away.

Marcos muscles began to twitch uncontrollably as the venom was spread through his body. The clone estimated that Marco had, at most three minutes until he checked out.

The clone made it almost out of earshot when she groaned and turned around. Explaining, "least I can do is watch you die."

Oddly though, he didn't die. It looked like he was dying. Flopping around on the sand. Occasionally foaming at the mouth. But not dying. The clone noticed that his right arm wasn't twitching as wildly as all the other muscles in his body.

She looked closer.

Something odd was going on. The clone had noticed that Marco had a variety of magical residues on him. That was to be expected from anyone who had any involvement with the Butterfly family. The poor bastard was already soul bonded to... Someone. Probably Princess Star. This runt was much too young to be soul bonded to anything. No, this was something else.

Marcos entire body stopped twitching and went rigid. It looked like his bones and joints were trying to stretch to their greatest extent.

Then his entire body started vibrating furiously.

Except his right arm.

That was perfectly motionless.

The clone blinked. In an instant a tentacle began to wrap its way around her neck.

"I told them, they could treat the symptom, but they could never cure the virus. I am eternal. This... Lump I'm attached to is... Not."
The clone exclaimed deadpan, "oh great."

"Hmm, not screaming for help. I suppose you are either brave, sniff, or drunk. Smells like drunk. Either way, I'm going to enjoy this."

The clone exclaimed in shock. The tentacle forcing her to the ground. In one smooth motion it whipped off her dress.

And proceeded to try to eat her bowels.

However.

Hekaclones were both made of energy. And able to self terminate. Before she ended her existence the clone sent a message, going all the way to all her creator.

"Anomaly! Not Tyhjiö. But he does have an arm like Rhombulus. Get this bastard!"

A dozen clones immediately stopped what they were doing and plotted an intercept course.

After a little while Marco woke up. The arm had filtered most of the Rizzik poison out of his system. He said in an exasperated tone.

"Oh crap, it's you again."

"Yes, it's me again. So, what are we going to do next?"

"We? I am going back to Earth and get Star to seal you up again. This quest just got way too stupid for me to continue."

"Stupid? Why do you say that?"

"Um, remember, you wanted to eat Jeremy's bowels? Well, I love my bowels too, so I'm taking us back to earth."

"Oh, come on. If I eat your bowels I die too. Can't we have a little fun first?"

"Define fun."

"We don't have to go straight to eating people, we can... Go get something to drink?"

"I'm not old enough."

"We're on another world. And I know what happened at the Rusty Scupper."

"Wait, how... How do you know about that?"

"Oh I may have been sealed. But I am aware of everything you do in your every waking hour. I know a great deal about you, Mr Diaz."

"That's... Creepy, wait! The whole time?"

"The whole time."

"Okay, I gotta get this thing out of me right now!"

A dozen clones appeared from nowhere.
On both sides of the river.

Marco was surrounded.

They were heavily armed with a chakra, halberds, spears, swords, a whip, a bow, a rifle. And something that bore a striking resemblance to a phaser from Star Trek.

Six on the left bank, which Marco was on. Six on the right.

Marco's eyes were drawn to the phaser.

It seemed to be the most effective weapon here.

The arm reached up into one of the trees by the riverbank and shouted. "When the time comes, Marco, blow like the wind. I'm going to drop you right on top of them!"

Marco felt as though his body had become super elastic and halfway out of his control as he rushed through the air he was met with a clone. The one armed with what appeared to be a phaser.

Marco had no control over the arm as he was whipped through the air. He found himself face to face with the clone with the phaser. In one smooth motion he grabbed the phaser and blew out the clone.

Kar launched Marco towards the next clone. One armed with a halberd. Marco was dropped in right behind her, then behind another in the exact same way. Marco blew them both out.

There was a clone armed with a chakra, another armed with a spear and one standing right behind them had the most powerful weapon of all by the river that day. The legendary Necroblade.

However she had not counted on how massively overpowered it was. As she drew the sword it created a pressure wave which blew out the two clones in front of her.

She panicked. Dropped the Necroblade, then turned and ran.

But as she ran she tripped on a piece of driftwood and fell behind some rocks.

Before Marco or Kar could do anything about that the clone with the rifle on the left side of the river opened up on them.

The clones had been armed with a variety of souvenirs from Hekapoo's adventures.

Swords of great heroes. And the Necroblade, which was as much a key as a sword. But as long as she had it back in its lock before sundown its rightful owners shouldn't get too upset.

Spears belonging to some of the greatest hunters who had ever lived.

A phaser she had "accidentally" packed into her luggage after a particularly wild week on Risa.

A chakra which, after having been combined with another chakra had lost most of its magical power and was now just a rather goofy and unwieldy weapon.

A pair of halberds. Gifts from the first colonists of planet Switzerland.

A bow which was a personal gift from Artemis's Landlord.

And a rifle she had purchased after a wild night in Saigon.
The clone who had picked up the rifle had gone into full flashback mode. Right down to a helmet and green face paint in addition to the M14 and bandolier of magazines she carried. As she fired at Marco, she couldn't hit him. The arm was moving him around too fast.

Then she realized.

"Don't shoot the Dangly Bob. Shoot the dangly that Bob is dangling from."

She shot the branch that the arm was wrapped around. The branch was thick, but it also had a large weight torquing around it. It shattered after three rounds.

Marco fell behind some rocks, the arm following him an instant later.

He was behind cover. A pile of river washed boulders.

Rifle clone exhaled, and gestured for the clones with spears to attack.

They did so. Moving very quickly they were going to jump clear across the river in one leap.

But then they found out.

That they couldn't quite jump far enough.

One landed on her feet, but the river was too deep. The other almost made it. But slipped backwards.

Rifle clone and bow clone looked around. They couldn't hit what they couldn't see. They needed someone to flush Marco out so they gestured for the clones with swords to attack. They leapt across the river.

Marco crawled to a decent firing position and looked over the phaser. He cranked the thing up to what he thought was its highest level, took careful aim at the clone that looked closest to him and fired.

A bright light was seen.

But the clones seemed unaffected by the beam.

The clone being lazed realized that she was being lit up with a phaser and said, "fun fact dumb dumb. Energy weapons sometimes don't work all that well on energy beings. You didn't think that we would come here with weapons that could actually hurt us, do you?"

The arm shouted back. "Most of your sisters on this side of the river look pretty dead to me."

Before the clone could say anything else she realized something.

She was standing next to the water as the thought wandered through her mind.

"Hmm, energy capable of disintegrating a human body entirely. What happens when?"

Curiously the energy only came into full effect when Marco released the trigger. When he did the entire river went up like a pipe bomb.

The clones leaping across the river were the first to go. They were snuffed by the water going up.

Bow clone got hit by the water when it came back down.
Rifle clone had a helmet on. She was just barely dry enough to hold together.

As the water settled rifle clone shouted.

"Come out Diaz!"

"Why should he?"

"I'm not talking to you, I'm talking to him. Diaz, come out and face me."

Marco shouted back, "what do you want?"

The clone asked. "You and the monster arm aren't working together. Are you?"

"I would like to think we are, and the name is Kar Magorach! Just so you know!"

"Listen, I'm putting the gun down slowly. It's going to be on a sling, I'm not going to just drop it. But I am going to leave it out of my hands. Can you see that!?"

Marco shouted back, "yeah."

As she slung her rifle on her back she put her hands up. Walking slowly and deliberately towards the rivers edge.

Marco came out from behind cover and walked towards the remaining clone. Her hands still up, he held up his left hand, Kar was also up in the air.

They all put their hands down and Marco took a good look at the remaining clone.

She was wearing a helmet.

One draped in flowers.

The flowers combined with her long hair and military accoutrements conspired to make the remaining clone look like a hippie chick who had gone to war.

Marco stood by the rivers edge.

The clone looked down at some of the weapons scattered by her sisters. She pointed at a sword and said.

"You, um, see that sword down there? It was actually owned by El Chapo. Joaquín Guzman."

Marco blinked and asked in disbelief. "The drug lord?"

"Yeah, I was part of one of the raids that arrested him. I think it was the second time he got arrested? Yeah, second time. I was... That was a fun mission. I was teamed up with this guy from the DEA who was like... Well, he was kinda like Deadpool, but also an accountant. Peter, he was like Peter from Deadpool 2."

"You... arrested a drug lord?"

"I was part of a team. There were actually a whole bunch of different teams and more than one time. The second time he broke out of jail he made a deal with an inter-dimensional entity to leave Earth until the heat died down. I hunted him all the way back to Earth."
As Marco picked up the sword he could feel the weight and quality of the blade. It had been used, there was some pitting on it.

The remaining clone smiled and said.

"So, did that story make for a good distraction, or what?"

Kar and Marco simultaneously asked, "er, what?"

Rifle clone smiled at him. Taking her rifle off its sling she threw it into the air. As it fell back to her she snatched it out of the air and did a drill team routine with it. She clicked out the magazine, replacing it with a fresh one.

While Marco was transfixed watching this the remaining hekaclone on the right side of the river. The one who had dropped the Necroblade, whacked him in the back of the head with a piece of driftwood.

As Marco fell, Kar lurched across the river to attack the clone on the other side. The clone fired, five rounds rapid. Straight into Kars mouth.

He fell, wounded.

The two clones echoed each other's laugh.

Marco woke up in a painful position.

It felt like he was being crucified.

Because he was.

The clones had tied him to an improvised bracket which was holding him quite securely. Rifle clone asked.

"Did you know that story I told you was completely made up?"

"Uh, what?"

"That sword, I didn't actually take it from a drug lord. I needed to distract you while the other clone snuck up and popped you in the back of the head. So I made that story up based on some random things I knew about your planet."

The clone pointed the Necroblade right at his nose.

"This... monster arm... thingy, it has got to go. And so do you. So, I'm going to chop your arm off here and my sister is going to shoot you in the head. The arm is the source of your healing factor, so I am going to separate you two."

The other clone raised her rifle.

Marco shouted.

"Wait! If you kill me won't you be killing yourselves? The quest will be over and you guys blink out of existence?"

The clone with the blade said, "right... Well, okay, I'll just chop the arm off and we won't shoot you. But this thing is way too dangerous. Much too much of an advantage."
The clone raised the sword.

The arm had healed just enough to be conscious again.

Marco remembered, he couldn't exactly remember where but he remembered that an octopus could slide through any hole bigger than its beak. The arm lurched to the left, then to the right, loosening its restraints just enough to shoot out. It whipped between sword clones legs and sent her flying, causing her to drop the Necroblade. Which happened to land right on top of the bracket. Cutting Marco loose.

Rifle clone unslung her weapon. But before she could get the safety off Kar took a mouthful of river water and sprayed it at her.

She poofed out of existence in a shower of flowers and military equipment.

As the remaining clone tried to recover she soon found herself staring down the sword.

"Fuck, he has the fucking Necroblade!"

The clone self terminated.

Following this fight Kar insisted, rather firmly, that they not go back to Earth. He didn't want to be shut up by Star. Kar was able to physically overpower Marco. But it was still his body. So, Kar and Marco worked out a compromise. They would hunt hekaclones together for as long as would be practical.

Over the course of the next two years another eight clones were snuffed. Marco and Kar began to work together smoothly. There were arguments, there were misunderstandings. But they got through them. Though it certainly helped that Marco felt genuinely grateful to Kar after saving them both from the ambush by the river.

They used or bartered away the weapons that they had picked up in the ambush. These allowed Marco to live, almost comfortably in Hekapoo's Domain. The notoriety he gained from having bested a dozen clones in combat drew acolytes, followers, sycophants and even a few genuine friends.

The clones plotted.

Marco needed to be gotten under control.

The Necroblade needed to be returned to its resting place.

The original Hekapoo came in and was briefed on what was happening. After considering the reports from the surviving clones she came up with a plan.

Hekapoo arranged a meeting of twenty clones and briefed them. When she was done she asked.

"Okay, so, everyone knows what they are doing?"

One clone held up her hand and asked. "Yeah, why did you pick me for what you all say is the most important part of this plan?"

"Because, 36, of all the clones in this batch you are the most timid. There are some problems that call for rifle fire and stabbing things. There are other times when you have to let... Beauty do its job. Come on, you're one of my clones. Show me that you can seduce a fifteen year old boy! I
mean, if you can't do that then, well, you probably don't deserve to live any longer. I mean you are kinda annoying."

Three clones approached Tufel Fortress.

It had been built for a war that had ended so long ago that no one on this planet could remember what it was about or even who fought in it. The squat stone structure lying across several crossroads was often used as a hideout for various bandits. And tonight was no exception.

Marco and Kar had beaten the stuffing out of the current batch of bandits occupying the building. Tonight they and a bunch of friends were celebrating their new acquisition.

The clones heard the party from a long away away. Two of the clones took hiding positions outside while 36 strode right in the building.

36 threw the doors open.

Everyone went silent.

36 Found herself grabbed by several sets of hands and dragged to the chair where Marco was sitting.

Marco looked remarkably disinterested in the clone that was being brought before him.

Kar didn't notice at all, he was gently working his way around a comely young woman.

"So, I see you have settled into this world very nicely." 36 Observed.

Marco said sternly to his right arm.

"Kar, knock it off."

Kar pulled back, then grumbled. "You know this would be a lot more fun if you would man up and... Whoa. So, what are you doing here?"

36 asserted herself by prying out of the grasp of Marco's entourage and spoke.

"I came here to confirm something. Now that I have I give you one final offer Mr Diaz. This is your last chance to turn around and ride out of here."

"Hmm, I think we have both heard that before. You didn't scare us then, why should you scare us now?"

36 observed, "nice little club you built here Diaz."

"It was mostly me, these people were just looking for a leader."

36 waved her hand in front of Marcos eyes.

"Hello, anybody home?"

"He doesn't have much to say these days. Every day my influence on him grows. Oh sure, he is physically stronger. But mentally he is still just a child. Marco put his faith in me, I'm what keeps him alive in this place."
Kar faced 36.

"Now, is there anything else you would like to say before I blow you out?"

36 looked around

"So what happened to the rifle and the Necroblade?"

"The Necroblade was stolen by marauders three days ago. We are going to get it back though. Sold the rifle after we ran out of bullets. That's a nice thing about swords, they don't need reloading."

"You know the original me likes that rifle. Would you care to tell me where you sold it?"

"You know I can't remember."

36 sighed and said, "alright that's all I wanted to know."

36 rustled her dress.

A flash bang grenade fell out.

No one had time to cover their eyes except 36.

After the blinding flash and explosion, Marco's entourage found that their leader had vanished.

Marco woke up.

"Still looking for these Dum Dum?"

Marco looked up.

The original Hekapoo was holding her scissors. A giant fiery explosion was flaring behind her.

Marco struggled. He was draped in layers of shackles. And some kind of strange mirror device around his arm. Hekapoo explained confidently.

"Cold iron, there are not too many life forms in the multiverse that can break out of that."

"What is this? Why have you kidnapped me?" He demanded.

Hekapoo put the scissors back and snapped her fingers. The other 20 clones moved with great speed and dexterity, removing Marcos ragged hoodie and other clothes on the top half of his body.

The original Hekapoo announced.

"Welcome to the Exploding Plains of Flendor. Fire comes out of the ground here naturally. Many have tried to control this flame. All have failed."

The original Hekapoo pulled something out of a pillar of flame.

"As long as you are in my Domain, you are my subject. This arm is a completely unfair advantage, so."

Marco was expecting to see her press the brand into his right arm.
Instead she pressed the brand into his left arm.

Marco screamed in pain as his flesh sizzled. He screamed, "why! Why that arm? Why not the other one!? that's the one with the mon... ster!"

Hekapoo explained, "the pain of phantom limb syndrome is treated with a device called a mirror box. It tricks the brain into thinking that the body is whole again. Technically you aren't missing a limb. But it is being uncooperative. This will trick your mind into helping to seal away the creature.

As the brand was withdrawn Marco looked down and felt the pain inside his left arm mirrored in his right.

Marco exhaled.

The pain was already subsiding.

The tentacle started to gradually turn back into an arm.

Marco breathed. He slowly closed and opened his right hand. As the pain subsided he felt free in a way he hadn't felt in a very long time.

"Wow, um, thank you. Wow, it's going to take some getting used to. Not having him, around."

"You're welcome Earthling, now, I must be going."

The original Hekapoo and nineteen of her clones booked it in various directions. Leaving Marco shackled to a stone altar amidst various stone wells that belched fire.

36 Began undoing Marco's bonds. Stating, "could you have let him go before you left? No, no you just had to leave the guy here didn't you. It's not like you could survive being chained to this rock... Could you?"

"Um, no, and why are you letting me go?"

"Because if you die then I die. And I really don't want to die."

The locks came undone. But there were so many more locks to go.

Marco continued, "you know I really feel different with Kar gone."

"Yeah, you had a mental link to him via your nervous system. Yours connected to his. But he had a stronger personality than you. He overwrote you. So, now that you are free of the tentacle, what are you going to do next mr Diaz?"

As the last few shackles came off Marco stretched and stared at his hand.

He touched his face with his right hand.

He exhaled in relief.

"Well, I think I have had enough of your domain. I have had enough of being hungry, enough of sleeping on the ground and enough of people looking at me like I'm some sort of leader. I'm going back to Earth."

The clone almost shouted
"Wait, you can't go. If you go I die!"

"You know I don't care. You are a clone that I can snuff out anytime. And I'm supposed to snuff you out. What's stopping me from snuffing you right now?"

"Um... the fact that I just saved your life!?"

"After your weird sisters chained me to a rock and branded me! This got too wild for me over a year ago. I want to go home."

Marco looked around.

"Only you don't know which way home is, do you?" 36 asked.

"I'll figure it out."

He sat there in silence for a moment. 36 Glared at him and exhaled.

"Listen, this is one of the most dangerous places in this domain. I will lead you back to the portal. Doesn't matter if you die from dehydration chained to a rock, or fall into a thousand foot deep fire hole. Dead is dead for both of us."

It was a two mile walk back to the portal. A very slow and careful walk across broken, smoldering terrain. Marco and 36 started talking. About various things. By the time they had made it back to the portal they were getting along like old friends.

"Seriously, you haven't had sex yet!?"

"No, well, man... Kar did a bunch of thing with a bunch of women. But every time I just kinda stood there and tried to... Not watch."

36 laughed and said. "Man that must have been gross."

"Yeah, but if you think that's gross, Kar had some natural lubricant or something that dripped off him all the time. Turns out it's a great treatment for bug bites and Keltraine Phage boils. It let him glide over people's skin."

36 looked over the next hill.

"Well, there's the portal. This will take you back to the portal junction. There you will find the portal back to your room."

Marco walked through the first portal.

On the other side was the dimensional junction that Hekapoo had created at the start of the quest.

Marco looked at the red portal that led back to his room. He took one step towards it when 36 shouted.

"Wait!"

"Since you are leaving, do... You want to fool around a bit?"

Marco groaned, "uh, I have a girl..."

Then he realized.
This had been going on for over a year now.

He would have been reported missing, wound up on the news and wanted posters, been the subject of an Amber Alert and by now.

Had probably been forgotten by everyone except his parents.

Star was probably back in Mewni.

Jackie had certainly moved on.

He didn't even want to guess what Janna was up to.

Ferg and Alonzo...

Marco looked at his much more buff body, asking out loud. "Would they even recognize me?"

Marco looked at the scared hekaclone.

"Hey wait, why do you..."

She kissed him, right on the lips. Leaving him momentarily speechless. When he could talk again he said.

"You know what, we have a solar system worth of planets we can get to with these portals. How about we get to know each other as... Friends instead of tormentors?"
Forgiveness of the eye.

Chapter Summary

Time, space, entropy and several of our major characters all get knotted together in the shortest chapter of this story.

"Unveil to me that which is forbidden!"

The portal opened.

Pauline, Hekapoo and Marco looked carefully at the scene.

It was a bedroom, it was night. There was what appeared to be a tall man writing on some paper at a desk.

Pauline looked the figure up and down.

It definitely looked like Marco only older and fuzzier.

The portal zoomed in on what he was writing.

It was in English.

"To The One Who is to Come. I don't know what your name is but I've been looking forward to this for this for an incredibly long time. Please look closely."

"Can he see us?" Marco asked.

Pauline moved the portal out of the bedroom and took a good long look at the stars over Tyhijö's hideout planet, asking. "Do you have what you need to find this guy?"

Hekapoo replied, "yep, I know exactly where he is now."

Tyhijö spoke.

"Excuse me, whoever you are staring at us right now, can I have you attention please?"

The portal swung around.

Mina Loveberry and the earthling mercenary Jeremy Stevens entered the bedroom. Carrying a monster. A large snake.

Lights switched on as Tyhijö grabbed the snake by its head and whispered in his ears. Withdrawing his offer of immortality.

The snakes eyes went from kind, to sad and then fell out of his head. Three hundred years of aging hit him all at once. The last survivor of the septarian order shattered into dust. As the energy that had been keeping the snake alive and healthy shot back into Tyhijö it also tried to return to its source. Hekapoo.
However.

Instead of dissipating across the multiverse to eventually come to rest back in the body of Hekapoo. The energy took the most direct path back to its source. Straight through the all seeing eye spell and Pauline Long.

Someone who had spent the past week staring at other people's memories.

Pauline felt herself losing control of what was left of her sanity as she began whispering out a song. The last piece of herself to hold onto as the multiverse itself poured into her mind.

"Skip, skip, skip...

A vision played out before her. The six deaths of the Septerian order.

Snake.

Frizaelith.

Rastacore.

Toffee.

Seth.

Lazzaro.

Which led straight to the creation of the Chronoscythe. Pauline could see why the chronoscythe had the ability to speed up time. Because that was exactly what it was designed for. Time ran fast in Hekapoo's domain. It ran fast because Hekapoo's Domain was a dumping ground for the universes excess entropy.

She could see how Hekapoo, Glossarick and Lekhmet had created Hekapoo's Domain. It had been created as a grand experiment to control entropy. They had intended to use entropy as a source of magic. To eliminate it from the multiverse entirely or failing that to control it. Funneling the energy through Hekapoo's Domain. This allowed Hekapoo to create clones of herself which could be used to undo the effects of entropy in various ways.

Words, possibly spoken by Glossarick, possibly spoken by Lekhmet came echoing through Paulines mouth.

"The pain cannot be eliminated, but it can be controlled."

Pauline shook her head and exclaimed. "That's what I was missing. Hekapoo doesn't just tap into the collective feminine energies of the multiverse. She also has partial control over entropy!"

She saw that this evolution of Hekapoo and her domain had taken millennia of work and that the Magical High Commission had to sacrifice countless lives to attain this, besides the twelve heralds.

Pauline let go of the memory.

Pauline reached for a bucket, dipped it in the open water pipe and doused herself.

Steam came boiling off her head.
Pauline turned closed the eye.

She thanked it for a job well done.

She knew they had to attack as soon as possible.

But before she could say that Pauline dropped the wand. It wasn't overheating. It was working perfectly.

The All Seeing Eye knew it's fate was in someone or something else's hands now. It burned away and did not renter the wand. In order to prevent any fires. It knew that if it had done its job it would be brought back to existence in another way.

Pauline turned around to face Hekapoo and Marco.

Her eyes looked utterly terrifying.

She screamed at them.

She wanted to scream, "okay, let's get this bastard!" But what came out was...

"Skip skip... Skip to mi Lou!!"

And then passed out

Pauline woke up.

Star was leaning over her. She said in an unamused tone, "so, bit off a little more than you could chew... again?"

Pauline grabbed Star by the scruff of the neck and choked out. "Frizaelith, he... You betrayed him! Why did you kill him?"

Star sighed and replied.

"Pauline... When we spent all that time looking at memories. When my mother first used the 'break the one that can't be broken' spell? Do you remember a skull on Toffee's shoulder? A skull with cheek marks? Well, remember, that was a skull. Not a severed head. Multiple eyewitnesses in the monster army that were captured following that battle testified that Frizaelith. You might remember him, the monster that bit off Rasticore's arm. He was the one who stripped the flesh off her skull, by eating it... in front of his entire army. That was always a big part of the Septerian's shtick. 'If we will do that to each other, imagine what we will do to you.'"

Star looked at Hekapoo and Marco.

"Go ahead and stop me if anything I say is a lie, but when I was in Eclipsa's custody to keep me from dipping down she had to keep me on that potion. I could barely stagger to the bathroom between doses. All the while Eclipsa tried to reason with me but every day I just got madder and madder and sicker and sicker. After two months the only thing that Eclipsa could do was let me go or let me die."

"Eclipsa dumped me in an abandoned barn on a farm planet. But by that point I was so weak I couldn't even move. It might have been hours or days before someone came along and found me. Eclipsa could have sent any monster in her party to warn the locals that I was there. But no, she sent Frizaelith. She was the one who made a deal with Sir Roderick. She killed my father with her
bare hands and it was her psychotic daughter that killed my friend and brainwashed all those girls!"

Star had grabbed Pauline by the scruff of the neck and practically roared the last few words.

A hand rested on Star's right shoulder.

Another hand on her left.

Star took a deep breath and summarized. "So, you cast the all seeing eye spell, where you watching it or making love to it? You... Don't look so good."

Pauline looked at herself and exclaimed. "Oh fuck, what? What happened to my skin?"

Star began to whisper a healing spell.

The burnt flesh healed rapidly. But as Star stood up she bent over and retched. Spitting out golden pellets of metal. Pauline picked one up and said. "Huh, looks like golden double ough Buckshot. How many times have you been shot with a shotgun, Star?"

Star spat out the last one and said, "just once. Looks like you missed something when you pulled all that bad energy out of my body."

The golden pellets dissolved. Pauline observed, "the actual pellets were probably shot into the walls of that cave you blew up in. These are just a magical form discharged when you finally told me the truth about what happened to you in Eclipsa's custody."

Star observed, "better out than in I suppose. So, do you have anything we can use against Tyhijö?"

"Yeah, man that eye spell is fun! We have his location and I think I have what I need to cut the energy links between Hekapoo and Tyhijö without killing her. I think. We just have to get the two of them to the same planet and chop!"

"Chop?" Star and Hekapoo asked.

"Yeah, chop. But, I gotta be on the same planet, preferably the same...

Despite Star's ministrations Pauline was still staggering. She coughed out the words.

"That was a really wicked spell you used on Frizaelith."

"Yeah, that spell was too spicy for me. You know it probably says something when someone like me says. 'You know what? This toy is too dangerous. Let's play with something safer. Like... black holes?"
Chapter Summary

You don't have to watch the episode of Death Battle where Chuck Norris fights Segata Sanshirō to appreciate this chapter. But it is certainly recommended.

Pauline staggered to her feet.

Hekapoo asked.

"Pauline, your face was literally on fire a few minutes ago. Are you sure you're up for this?"

Pauline looked herself over and said.

"I feel fine. Okay, so, Hekapoo takes me to his planet. I cut the connection. We portal out of there. Easy squeeezy lemon peasy."

Marco asked. "Um, hasn't this guy been making plans to destroy Hekapoo for centuries? And you're going to his home world?"

Pauline held up her right index finger and announced. "Plans to destroy Hekapoo. He has never seen the likes of me before. He doesn't even know my name."

Pauline looked at Hekapoo with an oddly ravenous expression. "Besides, if I can kill her. And she says I can, then I can probably kill him."

Star gestured for Hekapoo to make the portal.

"I'm coming with." Added Marco.

"Sorry Marco, no you're not." Hekapoo replied.

"What? Do you think me unqualified?"

Marco reached for a nearby sword.

Hekapoo replied, "a sword isn't going to do much good against this guy and his minions. And your ritual magic just isn't on the level required for this mission."

"And hers is?!" Marco snapped as he pointed to Pauline.

"Hey, I am the one to come, he is expecting me. I don't want to disappoint him." Pauline said with a creepy smile in her face.

"Pauline can kill me, ergo she stands a chance of killing Tyhijō." Hekapoo replied.

"You do realize that if you get killed our whole multiverse goes away." Marco countered.

"That might take years and you might find a solution to the bumping problem that doesn't need me."
"Fine, I had better see you all in a little while." Marco stated in exasperation as he dropped the sword and picked up his scissors to cut a portal back to Mewni.

Hekapoo braced for what was probably going to be the shortest and most bonkers visit to a new planet in... awhile.

They stepped through the portal.

The ship was gone.

But the stone house atop the hill remained.

As the hill went higher the ground became more broken and rocky.

Turning from flat, lush farmland to a crooked, jagged confusing mess of trails.

The sun of this world was rising over a cold, dreary, foggy, ruin choked valley.

Star reached down and picked up a long straw with an ear of grain on the end. Chewing it, looking as bumpkin as she could as the three of them moved quickly up the hill.

Taking on a slight John Wayne twang in her voice Star asked. "Think he is going to come out without a fight?"

"No." Pauline and Hekapoo said at the same time. Hekapoo continued, "plans within plans within plans. He has never gone down easy before. Why would he start now?"

Star exhaled and said. "Ok, we have established that this guy is very bad and he knows we are coming. But... I want to give him this guy a chance to surrender. Especially if..."

Pauline was flailing wildly.

Star finished the sentence.

"You can't kill him, can you?"

"Damn it! I can see the energy. But I can't get it to cohere enough to sever it. There's something... I don't know. Jamming me!?!" Pauline squeaked.

While Pauline continued to grasp at the air Star shouted, "yo! Tyhjio, anybody home?!"

A voice called back.

"Yeah I'm here."

Hekapoo asked. "So, why are you here? Is this a trap?"

"I suppose you could call it that. Or perhaps I'm giving you exactly what you want."

"Meaning you?" Pauline asked.

Tyhjio stepped out from inside the building.

He waved in a cordial manner and Star went speechless.

He really did look like Marco.
But his mole was on the wrong side.

Another man walked out from the building.

A man carrying a giant white box on his back.

Hekapoo gulped. Her well beyond normal senses informed her that this new guy was a pile of walking paradoxes with energies inside him that were beyond anything she had ever seen before.

Pauline shook her head in confusion, thinking.

"This guy looks familiar."

Star exhaled sharply through her nose. She had seen enough martial arts movies to have an idea what was going to happen next as she thought.

"Ok one small guy in a white Gi? No additional weapons? Well, either this is going to be epic. Or embarrassing."

The man snapped to attention and spoke.

"Sega Satān, shiro!"

Pauline said in a somewhat terrified tone.

"Oh fuck. I don't know how he got here. But I think that's Segata Sanshirō!"

Star asked in complete confusion.

"Sega... Who now?"

"He is a reality warper." Pauline explained.

"Reality war... Oh great. What kind of reality warper?" Star asked.

"The kind that can catch an intercontinental ballistic missile with his bare hands, stop it against a thin sheet of not bulletproof glass before launching it into space and possibly surviving the ensuing nuclear blast."

Star murmured, "ah crap." And bit down on the straw.

Tyhijō explained, "not possibly, definitely. You might be wondering why I spent so much time waiting for you to get here. Nytkopolis... Her being the brooding, super powered ultra emo chick she was. She focused her efforts into creating a multiverse that would create a life form capable of defeating Hekapoo. Ariadne created a multiverse dedicated to the love between her and Hekapoo. Brimo? She just said fuck all that and created a multiverse where the most powerful fighters would battle for dominance. The end result of this was a duel between two warriors of... Utterly insane power. They destroyed their multiverse at the exact same moment Omnitraxus Prime was blown up. All three of these entities had varying degrees of immortality. So the question was asked. "If we have just crashed three of the most impossibly awesome entities together what do you get? Well, as long as I'm the one pulling the strings. You get the sum total of the madness of all their respective personalities. Made manifest in this crazy motherfucker."

Tyhijō smiled at them and held up his hands.

Star thought, "huh, this guy has twelve fingers like Glossarick." She asked. "If we beat this guy,
does that mean we get Omnitraxus back?"

"Um, yeah sure, whatever. You kids have fun now." Tyhjö said as he walked towards a nearby portal.

Before Segata began his run.

But after Tyhjö left.

Hekapoo grabbed Pauline and whispered. "That thing is definitely part Omnitraxus. I can see eleven other multiverses right now, nine are headed this way."

Pauline whispered back, "I see the links stretching between them and Tyhjö's fingers. One dimension was blown up to make that thing running towards us. One might still be so dedicated to... Love that it is not taking part in this. Another is, just... empty."

Star whispered back, "empty? What do you mean empty?"

Hekapoo realized the answer.

"Empty. Because all life there is gone."

Pauline replied. "Uh, not quite. If there was no conscious life there then no one could say 'Tyhjö, hands, or should I say, finger, off our dimension!' There is one life form still alive in that multiverse... and I'm looking at her right now. That contraption Crowley created didn't just take energy from him and his dead acolyte. Sending Spode and maintaining close flight with this multiverse took so much from it that... Every life form in that multiverse had to pay with its own life. Since Lady Florence wasn't technically in that multiverse at the time so she is still alive. She severed all links between her dimension and ours."

Pauline closed her eyes to the miserable, lonely figure of Lady Florence. Shook her head and concluded as well as she could with the evidence at hand. "That universe shot it's load with Spode. And the one thing left alive there wants absolutely no part of any of this."

Star stammered. "Okay, so that's three multiverses. That means that there are still nine other multiverses heading for us. And let me guess, they are all probably going to hit at once?"

"In about two days." Hekapoo and Pauline said simultaneously.

He ran.

He was among them in a flash.

All eyes were now focused on the man in the white Gi. He made his statement again.

"Sega Satān, shiro!"

He slammed the massive Sega Saturn console in front of Hekapoo, Pauline and Star.

Pauline held up her hands, opened her eyes and replied, "I would like to, I really would. I would be deeply honored to play a game with the incredible Segata Sanshirō. But we don't have a tv or anything else to plug this into."

"Oh yeah, this guy is definitely the source of the interference."

Pauline thought.
He stared at Star.

Star was holding the wand very casually in her right hand, delicately, with just her index finger and thumb. Ready to spin it into any manner of incredible spells. With her left index finger Star poked Segata in the chest and asked. "Omnitraxus, if you are in there stop screwing around and come out."

Pauline murmured, "whoopsie."

Hekapoo ducked for cover.

Sanshirō cocked back a fist and punched Star Butterfly square in the face.

Even though her defenses were up, the blow still felt worse than being hit by a speeding mountain. The punch sent Star zipping off into the distance like a cannonball. After punching through the massive stone building that Tyhijo and Segata had just been inside, pulverizing it into a mass of dust and flying rocks. Moments after leaving the ground Star was propelled to near escape velocity. Shattering the sound barrier.

Fortunately, Star was gripping the wand so lightly that none of that unbelievable velocity was transferred to the wand. It simply dropped from where Star had been holding it. Before the wand could hit the ground Pauline reached out and grabbed it. This gave her a chance to try a new feature. She slid the wand onto the bayonet lugs of her FAL. Her wings charged up, Pauline took off, evading the punch that was now speeding towards her jaw.

"Okay, I'm pretty sure he can't fly. So I should be safe as long as I am..."

Pauline looked up and saw a massive face looking down at her in disapproval and fury, she thought.

"Oh right."

"He can clone himself and make himself giant."

The giants punch had enough power behind it for Pauline to attain actual escape velocity. Sending her hurtling towards the planets second moon. As she rocketed away Hekapoo began cranking out clones.

The giant Segata dissolved into dozens of clones.

Despite their lack of weapons the Segata's were able to beat the dimensional blade armed Hekaclone's. Grabbing them and throwing them every which way. Causing them to explode, repeatedly.

Soon there was only Hekapoo herself left.

Meanwhile on the other side of the planet.

Star had just recovered consciousness from the punch. She had nearly achieved escape velocity and was in full butterfly mode. Her Omatidia eyes allowed her to see that there was a whole damn planet between her and Hekapoo. So she did the only thing she could.

Star was going to use every last bit of her incredible inertia from the punch to slingshot herself around the planet. Tracking Segata and Hekapoo was proving to be easier than it should have been. They were having a huge fight.
But the balance was fading.

It went black.

Star went faster and faster.

She locked on to Segata.

Who was standing triumphantly above Hekapoo with his right foot on her skull. He roared like a T Rex as he increased the pressure on her head.

Star was going as fast as a falling meteor as she reached out with her fist...

Segata simply caught the punch.

Star was having trouble processing what had just happened.

This made no sense. Even if he survived the punch they both should have been blasting across the countryside at several times the speed of sound.

Segata raised his arm for a chop. Star hit the dirt. Somehow all the energy from that hypersonic approach transferred out of Star, into the planet beneath them. Most of said energy shot clean through the planet. Which, in Newtonian fashion. Went half into Segata and half into the planet they were on. Opening up deep rifts and causing volcanic activity.

The shockwave from this knocked Hekapoo out completely.

But on Segata it was just another no sell. He scowled at Star Butterfly.

Meanwhile just above the planet's second moon.

Pauline had configured the wand into a half FAL, half rocket booster to try to stop herself from flying any further away from the planet.

There was a moon.

She angled towards it.

This was going to be close...

Wham!

Only there was no noise.

Pauline picked herself up. Much to her surprise she wasn't in too much pain. Pauline held her breath and allowed herself to go fully nondual. Her wings formed a pressurized bubble around. She scanned the scene. Cycling through various spectrums. She hit upon a spectrum that allowed her to see Star.

A loooong way away.

Pauline shook her head and looked down. She still had the wand. She exploded off the surface of the moon with her wings thrusting out magical energy like a rocket engine. Going faster and faster in the vacuum of space until she was almost at the atmosphere. When she hit that she let her wings flare out to their fullest possible extent. Slowing her down and collecting plasma energy from reentry. Trading altitude for energy she transferred that energy into her rifle.
Her flight came down in a corkscrew pattern. She curved her flight so she would have a clear shot at Segata, then pass behind Star at an altitude of forty feet.

Pauline opened up.

The metal of the FAL's barrel began to burn after three shots. She honestly didn't expect the gun to last long enough to get to the bottom of the magazine.

The hyper velocity rounds struck around Segatas head. Exploding on impact. Pushing him in several different directions as Pauline flew around him.

The bolt locked back. By then all of the metal of the gun was white hot. The wooden fore end was on fire. As Pauline reached the bottom of her descent curve she planted her feet in the ground. Standing with Segata directly to her left she swung every last bit of inertia and excess energy she had around her into the rifle.

Which by now was so hot it was transitioning to a kind of plasma. The solid steel of the rifle exploded on contact. The wand flew off the rifle and back into the secure grip of Star Butterfly.

After taking multiple hypersonic projectiles and punches to the face it seemed that all they had done was make Segata angrier than ever.

Segata grabbed Pauline and threw her into a nearby mountain.

Which exploded.

Twice.

The whole mountain went up in combined multi megaton explosion.

Segata had been able to contain the energy directed at him just long enough to give it to Pauline.

Segata turned to face Star. His wounds healing before her eyes. His sneer looked utterly triumphant as he waited for the magical Warrior-Queens next move.

Star had the wand. But she only had time to make, at most, one spell. Star thought.

"Okay, not much reason to hold back then."

Her gestures were flawless.

Creating a point of impossible density.

It couldn't last long. Three seconds at most and it wouldn't be big.

But she could do it here.

Star incanted.

"I summon the singularity!"

The spell formed three inches in front of Segatas chest. He clapped his hands around it. As he did so there was a blinding flash.

He caught... most of it.
To Star the flash illuminated two more faces within this Sanshirō's body. A bearded white human male and...

"Omnitraxus?!" Star shouted.


Segata regained his concentration.

The three became one again.

Still under Sanshirō's control.

It had been longer than three seconds.

He had control of the singularity now.

He formed it into a blade. It couldn't actually be seen as light couldn't escape its surface. Along with everything else not strong enough to escape its pull in the immediate area. The temperature dropped precipitously. Star was speechless as she cast her mother's knotted laser sword spell.

The blades struck.

And something that neither fighter expected to happen, happened.

Their blades became stuck.

As they tried to wiggle them apart the laser sword pumped more and more energy into the singularity. Creating an ever more powerful stew of magic, raw energies, exotic particles. The density of realities densest matter, the lightness of light itself. Light and darkness.

Star was on the edge of panic. She knew that she had bitten off more than she could chew. Before it all fell apart though she heard a voice.

"Hey."

"Calm down."

"And sing it with me."

"Skip..."

"Skip."

"Skip to mi Lou."

"Skip."

"Skip."

"Skip to mi Lou!"

"Skip."

"Skip."

"Skip to mi Lou my... dar... ling?"
Pauline was kneeling. On top of what was left of the blown up mountain. Knees on the ground. Right hand on her pistol and left hand in the air. Wings at their maximum size. She had caught a significant portion of the energy from the explosion and had funneled most of it into her bullets in her gun.

She wondered where she had learned how to do that.

She was in incredible pain.

Her bullets had taken on so much energy they were transmuting into heavier elements. She had to dump the energy fast or they would explode. Pauline scraped the debris from the explosions off of her eyes and launched back into the air.

Being so focused on Star and the black blade he was just barely controlling Segata never saw Pauline’s bullets coming.

Star did, just barely. Just long enough to let go of the wand and ducked away. Shielding her eyes from what was about to happen.

Pauline fired three bullets at Segata and another five at his black blade.

An irresistible force met an immovable object.

So what happened was only natural. Everything exploded. With roughly the same force of the explosion that killed the dinosaurs.

A massive column of plasma blasted into the planet and the sky above it. Blowing a hole clear through the second moon. Pauline couldn't help but think that this was one of the strangest looking explosions she had ever seen. This was because the blast had been caught by Sanshirō... Mostly. Catching it had exhausted all of Sanshirōs strength and willpower. So as the plasma dissolved he split back into three separate entities.

One staggered to his feet. A bearded older Caucasian man.

He looked down at his hands and said. "Oh thank you so much, that guy who ate us was a real hothead."

Then he popped out of existence like a soap bubble.

Segata had landed face first and ass in the air in a very undignified looking position. He groaned, fell over on his side and whispered out the words.

"I have lost. But to warriors who can destroy reality itself. I feel no shame in this."

He died and dissolved leaving nothing behind but the skull and swords of an unconscious Omnitraxus Prime.

Star and Pauline felt a great rumbling.

Star asked. "Um, Pauline, how hard would you say you hit that mountain?"

Pauline replied. "Speaking strictly as a geologist? Not someone who can magically examine all energies around me? More than enough to trigger a volcanic eruption if that's what you are worried about."

Star concluded, "we gotta get out of here." As she looked down to see the wand at her feet, burning
white hot. Burning so hot it was cooking through the soil they were standing on.

Another rumble.

Star went to check on Hekapoo, she was unconscious, still holding her scissors. Not split for combat, oddly.

Star tossed the scissors to Pauline and shouted. "Cut a portal to the magic sanctuary." Star threw Hekapoo through the portal an instant after Pauline opened it. Pauline was about to jump after her but she looked back to see Star trying and failing to pick up the wand. Pauline shouted. "Star, we gotta go!"

Star shouted back, "no, I can't just leave it!"

Star was trying to grab the wand. She was trying to come up with a spell that could allow her to grab it but no spells could form. The already half destroyed mountain erupted with a resounding bang. A colossal pyroclastic flow was on its way. Pauline reassured her.

"Don't worry, the wand will be safe. If you can't touch it then that means that no one else can touch it. This valley is going to contain a lot of the explosion. Nobody will be walking anywhere near this part of this planet for more than five seconds for the next week. The wand will be alright, the wand is always alright. But we won't be!"

Star shook her head and jumped through the portal with Pauline. Sealing it moments before the choking cloud of burning hot gases, liquid and vaporized rock ash engulfed the grassy hill where they had been standing.
Our little Eclipsa.

Chapter Summary

Hekapoo returns to Mewni following the entombment of Tyhijō and the hunt for his ship.

And a little adventure with Queen Eclipsa.

Hekapoo had returned to Mewni.

Her recovery and the entombment of her... Weapon had taken longer than she had anticipated. After building a suitable network of defenses around the chronoscythe she had been further delayed returning to Mewni by a fruitless search across the multiverse for Tyhijō's ship and/or any more of his allies.

Mewni had mostly rebuilt from the barrage. But in the wake of the barrage had come the war. The septarian order had taken advantage of the ensuing chaos to spark off a massive monster uprising.

Hekapoo walked into Mewni castle. She walked quietly to Solaria's room and tapped on the door. Whispering that she was here.

Solaria opened the door and asked. "Why are you whispering?"

"Because you were pregnant." Hekapoo pointed to Solaria's belly. "And now you aren't. Doesn't that imply that there might be a sleeping child around?"

Solaria whispered back. "You imply correctly, right this way."

Solaria gestured to a nearby crib.

Hekapoo looked down at the sleeping child, looking absolutely adorable. "Oh wow, she really does look like Tanith." Hekapoo observed.

The baby yawned and opened her eyes for a moment. Taking a short look at Hekapoo, smiling, then going right back to sleep.

"I know, it's odd. She looks so much like him and so little like me. But damn if that doesn't just make me love her even more."

Hekapoo asked. "So what's her name?"

Solaria replied. "Eclipsa."

Hekapoo asked, "what led you to that name?"

Solaria traced her right index fingers across the blankets around her daughters head. "When Tyhijō blasted the moon it changed its path through the sky. At the moment that she was born there was a massive monster attack gathering on the castle. Bastards thought they could take advantage of me being in labor. Before a fight could break out there was an unscheduled eclipse. The broken
fragments of the moon started reassembling themselves. Scared the monsters so much that the attack broke up. That's when I knew how powerful my daughter was. She wasn't even born yet and she was putting the moon back together for us. My little miracle. Our little... Eclipsa."

Solaria gestured for Hekapoo to come with her. Once they were out of earshot of the baby, Solaria continued.

"I was really counting on you finding that ship for us. But I haven't just been lying around giving birth the whole time you were gone. Glossarick has... We had a bit of a falling out. I don't know where he is. Rhombulus and Omnitraxes are busy with other things. Tyhijö may have only created six... OOP. I mean five of his allegedly immortal and I say really fucking hard to kill Septarians but that doesn't mean that those five remaining haven't had a heck of a time fomenting uprisings and creating chaos and taking advantage of the damage his blasted ship caused. But... I'm hoping that I might have something that can tilt the balance in our favor."

Solaria led Hekapoo to a sparring area inside Mewni castle. There was a woman, sitting in the middle of the sparring area, meditating.

"Mina, how are you doing?" Asked Solaria.

"I'm doing just fine your majesty."

Mina opened her eyes, they had a haunting glow. Hekapoo recoiled slightly at the sight of her.

Solaria explained. "Isn't this incredible? My first volunteer for the Solarian Warrior program. She feels no fear, no pain. She is the perfect soldier. Once I work all the bugs out we are going to crush those monsters once and for all."

Hekapoo looked closer.

"Where... Did you get these spells?"

Solaria replied. "Lord Sardonicus."

"You have got be kidding me. Lord Sardonicus!? Self described hedonism incarnate? You went... That forest of his is forbidden for a reason you know!"

"Yeah, but since the old castle burned down he owns the biggest magical library in the multiverse outside MHC headquarters. Since Glossarick is gone no one is allowed access to the MHC archives anymore. Sardonicus isn't just helping us with magic, oh no. His personal guard the only thing keeping the lines of communication open between us and the Cloud Kingdom. As far as I'm concerned he is a better ally of Mewni than Glossarick these days."

Hekapoo exclaimed. "His personal guard is made up of brainwashed women! He practices black magic like it's going out of fashion. He should have been arrested for crimes against mewmanity years ago! How do you know that these spells don't tie your Solarian Warriors to his destiny?"

"Because I cast the spells. I have the wand. I am the most powerful magician in this realm. Not him. I know Lord Sardonicus is a creepy, slimy, sadistic bastard. But once the monsters are dealt with then we can deal with him. You have my word on that. We are dealing with immortal monsters. We need someone who knows immortality inside and out."

As the conversation went on Solaria and Hekapoo left the sparring room and went to the throne room where they could talk without breaking Mina's concentration. A cold rain began to pour on the windows. Gray, obscured sunlight lit the room. The brightest thing in the room was Hekapoo's
flame. She began.

"Your majesty. Um... I think that if we are going, no... No. The relationship between the throne of Mewni and the MHC may demand my obedience. But it does not demand my heart. I can't continue to be your lover if you are working with someone like Lord Sardonicus."

Solaria sat down on the throne and asked. "So I would continue to have you as a diplomat? And as a warrior?"

She gestured for Hekapoo to come closer.

"Kiss me, show me what you are, show me what you are to me." Solaria asked.

They kissed.

Solaria reciprocated for awhile. But Hekapoo clearly wasn't into it. Despite their long separation there was no passion in the kiss. Solaria pushed Hekapoo away.

"I think I can make due with everything else you provide, Hekapoo, I'm not going to throw a temper tantrum because we no longer share a bed. I will try... To be grown up about this. Just... Can you do me one last favor then?"

"Tell me."

"If something happens to me, please take care of my daughter. Do a better job of serving her than you did serving me. And help me make sure that this Septarian problem doesn't become any bigger than it already is."

Eclipsa looked over her mother's elite troops.

She had seen them a hundred times before. But every time she had seen them the experience became more and more... Bitter.

There had once been 100. Then sixty, then fifty, now... Just thirty nine.

Thirty nine of the most war weary beings in existence.

Her first time in full command. Following her mother's death. She had commanded several of them on various missions before. She knew them, she trusted them.

Which was part of what made this so painful.

She felt like she was about to ask an awful lot of them today. But it had to be asked. Either way, this would prove once and for all if these soldiers were her mother's instrument, her instrument, or lord Sardonicus's instrument?

Eclipsa rested the wand against her shoulder trying to look casual as possible she asked.

"Ladies and gentlemen. I have a particularly... Important mission to ask of you today. I have worked out a ceasefire between us and the monsters. This deal hinges on one condition. We are to capture and try. And most likely execute a Mewnian citizen named Lord Sardonicus."

"Why?" Asked Mina.

"Because he has been conducting experiments, cooking up magical monster-human hybr..."
"No, you misunderstand. Why have you negotiated a ceasefire?" Mina interrupted.

"Because I have no intention of seeing Mewni drowned in flames for the rest of my lifetime like it was during my mother's reign. Our people have suffered enough. The monsters have suffered enough. We have already taken most of their land and they aren't getting it back in this deal."

"But we're not talking about land. We're talking about wiping them out! They are monsters. We can't live with those things!" Shouted Mina.

"Now you see, I'm not sure about that."

Mina grabbed Eclipsa by the collar and walked her out of the room with the Solarian Warriors and started whispering. "Come on, you think I don't know about Globgor? I know about Globgor. I know he executed fifteen Mewman prisoners after the battle of Bells Pond. One of them was my cousin. My last living relative. I know he puts on this super smooth... charming act and he really does have the most lovely singing voice. But you cannot be serious about this?!

"I am serious. And we will have to have a trial over what happened at bells pond. But perhaps we should also consider trials for the battle of Ferns Glade? How about Beaysuilquidlych? You..."

Mina let go of Eclipsa's collar.

"Okay, but seriously? We might get Globgor but in exchange we gotta give up... Sardonicus? He isn't that bad."

"Yes we do because yes he is! I wasn't kidding about those hybridizations. I could show you the evidence but I don't think you would have the stomach for it."

"Aw man... Foof, well, I suppose we do have to kill him then. But this Globgor thing isn't over, you hear me!??"

They marched back into the room with the rest of the Solarian Warriors.

"Listen, I'm just going to take C squad with us on this mission okay, the rest of you guys hang back here, okay?" Mina said.

16 Solarian Warriors followed their new queen off to confront the legendary magician.

They made it all the way to his front door before they encountered resistance. As the door creaked open they were met by a young woman.

Eclipsa looked at her and said. "This... Is a trap, isn't it?"

The woman took something out of her mouth.

It looked like some kind of candy.

"Oh this is going to suck..." Said both Eclipsa and Mina.

The woman bit into the candy. As it cracked and flowed down her throat she began transforming into some kind of seaweed tentacle monster.

Eclipsa invoked velvet inferno at it before the transformation could complete. As the monster woman died a voice resonated from inside the building.

"I'll thank you to stop breaking my toys and come inside, all of you. We have some... Things to
discuss."

Eclipsa walked inside Lord Sardonicus's home, the Solarians followed.

They walked through a living room, into a hallway up some stairs where one last doorway awaited.

Eclipsa and Mina entered, it was a sauna of some kind.

Sitting there, atop a bubbling hot spring, wearing nothing was the famously ugly, stocky, hairy but not all that old looking, Lord Sardonicus. He said to Eclipsa and Mina. As he took a bite out of a piece of fruit.

"You seem, relaxed." Observed Eclipsa.

"I'm a dead man, your majesty. When one realizes this fact life takes on a different tone, a different texture. For most people it leads them to a somber, contemplative state of mind. But in my case it's more curiosity than anything else.

"Curiosity?" Asked Eclipsa.

"When I gave Solaria the spells she needed to create Mina and the rest of her warriors. Solaria placed me under a geas. That if I ever contravened her, betrayed her or her progeny that I would die. I agreed to it at the time because I could see no way she could enforce it. Solaria was a determined warrior, a dangerous foe and a dangerous friend. You, you are very much not your mothers daughter. And yet you are something even worse. If only in sheer intellect and skill. If anyone in the multiverse could figure out a way to kill me I would imagine it would be you, Queen Eclipsa. So, how about we get going? How about we have our long anticipated battle. You with your wand, and me with my most..."

He slapped his right leg.

"Formidable weapon!"

Eclipsa cast a spell.

Something about breaking ones who can't be broken.

In his left hand he had been holding a piece of fruit.

As he dissolved from existence something very strange happened.

He was able to throw the fruit in his hand towards Mina. It landed in her mouth and she involuntarily took a bite. As he vanished completely Eclipsa turned around and asked.

"Mina?"

Mina was already chowing down on more of the fruit in a bowl nearby in a frenzy.

Eclipsa hadn't seen passion like that in Mina's eyes since... Ever, she thought.

Mina finished the fruit in the bowl and belched loudly. She her hands up and down her neck sensuously. Then stared at Eclipsa with cold fury and knocked her queen out cold.

The very last shred of self control in Mina's body convinced her not to destroy and devour her queen right then and there. The shred managed to convince her to attack her troops instead.
Convincing the frenzied warrior that her troops would make a much greater challenge, better sport.

When Eclipsa woke up, Mina was kneeling at her feet.

Covered in blood and crying. The only time Eclipsa would ever see her cry.

Nearby was a pile of corpses arranged like an altar.

"I can't... I don't know how, I don't have the power to bring back. I can't bring back. I can't bring them back. I can't bring themaaaahnhh!"

"Hypnoslumber!"
Chapter Summary

Wherin Janna Ordonia and Robert Recorde split the sheets.

And some fine details concerning the rescue of Star Butterfly.

Bob woke up on his bunk bed.

Jan... Tom was gone.

The bed was unmade.

Bob felt way less horny than he had been last night.

He felt much more like his normal self.

He stretched out.

It was like his hormones were back to their usual function.

As he got off his bunk he noticed a note.

"Bob, with all the chaos there's a small rebellion going on in hell. I've got to go back to get everything under control. Talk to you when I can, Tom."

Bob sighed.

This seemed like a ploy to corrupt Janna. But Bob trusted them both enough to give them the benefit of the doubt.

Two weeks went by.

Bob had been looking for an excuse to 'bump into Janna' for days now. He was genuinely concerned that Janna had been dragged down to hell.

But when he finally worked up the nerve to go back to Mewnian hell he found that no one there knew what he was talking about. There had been no rebellion. Hell was dealing with the current chaos better than any other realm and no one had seen Janna down there since the three of them had returned to Mewni.

Bob was about to get back in the elevator to Mewni and start hunting Janna when Hekapoo walked up.

"Hey, earthling, I need your help."

"You need my help, Marco needs my help, everyone needs me right now. But I've got to take care of something first!"

"This really can't wait!" Replied Hekapoo.
Bob sighed and said, "okay, get in the elevator."

As the elevator rose Hekapoo began.

"The multiverse can probably get by without Rhombulus. It won't be easy but we can probably get by without Lekhmet too. And don't tell anyone this. But we are probably better off the longer Glossarick decides to play dead. But we need to find Omnitraxus Prime right now!"

"I thought Omnitraxus was dead."

"If we can find a fragment of Omnitraxus then we might be able to revive him at the Sanctuary. We need him to track incoming dimensions. He was created to do that job and I can't do it without him. Without him we loose an essential early warning element."

"Well, how are we going to find him?"

Hekapoo unfolded a map.

"This is where Omnitraxus exploded. There's only just so many places that his remains could have been flung to. Look."

Hekapoo took out the weapon Eclipsa had intended for her.

"This is made out of the same magics that created the other weapons. All you have to do is stand on a suspect planet and if it vibrates then some physical trace of Omni is there. All you have to do is use this and sooner or later you will find him."

"Sooner or later. That could be a long time."

"Yeah, but you're a mathematician. You can calculate trajectories, likely paths through gravity fields. If anyone can do this, you can."

"Will I get a pair of dimensional scissors to do this?"

"No, after."

"I can't do this job without them."

"Well, you could use ritual magic."

"And lose a kidney or something every time I have to go to a new planet? Screw you. Also, I want to be paid at my current pay grade for working for the Mewnian government."

"Alright fine, but if I'm paying you I also want you to help rebuild my order of Monks."

"Alright."

"Yeah, I figured you would be perfect for that job."

Ding!

The elevator opened.

Janna and... Lieutenant Rostrum were standing there with hand trucks loaded with books.

Bob exclaimed.
"There you are, I've been so worried! I thought you had been busy fighting rebel demons in hell. Not so much, eh?"

Hekapoo handed Bob a pair of scissors. She got out of the elevator and portaled off to somewhere else.

"So, where have you been, Janna?" Asked Bob.

Janna pointed to Rostrum to go and take the books to where they needed to go.

"I've been helping transfer things from the MHC headquarters to here. Since their security is so terrible Hekapoo said that this stuff would probably be safer here."

"How's Tom doing?"

"Toms good... He's just... Sleeping at the moment."

"Can I talk to him?"

"No. He has gone into hibernation to protect his mind from mine. To make sure our memories don't get all mixed together."

"What if I don't believe you? What if I think you're lying?"

"Well, let's say I am lying. Let's say I have somehow trapped Tom within myself. What's wrong with that? Tom is a guest in my body. Perhaps I don't want him yammering in my ear as long as I'm stuck with him. They are fixing his body. It's going faster than expected. Once his body is repaired he will have his body back and that will be the end of this."

"Is this guy giving you trouble, Babe?" Asked Rostrum.

Bob turned around.

He noticed that the very young lieutenants hand was tantalizingly close to a holstered Beretta 92 Pistol.

Bob had his USW. A fight would be brief and very ugly.

Bob leaned back from staring very closely into Janna's eyes and said. "No trouble, no trouble at all. I had just made a mistake of assuming some character development had occurred. I'll see you around, Miss Ordonia."

Two more months later.

Star woke up.

She felt great.

She looked up to see.

"Oh wow... Marco, Marco, Marco, I missed you so much. Marco, they shot me full of drugs. I... I don't know how long was I gone. How long was I gone?"
Marco replied, "three months."
"How did I get out?"
"Eclipsa... She let you go."

As the drugs were clearing out Star felt more and more coherent with every second that ticked by. But there was something that was bothering her.

Star looked at her body. She was withering away.

She asked, "please don't tell me that you still have that arm?"

The tentacle stood up.

"So what if he does?" Asked Kar.

"Great, Marco can you keep that thing under control?"

"I'm just going to go with the flow for a little while. Oh, but I can't let you touch Marco without his permission. I should have stopped you sooner but I couldn't do anything while I was sealed. But, I'm unsealed now!"

She asked, "do you guys still have the wand?"

Marco nodded, he summoned a guard to retrieve the wand. The guard returned with a case and presented it to Star.

Star reached for it, she was so weak that she could barely get her hand to the thing.

She touched the wand.

She felt a warmth radiating through it.

She had just enough strength to pick it up.

She held it to her chest. Star closed her eyes and said.

"Can I have a moment alone with my wand, please?"

Everyone cleared out of the room.

The wand started to glow.

Star materialized inside the wand.

Doors to spell chambers were flying open. A narwhal appeared and exclaimed. "Star!? What are you doing in here? Where have you been?"

"How's everyone doing in here?" She asked.

The snail said, "we have been hiding down here ever since the fire."

"What happened to Spider?" Asked a warncorn.

"You mean he isn't in here?" Star asked.
Everyone shook their heads in the negative.

"Eclipsa... Hey, what happened with the All Seeing Eye spell?"

Narwhal pointed to a nearby chamber and explained.

"We keep him locked up just in case he decides to go all pyromaniac again. We don't know how to kill a spell and even if we did we figured that eliminating him was your decision, not ours."

"No, you made the right decision. Just keep it locked up, I have plans for that thing." Replied Star.

"Can it still see us?" Asked Narwhal.

"That one can't, but Eclipsa said that one was just a copy. If she has the original then she can use it to keep an eye on us. As long as that spell is locked up it shouldn't be able to see or hear anything. Though it can probably hear us talking outside its room. But I have some ideas on how to fix that. Either way, you guys did good down here and as soon as I get back on my feet I'm going to..."

Star left the wand.

She was back in her withered body.

She had a theory.

She called for Marco.

"Marco, bring me everything you can find on Earth about muscle rehabilitation. Fitness magazines, medical journals, everything. I'm going to rebuild my body."

"Rebuild it?"

"Yeah, I got the wand and people on Earth come back from broken necks, near death experiences. With that info and a little magic I should be back to normal within a few weeks."

"Wow, Star that's actually pretty clever."

Star blinked and looked at the sharp toothed tentacle arm and had a thought. A thought she kept to herself.

"Going to have to... Yes, going to have to think of a way to get rid of that thing."

"Oh, and I want a sword."

"A sword?" Asked Marco.

"A new sword. A magical sword. Made with the most powerful magics we can find. Do you still have the swords that those Vorlite weirdoes used to chop up Rhombulus?"

"Yeah, the Vorlites escaped shortly after Roderick was killed. But they left most of their equipment behind."

"If they had swords sharp enough to cut up Rhombulus I want to study them."

Star groaned.

"Once my body is healed, of course."
The return of Janna Ordonia?

Chapter Summary

Pretty self explanatory. Events occurring roughly concurrently with chapter, Trial and Evaluation.

Tom was waiting at the mouth of Mewnian hell.

No one had any idea where Janna Ordonia's soul had wound up after her death. Monster souls usually wound up in hell. Certainly the creature that possessed her body and killed Captain Rostrum had found its way here. But there was no sign anywhere as to what had happened to her or Rostrum.

But still Tom waited.

A dimensional portal opened next to him.

Bob stepped out.

"So, still waiting?" Asked Bob.

"Still searching?" Replied Tom.

"Still searching for any sign of Omnitraxus. Even with the monks help we are looking for a really tiny needle in a really big haystack. I'm hoping that we might at least find Reynaldo at some point."

Bob sat down.

"I really don't understand why you wait here though. I mean, she did trap you inside herself. It's not like you parted company on the best of terms."

"Yeah she was a control freak, but I was closer to her than anyone I have ever known. She knew things about me that I've never told anyone else."

"Because she took those things from your mind. She didn't ask, she took."

"Those were things that had to be taken, they couldn't be given."

"That just seems so wrong."

"I'm half demon, Bob. Wrong is a big part of what we do down here."

"I suppose that's just another part of demonic existence that I'll never understand. It just seems odd that you keep this up. I mean, if there was any chance that she was going to come down here, wouldn't she be here by now?"

"I know, it's just... Come on, you know better than I do how cunning she was. How many layers of scams and tricks she had. I just refuse to believe that after all she learned that she didn't have some means of survival."
"Kinda hard to survive having your head blown off. That even slows down most immortals."

A Mewnian cobbler who had just been executed for murder stumbled through the gate. Tom stood up and said, "it's amazing how boring things are down here since Marco took over. Mewnians used to show up here, dozens a day. Now all we get is the occasional deviant like this loser. Who knows, we might not even have enough souls down here to keep the lights on someday."

Tom got up and started walking towards his family castle, Bob followed. They got in an elevator up to Tom's room and everything went silent.

Unresolved feelings swirled around the elevator.

The elevator opened.

The two men walked silently to Tom's bedroom.

As Tom opened the door he was rather shocked to see a giant snake slithering around on his bed. It was eating something. The spirit of the monster that had gotten Janna killed. Tom had kept it under glass in the castle for various reasons.

"What the...!?" Asked Tom.

The snake looked at him and finished its meal. Then the snake started moving like it was trying to dance. As it undulated it began to split from one large snake into two smaller snakes. The dance continued. It split into four still smaller snakes. Each time it doubled the snakes shrunk. But remained together. After about twelve divisions snakes began to writhe together into the form of a human being.

"Oh fuck, my head. Where am I...? Tom!"

"Janna?"

"Tom! You're okay?"

"Yeah, just fine?" Replied Tom.

"You... I'm sorry, who are you?"

"It's Bob, Janna? You don't remember me?"

"I guess not... Wait, your name is Bob? I think I have a message for you. Whoa boy!"

She looked down at her scaly arms and asked.

"Am I like a snake person now? or...? Oh crap!"

Another voice erupted from her throat. Deep, booming and masculine. "Tom Lucitor! I will not soon forget this..."

She collapsed to her knees.

A golden flaming sword materialized in her hand.

"He said that he was The final cold. The dark at the end of everything. The end of universes, Gods, worlds... Of everything. But we are Hope, what chance did that smug worm ever have against us? If memory serves he was significantly more powerful than you. Prince Luci..."
He blinked.

This Tom was not the same as the one he had fought all those years ago. But he was still an enemy.

"I'm sorry who are you? Practically anyone or anything can claim that they are 'hope" Asked Tom.

"I am Cassiel! The angel that attends the deaths of kings! You kept a part of me locked up down here in..."

He looked through Janna's eyes.

"That thing!"

He pointed to an urn.

He turned again.

He noticed something on Bob's chest.

He staggered towards Bob and pulled the crucifix from under his clothes.

"I won't hurt you." Said Bob.

Click.

"But I can hurt you. Now, clearly there is something here I don't understand going on. But whoever you are, I'm not going to let you hurt Tom."

Janna wrestled control back.

"I've... Got it... But Bob! You're gonna need to go back to Earth. Some giraffe guy named Reynaldo told me that the last piece of all this is about to fall into place. All you have to do is solve the riddle of steel."

"The riddle of..."

Bob holstered the pistol and drew his dimensional scissors. He took out the chunk of shrapnel engraved with a mysterious message from Earth that he had found among Eclipsa's things.

Bob made a portal and asked.

"Are you sure you're going to be okay?"

"Probably not, but hey, nothing ventured, nothing gained. Go on Bob. I'll handle this demon to demon. Home field advantage should count for something right?" Said Tom.

"Yeah, but there might be an angel in there along with Janna. Don't you think that's more my department than yours?"

"Well, I suppose we will have to work on trusting each other a little more then." Said Tom.

Bob portaled out.

"Now, where were we?" Asked Tom.

Janna started to look a lot more snakey.
"You can't possibly think I will let her go. Not after all this time." Said the deep masculine voice booming from Janna's vocal chords.

"Well, lucky for me, you don't have a choice. See that urn behind you?"

Tom levitated into the air and began speaking words that no one could hear and remain sane.

Midra'Apep dissolved back into the urn.

Thus leaving an entity which was half Janna, half Cassiel.

But it wasn't the Janna that Tom was used to. It was some kind of elderly... half demon? Janna? She had a huge demon wing sticking out of her half of the body. A small angel's wing sticking out of Cassiel's half and she still looked very snakelike.

Cassiel focused.

He drew forth his fiery sword.

His magnificent wing came out.

"I studied that beast's magics for years. I know exactly how he made a blade that will cut anything. Even a god."

He swooshed his blade through the air.

"All it required was the will to do so. What entity in existence has more willpower than an angel?"

Janna asserted herself.

"We're not doing that here! You hear me! I didn't spend 300 years in the service of that butt-munch. Just to wind up right back at the place where we met. Down boy!"

Janna threw herself backwards to the marble floor.

Cassiel grunted.

Tom ran over and said. "I can get you apart!"

They stopped fighting.

"Look, all I have to do is destroy that urn. Once Midra'Apep is completely destroyed Cassiel can go wherever he wants."

"You would let me go? Why?"

"Call it a lesson I was taught."

"Your family has kept me in that urn for a very long time. How do you know I won't destroy you?"

"You spent 300 years with Janna. I trust that she has the ability to get you to behave. And if that doesn't work then some guy named Bob is going to hunt you all the way to heaven and make you pay. Come on Cassiel, we both know, even down here, we are under the eyes of God."

Cassiel tried to look at Janna.

He couldn't.
He physically couldn't.
But he could feel her.

He dropped the flaming sword.

Tom levitated the urn out of his window. A dragon was flying by. Tom urged it to come down, take up a position just outside his castle and burn the urn down to nothing.

Snakes dissolved into the fires of hell.

Cassiel exploded out of Janna and shot through the roof of hell. Within moments he heard the singing of his brothers.

He returned to where he belonged.

Tom looked at Janna.

Her body was normalizing. Going from part human, part demon, part snake, part angel to...

Her fourteen year old self.

She looked down.

She was naked.

She grabbed a blanket off of Tom's bed and asked. "So, yeah, hi. I'm not sure if we've ever met? My name is Janna."

She held out her hand for an awkward handshake.

"Tom Lucitor, your last name is Ordonia and you're friends with Star Butterfly, right?"

"Yes."

"Do you remember Islakar? The Tsennet?"

"No. Should I?"

"Well, that's how you died. At least how I thought you died. I wasn't there, I just got the story. You... Died there when you were about twenty years old."

Janna exhaled and said. "Well, that sounds bad. I made it into my seventies. But I was in a dimension where time went super fast. So I wonder if that really counted?"

Tom sniffed her.

"Hekapoo's Domain."

"Yeah, I was trapped there with this... Whoa!"

Janna started gasping.

"We're... Oh fuck! Please, please tell me. What is Star doing right now?"

"Right now? She is being interrogated by the Mewnian government. She was a very bad girl. She was exiled after almost killing Marco and Hekapoo."
Janna relaxed her grip on Tom's shoulders.

"Okay, so... There's no unstoppable monster that's actually or partly Star Butterfly rampaging across the galaxy?"

"Well, not anymore. She ran away to Earth and some Earthling convinced her to come back and face the music."

"Brunette girl? Turned up nose? Wears red framed glasses? Possibly insane?"

"Yeah that's her."

Janna relaxed and let go of Tom. She looked around his room and asked. "Got any clothes that will fit me?"

Tom replied. "I might be able to oblige you."

"Good, I think we should..."

Janna passed out.
The riddle of steel.

Chapter Summary

Bob and Sam meet up at an... Unfortunate event and watch a movie.

I suppose this could be classified as a Monty Python-esque. 'And now for something completely different.'

Sam settled into her room.

The same room that she had stayed in with Eclipsa all those years ago.

She and Daniel had left Earth shortly after their fathers death in a crash. Their mother had passed away from a brain aneurysm around the time of Sam's twelfth birthday. With Eclipsa's dimensional scissors Sam and Daniel had gone seeking adventure and fortune in the wider multiverse and they had found it.

Daniel had died, in of all things, a rock climbing accident. The last in a long string of adventures that the siblings had shared. Sam had brought Daniels body back to Earth. He had been cremated following a short ceremony. She had invited what little remained of her family to attend but none had showed up.

She looked at the urn.

Eclipsa's Pistol.

Her dimensional scissors.

And a brand new cell phone. With a movie cued up. A movie that she really enjoyed watching with her brother. She was going to watch it one more time.

There was a knock at the door.

Sam looked through the peephole in the door. There was a man that she did not recognize.

She asked.

"Who is it?"

"My name is Robert Recorde, are you Samantha Curry?"

"Yes, what's this about?"

"I work for the Mewnian government and I think I have something that belongs to you."

He held up the shrapnel.

She went to her bags and pulled out Daniel's beretta.

She opened the door just a tiny bit, with the lock chain still in place and said. "Toss it in here,
carefully."

He tossed it in.

She shut the door.

She examined the shrapnel.

Sam put the pistol away and said, "thank you, so, what do you want to talk about?"

"May I come in?"

Sam undid the locks and allowed Bob inside. She took off his pack and frisked him.

"Hmm, now what have we here?" Sam asked as she drew Bob's USW from its holster under his coat.

"I have a permit for that."

Sam dropped the magazine, racked the round in the chamber and put the pistol back in its locking holster.

Bob looked down at the shrapnel, still on the floor and asked, "you haven't touched it?"

"I've been trekking through the multiverse long enough that you don't just touch extremely powerful magical objects. Even if they are of great personal value. How about you tell me where you got it?"

"This was found among the fugitive Eclipsa Butterfly's personal possessions after her death."

Sam had found out about Eclipsas death after it had been announced by royal decree shortly after it happened. Still it irked her to hear someone talking about it in such proud terms.

"How did you find out that I worked with her?"

"We knew that Eclipsa had contacts on earth but we never found out who they were. Our only clue was this. I had an expert identify it as a fragment of a 155 millimeter artillery shell. Quite a few 155 millimeter shells were fired in that province of Afghanistan that year. But of all the incidents reported one in particular jumped out at me. The case of one Sgt. Daniel Curry. Curry was cited for bravery and recklessness when he called down fire on his own position. I tried to track down this Daniel Curry years ago but it was as if he and his kid sister had disappeared off the face of the Earth following the death of their mother from a brain aneurysm and their father in a plane crash in Alabama. Following their disappearance Sam and Daniel kept in contact with remaining relatives receiving multiple letters and photographs illustrating that Daniel had been cured of leukemia. Multiple pictures were posted of him in perfect health."

"A home was sold."

"Assets were liquidated."

"And almost all memory of the Curry family faded from the face of the Earth until you published a death notification, three weeks ago. So, now that I'm here, do you have any idea what the riddle of steel is?"

"What?"
"That's the last part of this. I've been told that in order to finish this I must... Solve the riddle of steel. The person who told me didn't seem to have any idea what the heck it was about. I just figured that it had something to do with this."

Bob knelt down and picked up the shrapnel.

"This is the only riddle related to steel that I couldn't solve."

Bob looked around the room. There was an urn prominently displayed.

"Did no one show up for the funeral?" Bob asked.

"I don't know what I was thinking having this funeral on Earth. All our friends are out there. On Zanagar, on Eltwhiss, on Nabeshin. We..."

Sam went to the window and exhaled.

"Am I under arrest?"

"I'm heading up the investigation into Eclipsa's criminal actions. From what I've been able to gather the only crime you committed in her service was breaking into Magical High Commission headquarters to reveal evidence of the MHC's coverup of the circumstances surrounding Eclipsa's exile from Mewni. I'm not going to arrest you for that. Once I'm done talking to you I will have to report back. But in the time it will take me to do that a resourceful woman like you should be able to find a place that doesn't have an extradition treaty with Mewni. Or heck, you could stay here on Earth. The US at least, does not have an extradition treaty with the Mewnian republic, just yet."

Bob chuckled.

"Would you believe it's bogged down in the Mewnian parliament?"

Sam turned around and held out her hand. Bob returned the shrapnel. She asked, "do you have to get back soon?"

"There's something that I do have to attend to. But something tells me that it can wait for a little while."

"Let me show you what the riddle of steel is."

Sam connected her phone to the hotel tv and started playing the movie.

Sam sat down and asked, "you've never seen Conan the Barbarian?"

Bob replied, "nope."

As the movie started to play, Bob sat down and observed.

"Oh, it's got James Earl Jones in it? I love that guy!"

Bob continued.

"That is not how you make a sword, just, no, that is not how you make a sword."

"Okay the dialog is a little stilted."

"And James Earl Jones just did what?"
"Oh, so that what that image means. Death to Thots. Even if it's not a Thot, it's just a woman defending her honor."

"Why... No, no his body would be broken working that wheel without a steady and massive supply of calories, living that slave... Wait no? Is he supposed to be a slave or something? Why are they training him to fight?"

"I must admit I did like the Excalibur in the rust, bit."

"Oh wow, is... Why would they throw a naked woman in with him?"

"And he is just acting like a... Even though they have him caged like an animal."

"And now he is...?"

"Oh lord, is this supposed to be smut or rape? And oh what the? she was a cat person or something? This is how you bury nekko shit deep in the subconscious."

"Oh, it's a metaphor for the Christians and the Mongols taking down the mooslims. I mean the snake cult. This movie is basically just the Iraq war isn't it?"

"Snakes, snakes, snakes, snakes."

Sam finally spoke.

"No step on snek."

Bob replied. "And what a fresh and tasty joke that is."

Sam shook her head as Bob continued to ask all sorts of questions about the movie.

"Um, why is the priestess naked, almost naked?"

"Ok, we are stealing the jewels."

"And the snek is awek."

"Ooh, death to Thots again!"

"Yes, but to actually combine, magically, two different life forms... Naked woman, snake blood everywhere."

"Yes, the mighty Dick trying to conquer the mighty snek."

Sam continued.

"Hey, look, all seeing eye motif right behind the naked woman. Remind you of anything?"

"So this show that we're currently in was influenced by this movie? I believe it. Wait. Was... The priestess supposed to let herself be eaten by the giant snek?"

"I think so."

"And now, we feast, we fuck, we enjoy life!"

"We... Hopefully have a smut scene with a little less cat noises. Ew, feels like I'm watching porn with my sister."
"I'm not your sister, we aren't even related. Heck, I didn't even know you existed an hour ago."

"Yeah but still, you're really cool... Piggies! Gotta keep that protein intake up!"

"Nice hat."

"Arnold is literally passed out in his porridge. Our protagonist ladies and gentlemen!"

"This movie is weird."

"Osric?"

"Oh, so we all hate the snake people."

"I wouldn't want to try to kill anyone with that dagger."

Sam spoke.

"Yeah."

"Thulsa Doom and his mountain of power? Sounds like an Oklahoma hair metal band."

Bob replied.

"Kinda interesting to hear women talk like that."

"Yep."

Bob continued.

"I think they could replace Arnold with a marble statue and the movie wouldn't be all that much changed. Brilliant directing though. Casting Arnold as a star and getting him to shut up for most of the movie."

"Oh yes."

"Oh, he is gone."

"Hm."

"I like her. I hope we see more of her."

"Excuse me citizens, have you seen this snake cult?"

"No? Thank you."

"Dooms children?"

"Oh what a pretty spot."

"Aw, he sings to the ruins."

"And there's the hair metal band again."

"Oil the sword? Then why did you stab it into the sand you twat?"

"Well, this is very cultish."
"Doom?"
"Yes, reassuring isn't it?"
"Eep."
"This guy and his body talk..."
"Please tell me this guy is about to be snapped in two by Arnie."
"Good."
"Ugh, infinity."
"Yeah, some seer you are."
"It's starting to feel like I've been watching this movie for a million years.
"Oops, there's wait.
"For a thousand years?"
"James Earl Jones is awesome!"
"He raised that snake?! Heh."
"For me... It was a Tuesday."
"Oh boy."
"Now we, oh wait he is the vil-lain, so it's probably lies."
"Steel isn't strong, flesh is stronger."
"There, on the Rocks, that beautiful girl."
"Splat."
"Huh."
"What is steel compared to the hand that wields it?"
"Contemplate this on the tree of woe? Crucify him!?"
"Oh, I saw this on a bunch of parodies, he will be fi..."

Bob grimaced. Sam interrupted.

"Arnold died for your sins. Yeah, and now he is Prometheus getting his liver plucked. This is the story of the Iraq war, isn't it? Well, nothing left to do but to let the Mongol hordes ride to the rescue and burn Baghdad to ashes. And that looks like a chaos undivided necklace."

"Ooh, runes, I like runes."
"Wow that looks weird."
"So... We killing ghosts or something?"
"Well that's not good, red sky at night?"

"And... We're stabbing at ghosts. Wow. For gods sake people, stop stabbing sand!"

Bob and Sam looked at each other.

Sam "All the gods, they cannot sever us. If I were dead, and you were still fighting for life, I'd come back for you."

Bob replied.

"Back from the pit of hell."

"To fight at your side."

Sam apologized. "I wasn't there. But I'm sorry about the monks."

Bob replied, "and even though I wasn't there either. I'm sorry about Trundelheim."

Sam stated, "Eclipsa might have left me with something besides..."

Bob interrupted. "I'm sorry, but look at this, the hand stress, claw thing."

"Princess? We're stealing princesses now?"

"Literal gate to hell anyone?"

"Oh come on, were those guys in gimp suits?"

Sam replied, "big ol padded gimp suits."

"Bring out the gimps?"

"Blowtorch and pliers?"

"I'm sure glad you aren't my actual sister, Sam."

"Bubbling celery soup and endless fucking?"

"Not my idea of paradise. I could stare into those eyes forever though and endless fucking doesn't sound, too bad. Ooh, kitty kitty."

"I was talking about the celery soup."

"Does his face look weird?"

"Kitty again."

"Ah, he is a snake guy, who also has a pet kitty. This is what he looks like when he lets his hair down, huh?"

"The eyes of a snake puppet just can't match those of James Earl Jones, sorry."

"Oh god, hentai shit again."

"I saw a hand in the celery soup."
"Hell, not heaven, right?

"Ooh, gimp one is down, gimp one is down! These leather daddies are awful fighters. Think about it, they look intimidating. But they would be awful fighters. Their one piece of armor covers their eyes and ears... And... Snakes making a break for it! Someone call a plumber!"

"Oh god, chekovs celery soup."

"Celery and people soup!" Said Sam.

"Now comes for the time for all the Bronze Age muscle bound heroes and villains to clash."

"So, we rescued a princess, did... We win?"

"Oh god, more people parts, hey. Snake guy."

"Man, Jones really put on his genocidal pants for this role."

"Flying serpent?"

"What?"

"An arrow?"

"And I suppose that is it for her."

"Oh what the snek?"

"So I suppose we are summoning the Loch Nar? Oh we are making traps. Boy I sure do pity the horse that is going to walk into that big springy wooden pick axe thingy."

"Not very scarred for a guy who spent 20 years in combat."

Sam very carefully reached for Eclipsa's Pistol. She opened a secret compartment in the bottom of the grip and handed a tightly folded piece of paper to Bob.

"Eclipsa mentioned that if you could find one of Glossaricks silkworms that it might be possible to rebuild the magical book of spells from that page."

Bob examined the page.

He memorized the information for the Crystal Pulverizing Spell. Then went back to watching the movie.

"Poor horse."

"The crazy old fuck gets a kill too?"

"Oh fuck, there's the big horse trap."

"Ouch!"

"And here comes Jones."

"No?"

"Ah, she came back as a literal Valkrie bitch."
"That guy took some killing."

"Run away, you cowardly snek man who uses snakes and women like objects, man."

"So, they still have a snek cult, but they worship her now?"

"Okay."

"Oh god not another sex scene?"

"All seeing eye again."

"Burn you the way to paradise and he is literally holding a lit stick of Semtex, subtle."

Sam replied, "yeah hear that chanting? This movie don't do subtle."

"What will your world be, without me, my son?"

"No, still has hair."

"Sword drop, like a mic drop only mics haven't been invented yet."

"And we're putting out the lit sticks of dynamite. Very good. No more suicide bombers anymore, right?"

"Pretty though."

"All seeing eye again."

"Christ, how much..."

"What?"

"And he just shot putted a lamp."

"We eat the pig and then together we burn! Burn! Come with me! You belong with me!"

"What's that from?" Asked Sam.

"Dirty Deeds with Artie Lang. Love that movie."

Sam had the last word. "That woman doesn't look like she is lamenting anything."

The credits rolled.

Bob turned to Sam and asked.

"So where are you scattering the ashes?"

"Up at Stead. That seems like the right place to do this."

"May I come with you?"

"It would be an honor." Replied Bob.

After a short, solemn drive they got out of the car near one of the race pylons. Sam delivered a eulogy.
"My brother, was a man of widely varying tastes, but more than anything else he was an adventurer. He lived his life on his terms and no one else's. When we were offered the chance to see the universe together I jumped at the chance and now..."

"Now here we are. Back at where all this began. Ten million light years and so many adventures ago. Close to where I thought I was going to lose you. But instead I found you."

Sam took the lid off the urn.

"Goodbye Bro."

As the ashes dissipated Bob just stood there until Sam turned around. As she did so Bob handed Sam a bit of paper with several forms of communication addresses on it.

"I... Have to go. I can't promise you that no one is ever going to come for you. The Queen might decide to take vengeance on you and there's a lot of rumors going around that she is hiding somewhere on Earth. But I'll do all I can to clear your name."

"Bob?"

"Yeah?"

"As soon as you can, find me again. I want to tell you about who Eclipsa really was."

Bob nodded in the affirmative. The riddle complete, Bob got his scissors out and returned to Mewnian Hell.

Sam just reached into her pocket and gently caressed a well worn piece of jagged metal. Thinking about what had been, and walked back to the car as a gentle rain began to fall.
Umbra

Chapter Summary

The final confrontation between Eclipsa and Star.

And the revelation of Janna's betrayal of Tom.

Today was the day.

The last day of her life.

It wasn't the result of some dream, or a vision or prophecy. It was an estimation and an instinct. It had been a little over three months since they had let Star go. More than enough time for Star to come up with any number of plans and recover from the effects of her captivity.

Ever since she had let Star go Eclipsa had been hoping that Star would abandon her pursuit and focus on continuing the work that Marco had started.

If she didn't there was just one thing that Star had to do to find Eclipsa again. Use the all seeing eye spell. The copy that was in the wand had been kept sealed in its chamber. It saw nothing but darkness and heard nothing but the occasional muted conversation. But Star could still use it to find their hideout.

By the careful placement of anti magic generators Eclipsa simply couldn't materialize the spell portal in certain places. Effectively making those places immune to its surveillance.

The generators couldn't cover everything though. Enough information was gleaned from the occasional glimpse at mess halls, conversations of people in the streets and various other things to conclude that Star was never going to let Eclipsa go.

The people of Mewni had spoken in dreadful tones about the vengeance that Star had planned. Star had called for a blood drive. Officially it had been to provide a reserve of blood in the event of attack. But in reality the Mewnian government was harvesting the blood of its citizens to manufacture a new magical weapon. A sword, whose blade had to be quenched in human blood.

More terrifying than that was Queen Star's attempts to teach herself healing magic. She had called for Mewnian citizens to volunteer for medical experimentation. With the advice of Prince Tom's doctors from many different dimensions, Queen Star was learning magic at the price of her own citizens. Despite cover up attempts, the Queen's popularity rating began to crater as the results of these experimentations returned to their homes. Often mutilated or cursed with poorly understood or perhaps unprecedented medical conditions. Such as a Mewnian beggar who had lost an arm who now had arms where his eyes had once been. Or a Mewnian farmer suffering from an infection had been consumed down to his bones after Star's magic had supercharged said infection. After awhile the Mewnian government ran out of local volunteers and began importing volunteers from Earth for experimentation. Fortunately for them, by the time they were being brought in Star had learned just enough about the general concepts of healing and human anatomy that her experiments had an eight out of ten average success rate. The remaining two out of ten were usually stuck with some terrifying variation of the disease, disorder or injury that had led them to this place of desperation.
in the first place.

It was a simple matter of numbers. Eclipsa could only command 400 monsters. Star could command many more monsters than that, and people and weapons. Star was in a good position to take a 'brute force' approach.

This hideout had the best possible defenses, magical and otherwise that Eclipsa could come up with. There were other hideouts here and there across the multiverse but Eclipsa had already concluded that if Star was coming for her then they would meet here. Running would just mean that Eclipsa and Star would meet at some other place where Star would likely hold the advantage.

Today was the day.

Eclipsa examined the reality warping shrapnel. Eclipsa briefly considered leaving a note with the shrapnel with Sam's contact information on Earth. And instructions that it be returned to her. But all that would do was drag Sam into this mess.

How charming Daniel had been.

Eclipsa had found just the right potion to undo the damage with the contents of Daniels medicine cabinet. It was a remarkably simple spell. With many components that Daniel had just lying around the house.

And a few ingredients that she had brought herself.

After mixing everything in the proper proportions Eclipsa poured the potion into a shot glass and explained.

"Ahem. Now that we have established that I am indeed a "sorceress." This is a... Very potent magical spell. It will cause you to go through a... Sequence of events that should cure you of your out of control cell growth."

Daniel replied.

"Really? because that just looks like a ground up mess of a whole lot of medication, some herbs and literal eye of newt. I mean, how do I know that stuff won't kill me? Or even worse, how do I know that it won't make me part of an invincible zombie army?"

Eclipsa frowned and asked.

"Well, if you're worrying about me killing you, aren't you're dying anyway? As for the zombie stuff... I don't know. I'm pretty sure this won't do that."

"Pretty sure?"

"Ok, when is your sister due back from school?"

"Half an hour."

"Is that enough time to turn you into a zombie soldier... thing?"

"Probably."

"Okay, let's try this."

Eclipsa handed Daniel his own phone.
"If at any time you feel that I'm trying to hurt you just press a couple buttons and call whatever kind of help you want. Will that work for you?"

Daniel replied. "Okay."

"And..."

Eclipsa held the drink a little higher. Daniel said.

"Oh, it glows. So whatever this is has glow stick fluid in it? I'm beginning to think becoming a zombie super soldier was a bit optimistic."

"Um. Daniel. I should warn you. My magic is a bit unstable at times."

The brown liquid turned purple. Then green, then gold. Daniel stared at it nervously and said.

"Okay, I don't know how you did that."

"Could you please... If you don't drink this spell soon we all might get blown up." Eclipsa said anxiously.

"Blown up?"

The golden liquid bubbled erratically.

Eclipsa tried to explain it in terms he could understand.

"You know about handguns? This liquid has the potential firepower of a thousand handguns, big ones, okay? So it can either be consumed... Or thrown away and hope that we all don't get caught in the blast!"

He grabbed the Jigger.

As soon as it was in his fingers it turned clear.

He took a sniff.

The color changing magic liquid was now...

"Vodka?"

He downed the shot.

He closed his eyes.

As did Eclipsa and...

Nothing happened.

Daniel slowly opened both eyes and asked. "So, um, what happens next?"

Eclipsa replied.

"We... Just sit here for as long as it takes for the spell to do its thing."

"Okay. I mean, I'm not going on a psychedelic hay ride or something am I?"
"Nope, well, I don't know, we might. Um, just to be safe how about we put on some music?"

As Eclipsa leaned over to press play on the stereo, Daniel added.

"Power of over a thousand handguns you say? What kind of handguns? I don't know if you mean something like... Hang on."

He went to his room and retrieved two items from his gun safe.

One was an unloaded beretta 92.

The other was an unloaded, 50 caliber, gold plated, desert eagle handgun.

"We had better not be going on a psychedelic hayride. Don't want to be waving these around screaming. *Spirit dragon, this is my darkest hour! Lend me your strength!"

Eclipsa looked at the pistols.

They were... Not what she was expecting. Daniel explained.

"Detachable magazines allow a rapid rate of fire. Effective rate is only limited by your trigger finger and the amount of loaded magazines. This is a magazine. And this is a single fifty caliber round."

Eclipsa gulped.

A miscalculation based on a misunderstanding caused by three hundred years of technological development had made the spell significantly more powerful than she anticipated it was going to be.

Eclipsa then thought back to the moment when Sam had given her the shrapnel.

"Okay, so, you have the plan, right?"

"Yeah, grab my brothers taser, use it to knock out the guards. Find the archive, find the evidence, leave the notes and leave a big obvious trail to the evidence."

"Do you remember the song?"

"Yes I remember the song. Oh where can there be light? I remember it, okay!"

"Good. Listen, there's one other thing and I'm aware of the symbolism of this running counter to my whole... I don't want you to be a killer, thing."

Eclipsa handed Sam an antique flintlock Pistol.

"I want you to give this to Daniel. He seems like someone who would appreciate it more than I do."

Sam examined the pistol. "This thing is an antique. The markings on it say that it was proofed by the British government. It's probably worth at least $3,000."

Sam reached into one of the pockets that she had insisted be sewn into her ridiculous princess dress and tossed the shrapnel to Eclipsa.

"Hey. Iron for iron."
"No, Sam, this... This belongs to your family. It, it's got so much of Daniels blood on it."

"Damn straight. And it's because of you and that thing that he isn't dead twice over."

As Globgor stirred from his sleep Eclipsa commenced an evacuation of the hideout.

Monsters began packing what few possessions they had and vanishing through dimensional portals created by Eclipsas small force of dimension transcending monsters. If they were victorious then Eclipsa would find them at designated rendezvous points. If not then they were to run and hide for as long as they could.

There was no chance of being able to defend this place against a dedicated attack by Star and the Mewnian military. This hideout had been built far from the main magical wells of the multiverse. Having a well would have been too much of a security risk. Without a well Eclipsa had to scavenge what magic she could. She needed to save what little she had for any engagement with Star. Which would be brief.

Through the eye Eclipsa had watched Mewni being transformed into something so much grander than the embarrassing stain on the map that it had been from her time until relatively recently. She didn't know how she felt about this. On the one hand it was something that needed to have been done a long time ago. On the other Mewni was quickly becoming a colony. Economically and culturally, if not in the legal sense, of the United States of America. Mewnian culture was being washed away in the technological transfer.

Which brought Eclipsa back to the most intractable element of all this.

Mewnian culture.

Eclipsa had been decrying it... Off and on for three hundred years now. And now here she was. One of relatively few who would remember its existence.

As the last few monsters disappeared into their portals a mirror rang.

Eclipsa walked towards a roughly made wooden table where this device and a dimensional portal had just appeared. Communications mirrors weren't allowed in the hideout. They were too much of a security risk.

Eclipsa answered it.

"Hello!"

"Mina! You're still alive?!"

"For the moment. Your presence is requested in the home of my new master."

Eclipsa looked at the portal.

Globgor grabbed her hand and asked, "what if it's a trap?"

"I did everything I could to save her husband right up until he decided to blast us. That should count for something. Besides, if Star is coming then we are probably dead either way."

Eclipsa walked through the portal.

Globgor scratched the back of his head and observed.
"Hmm, even after all these years she is still so impulsive."

In all directions spread ruins. Massive, brooding and very very old. A great civilization had once been on this planet. Filling a valley that spread below her.

Atop the grassy hill she was halfway up there was a ship. White and angular. Floating above a building. Undergoing repairs.

"You're here."

"Eclipsa turned around and replied. "I'm here... But where exactly is here? Mina."

"That's for me to know and you not to find out." Mina replied.

"Okay, then what can you tell me? Who is your new master? And how did you get out of the throne room? I checked your pulse, you were dead!"

"Only mostly dead, not all dead. I was dragged out of the throne room by an earthling named Stevens. You... Might remember him, he was the guy with the rocket launcher. Anyway we stagger out of there and see there's this tall, dark and handsome looking guy waiting for us. He says..."

"I'm putting an army together and I'm in need of warriors. Preferably immortal ones. I can guarantee you both safe passage out of Mewni. Or we can all hang around here and see if Queen Star can discover any mortality that remains within you."

Eclipsa turned around yet again to see the aforementioned guy who had just interrupted their conversation.

The eyes were wrong.

All wrong.

And his mole was on the wrong side.

This... Wasn't Marco Diaz. But he sure looked like him.

"Who are you?" Asked Eclipsa.

"My name is Tyhjö. I brought you here because we have some unfinished business to attend to. I've been looking forward to this for awhile. Although we did meet once before, I believe I asked you then... Am I free?"

Eclipsa could sense the layers of magical, anti magical and other defenses in place. This whole place was a trap waiting to be sprung. There was something she had to know first.

"I've heard stories about you, Tyhjö. Stories that don't make a lot of sense. But if you really are him then I want to know one thing. Did you kill a man named Prince Tanith?"

"Yes."

"Why!?"

"Because if I had introduced myself to Hekapoo in any other way she would have tried to find another way of fixing me. She would have tried to appeal to the parts of me who still love her. And those parts of me might have been able to convince the rest of me to go go along with that. I needed to wound her so deeply that she would never be able to forgive us."
Tyhijö gestured for Mina to leave. She walked away.

Tyhijö sat down on a rock and invited Eclipsa to sit down next to him. Eclipsa remained standing as he exhaled and explained his side of things as well as he could. He concluded by saying.

"It's... It's ridiculous, there's really no other word for it. This plan has been unfolding since before you were born and there's still something missing. I don't even know what it is yet, something, someone. An entity? a sorcerer? A monster? I don't know. It's out there somewhere. It doesn't even know what it is yet. I call it 'the one to come.' I can sense it. But it has yet to awaken to its true power and it has to do that before I can be destroyed. It has something to do with Queen Star. Once she finds it only then will I be able to reveal myself and end my existence. Look at me, plans unfolding over millennia. Through all that time the only thing I want doesn't even know what it is yet."

"How do you know all this?" Eclipsa asked.

"Krokopelos, the second herald. She had near perfect precognition. She... Died a very long time ago. There is very little of her left within me. But there's enough to know what we need to do. Everything Krokopelos did in her life was because she had to. Her precognition robbed her of her free will. She knew that someday a solution would be found for the bumping problem. But that it would take a very long time, a lot of work and a lot of heartbreak to get there. So she played her part as long as she could until she became a part of me. She rests inside me. Deep in the quietest recesses of my mind. She does what she can and waits. Waits for the one to come."

Tyhijö stood up and said solemnly.

"You really do bear a striking resemblance to your father. And for what little it's worth. I'm sorry that I had to kill him."

Tyhjiö held Eclipsa's hands.

"But when you showed me your hands you showed me how their darkness was created. You lost your innocence a long time ago and I had nothing to do with that. I know why you did it. I understand why you did it. But you can never forgive yourself for doing it, can you? I am sorry about your father. But this burden is yours and yours alone. It's time to pay the piper."

Tyhjiö drew his scissors and created a portal. Then pushed Eclipsa through it.

As the portal dissolved Eclipsa turned to Globgor and said.

"We have got to..."

Eclipsa could feel it.

Star had unlocked her copy of the eye. Eclipsa could feel it scanning the hideout.

Star would see something that Hekapoo could identify soon.

Eclipsa took the shrapnel out of her pocket and put it on the table. Then she walked to the front door of the hideout. Globgor and the Ressinkreet followed her.

A firey red dimensional portal opened up.

Hekapoos signature.
Hekaclones started pouring out of the portal. Followed soon after by a dozen riflemen. Then by Janna, Bob, lieutenant Rostrum, Star Butterfly and finally, Marco Diaz.

Eclipsa tried to summon a butterfly form. But she couldn't do it. She just didn't have enough residual magical energy in her body. But she did have enough magical energy to cast a few spells so she cast.

"Hypnoslumber."

The dozen riflemen went to sleep.

As did the Ressinkreet.

The hekaclones fell to the ground and poofed out of existence.

Remaining awake though were.

Globgor.

Star.

Janna and Tom.

Bob.

Marco and Kar.

And Hekapoo.

They all looked at each other in confusion for a moment.

Globgor theorized that his immunity might be because he had built up a tolerance to Eclipsas magic by continual exposure.

Marco attributed his resistance to Kar.

Janna concluded it was her connection to Tom.

Star believed it was her wand shielding her.

Bob attributed it to the layers of magical wards and defenses he had built up.

Hekapoo because she was simply. Hekapoo. MHC commissioner.

Either way. Eclipsa knew she knew she wasn't getting out of this.

Eclipsa cast midnight shriek at the remaining Mewnian forces.

Star went flying backwards. Holding her ears in agony.

Eclipsa realized that she was only going to have one shot at the two entities that killed her daughter. Marco was just a human. But the tentacle arm was demonic. Potentially immortal.

"Devoured!"

The spell exploded from Eclipsa. Since Kar was moving towards Eclipsa as fast as he could it struck him first, then started speeding down the tentacle.
Hekapoo knew she could only do one thing at this point.

Hekapoo used her dimensional scissors to do what she should have done a long time ago. Detach Marco from his burden.

The tentacle was cut right before the spell could hit Marcos body.

Bob fired a Carl Gustav at the increasingly large Globgor. As he want down like a sack of hammers Janna used Tom's magic to summon a box to keep Eclipsa trapped.

Eclipsa couldn't move.

She was in check.

Star fought her way out of the Midnight Shriek spell and began an incantation.

"I call upon..."

Janna and Bob grabbed her shoulders.

"Remember how much collateral damage that spell has?" Asked Janna.

"Eclipsa isn't immortal, that shouldn't be..."

Bob looked over at Janna.

He noticed something that he hadn't noticed before. There was a valve like fitting on the back of the pendant.

He reached down and grabbed the valve.

The gem shifted colors. From blue to red.

Tom breathed in.

Eyes burned with rage.

He turned to Bob and said. "Thanks for figuring out Janna's little modification."

Tom reached for a large knife on Bob's belt and held it against Janna's neck.

"Sorry, I have to leave. I need to get back to my body before Janna pulls any other crazy stuff."

He immediately walked back through Hekapoo's portal back to Mewni.

Star drew her sword as the box that contained Eclipsa crumbled back into the ground. Leaving a mostly crushed Eclipsa. Between the 'recoil' of the spell and the box, Eclipsa was badly wounded.

Star raised her sword.

"Star! We need her alive to tell us where the monsters went!" Exclaimed Hekapoo.

Star tapped her foot against the still unconscious Ressinkreet. "We can get the information out of him."

Star chopped off Eclipsas head, then impaled her through the chest.
Eclipsa's heart stopped pumping.

Hekapoo's jaw dropped. She knew exactly what was going to happen today. But even knowing the outcome it still came as a shock. She couldn't help but think back to when she had first met Eclipsa. And that promise that she had broken all those years ago.

Star cleaned the blade on Eclipsa's dress, and observed. "Well, that was much easier than I thought it would be." Sheathed the blade and walked over to Marco.

Hekapoo held Marco gently. She stammered, "I just, I don't. I did what I had to do to save Marco. I'm so sorry."

Star interrupted, "don't be. Returnio armius Normirini!"

Twinkling energy flowed from the wand to Marco. It coalesced around the stump, forming into a perfectly normal, healthy arm.

"There, no more tentacle." Said Star.

Marco had no idea what to say.
A dimensional portal opened in Tom's bedroom.

Tom was waiting on the other side, he invited Bob to come with to the clinic down the hall. Janna was unconscious on the bed inside.

"How long has she been like this?" Bob asked.

"Since not long after you left. I summoned a physician. But even with her fancy earthling med school education she can't figure out what's wrong with her."

"Hey, I'm sorry. But this whole thing of hell being real is still taking me some getting used to." Said the doctor.

"Yeah well, consider yourself lucky that you aren't fated to come here." Said Tom.

"No, I'm probably going to wind up in some different hell. One where I don't have any juice like I seem to have here."

"Hey! so, what's the problem with the patient? Why is Janna unconscious?" Interrupted Bob.

"Oh, the patient? I haven't the foggiest. From what Mr Lucitor is telling me about her medical history it could be a dozen different things biologically. And possibly anything magically."

Bob held his head and said.

"Look up Segoians-Attman Syndrome."

"What's that?" Asked Tom.

"It's a condition I saw a few cases of when I was rebuilding the Order of Hekapoo. Normally when a life form takes Hekapoo's challenge they go through an initiation process where their memories as they are at the beginning of the challenge are preserved in a great black crystal and their own minds. All one has to do to restore the back up copy of their memories is to die while undergoing the challenge. If the challenger gives up or completes the challenge the older memories are retained at the discretion of Hekapoo."

Doctor Evelyn Rush opened up a book to the relevant entry and read out.

"Okay, here we go. Segoians-Attman syndrome. A condition defined by long periods of blackouts wherein the subject is forced to relive memories occurred on different planes of existence wherein the flow of time is not uniform compared to their native dimension. Most commonly the result of excesses of inter-dimensional travel. However, rare cases are known to have existed in subjects who have never traveled to a different dimension as a result of leftover memories from previous physical incarnations into their current physical incarnation."
"Condition requires a temporary or permanent blending of two separate souls. The use of the word soul here is intentional. Entities that are defined according to current universal ethical parameters as soulless do not qualify. Condition is always the result of a lack of synchronization between two souls bound together over the course of decades of time. Treatment requires separating the two entities."

"But wait. Janna... Yes she was bounded to an entity. But that entity is gone now." Said Bob.

"Cassiel wasn't the only spirit that Janna was bound to. She was also bound to me." Said Tom.

"No, our Janna. Dead Janna was bound to you. This is some other Janna who didn't even recognize me. Who barely recognized you."

"It's still Janna though! I can... I can see it in her eyes, her body language, her... This, this is definitely Janna."

"Okay, let's say it's Segoians-Attman. Then what are we supposed to do that hasn't been done yet? I mean, you and her want to play nice. Cassiel flew away. What's the other entity causing these blackouts?" Asked Doctor Rush.

"The other entity is me."

All three of them looked down, Janna had just opened her eyes.

"The problem isn't just Segoians-Attman. I'm... I'm a fragment of a fragment of a fragment of a fragment. Granted one last chance by someone way above my pay grade. I'm the last living shard of the soul that was Janna Ordonia. I cut myself in two sometime... Long, long... Long ago and only now am I... No, there's still some things missing. Listen."

Janna sat up.

"Listen, the problem is that I'm... Im too many me's. My head is crammed with memories from at least nine different physical incarnations. I've got to hit the reset button and I think there might be a spell in the Mewnian royal library that can help."

"Wait, if the conflicting souls are your own why don't we let the problem resolve on its own before we go adding more magic to the equation?" Said the doctor.

Janna grabbed the lapels of the doctors lab coat and screamed. "Because I'm not going through another one of those fucking blackouts you hear me!!!"

Dr Rush held up her hands in resignation as the other three left the Lucitor family castle. Walking to a nearby opening to the realm of Mewni.

As Pauline looked down at the unconscious Hekapoo she knew what she had to do next.

"Sanshirō and energetic interference from the wand threw me off. But I can see it now. I can see the details, the back and forth. The connections upon connections upon connections stretching clear across different multiverses. The one who became thirteen who became twelve who became the... Two."
Pauline closed her fist and concluded. "I think I can break the connection between Hekapoo and Tyhjiö. But how can I see the link over such a long...?"

Pauline looked up.

The battleship was flying over Mewni. At an altitude of about three thousand feet.

It had not fired its weapons yet.

But it was on an attack run directly to where Pauline was hovering.

"Okay, do it!" Star shouted.

Pauline reached up with her other hand and grabbed more of the link between Hekapoo and Tyhjiö. Lifting herself away from the ground, towards the ship. Summoning more and more energy through the link causing it to manifest like a rope.

Pauline looked into Hekapoos black eyes.

"Oh this is gonna suck." She whimpered.

Pauline began gesturing in the air inside her arms. Feeling for the lightest.

And there it was.

The vastness of energies, manifested into this tiny form. With every motion it got thicker.

More corporeal.

Pauline said one last thing.

"I think I have it, but I'm... If this breaks and they both die then I go down in history as the girl who ended the multiverse."

"StarFan, if you don't break that link right fucking now then we're all dead regardless." Said Star in an oddly conversational, casual tone.

"I know, just please. Cover, this is going to be big."

The most massive and dense energy shield Pauline could manifest formed around her arms and face. Her smoldering wings reemerged as Star manifested her own shield around herself.

It was so tiny now. All she had to do was twist, ever so slightly.

It was not unlike the breaking of an icicle. The empty blackness hovering above Hekapoo was instantly pulled from her eyes and hyper accelerated by the severed energy link. Now aimed perfectly right at the middle of Tyhjiö's head.

The ensuing event was a curious cocktail of energies. Unfortunately, given the massive distances involved. Most of the energy turned out to be gamma rays. Fortunately, because of the axis along which they were aimed, said gamma rays were primarily directed into the skies above Mewni and the ground below. No one in Mewni got a significant dose of radiation.

On the ship however. Right in the middle of the beam. Despite having to punch through the hull and shields. The impact hit Tyhjiö's body with enough energy to go well past vaporization. It turned his entire body into four fundamental particles, photons, gluons, Z bosons and W bosons.
But instead of splitting further into 12 types of quarks and leptons. The 12 heralds reemerged as separate spirits. As the twelve looked at the world through their own respective eyes again they realized that they had a choice. They could choose to maintain their spiritual existences.

Or.

Become energy again.

Ariadne was the first to let go.

The energy that had sent sir Roderick Spode across the void between multiverses went flying straight back to the sword of Nytkopolis. Lady Florence took the energy and directed it into a spell which would bring about a partial resurrection of life in her multiverse.

A few femtoseconds after resuming singular form, Brimo felt a hand on her right shoulder.

"Come on, it's time to go home." Said the bearded man.

A hand on her left shoulder.

"Yeah, I don't think these weaklings can take much more of us." Said Sanshirō.

The three of them snapped out of this existence.

As the remaining links between the multiverses proceeded to dissolve or disintegrate, Pauline closed her eyes and felt the energy around her cause a very odd, kind of an explosion. She caught fire again. What little remained of her clothes burned off. As her belt burned away her pistol fell off with a clunk. After having seen the entire vastness of all of creation, being shot into space. Blown up with multimegaton explosions and now this all Pauline could perceive was burning pain.

She was still in the air. Suspended by her wings. With her last remaining bit of mental cohesion in her brain she opened her eyes and saw a large body of water not too far behind her.

Pauline directed herself towards it at best possible speed. Then as soon as she was over the water, she flipped inverted. As her wings hit the water they functioned somewhat like a hovercraft. Water came up in a fine steamy mist. Pauline floated above the surface for awhile. Then the wings started to throttle down allowing her to fall gently into the water.

She waved goodbye to Star with a somewhat creepy smile on her face.

And pointed behind Star to the portal to hell opening up behind her.

Bob, Janna and Tom came running out of the underworld, Tom was exclaiming. "Star, you aren't going to believe this. We might have a way to uncrystallize your... Whoooo, what the heck is that?"

"Never mind that, look out behind you!" Star shouted to them.

"Oh fuck!" The three of them exclaimed as they looked up.

Tyhijō's ship had excellent shields and a very strong hull. All that was able to do though was contain and somewhat channel the relativistic explosion. The ship was severed into 144 cleanly separated pieces. Said prices came shrieking down to the surface of Mewni in a heap. Grinding and tumbling and smashing their way through the forest in front of the sanctuary. Coming to a halt just before our heroes.
There was a moment's silence.

"Do... Do you think the crew is dead?" Asked Tom.

A scream echoed from the wreckage.

"Nah, we don't have that kind of luck." Star replied deadpan.

Mina climbed out of the wreckage. Holding Jeremy Stevens body. Or at least, most of it. Mina held what remained of the chopped up torso with a rifle strapped to it and cried. She gently stroked what was left of his uniform, then looked around and screamed in agony. She looked at Star and screeched.

"You... You just can't stop taking things from me, can you?"

Star picked up Pauline's Field Pistol off the ground. Carefully sighting in on Mina's face and incanting.

"Explosive."

Three gigantic magical explosions detonated in Mina's face and in her hand.

Mina collapsed to her knees.

Having soaked up the magical equivalent of 40 megatons of TNT energy into it. The Field Pistols front end was now sporting a set of holographic rings. Looking not unlike the ones around Saturn. As they tried to manifested light energy into ice water to properly replicate planetary rings Star stated.

"I got a lot more than three rounds in this thing, Mina. And once it's empty that's when I whip out the really spicy stuff. Give it up!"

Mina screamed back.

"What part of I can't die do you not understand, Star?!"

"Yes you can and you're about to."

Everyone turned around.

There was a sleazy looking ghost who had just come up the stairway to hell.

No one recognized him except for Mina who exclaimed.

"Lord Sardonicus?!"

He smiled and said, "hello Mina, it's been a long time."

"What are you doing here?"

As he walked towards Mina he explained.

"I followed Prince Tom up here because I have to tell you something. Kwyjibo fruit doesn't give life by itself. It takes life from others and adds on to your own when one is in the frenzy of a kwyjibo fruit feast. When you killed me and those sixteen warriors you took my life force and theirs. The sum total of what should have been our remaining years. Those years are up now."
Mina began to tear up.

"No, no no no no no no no NO!!! It can't end like this!"

"Then how else would you like it to end? To have this woman keep shooting you until you explode? Come along now, it's not like this is your decision. It's time to pay your dues."

He put his hand on her shoulder.

Mina phased out of her Solarian warrior state. Her body slammed into the ground having aged three hundred years in about ten seconds. Mina's indomitable spirit however, remained standing. Lord Sardonicus placed what looked like a handcuff on her arm and the two spirits shot back into Mewnian hell. As the pathway slammed shut. Star looked at Bob, Janna and Tom and exclaimed.

"Sanctuary!"

Star looked towards the water.

Pauline had descended into the depths. The massive energies discharging from her body had caused the magic sanctuary to rise. Along with dozens of alligators and huge pools of golden liquid magic. Star tossed away the pistol and picked up Hekapoo while Bob grabbed Omnitraxus and the both of them ran into the sanctuary. Star put Hekapoo in her pod while Bob did the same with Omnitraxus. Star jumped up, but before she could tip over the vat golden fluid erupted from the well. Within moments Omnitraxus Prime was restored to his original self. Just in time to vanish from the scene and notice that nine different branes were now moving away from their multiverse and not towards it.

As she watched the other dimensions retreat Star sighed in relief. Then she asked Bob.

"So, Mr Recorde, it's been awhile. I would love to stay and chat but what's this about freeing my mother?"

Bob presented Star with the crystal pulverizing spell. Star read it, went through a quick mental inventory of where she could get what she needed to cast the spell and and phased back into butterfly mode. As she flew away she shouted back.

"I'm going to get my mother out of that crystal before anything else happens. Guard Hekapoo and take care of Pauline!"

They looked around.

Dozens of dead crew from Tyhijō's ship were heaped around them. Creatures and aliens the likes of which neither Bob or Tom had ever seen. All gruesomely chopped to pieces. None of them looked like a Pauline.

Tom snapped his fingers and concluded, "Pauline is probably that girl with wings we saw going into the water."

Bob replied, "well if she is how are we supposed to take care of her her?"

They looked over at the water and saw something bubbling and rising from the depths.

Pauline exploded out of the water like a steam powered... Lump.

Bob and Tom grimaced at the sight of her.
Pauline was able to take a moment to muse on her situation. She had just channeled an absolutely insane amount of cosmic energy through and around her body. So it only seemed fair that she had been turned into an unholy abomination. Parts of her had cooked off, other parts were healing. Pauline looked like a combination of a badly wounded and burnt human and a crumpled up piece of torn paper. Her wings were mangled into an ugly, profoundly sharp looking shape. More like sword blades than wings. Or perhaps corkscrews. Many of her bones were exposed. She threw up a combination of vomit, seawater from her lungs, blood and black bile.

As she caught her breath the pain came. She couldn't even imagine that this much pain could possibly exist in all the multiverse. This was just too much body horror all at once. She tried to push herself back into the sea to drown herself. Janna exclaimed.

"StarFan13!"

Pauline couldn't see her, her eyes had burned out of their sockets. She couldn't smell her, her nose had fallen off. She couldn't feel her, her hands were nothing but bone, tendons and a few nerves. She could hear her though, she whimpered, "Janna! please, please... don't leave me like this!" As she passed out.

Bob walked up to her and carefully wrapped what was left of her in a blanket and carried her gently as they could to Rhombulus's pod. She came back to consciousness when the magic hit and whispered one last thing to herself. Something to hold on to. The only thing she could think of besides unspeakable pain.

"Just skip to my Lou, my dar-ling."
Moving faster than most people could see Star rushed to gather what she needed to cast the spell. The last item was a one time use wand. She had manufactured several and hid them around Mewni Castle for... Various reasons, years ago. As she opened a cedar box containing three single use wands Star chose a particularly aggressive and sharp looking wand. Star really had no idea where the inspiration for this particularly wicked looking design had come from. But with its pointy blades it was perfect for the Crystal Pulverizing Spell. Star provoked the borrowed cockerel into crowing once. Swished the wand through the air, then pricked her ear with the wand. Noting the tiny bit of blood on the Wand's sharp point, she repeated the process.

"Cock a doodle doo!"

The crystal cracked.

Star smiled as she discarded the now inert wand.

The crystal shattered.

Moon Butterfly fell into the arms of her daughter.

Moon coughed up crystal fragments.

"Ugh cough, hu, ahch, choo! Ugh, Star?!"

"Hey Mom."

"Oh good grief, I was in there awhile, wasn't I?"

"Yeah."

"Cough! Where's... Where's River?"

"Dad... Died, not long after you got crystallized. There was an accident but I'm..."

"Cough, oh... Fuck!"

Moon couldn't move just yet.

"Help me up dear?"

Star did so. There was a wheelchair thoughtfully placed next to the pile of crystal shards.

Star wheeled her mother to her own bedroom. After a quick trip to the bathroom, Moon got up
from the chair and lied down in her bed.

She looked at her hands.

"How long was I in there?"

"Ten years."

"Ten... It took that long for this to heal?"

"No, that only took five months. But while you were crystallized, Rhombulus got killed."

"Rhombulus?"

"Yeah, we almost lost Omnitraxus Prime and Hekapoo too. But we're okay now... Kinda."

"What do you mean, Kinda?"

"I mean we kinda... Don't live here anymore. Mewni is a republic. You remember Marco?"

"Yes, your roommate?"

"Yeah I suppose that works, I got kidnapped and Marco had to take over Mewni. And while he was in charge he laid the groundwork for Mewni to go through an industrial revolution. I'm... Not queen anymore, I'm not even a princess. My, our titles were stripped. Mewni is a republic now."

"And... Marco is in charge?"

"Yeah, and he's... Really good at it. The people love him. I think we're cool to stay in this room for now but if we were to go outside... I might get shot and you would probably be pelted with horse manure."

"Horse... Oh boy. I suppose we didn't get our shaped charge, did we?"

"Me presiding over a rebuilt Mewni? No. No that all went up in smoke because of some baggage from the old queens. It turns out that when they get the choice of having either peace, or an endless genocidal war. They went with the first option."

Moon stood up from the bed.

She looked out the window.

Monsters on the grounds of Mewni castle. Some had weapons.

Moon sighed and walked away from the window.

"It was Eclipsa, wasn't it? I made that deal with her and you fulfilled it. Eclipsa killed River, didn't she?"

"Yeah, but would you believe it was an accident?"

"Really?"

"Yeah, he was upset, screaming, he threatened Eclipsa with a knife and she kinda... Smacked him."

"I presume you killed her then?"
"Yeah. I decapitated her myself. Her entire network has been run down and neutralized. Globgor took an antitank round to the brain pan. Eclipsa is ah, no more."

"Okay. So, tell me what else do I need to know?"

There was a song playing in Pauline's head.

A song she had always liked the sound of, but had never liked.

She was glad to have the previous song out of her head. But replacing that one with this one was...

This song had always sounded... A touch sappy to her. But what had always irritated her about it the most was that whenever she had heard it in a movie or tv show it always meant the same thing. Death, usually and lots and lots of death. But always at least some death.

She stretched out.

She was whole again. Her wings had dissolved, her bones were no longer exposed, her body no longer crumpled. She felt great. She had successfully absorbed and then discharged energies far beyond anything she had ever experienced before. Even in her fight with Star. She was stronger and more resilient than she had ever been. Her body was adapting to absurdly high energies.

She pushed gently against whatever it was that she was inside of.

She fell out of the pod, naked. In front of Janna Ordonia.

Janna looked nervous as hell. She was also wearing what looked like some of Tom's old clothes. But what really freaked Pauline out was that Janna looked exactly how she had looked the last time they had seen each other.

"I was under the impression you were dead." Stated Pauline.

"I might be, I'm, no one's sure exactly how I got here." Replied Janna.

Noticing a pack nearby Pauline asked. "Wouldn't happen to have any clothes in that?"

"Yeah."

Janna reached in and took out more of Tom's clothes. These were a bit bigger and more... maturing demon clothes than the angsty teen getup that Janna was wearing. Pauline put them on and asked.

"So where are the two guys who carried me in here?"

"Outside, they figured that since your clothes got blown off you might be more comfortable with a girl helping you get dressed."

"I don't know if I feel all that comfortable naked in front of a girl I saw die several years ago."

"You saw me die?!"

"After a fashion, through Star's memories. Hmm..."

Pauline adjusted her clothes. They stank lightly of sulfur and they itched a bit. She was going to need to change out of these as soon as she could. She blinked allowing her eyes to take on their
"Okay, I think I have a better understanding of what's going on. You're not from around here, are you?"

"However can you tell?" Asked Janna. Already knowing the answer.

"Over the past few days I've been learning how to see things beyond this multiverse. The only thing I've ever seen with an energy spectrum like yours was a guy named Roderick Spode. Spode wasn't from around here. Wait..."

Pauline allowed her wings to come out. They twinkled gently. A barely visible hologram compared to the razor sharp, dense corkscrew shaped metal they had been moments ago.

"Wow. Who the heck taught you magic?" Asked Pauline.

"Pardon me?"

"Well, your body is charged with magical energy. But it's not yours. It's... It belongs to, wow this is amazing. Did... Oh jeez, what... You took magical energy from living things and dead things haven't you?"

"Yeah, what, isn't that the way magic is done?"

"It's a way one form of magic is done. A form of magic that's probably more trouble than it's worth."

"Oh yeah? Well then where do you get magical energy from?" Snapped Janna.

"A bunch of places, the wand mostly, the realm of magic. That place is really fun. Psychedelics, breaking energetic bonds. Probably going to have to take a break from that one for a little while. But the only reason why I'm still alive is because I tap into the zero point energy field. It's the energy of the quantum realm, forever undulating, forever moving. Forever introducing randomness and unpredictability into things. According to the calculations of Richard Feynman there's enough energy in a space the size of a coffee cup to boil all of Earth's oceans."

Pauline breathed deeply.

"When I broke the bond between Tyhjiö and Hekapoo I was able to divert the energy that would have killed me and Hekapoo into the zero point field. Spreading the impact across this entire multiverse. It's a little like dropping a meteor into the deepest darkest part of the ocean. The sea undulates, it heats up. But unless you are talking about a really big and/or really fast moving meteor. The sea will take the hit. I practice non-dualism. But even when I become the sea there is give and take. Killing Tyhjiö though. It's funny, feels like that was more me giving than taking."

Pauline walked closer to Janna.

Janna backed up.

Pauline chuckled.

"Part of you wants to reach out and touch this energy field I'm manifesting, don't you? But it's a small part of you. The rest of you is scared shitless of me, why?"

"Because I know what you're capable of, Pauline Long. I've saw what you did to Princess White"
and I know exactly what some other you did to some other me."

"Okay, I have no idea who Princess White is and... Some other me? Some other me that is not me? If so then what did I ever do to you? I mean, we weren't friends, but it's not like I ever punched out your lights."

Janna held own head and said. "No, no it's not punching it's... Dammit, look closer with those goofy eyes of yours. See what I am."

Pauline did so.

"Holy... Wow, you're... You have the body of a fourteen year old, but your aura is old. Really old. And it looks like you spent a good long time being fucked by a demon, I'm seeing undeniable traces of the sexual energies of... Several demons? And... Well how is that possible? I'm also seeing traces of angelic energies and..."

Pauline saw what this Janna was at the core of her being and asked. "Why would you cut your own soul in two?"

"I don't know. I was a stupid kid fucking with things beyond my understanding. I got swept up in a war, and then another war and another war after that one."

"Yeah, I believe you, you... You're not the Janna I knew. I don't even know what you are. I mean, biologically you're 100% human but energetically, you're a walking nightmare."

Pauline held up her hand and Janna recoiled.

Pauline smiled and said. "You've been giving it back though, haven't you? Everything you took, everything you stole."

"Doesn't really feel like I've had any choice, but yeah."

"No, you always had a choice, you just kept making the wrong ones because it seemed cool. But you also had to live with the consequences of those choices. How... How did you collect the fragments of your own soul back together?"

"I'm not sure. I think someone did me a favor. And like you said, angelic presence. He may have been an asshole. But he knew how to get things done."

Pauline tilted her head and said, "yeah, Angels can be rather insistent."

Her wings dissolved.

"Fortunately for you I'm not an angel, just a winged humanoid."

"Fortunately for me?"

"Well yeah, if I was, with all those demonic influences tracing through your aura I might have to..."

There was a knock on the door of The Sanctuary.

"Come in." Pauline and Janna said simultaneously.

Bob and Tom walked in, followed by Marco and several Mewnian soldiers.

"Is Hekapoo alright?" Marco asked insistently.
Pauline turned around and said, "you know, I'm not sure. She hasn't come out of her pod yet. Can you check?"

Marco walked up to the pod but before he could touch it, Hekapoo fell out.

Her clothes were intact. Hekapoo looked perfectly normal. She felt herself over, then jumped up and hugged Marco.

The two of them embraced silently for a full minute before Hekapoo pulled out of the hug.

She brushed the hair out of her right eye and walked out of The Sanctuary.

She looked at the still smoldering wreckage of Tyhjiö's ship and crew.

She breathed deeply as she looked out across the multiverse, and beyond.

She could see it all.

She laughed. It was a laugh of profound exhaustion. A laugh of relief. A laugh of absolute unmitigated joy.

"He's gone, they're gone. They're all gone. Hundreds, thousands of years of dreams. They're all gone, they are finally at peace... Peace. Oh Glossarick, I never thought I would ever see peace."

Chief Foffmin walked up with a couple dozen Mewnian policemen and police-monsters. Hekapoo walked up to him and asked. "Can you handle cleaning up this wreckage?"

"Um, yeah, sure. It's kinda my job." Replied the Chief.

"Good, seeing as how I've just lost thirteen parts of myself. I think I'm going to take a nice, long vacation."

Hekapoo took out her dimensional scissors.

"Yo, Muscles, you want to come with?"

"Sure." Replied Marco.

Hekapoo made a portal, she and Marco stepped through it. Moments later the portal blinked out of existence.

"Hey, wait! I still want to know how I got here and if I'm... Dammit! I can't believe she would just shrug us all off like that." Exclaimed Janna.

"Eh, it's kind of her thing." Stated Tom.

"Where's Star?" Asked Pauline.

"Off at the castle de-crystallizing her mother." Said Bob.

"Huh, oh, hi. I don't think we have ever met. I'm Pauline, you're Robert Recorde?"

"Yeah." As he extended his hand for a handshake, Tom did the same.

"Oh, I think this belongs to you." Said Bob. "I didn't know these were on the market yet."

Pauline looked at the scorched Field Pistol and said. "Dammit! I just got this thing!"
"I examined it while you were recuperating. I think it's fine just a little bit burnt."

Pauline hefted it and said, "I don't know, it feels heavier than it used to."

She dropped the magazine and examined the bullets inside.

"Wow, that's different."

The hollow-point bullets, once filled with a dense metallic golden magic had been completely transformed. The projectiles now appeared to be some kind of grayish blue gem like substance filled with twinkling light.

"Kinda looks like a Steamlight from the movie Redline." Said Bob.

Pauline chuckled and said, "something told me that I was going to like you."

As the Mewnian soldiers and policemen established a perimeter around the wreckage. Pauline, Bob, Janna and Tom started walking towards the castle.

Chapter End Notes

https://youtu.be/35XptNZU2OA

And for reference purposes. Yes, the one time use wand that Star used to free Moon is a copy of the wand in Marco's configuration.
"To the future queens who inherit this book I hope my decision will be just and right. I don't know what the future holds for this kingdom. But it's clear that the mounting tension between mewmans and monsters are at their peak. I know it seems like I'm just thinking of myself in this decision. But maybe it benefits the kingdom too."

The Magic Book of Spells, last entry in Eclipsa's chapter. Translated from Low Mewnian.

Sam sat at the hotel bar, running her finger across the top of her shot-glass.

Someone sidled up next to her.

"So, whatchu drinking?" Asked Bob.

"Whiskey, neat." Replied Samantha.

"You know you didn't seem like a whiskey drinker." Bob replied.

"I'm not, usually. But I'm told this is what you drink when you have a broken heart."

"Ah, well. Anything I can do about that?" Bob asked.

"Sit with me, tell me how things are in Mewni."

"Things in Mewni are good. Real good as a matter of fact. The countries transition from medieval monarchy to post Information Age democratic republic is proceeding nicely."

"It's quite remarkable, actually." Said Pauline as she sat down on the other side of Sam. "So, Pauline Long, I'm told your name is Sam?"

"Yeah, I'm sorry, do I know you?"

"No, no you don't. I've heard about you, rumors and hearsay. I wanted to see for myself if Bob had come to the correct conclusion."

"But don't think you have all of us fooled." Interrupted Janna.

Janna strode up to Samantha Curry and looked at her very closely. She growled in Sam's ear at a volume below what Bob could hear. "If I were to show you a picture of two boys fucking, how would you react?"

Sam quietly replied, "I'd probably say, 'Why on gods green earth are you showing me pornography you incredibly creepy girl? Please get out of my face and leave me alone forever.'"

Janna backed up.

"Okay, it's fine. She's... Definitely not the Sam I knew."
Sam looked around and asked, "so, what? Is this my reckoning? The moment where I am made to pay for what I did?"

"Nope, like Bob said, you didn't really commit any crimes. At least not in or against Mewni. I just wanted to come by with a couple of friends of mine to get a look at you. We're not going to tell Star about you and if she finds out and comes after you, I will stop her."

"We will all stop her." Added Bob.

Janna just stood there motionless.

"Where's the shrapnel?" Asked Bob.

"Left it up in my room. I'm not sure if I want to carry around such a thing."

"Ah." Bob concluded.

Over the course of the evening the four of them caroused, drank and talked. And talked and talked and talked. Finally Pauline, Bob and Janna parted company with Sam. Walking out to the parking lot, finding a spot without cameras and cutting a portal back to Mewni.

Sam went back up to her room. And exhaled in relief after Bob had accepted her excuse.

After Bob departed back to Mewnian hell a curious thing happened.

Sam threw away the piece of shrapnel into the field where she had spread Daniels ashes. Buried Meteora's skull and where Bob had unintentionally brushed one of Globgor's hairs.

As soon as the steel hit the ground it exploded.

Out of a small cloud of smoke and various other things staggered Eclipsa.

As she coughed out some of the other things that had coalesced together into her she looked at Sam.

Then looked at herself.

She was naked.

Seemed to be some kind of rule with resurrections. Or at least these kinds of resurrections.

Eclipsa nervously covered herself with her hands.

"Riddle of steel huh? Well I suppose that's one way of writing you back into the story."

"Oh no, I'm not stopping here. I'm nowhere near done."

Reynaldo the Bald Pate, another Eclipsa with a baby Meteora and Glossarick had just climbed up a set of stairs that had materialized next to Sam's car. Reynaldo reached into the car, grabbed some of Sam's clothes, tossed them to Eclipsa. Then lobbed a case to Eclipsa's feet.

Reynaldo elbowed Glossarick.

"Okay, right... Um, my son here is cursed to only speak in riddles. We were wondering if you might have any idea how to undo that?"
Eclipsa pulled on a T shirt two sizes too big for her and a pair of very form fitting pants and replied.

"So, what... I come back from the dead and that's all you want from me? Why don't you have her do it?" Asked Eclipsa to her other self holding the baby.

The other Eclipsa walked over and handed Eclipsa, Baby Meteora. The other Eclipsa took off her gloves and said, "Because you are better at magic than I am. You mastered dipping down. I never did. I have already tried."

Baby Meteora reached up to Eclipsa. Eclipsa couldn't help but begin crying. She whispered to her other self, "I know she's not mine. But please, can I just hold her a moment?"

The other Eclipsa nodded with a smile on her face. The moment stretched on for five whole minutes. Baby Meteora gurgled and babbled and smiled at the other Eclipsa. Then Eclipsa handed her back.

Reynaldo wrote something down on a notepad and held it up.

"Come on hurry up! I got to get the wand back to the lava of Planet Molountrakia before Star goes back to look."

Eclipsa opened the case.

"Alrighty then." She stated as she slowly reached down and grabbed the wand.

She hesitated.

She couldn't do it.

Eclipsa blinked and tried to grab the wand again.

It was hot.

Really hot.

She looked down at it and asked.

"Um, Sam, could you come here and take a look at this, please?"

Sam walked over to look inside the case.

"What's that glowing writing? It looks like Low Mewman."

"It is Low Mewman. But I think it's misspelled. 'Keep poductive at all times.' Do you think it's supposed to mean Productive?"

"Could be, do we add the missing R?" Sam asked.

Eclipsa looked at her hands.

There was something oozing out of them. She had a slightly deranged thought.

She moved the holographic images of the Mewnian letters for p and o aside. Then wrote in the r with the gunk from her fingers.

The glowing inscription changed from 'be productive at all times' to 'Regiis Solum Lacrimae.'
With a loud click and a dramatic hiss the wand opened into 2 halves.

A huge amount of steam shot out. Enough to blow apart the case the wand was in.

The wand reassembled itself into Eclipsa's configuration as magic residue in Eclipsa's hands flowed towards the wand.

Eclipsa picked up the wand.

The dusk-glass at the end of the wand grew a valve and started expelling large quantities of gases. To be specific, a combination of tellurium hydride, helium and xenon gas. Not radioactive, but products of radioactive reactions. Either way, the gases were inert, albeit a bit smelly. They drifted up harmlessly into the atmosphere.

As the wand continued to pour out vapor, Eclipsa held the wand's valve as far away from anything alive as she could and looked at Glossarick and Reynaldo.

"I don't understand, if you two are Magical High Commission members, why do you need help from me?"

"This spell was placed on Reynaldo by a queen of Mewni. Only a queen of Mewni can lift it." Explained Glossarick.

"Rhina could never pull it off and she created the spell in the first place. Isn't that a trip?" Said the other Eclipsa.

As the gas venting began to slow, Eclipsa leaned the wand over her shoulders and popped out the parasol. As soon as she did so impossibly small, impossible to perceive threads began to be pulled from Eclipsa's head into the open parasol of the wand. Eclipsa boldly stated. "Well then you're shit out of luck. Because I just cast spells, I can't un-cast them."

"Why don't you just do the spell backwards? Even I've heard of that trick." Said Sam.

Eclipsa looked at Sam and growled. "That cannot be a real thing."

"No, it is." Said Glossarick and the other Eclipsa.

Eclipsa looked at Sam and whispered to her, "ok, thank you very much Helpy Helperton."

She spoke the next part.

"But even if that's possible, I can't reverse a spell that I didn't know in the first place."

Reynaldo reached into his Toga and pulled out a handwritten copy of the spell that had cursed him written in Low Mewman, showing it to Eclipsa in one hand. And a translation of Eclipsa's last note in the book of spells into English that he showed to Sam in his other hand.

Eclipsa read it silently. Then noticed the other note. She blinked and looked at Sam awkwardly.

"Really? That's it? I have to say this backwards? Okay, fine. 'Head bald Reynaldo's!'"

The wand leapt off of Eclipsa's shoulder and hovered in the air taking on various different forms. First that of Queen Rhina's incredibly complex riddle cube. Then the configuration of Queen Crescentia. Something fired from the wand. Somewhat looking like a digital rendering of an ICBM
launch from the wand straight toward Reynaldo.

Reynaldo drew a wooden dagger from his toga.

The tiny ICBM hit the dagger and burst into flames. The flames swirled around him and changed his form, from an anthropomorphized giraffe to the appearance of a handsome human being. With a large, muscular chest under his toga and long lustrous hair spilling from his head.

He ran his hand through his hair and exclaimed, "yes!" In what was now a deep, swarthy voice.

"Huh, I guess he isn't, 'The Bald Pate,' anymore." Said Glossarick.

"Of course not, now that I am freed of my curse I am merely, Reynaldo! The ferryman of time. Reinstated member of the Magical High Commission. Tasked with maintaining order in the entire multiverse. I have much work to do, but I suppose it will be easier without Rhombulus constantly fucking up everything. So! Hasta Luego... everyone!"

He went down the stairway leading to his ferry.

The other Eclipsa smiled at Sam and Eclipsa and said. "Well, have to get going. Hopefully I'll have Globgor out of crystal soon. Good luck."

Baby Meteora waved goodbye as they walked down the stairs to Reynaldo's ferry. Glossarick hovered over to Sam and Eclipsa and said. "You want to hear something really messed up? In the timeline that version of you came from the dimension of magic gets destroyed. And Monster-Mewman hybrids can't exist without magic. It's curious, it's almost like there's some force that even I can't comprehend keeping you from your daughter. Or perhaps this is a really fucked up story."

Glossarick looked at Sam and said. "Okay, so, if you want Star to hunt you down and probably kill both of you. Keep the wand, if not. Just chuck it into a portal to Planet Molountrakkia. The one near the center of the Galaxy, orbiting a star that's orbiting a black hole. You've been there, it's where you talked to Tyhjiö. I should warn you though. Don't go there yourself unless you like the idea of breathing vaporized rocks. Bye."

Glossarick went down the stairs. Then the stairs dissolved.

Sam and Eclipsa looked at each other.

Not knowing what else to say, Sam stammered out. "I've still got your dimensional scissors."

Eclipsa looked down at her hands, they were okay again. She heard laughing, children laughing. It seemed to be coming from inside the wand.

"So... What should we do?" Asked Sam.

Eclipsa grabbed the wand out of the air. It resumed the shape that she was familiar with. But unbeknownst to her it continued to pull potent but toxic strands out of her body. "Make the portal to Molountrakkia in a little while, let's say, three hours. I've got a few things I want to take care of first."

Three hours had passed.

Sam entered the hotel room.

Eclipsa was inside, sitting on a bed staring at the city.
It didn't make any sense.

Nothing made any sense.

This was just too much.

Sam walked in and stated.

"Yeah, it looks like we're cool with the Mewnian authorities. They still think you're dead. Or it sounds like they still think you're dead. Or Glossarick intervened for you or whatever."

"What was it all for, Sam? Globgor, Meteora, Mina, the Monks. Everyone that has died around me. What was it all for? Hundreds of years of having my hands rotting off. What was it all for?"

"Maybe it benefits the kingdom too."

"Huh?"

"That note that Reynaldo showed me. That was the last part of it. "Time will show my decisions were just and right." I know you saw it too. What was the significance of the note? I couldn't read the other one, but it was just the spell that cursed Reynaldo, right?"

"Yeah, it was, the other note, the one in English was... I originally wrote it in Low Mewman funnily enough, but that's easy enough to translate. It was the last thing I wrote before I tried to flee from Mewni. I was not allowed to flee, I was captured, and trapped and you know the rest of the story."

Sam stretched out and asked. "Maybe it benefitted the kingdom to not have a ruler who wanted to force monster integration on an unwilling populace? Maybe this is how you escaped being lynched? Maybe what it was all for was you trying to rescue yourself. But you couldn't rescue your husband or your kid. Your husband had blood on his hands from Bells Pond and your daughter... Sheesh. We both know the fine details of what she did when she was in charge at St. Olga's."

"I just... I still can't believe my own daughter used Lord Sardonicus's magic. In modified form, but the exact same intent and results. It's the only way she could have survived as long as she did... I know they both messed up but if I'm here without them then what's the point of continuing on?"

"Because we must. And also because Daniel was the one who made a deal with you. A life for a life. I would rather not see his sacrifice go to waste."

Eclipsa saw the shell falling on Daniel again.

Eclipsa exhaled. The entire universe was snapping her back to this moment in the hotel, then to that moment in Afghanistan. Then to the one after this and the one after that. She wondered how grandma Skywynne kept from going...

"It's maddening. It's just... Maddening."

Sam sat down next to Eclipsa and hugged her. "Yeah I know, it's just... Really fucked up."

Eclipsa leaned into the hug and asked. "So what are you doing next?"

Sam leaned back and whumped into the bed.

"What am I doing next? I'm passing the fuck out. The people from Mewni. All three of them were from Earth. How about that? They were a... Oh one guy was some kind of religious whacko with a
taste for quality firearms. Another was this creepy fourteen year old Phillipina girl who may have been molested by demons for God only knows how long. And some-one with lightning bolts on her face who was a recovered alcholololololoic. She clearly couldn't drink. So, since I was the only one who could I had to drink for my brother, for you and apparently for the son of a bitch who started all this. Whiskey is very good for a broken heart when shared with friends."

"Excuse me?" Asked Eclipsa.

"Yeah I'm too drunk."

"I meant about the son of a bitch who started all this and the one with lightning bolts?"

"Oh? Tyhjiö? The creepy fuck who looks like some kind of hybrid of Glossarick, Marco and a caveman? Ba-zap! Dead as a door nail! The alcholololololoic downstairs, Pauline, that's her name. But she used to be called StarFan13.? Anyway she killed Tyhjiö earlier today. Hail something, the wicked bomba bompar bombard... Bombie... Antelope!? Guy who guided other multiverses to attack this one? He's gone! Zapped clear out of existence by a frigging gamma ray beam fired by lightning bolt lady. Craziest eyes I've ever seen on a chick. Nothing survives gamma ray beams. At least not of that intensity. Anything mechanical, biological, foof... Gone. And Mina ate shit and died too. Lord Sardonicus came back from Mewnian Hell just to drag her cursed soul into the firey abyss. But yeah, Pauline Long. She, she also says that she managed to slap some sense into Star, or maybe mind rape some sense into Star. I don't know, I'm a little fuzzy on that detail. But she sez she will stand between me and Star if Star ever finds out about us, which she hopefully... Won't, goodnight... Ecli..."

Sam fell asleep.

Eclipsa stood up.

"Am I Free?" Whispered a voice.

"I don't know, are you dead?" Asked Eclipsa.

"Correct answer." Whispered a different voice.

"We are sorry."

"We are so sorry."

"This was the only way we could be free."

"With your help."

"At every turn."

"We are so sorry for your father."

"But this was the only way."

"Stop! Just, tell me, is this all over!?" Eclipsa shouted.

"Yes."

"You may live the rest of your life wherever you want except Mewni."

"With whomever you want, within these rules, of course."
Eclipsa realized what had happened.

They had run out of voices.

She closed her eyes.

She opened her eyes.

She looked around the room.

There was no one there but the sleeping woman that Eclipsa had been sitting next to.

As Eclipsa removed Sam's shoes she grunted awake and said, "don't you try anything cute, Buster!"

"What?" Asked Eclipsa.

Sam's eyes rolled back up into her head and she was asleep again in moments.

Eclipsa looked around. She found some hotel stationary. She picked up a pen. These ballpoint pens were so nice. And she started writing.

"I call the darkness unto me, from deepest depths of earth and sea, from ancient evils unawoken, to break the one who can't be broken. To blackest night I pledge my soul, and crush my heart to burning coal, to summon forth the deathly power, to see my hated foe..."

Eclipsa hesitated for just a moment, then spoke a perfect reverse of the incantation.

"Me unto darkness thee call... I."

She hesitated for another moment.

Sam woke up again from her drunken haze and blurted out. "You're the queen of darkness because of your messed up hands, right? I mean, there's nothing else about you that's really dark? Is there? Your skin is pale and your morals are just as good as any other queen of Mewni I've heard of. So what is it that makes you so dark?"

Sam passed out again. Eclipsa decided to leave the room and used the dimensional scissors to go to an empty parking lot far far away from her to finish what she was doing. She dipped down and began to cast a spell.

"I summon the all seeing eye, to tear a hole..."

Eclipsa hesitated and instead cast.

"Regiis Solum Lacrimae."

A portal opened, not unlike the all seeing eye portal but different. No flames and instead of an insidious looking eye opening it was more like a bundle of threads separating.

Eclipsa looked through to somewhere she didn't recognize. She was able to surmise that it was some kind of a pocket dimension. All made of pillows, light and ribbons including some very bold red ones. Eclipsa saw what it was she needed to see. Pauline Long, with her distinctive thunderbolt cheek marks. Waving around the wand, now in Queen Star's configuration. Pauline gently put the wand on its own pillow and began gently kissing Star as they sat atop a huge pillow in full clothing.
Star pushed Pauline down playfully. Pauline began moving to take her own pants off. Giggling the whole time.

Star began to turn around.

Eclipsa closed the portal as fast as she could.

But Eclipsa knew now why it had to play out this way. As insane and as painful as it had been. She knew the answer the moment she got a clear look at Paulines face.

She exited the dipped down state and elected to call it a night. If Star had seen her then she would have already portaled in and chopped her head off. She went back to her room and went to sleep in the bed next to Sam. Whatever happened next, she knew she was going to be able to think better once she had a good nights sleep.
Chapter Summary

The conclusion of our story. Or at least this part of this story. The character of StarFan13 or at least my interpretation of her as Pauline Long presents an interesting paradox. A 'self insert' who is technically canon. Someone who can't help but have an influence on the story around her. Who was used very sparingly in canon and is usually used sparingly in most fanfics.

But not in this one.

In this one StarFan13 gets everything she always wanted from Star. Partly this is a desire on the authors part to give a favorite character everything she always wanted. But much to the authors stunned surprise the Magic Book of Spells provides a suitable framework for the integration of this story and other fanfics into a larger fictional multiverse.

As I was writing this story I kept waiting for some sign from the universe that it was time to abandon this project. That it consumed too much time and effort. But the universe I live in has sent me subtle messages over and over again that I should persist. As twisted a concept as it is. A smut and violence and gun and drug filled fanfic about a Disney cartoon. It seems that there is a demand for this story to exist.

So I give you the final chapter

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

"Did you hear something?" Star asked.

"No..."

Pauline looked around.

She looked deeply.

There was nothing in sight in the pocket dimension that wasn't supposed to be there.

"Nope, I don't see anything. You want to take a look?"

"Nah, I don't think I want to do diamond vision while in a different body."

"Okay, so..."

Pauline blinked away the pattern, as she finished pulling off her pants she asked.

"Oh, how are things with your mother?"

"Good, as can be expected. She... Ferguson worked out a deal where she can stay in the castle
under some kind of temporary transitional government... Arrangement. She might even get an official position like queen mother."

"Queen... Mother, does that mean you're reinstated?"

"In a strictly ceremonial role, until Marco and Hekapoo come back, technically... yes. I have zero actual power in Mewni. I am not allowed to talk to anyone in the parliament and Ferg says that the position would consist mostly of... Diplomatic work."

"Ooh, does this mean I can get a diplomatic passport?"

"I think so."

"Ah, always wanted one of those. Great for getting out of speeding tickets."

"So what, are you saying that you are only interested in me because of my... power?" Asked Star.

"Well, I would be lying if I didn't say that it wasn't attractive. But I think we have established that I do genuinely care for you. I mean... When we met after our ten year split you introduced yourself to me as a fugitive."

"What? You would have turned me in?"

"Probably not. But I didn't have to shelter you and/or have sex with you."

"Yeah, or feed me drugs."

"Hey, I made it abundantly clear that you could back out of smoking that stuff right up until you actually smoked it."

"Foof, yeah I know. Either way, yes! my mother is fine. I'm fine! And don't you know that this is a really bad time to talk about someone's mother?"

"Good point."

"Oh, before I forget though, why did I see Janna walking around? And why is she back to her fourteen year old self? Is she supposed to be a clone or what?"

"Ah Janna. As far as I can figure she jumped from potentiality to our reality sometime when all those other multiverses were at their closest point. She's not our Janna, she's from some other timeline where you fucked up royally.

"Fucked up how royally?"

"So royally that that Janna is going to blank her memories with a spell out of the Codex Cortex in the Royal library. After she writes down a few things. I'm a little unsure of the details but it sounds like some other you unleashed something that resulted in the complete destruction of Earth, Mewni and a few other places. That Janna you saw... Survived... Well, if she's telling the truth. She survived some pretty hairy stuff.

Pauline whipped off her panties and began to stretch her arms and legs into the dimension of pillows.

"Are you sure this is a good idea? I mean, I did just kinda. Trigger and then absorb a gamma ray burst a few hours ago."
Star took off her undershirt and said. "That's exactly why I want to do this."

She snapped off her bra.

"This place absorbs that kind of trauma, right?"

"Yeah."

Pauline took off her shirt.

Star stood up.

She was about to start slipping off her pants when Pauline shouted, "wait, transform first. I want to slip those pants off you after."

"Really? why?" Star asked.

"Really, conceal then reveal, trust me on this."

Pauline finished undressing and gestured for Star to proceed.

"Hocus Crocus."

The threads rustled softly.

But nothing happened.

Pauline thought about what was happening.

"Wait, hang on... I think I got it."

She reached into her pants pocket and took out a notebook.

She very carefully transcribed a note and handed it to Star.

"Read that."

"What is this?"

"It's Latin, an extinct tongue on Earth. But practically everything said in it sounds important. Sanus Maximus! Anyway, the control freak chick who created this dimension. She was one of those people who discovered that anything said in Latin sounds important. So her spells were mostly just commands in Latin. The kernel spell that created this dimension is the only tears of a royal spoken in Latin. An attempt to use all of the things that she had torn out of herself in order to be the positive, outgoing, vibrant, utterly insufferable tyrannical Pratt that she was! So I think this incantation should give you complete control over the spell."

"What's it mean?" Asked Star. "What's the command? I don't read Latin."

"You don't?"

"No."

"Okay..."

Pauline took the note back and wrote down translations in English and low Mewman.
Star chuckled and spoke the words in Latin and English.

"Regius clamavit voce magna! The Royal cries loudly!"

Threads descended and swirled around Star like a tornado.

They retracted.

Pauline couldn't help but think that Star looked incredibly handsome as a guy.

Pauline crawled her fingers up his... He he, his leg. And grabbed Star by the belt.

She pulled down Star's pants.

Then much more slowly removed Star's underwear.

Pauline looked at it like she was staring at... Something she shouldn't be staring at, the sun perhaps? In a distant, hypnotized sounding quiet tone Pauline said.

"It's just so..."

"What? I know you've seen one before." Said Star.

"It's just so... Big."

"It is? It doesn't look any bigger than my Dads."

Paulines expression changed dramatically.

"You've seen your fathers... Dick?"

"Yeah, did you... Ever meet my father? River hated clothes. He was shirtless most of the time. That was if Mom could get him to wear pants."

"Okay, I understand but... Star, this... I think this might be too much for me."

"Really? Too much for you? Too much for little miss blade wings who luncheons on gamma ray bursts?"

"Okay, I see your point it's just that... Geeze I don't think I can handle this."

"Well, why don't you just suck the tip for a little while, see where it takes ya."

Pauline put her hands on the sides of Star's legs. And very gently reached out to the thing between. She hesitated and asked.

"Are you really sure? I mean the last time we did this you passed out."

"I'm feeling much better now that we have the right incantation."

Star bent down and faced Pauline.

"I mean, we don't have to go straight to that. We can do a little cuddling first."

Star began kissing Pauline deeply.

Pauline pushed her away.
"Man, who taught you how to kiss?"

"No one, you know how bad I am at foreplay, Pauline."

"Okay, it's just... Okay, just give me a second."

Pauline grabbed hold.

Somehow getting a handful of it didn't improve Pauline's confidence. She held up a finger to Star's face and very gently snaked her way down. A voice in her head said.

"Come on, you're a big girl. It's not like you haven't seen one of these before. Remember Kevins?"

"Kevin, he was so tiny and unnatural."

"What about Bryce?"

"Bryce? He was decent. But nowhere near this big."

"Ogulnd?"

"Nope, not him either. No this is just..."

She looked up.

"Guy Star, and Guy Star is apparently hung like a frikking..."

Pauline dove onto it.

Taking it in.

Further and further into her mouth. As far as she could push it in.

As more blood rushed in Pauline came off it and asked.

"Is this right? I mean, does this feel earned?"

"Pauline, this has been unfolding for over a decade. What about this feels unearned to you?"

Pauline climbed on top of Star.

She knew that she wanted this.

She very carefully guided Star into her.

Insisting, firmly that Star move very slowly.

Pauline breathed.

She remembered where she was.

This whole place had been built to accommodate for the sort of thing that was about to happen.

Pauline started screaming.

She let it out as slowly as she could. As gently as it could. But as soon as it escaped her lips it fairly detonated into an extremely energetic result.
Pauline collapsed onto Star.

It was still hard.

Pauline whispered softly, "gently gently, softly softly. Like a diplomat... Wouldn't."

Star began to rock rhythmically, but softly.

It was still taking Pauline some getting used to.

It was starting to feel less like a sustained punch in the gut though.

Pauline whimpered and cried between moments of extreme pleasure. It still felt more intense than the first time she had sex.

Time seemed to slow.

Then she remembered something.

The intended purpose of this dimension wasn't just flipping genders just for amusement, or even for delightful dalliances like this. The purpose had been to facilitate gender flips with the intention of impregnation and childbirth. Crecentia didn't just want to experience her mermaid lover in a completely new way. She wanted a daughter.

Pauline realized that if Star came there was a very very good chance that this would impregnate her.

Then she realized.

That was something she wanted.

Something she had wanted for a very long time.

She smiled and relaxed.

Speed picked up.

Something whispered to her.

"Not going to work. Star hasn't had time to live as a male. She hasn't had a chance to cultivate the needed cells to facilitate impregnation. You think I hadn't thought of this?"

Pauline closed her eyes and thought back, "doesn't matter, either way. Now or later, Star will be able to pull this off. Wether it's now or wether it's later, that doesn't matter as long as I have Star. And why are you speaking to me in that tone? You got a kid... Somehow."

Star came.

Pauline pulled away.

She could barely breathe.

Pauline felt... Like a canoe. That had been used to raft down the entire length of the Columbia River.

She had never felt this profoundly exhausted.
Her back felt funny.

Everything felt funny.

Pauline observed, "you know... I'm kinda glad we waited. I don't think fourteen year old me could have withstood that."

Star smiled, stretched out and said, "crocus hocus." Turning back into a woman. She lied down next to Pauline and they kissed.

Chapter End Notes

My interpretation of StarFan13 is not the same as the one in the canon TV show, obviously. She is older, weirder and much more heavily armed. But this is the StarFan13 needed to complete this story. That said...

https://youtu.be/S4ITbZGUlko

The detail and degree of... Enmeshing with canon as this story emerged came as a huge surprise to me throughout the writing of this. With that in mind I must acknowledge the work of All_Possible_Worlds with I Summon the All Seeing Eye and Grade_A_Sexual with A Habit Hard to Break. This story simply would not exist without those stories.

This story and particularly my character that insists, rather strongly that she be called Pauline Long helped me get through a particularly trying time in my life. Something that was inevitable. Something that I had been expecting for a long time. But when it finally came, it overwhelmed me.

Pauline was there for me the whole time.

This story is dedicated to her and her archetype. All the small, fragile and utterly terrifying women and girls who make up the very last line of defense.

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