

Fortunes Told, Spirits Called

Saturday, September 23, 2023 7:06 PM

The three sat around the central table. It bore a number of candles, all of which were melted to some degree or another. There was plenty of room around it. Aside from the entry they'd been guided to, wooden cabinets bore over them, displaying skulls, jars of animal parts. The room smelled of herbs, roots, and wax, which was a pleasant change from the corpse of their friend, left laying on a bier in the back. A lone torch lit the gloom.

The adventurers exchanged worried glances with each other. They'd agreed to this, but they weren't entirely sure what they'd agree to, in retrospect. Corso, a half-orc master of the blade, and suspicious of magic at the best of times, took in the interior hall, its various occult appointments, and sneered around his teeth. "I don't trust this. You're sure this'll let us talk with Aelv'I?"

The shaped peaks of Belarough's eyebrows rose. Party bard, he began to persuasively go through it again to ensure harmony, his voice practically singing in the shadows that surrounded them. "We can't be going over this again. Short of finding the actual scroll to return him to life, this is the closest option. Everyone in the storyteller's guild agrees the Wandering Caravan has the goods for those who'll pay, and coin is not something we're short on. Besides..."

"I said I'm not walking back two weeks to Volesburg," Mithnil cut in. Short, lithe, goblin, party thief. She checked her daggers. Checked them again, and restored the little peace ties over them. "I bet one of these candles is magic. We just make off with the lot, figure out which of them lets us talk to his spirit, and be done with it."

Belarough looked aghast, and only part of that was staged for effect. "And be cursed to the end of our living days? Surely, your words are but ill-devised jest." The witch who worked these wonders wasn't here yet, but he worried she could be listening. It was a classic conjurer's trick anyway, and had to be if he'd even heard of it.

Mithnil sighed. "Right. Joking. The real joke is that Aelv'I put it somewhere before he fell into the gelatinous cube. A real bucket of laughs." Her head turned, regarding the temporarily preserved, but badly acid scarred corpse of their friend. "You've got to let me finish checking for traps, you idiot!"

The three all looked on at their friend for a long moment. It was hard to argue. As often as he was useful, Aelv'I's awareness was nowhere near as potent as his magic, and his complete disregard for the agreed party lineup had resulted in a number of accidents. He was lucky only this most recent one proved to be fatal. Belarough was about to remark on this, when one of the candles lit in the midst of the table, and the three adventurers jumped in unison.

"Bless my heart!" Belarough screamed, voice going shrill.

Lit in the new flame was... well... The three hadn't been sure what they expected. Witch conjured a rather specific image. Pointy hat. Grim. Aged. At least three moles, one with a hair. Stories said that's where the magic was. This woman was not that.

She was dressed in the mode of the wandering people. A corset laced tight against her, propping up a full chest, cleavage inviting in the flickering candle flame. A flowing brown skirt suggested, but did not reveal the fullness of her hips. Her skin was pale, unnaturally so. Could she be some creature of the night? Her red lacquered lips didn't appear to hide fangs, but a welcoming smile. Pretty curls of red hair spilled over her shoulder and down her back. Her eyes were a glassy grey that very nearly reflected the

trio's looks back at them. She leaned onto the table with her palms, getting a feel for it, her feet drawing her chair close. Her voice was warm, with a touch of the ethereal to it, almost as if a second voice was speaking under her own. Her voice carried the foreign sound of the hills the Wanderers were famed for. "Hey there. Sorry to keep you waiting. Hope I didn't scare you."

Corso quickly interjected. "I'm not afraid of anything... especially not a woman," he bravely lied.

Mithnil's eyes were still wide. She stared openly over the edge of the table, eyes still unblinking. "Pretty. Fire. Lady."

Belarough sighed. It was up to him. "What my eager and eclectic friends are trying to say is, yes. We need to speak with our friend, and we understand that you can arrange that for a meager donation of some of our adventuring capital."

The witch nodded her head. "Yeah. We do that. Fortunes told, spirits called. I'm Janna Dreamseeker, and," she added with an air of mystery, addressing each in turn, "I know all of your names. Belarough. Mithnil. Corso."

Corso and Mithnil looked amazed. Belarough plainly recalled he put their names on a card before they were allowed entry, and kept that to himself. "Be that as it may, our friend hid, or stored, something we need, and I'd very much like to get that thing so he can stop stinking up your hut and our bedrolls."

Janna lowered herself slowly to her seat, drawing a set of worn cards from a bag hanging from her waist. Belarough knew the Tarot, and some of the theatricality centered around it. She merely sat the cards before her, and a few more disparate candles came to light. "And my assistant says you've paid, so this next part is up to all of us. I have a few rules you all need to hear and follow."

Her voice shifted from mysterious to serious as if flipped by a switch. Her eyes went to each of them as she spoke, intoning the words as if holy ritual. "We will all be the link to your friend. Together, we'll bring his spirit here. The circle we form should not be broken. The bond we form will last to the end of spirit calling, until they are dismissed. There may be lights or shadows, changes in temperature, the appearance of ectoplasm, so do not be alarmed. You'll all follow these orders, and any other I give until we're done. You understand?"

A half minute passed in silence, the three staring at her. She repeated, louder. "You understand?" There was a suddenly glut of assurances, agreements, and 'When you put it that way's that responded this time. She smiled again. "Good. Remain sitting for the remainder of the séance, no matter what happens." Belarough considered this may be good showmanship...

Janna's arms crossed over the cards. Her eyes rolled up into her head, until the whites alone showed. She hunched forward, fingers steepling, hair falling before her face. More candles joined in the flames, their smoke starting to swirl above the table. The adventurers clung to their seats, leaning back. A world of magic existed, and they'd rushed through it, plundering and looting. This thing that didn't intend them harm, this pretty woman... she was scary.

"We call you, deceased." Two voices spoke now. Both came from Janna. A second set of spectral arms emerged from her torso, shaping ethereal, glowing letters upon the table, bits of melted wax flowing to follow the finger movements, and shape runes. "From your fate, released." There was a new sound, like breath being drawn. It came from the corpse of Aelv'l, which arched upwards. Smoke rose from its mouth, drawn towards that which swirled above the candles. "In our life, in our voices, feast." The three watched as something like their friend's face appeared in the smoke, and started to draw down to where Janna continued the ritual. Belarough was suddenly prepared to believe. And bolt. "Until your spirit, we release." The face rested over Janna's. She shuddered violently, both sets of limbs twitching.

Her eyes came down green. The color of their temporarily departed friend.

Janna's voice became primary again, followed by the second feminine, and a third masculine. They spoke the same words, each in turn, fading in power. "I'm here." Her skin went glossy, the air about her looking wet, and shimmering. The very image on his face when he died. Corso went as pale as he'd even been, and promptly fell out of his chair, fainted, turning into a hefty lump on the wooden floor boards. The air became thick with the scent of oppressive, acidic fumes. Janna made an uncomfortable gurgle. "It doesn't burn anymore." She swallowed something thick, red lips dripping.

Belarough look at Mithnil, who shared his look back, before both their eyes went to Corso. Belarough decided to proceed. "Aelv'l. Nice to see you. In the flesh. Someone's flesh. Uh. Listen, the scroll of resurrection, where is it, old mate?"

Janna swallowed deep. "I can't see you. I can't hear you. I can feel you here, though. It's like I'm still in that thing. It doesn't hurt now, but I'm still drowning." Her fingers clutched, as if trying to feel themselves, fingers touching to palms, uncertain.

Mithnil almost shot out of her own seat. "Belarough, fucking look..." His eyes followed. Beneath Janna's hair, behind the hands spectral and otherwise, her breasts were... more than pleasant. They were audacious. They pressed eagerly into the front lacings, a depth of cleavage previously not present heaving over the edge of the formed cups. Belarough couldn't tear his eyes away, and started kicking Corso's foot.

Janna continued to speak, in triplicate, punctuated with swallows. Every time her throat drew down, the pale orbs rose larger, pressing against each other, rising fuller. Already, they dominated her chest, presenting eye-popping décolletage from her collar bones, to the rosy suggestions of her nipples just peeking over the edge of her cups. "I'm still there. I need to get away. It's going to eat me. Dissolve me. Don't let it."

Belarough felt his mouth go dry. He stammered. "Mithnil, I don't suppose you have anything to wake up our fainting fucking fighter? I'm pretty sure him laying down there has us good and fucked."

Mithnil shrugged, and leaned as far out of her chair as she dared, plucking a nose hair free from Corso's nostril.

With a scream of pain, Corso shot up, grasping his nose, and banged his head on the table, shaking the contents on it.

Janna suddenly peered at each of them with sudden recollection, another gulp coming. Aelv'l's voice came first, Janna's lagging behind it. There was a tense creak from her corset's bindings, the strings practically humming. "Wait. I hear you. You're here. I'm here. I'm... why do I have tits?"

Belarough was just finishing staring reproachfully at Mithnil, when she said, "Aelv'l, you're dead, and we put you in a LADY. A hot fucking lady."

Janna, possessed by Aelv'l, peered at her, unbelieving. And then, with another gulp, winced as the corset finally gave up its hold on the pair, one simply enormous breast shoving free from its confines, nipple falling full, and hefty. His eyes went back down. "Okay. I'm in a lady. A lady with growing fucking tits." He blinked. "Is something happening to my ass?" He paused a moment. "Her ass?"

Corso and Belarough leaned to check. Oh. From somewhere high on her hips, to just below the bottom of the corset, she blossomed. Hips pulled at the fabric, a heart shaped heave of flesh pushed firmly to the chair behind her as much as beneath. Corso said, "Yup." Belarough nodded.

Aelv'I let off something of a concerned sigh as Janna's second breast fell out, emboldened by its sister. Had she not been fully braced against the table, this might have been a cause for concern. The pair hung like weighty watermelons, swinging full with secret weight. Her nipples bulged, as if ready to give forth what they hid, rubbing against the edge of the table. "This is a Wanderer's Hut. They can curse us! We... Stop ogling her huge tits! We've got to stop this!"

Belarough nodded. "Right! Can you get her back to the mouth? She was leading this thing."

Mithnal ahemed. "Two things. First. Big lady hot. Second, the scroll."

Belarough aha'd loudly. "Right. What'd you do with the scroll of resurrection? It's the entire reason we're doing this."

Aelv'I gulped. The chair shifted balance, sending the pendulous breasts wobbling side to side. "Oh. Ah. Hahah. Not there, right? Oh, let's... let's talk about something else."

Corso frowned. If there was something he couldn't tolerate over witchcraft, it was a blatant misuse of party supplies. "What did you do with it?" The others in the trio crossed their arms, the icy stares of judgment passing unphased through the candle flames.

Aelv'I winced. A couple people were getting very insistent about something he couldn't quite make out. The body was miraculous. He wasn't driving terribly well, and couldn't get it to do anything but speak. He couldn't help but swallow, the remnants of his fate still thick in the air around him. Her shoulders hurt. Her back was straining. They weren't going to stay upright anymore. "Oh, I... I'm sorry. I sold it for a markup at the bawdy house is Volesburg."

Mithnal spat. "Fucking Volesburg." Corso's glower deepened. Belarough's hand found his face, and held it in his palm. "To be honest, I feel pretty betrayed. Leave him dead?"

Aelv'I's voice came back with panic. "No, no, don't do that, bring me back, and I'll pay for it, and I won't take a share for the next dungeon at all, you know I'm worth it, you... ulp..." That was one too many. The breasts were pressed enough into the table, that the tenuous position with the chair was no longer viable. Janna's body fell out of her seat, breasts landing with a hefty splat on the floor.

"SPIRIT RELEASE!" The call came up from the floor, Janna's voice once more in command. The weird that so thoroughly collected in the space was blown clear with the voice, candles going dark, the vestige of phantom acidic beasts washed from the air. Almost immediately, Belarough and Corso rushed over to Janna's aid. She swatted at them a few times before allowing them to help her to her feet.

She was sweating. She smelled of incense this close. Belarough wondered what a handful would cost him, curse wise. "Um, terribly sorry for the trouble, ma'am, but we got our answer."

Janna slowly, put her own hands to the mighty swells, wrapping them in her clearly insufficient fingers, and letting off a slow, easy sigh. "I've had worse... Get your friend and get out, okay? You've got a long walk to Volesburg, and I've got a lot of ectoplasmic slime to release."

Corso grabbed up Aelv'I, putting him over his shoulder. Belarough looked as long as he dared, before turning to follow. Mithnal hopped from her chair, and tugged on Janna's skirt. She looked up with her eyes wide.

Janna craned her neck to look down at her over her tits. "Yes?"

"Big lady pretty."