

## **Volcano God Sacrifice**

### **A NSFW short story by TeSculpture**

"REJOICE, ASH RAIDERS!"

The high priest's voice boomed out over the whooping and yelling of the assembled tribesmen. Dressed in loincloths and animal hides, with elaborate war paint and hair styles formed with caked mud and ash, the mob was several dozen strong, and had been driven by pack mentality to a volatile level of rowdiness.

They were standing in a wide, clear meeting area, at the edge of a village of mud huts and animal-hide tents. The ground beneath their feet was bare, coarse rock with dust and gravel collecting in every crack and depression. It was also sloped on an angle; the lower extreme of the village became a descending landscape of boulders, outcrops and formations that eventually gave way to the forest below the mountainside, while the upper one climbed a little further before ending at the lip of the crater that formed the mountain's peak. The night sky offered no illumination to the scene; the only sources of light were the various flaming torches scattered throughout the settlement, and the ever present orange glow on the underside of the smoke rising from the crater above.

The high priest was taking advantage of this incline by standing at the higher end, placing above the mob as if he were standing on a parapet. "REJOICE, FOR AT LAST WE HAVE ACQUIRED A SACRIFICE TO OFFER TO OUR GOD, THE MIGHTY EXTRUS!"

The mention of the God's name sent the mob throwing themselves to their knees, throwing up their arms in a caricature of bowing and replacing their whooping with appropriately reverential noises.

"EXTRUS, WHO LIVES WITHIN THE VERY MOUNTAIN WE DWELL UPON," The high priest intoned menacingly, his voice growing in intensity with each sentence. "EXTRUS, WHOSE HUNGER IS NEVER SATISFIED. EXTRUS, WHOSE MOUTH IS FOREVER OPEN, FOREVER DEVOURING, FOREVER HOWLING FOR MORE! WITH THIS SACRIFICE, WE SHALL APPEASE HIM, AND IN RETURN, HE WILL LEND US HIS POWER, MAKING US FEROCIOUS AND INVINCIBLE IN BATTLE!"

Springing back to their feet, the mob cheered and roared anew, their yelling quickly forming in chanting. "EXTRUS! EXTRUS! EXTRUS!"

Gesturing for order, the high priest pointed through the mob. "BRING FORTH THE SACRIFICE!"

The mob split down the middle, its members turning to look back in the direction the leader was pointing.

Through the resulting passage, two tribesmen appeared, dragging between them a young woman bound at the wrists and ankles. Though she was also dressed in only animal hides, they were of a notably different style and quality to the rest of the tribesmen, and she lacked the elaborate face paint and hair styling that characterized the mob.

As she was dragged through the mob, its members followed her passage with undisguised interest. Some bent or crouched to better study her chest and behind; some leaned to their peers and exchanged whispers and snickers; some barked like animals or yelled lewd comments at her; and a few tried to reach out and grab her as she went past, forcing her escorts to shoo them back.

"DO NOT LAY HANDS ON HER, MY BROTHERS," watching their behaviour, the high priest intoned firmly.

Despite this, when the prisoner arrived before him, he proceeded to seize her chin in order to study her face, with leering interest of his own. "Although you look an excellent woman..."

The young woman was sobbing in a mixture of fear and misery, her tears having cut countless rivulets through the dirt on her face.

The high priest however released her, and addressed the mob again. "HER FLESH IS FOR EXTRUS ONLY! BUT WORRY NOT! ONCE WE HAVE EXTRUS'S BLESSING, THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF FLESH FOR ALL OF US!"

Allowed to drop to her knees, Siri watched in horror the cheering, thrashing mob. Her fear up to this point had purely been for her own safety; now her thoughts went to the rest of the girls of her tribe, who might yet suffer at their hands.

She couldn't understand why fate had cursed her tribe, the Forest Dwellers, with such misfortune. Their existence had always been peaceful and bountiful; hunting, gathering and farming in the forest below the mountain, and trading with other tribes whenever their members visited. The only problems they had to deal with were wild animal attacks and the ravages of the seasons.

But then the Ash Raiders showed up. By the time the Forest Dwellers realized they were a whole tribe as opposed to a couple of malcontents, they had established themselves on the mountain. The Forest Dwellers had extended the hand of friendship at first, but all attempts at communication had been met with either silence, or hostility.

And so they had resigned themselves to not getting on with their new neighbours. But then valuables started to go missing at night - a herd animal here, some stores of grain there. Before long barely seven days would pass without something being stolen, and the thefts were rapidly growing in size. They tried posting guards; all this achieved was ensuring that on top of losing valuables, some of their number got beaten senseless as well. Soon the Ash Raiders weren't even bothering sneaking under cover of darkness; they just attacked at any time, taking what they wanted and crushing anyone that fought back.

And now they had taken her. It had started like any other raid, except this time became apparent the Ash Raiders were going after people as well as supplies. Dren had tried to drag her to a shelter, but a raider had swooped out of nowhere, knocking Dren down and dragging Siri off-

*Dren.* The memory of her childhood friend, lying on the ground with blood trickling down his head made her cry in anguish once more. Was he okay? Did he know what had happened to her? Was he even alive?

Siri couldn't bare to contemplate that last possibility. She and Dren had always been together; in the days prior to her kidnapping, she had started to seriously contemplate spending the rest of her life with him. She hadn't even

had a chance to find out if he felt the same way...

"LET US WASTE NO MORE TIME! BRING HER!"

With the high priest's bellowed command, Siri's anxiety was abruptly focused back on herself. Her escorts yanked her to her feet again, and with the baying mob bringing up the rear, the high priest turned and lead the way toward the crater lip.

Siri did not fight back. Her limbs felt as heavy as lead, and the tribesmens' grip felt like stone encircling her arms. She kept begging feebly to be let go, but to search for mercy in this place was like looking for water in the embers of a camp fire.

As they neared the crater, the rock underneath Siri's feet grew hot, and smoke could be seen rising from fissures in the ground. Back when she and Dren had been children, their parents had brought them to the foot of the mountain. During that trip, she had looked up and seen this place at the top of the peak, where an unseen fire endlessly spit black clouds into the sky. The childhood trip had been primarily meant as a sightseeing adventure for the young ones...but it also had served as a warning to never come here by themselves.

Now here she was, forced to visit this place against her will.

More and more of the crater lip came into view. The crater was massive; it would have taken a person a full day to walk all the way round the rim. The far edge was higher, towering hundreds of feet above the side they were on. Its inner surface was lit up by the bright orange glow from within the crater, like the backdrop of a stage on which the coming tragedy would play out. Rumbling and strange bubbling sounds from within rapidly grew in volume as they approached, until even the mob was struggling to be louder.

A long, thin outcrop of rock extended from their side of the crater lip, and it was to this platform over the abyss that the high priest made his way. He stopped about halfway along the outcrop's length, with Siri and her escorts a quarter of the way, and the mob sticking to the relative safety behind the crater lip.

Siri was suffering utter torture. The rock of the outcrop was even hotter than the crater lip, burning the soles of her feet and leaving her unable to stand properly. On top of that, the air itself over the crater was scaldingly hot too; simply drawing breath was agony now. She couldn't understand how her tormentors could withstand it without even wincing.

Outstretching his arms above his shoulders, the high priest addressed the inferno below. "O GREAT EXTRUS, ACCEPT THIS GIFT FROM YOUR LOYAL CHILDREN! MAY SHE SATE YOUR HUNGER, AND IN RETURN, LET US HUNT WITH YOUR STRENGTH, FIGHT WITH YOUR FERVOUR, **KILL** WITH YOUR FURY!"

The rising crescendo of his voice prompted another cheer.

"GLORY TO EXTRUS! PRAISE EXTRUS!!!"

As his call was taken up by the mob, the high priest stepped to one side, one hand gesturing toward Siri and her guards... and the other pointing toward the end of the outcrop.

Siri cried. She struggled feebly. She whimpered like a child, "No, no, please no..."

But her words fell on deaf ears. Without even glancing at her, her escorts dragged her past the high priest...

"No, no, please..."

...pulled her to the top of the precipice...

"...no, please no...!"

...planted their feet for leverage...

"No! Nooo!!!"

...and threw her over the edge.

Siri screamed. She screamed in terror, she screamed in anguish and she screamed in agony. The ash-laden smoke scoured her face like flint shards, forcing her eyes shut. The heat was so bad, that for all she knew, she was already in the fire, already burning, already turning to ash...

\* \* \* \* \*

This place was cool.

Siri could feel a source of heat on her back from where she lay on her side, but it was a pleasant one, just strong enough to keep the chill at bay, like the camp fires her family had sat around in her childhood. Not like the suffocating, scorching heat of the-

-Wait, hang on; *the volcano!*

Her last conscious memory returning to her, she sat bolt upright in panic.

The last thing she remembered was falling into the crater...she seemed to have landed on solid ground, but all the qualities that had defined the crater - the smoke, the searing heat, the noise - seemed to be absent. She couldn't see the rock of the crater's interior...in fact, she couldn't see anything. Her eyes found nothing but inky blackness.

Her skin still felt raw from being burned, but there was no pain from any falling injuries, and while her wrists and ankles were especially raw from the rubbing of her restraints, they were no longer actually bound either. For a frightening moment, she thought she had gone blind, until she raised a hand and saw at last her own skin, illuminated by light coming from somewhere behind her.

She looked over her shoulder where the light was coming from, and beheld...

...it was like nothing she had heard of before. It reminded her of a burning log; its surface a mesmerizing, undulating pattern of orange in between patches of black, hardened crust. But instead of a lumpy cylindrical shape, it was an enormous circle - no, a sphere; she could tell it was a sphere when she moved – that somehow hung in the air, free of any obvious support.

It made the same glow that she had seen lighting up the crater...and yet here, there seemed to be no walls, floor or ceiling for the reflect the light; the only thing illuminated was Siri herself. No sound seemed to exist in this void either, beyond a subtle rumble from the sphere and her own uptight breathing.

Murmuring in trepidation and wonder, she got to her feet to examine it. She took a step closer...then another...then another...

"I AM EXTRUS, GOD OF THE VOLCANO, LORD OF ROCK, EARTH, AND FIRE."

The stern, booming voice that suddenly emanated from the fiery orb sent Siri shrieking and leaping a foot in the air.

As she fell on her behind and scrambled back, the voice continued. "YOUR BRAVERY IN SEEKING ME OUT IS RECOGNIZED, PILGRIM. FOR WHAT PURPOSE HAVE YOU SOUGHT MY WISDOM?"

Throughout her ordeal, Siri had never really considered whether the God the Ash Raiders worshipped was real or not. Back when she and Dren were kids, the tribe elders would tell the children all the old stories about Gods and other magic beings. At the time Dren had loudly proclaimed his lack of belief in the stories, claiming the adults were just trying to scare them. She herself had never given the stories' truthfulness any thought, just enjoying them as they were.

But now the scary part of the stories was all too real. The horror of being kidnapped and thrown into the volcano's burning maw had been bad enough...but now she had to face the experience of whatever this God would do to her?

The voice when it came again however, though still booming and firm in tone, had a reassuring note. "THERE IS NO NEED TO COWER PILGRIM. I WILL NOT HARM YOU."

For a moment, Siri was dumbstruck. This was the great God of fire the violent, malicious Ash Raiders worshipped?

Tentatively, she found her own voice and forced it to work. "Y...You won't?"

"I HARM NONE WHO SET FOOT BEFORE ME. BY COMPLETING YOUR PILGRIMAGE, YOU HAVE PROVEN YOURSELF WORTHY OF MY KNOWLEDGE OF THE EARTH AND ALL THINGS. ONCE I HAVE TAUGHT YOU WHAT YOU SEEK, I SHALL RETURN YOU TO THE MORTAL REALM. IS THAT NOT WHY YOU ARE HERE?"

"...Um..."

When Siri didn't answer immediately, Extrus's voice took on a note of confusion. "...WHY *ARE* YOU HERE, MORTAL?"

Siri had been expecting a voracious monster...and yet this being reminded her more of the Forest Dweller elders. Sensing she ought to behave as if it were, Siri struggled to her feet again and faced the orb with her head bowed respectfully.

But what should she say? If she revealed she was a sacrifice, Extrus might change his mind and devour her after all...but if Siri lied, she might face a punishment for her untruthfulness just as horrific.

In a voice scarcely louder than a rustle of grass, Siri mumbled. "I was...I mean, o great, powerful Extrus...I was kidnapped from my tribe and...thrown into your volcano as...as a...sacrifice-"

**"SACRIFICE?!!!"** Extrus's even tone became a howl like the world ending. **"WHO DESECRATES MY SACRED MOUNTAIN WITH SACRIFICE?!!!"**

Nearly rendered deaf by the sudden change in volume, Siri cowered. "Th-th-the Ash Raiders tribe-"

**"ARE YOU A WILLING SACRIFICE?!!!"**

"N-n-n-no-"

**"SACRILEGE!!!"** The Volcano God raged. The fiery surface of the sphere began to roil as if it were liquid, and the subtle rumbling became louder than it had been in the crater. **"I WILL NOT TOLERATE SUCH PERVERSION!!!"**

Siri sank into a fetal position. Now the God was angry, and she would be the one suffering its wrath...

Suddenly the amplified rumbling died away. The God's voice when it came again was still angry, but back to its original volume. "MORTAL."

Not daring to raise her head, Siri scrambled into a prostrated position. \*sniff\* "Y-y-yes, o-o great Extrus?"

**"GO FORTH. GO FORTH AND DRIVE THE ASH RAIDERS FROM MY MOUNTAIN! DO NOT ALLOW A SINGLE ONE TO REMAIN ON MY SLOPES!"**

It took Siri a second to process what Extrus was demanding. On one hand, the Ash Raiders were clearly mistaken in thinking they had this God's approval. Unless his anger was provoked, he actually seemed vaguely benevolent.

But on the other, the thought of facing the high priest and his cronies again turned her stomach just as much as the fury of Extrus.

"B-but great Extrus, I am but a single person! The Ash Raiders are a whole band of fighters and thugs; I do not have the strength to oppose them!"

"HMM...

...UNDERSTOOD."

The roiling of the sphere's surface calmed. For several long minutes Extrus was silent; Siri got the impression he was thinking carefully. For her part, she remained prostrated, fearful that any break in decorum would expel her from the good graces she currently occupied.

Then Extrus spoke again.

"I SHALL GRANT YOU A MEASURE OF MY POWER, MORTAL. WITH MY BLESSING, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO COMPLETE YOUR TASK."

Siri's eyes, directed at the ground due to her prostrated position, went wide. She was to receive the personal blessing of an *actual God?! If her parents were here to see her, they would surely faint with pride! Siri would probably have felt proud herself if she didn't feel so overwhelmed by everything that had happened to her in the last few hours. "Th-thank you o great Extrus! I will strive to-"*

"RISE AND PREPARE TO RECEIVE MY POWER, MORTAL." The Volcano God's voice was impatient. Taking the hint, Siri resumed her standing-with-head-bowed pose.

From the surface of the sphere, off to the side on the lower hemisphere, a plume of fire burst out. For a second it flared continuously, then the flames detached from the surface and resolved into a wispy fireball that began flying toward Siri. Its flight was erratic, twisting and turning through the air with random changes in velocity.

Daring to lift her head, Siri watched as it drew closer. When it came within arm's length, the fireball began to orbit around her; once, twice, three times...

...Then, after pausing briefly to hover in the air, it shot toward her abdomen, striking her belly-button and passing through the skin.

Siri recoiled, but there was no pain, or even sensation of an impact.

Looking down at her navel, she could still see the glow of the fireball through her skin...only, the glow seemed to be spreading. Instead of single point of light inside her, the actual flesh of her midsection was starting to glow as if it were red-hot. She was starting to feel hot in that area too, as if she were coming down with a fever.

With partly enchanted, partly horrified fascination, she watched as the red-hot look spread both up her body to her chest and shoulders, and down to her hips and thighs. She examined her arm as the glow propagated to her elbow, then her wrist, then finally to the tips of her fingers. The same thing happened to her lower legs all the way to her toes, and though she couldn't see, her head from the neck to the top of her scalp was now red-hot too. Even the individual tresses of her hair and the pupils of her eyes became incandescent.

As the glow had spread, the fever-like heat had spread too - though far from feeling uncomfortable from it, Siri was starting to feel...vaguely aroused.

A sudden loud gurgling from her stomach caused her hands to fly to her midsection self-consciously. ..only for her sense of touch to register something strange.

"Hmm?..."

Looking down a second time confirmed what her hands had told her.

...Wha?!!!"

Her red-hot stomach had expanded. No - it had not *expanded*, it *was expanding*. The flesh of her belly had developed a bulge that was growing before her eyes. Like fat, the mass felt soft and formless and sagged under its weight. And yet, like a pregnancy, her skin felt taut and stretched under the outward pressure. Either way, in under a minute it was sufficient in size to block her view of her own feet.

As she pushed at her stomach with her hands in a vain attempt to figure out what was going on, she realized it wasn't the only thing growing.

"...?!!!"

Whatever was making her belly expand was affecting her breasts as well. They swelled inside her animal hide top, her cleavage growing more exaggerated and protruding with each passing second. Just as her paunch now blocked her from seeing her feet, her bust was in turn blocking *that* from view.

Siri's mind barely had time to register this development when it was forced to register another – the increasing tightness in her loin cloth at the back. Checking with her hands, she found her buttocks had started to swell too. Siri had been generously endowed in both bust and hips upon reaching womanhood, but now she was developing a figure (not counting her fat belly) that would have made her the envy of every woman in the Forest Dwellers.

The sense of arousal had gotten worse. The feeling concentrated in the tips of her breasts and her crotch, and to her shame, a sensation of wetness was forming in those areas. The itch of desire between her legs was embarrassing enough, but why her nipples too? Surely such a thing should happen only after she had a child-

At that moment, she received a distraction of a different sort, as her animal hides - both her loin cloth and her top - burst into flame.

"EEEK!!! WHA!!! WHA!!!"

Her hands frantically slapped at the flames consuming her chest. In less than a second, the hide burned through and snapped, spilling her mammaries onto the slope of her belly.

It took a moment for Siri to realize her red-hot flesh was unharmed. Lifting one of her breasts, she stared in shock at her lactating nipple. The liquid trickling from it was not the white of milk, but a more viscous substance, an identical orange hue to the sphere before her.

Her loin cloth had been reduced to ashes in the same way. With difficulty, she reached an arm under her swollen belly to her crotch, feeling the sliminess there. When she raised her fingers to inspect them, they too were covered



in the same molten ichor.

Had Siri possessed a contemporary understanding of volcanoes, she would have recognized the substance as magma. But while she did not understand its relevance to Extrus, her brain was starting to understand her predicament. Her body was not getting fat...the Volcano God was filling her, like a goat skin filled with water. Only instead of water...it was liquid fire.

While all this had been going on, Siri's belly, breasts and butt had continued to expand. Her paunch had become an enormous blob of flesh with a belly button in the center, projecting ahead of her and hanging as low as her crotch. Her breasts had each grown as large as her own head, which, combined with the fact they were resting on top of her belly, meant they were beginning to obstruct a significant chunk of her forward view.

Her buttocks were even larger, their combined diameter matching the width of her bulging stomach. Above them, the flesh from the base of her spine up to her shoulder blades had started to swell outward too, creating a similar blobbiness that wrapped round the sides of her torso to merge with her belly at the front. The slender musculature of her arms, legs and cheekbones had been lost as they all bloated as well, with her thighs in particular growing to match the extreme thickness of her derriere.

Every part of her body was gurgling now, as magma appeared within and flowed wherever it could fit. The extra padding around Siri's knees and elbows was making them difficult to bend. She was having to move her feet further and further apart due to the increasing width of her legs. The trickles of lava from her nipples were now steady flows, running down the slope of her stomach before dripping off the underside. An equally substantial flow originating from her crotch ran down the insides of her legs. The leaking substance pooled on the invisible floor, forming a slowly widening puddle between her feet. The sensation of the leaking was the most shameful kind of wonderful Siri had ever felt.

Nonetheless, her fascination had long gone from being partially enchanted to purely horrified. She implored the sphere of magma. "O-o great Extrus, I-I don't understand how this is supposed to help..."

But Extrus didn't respond. The burning sphere was silent, its surface calm.

Panic set in to Siri as she realized she wasn't going to get any further guidance. Had the god changed his mind and decided to punish her anyways? Had he forgotten she was here?

...Or...was this exactly what he intended to happen?!

More and more of Siri's vision ahead was disappearing behind the rising topsides of her breasts, not to mention her bulging cheeks, which had rendered her face a whole third wider at the bottom than the top. The girth of her arms had all but immobilized them, but resting them on her sides now meant they stuck out perpendicular to the ground. Her legs meanwhile had reached the threshold of being as wide as they were long.

At the back, her buttocks ballooned further, hanging out over the mass of her thighs and merging with the blobby flesh of her spine. At the front, her belly extended more than a metre before her, just as far out to each side, and hung low enough to hide her knees.

Suddenly, a new and all too bizarre sensation befell her. Her crotch had been assailed by sensations ever since this

began, but now it felt as if the underside of her torso between her legs was beginning to swell *downward*.

Her immediate instinct was to cross her legs or clamp her hands there in a bid to hold it in, but there was no way she could do so with her bulbous limbs. She could only endure it as her crotch descended lower, pushing its way between her rotund thighs and forcing her legs out at 45 degree angles. With her feet spaced so widely, the inner surfaces of her wider-than-long calves were now pressing against the floor, and all movement, even waddling, was impossible.

*How could this be happening?! What was happening to her innards?!*

It was too much for Siri. The attack, the kidnapping, the sacrifice, and now this...it was too much stimulus. Tears welled in her eyes and ran down her plumping cheeks, but they too were viscous and red-hot.

Desperate, she cried to the God a second time, steadily disappearing behind the hills of her breasts. Only now, the swelling of her face was making even that difficult. “*O gweat Extrus, pwease! Why awe you doowing thish...?!*”

Again no reply. Siri couldn't even be sure Extrus heard her; the gurgling of her body parts was as loud as the sphere's bubbling when the God had been angry.

Her crotch and butt were the quickest growing parts of her body now, surging downward as if to catch up with the growth of her belly. As they got lower and lower, the overhang of her belly reduced, her body shape shifting from a distended human form to something closer to a ball. It was not just her bloated calves, but her thighs now she could feel touching the floor on their inner surfaces, and as they got bigger and bigger, she could feel the bearing of weight shift away from her feet. Up above, her arms were going the same way as her legs, their bloated sausage shapes assuming a width greater than their length.

Siri yelped and quivered as her sensitized private parts made contact with the floor. She was now resting on her crotch and the inner surfaces of her legs, while her feet were slowly lifting off the ground. With her crotch having finished descending, her entire body was more or less spherical. On the upper hemisphere, her head sat on top, with what remained of her arms either side of it and her breasts rising up in front. On the lower hemisphere, her crotch and what remained of her legs formed the south pole, with her buttocks taking up the backside of the hemisphere, and her belly button at the front slightly below the equator.

She tried to maintain some semblance of standing by touching the ground with the balls of her feet, then her toes, then the tips of her toes, but eventually not even they could reach.

Struck by anguish, Siri cried out and attempted to thrash her limbs, but only succeeded in flapping her hands and feet. The action however did succeed at shifting her center of weight. It was only a minor shift for only a moment, but it was enough to upset her balance. Slowly at first, then accelerating, her bloated body tipped forward.

Her gigantic breasts hit the ground with a loud, wet SLAP, the impact sending magma squirting from her nipples, and eliciting another cry of discomfort from Siri. The contents of her body sloshed back and forth, causing her flesh to pulse and undulate. Now resting on her stomach with her head at the front and her leaking crotch at the back, She felt even more helpless than she did before.

And yet she was still growing. Her flesh pushed out in every direction, and as it did so the spherical shape of her body became more defined. Her arms, legs and buttocks were becoming less distinct, their shapes widening and flattening into the surface of the rest of her. Only her breasts remained separate autonomous orbs, continuing to bloat in their own right.

Her cheeks had swollen to the size of grapefruits, and were obstructing her vision much like her breasts had previously done so. She was still crying molten tears, and like the magma on her belly when she was standing, they were running down her cheeks and dripping off their undersides. Landing on her breasts, they ran down again into the yawning canyon of her cleavage.

Soon, no trace remained of her limbs and buttocks. In their wake, divots started to form around her feet, hands and head, as her body outgrew her extremities.

Throughout the whole ordeal, Siri had been able to feel her skin stretching as she expanded. Suddenly though, the sensation was changing; feeling less elastic, more like rope bearing a heavy weight. This shift was matched by a physical one; her flesh seemed to have less and less give. Before, her stomach squished against the ground under her weight – now it was becoming rigid, lifting her higher as it resumed its spherical shape.

Siri realized she was must be almost filled to capacity. A goat skin could only hold so much water before it became impossible to put any more in. What was going to happen now?

Even so, there was no respite. Creaking noises were starting to issue from her skin. The rate of Siri's expansion was slowing down as her increasingly inelastic surface fought back against the outward march of the mass within. But by the same proportion, the magma running from her nipples and crotch was becoming pressurized, spraying instead of merely flowing. The divots around her extremities were deepening, and with this, their range of movement was reducing. It was particularly bad for her head; the flesh pressing up under her chin was forcing her to look upward, while the same thing happening under her enlarged cheeks prevented her from looking left or right. The only reason she could see straight ahead was because she was lying on her front, so for her up *was* straight ahead. Turning to look at her own body wasn't possible...but she could still feel it. She could feel how big she was...and how overfilled.

As a child Siri had once gotten sick after eating some bad food. For days her stomach had been consumed by agonizing pain, leaving her writhing and wailing while her parents looked on helplessly. The pain had felt like some kind of monster fighting to get out; she had been sure it going to burst her open to escape. The only thing that had kept her holding on was Dren, staying by her side throughout the ordeal and reassuring her she was going to be okay.

There was not much pain with her current predicament. On the contrary; the pleasurable sensation of magma leaking had intensified, becoming an ecstasy that permeated her whole titanic body. But the pressure growing and growing inside – and the louder and louder creaking of her skin – carried the same hideous portent of what was going to happen.

Siri couldn't hold anymore.

Siri was going to explode.

Despair took her. She had been foolish to hope that somehow she might get out of this alive. How arrogant was it to think you were capable of bearing even a measure of the power of a God?

“...Hewlp...Dwen...”

The words came out a barely audible whimper. After that, saying anything more was impossible. Constrained by the girth of her cheeks, and slightly fattened with magma themselves, her lips became stuck in an involuntary pucker.

There was almost no give left in Siri; she sat on the patch of her belly that was her lowest point. Creaking and gurgling filled the air. Fountains of magma sprayed from her private parts. Ecstasy assaulted her senses. Her mouth emitted stifled moans and coos; the only sound she could make. And as her skin desperately eked out the last of its structural integrity, the pressure within her neared a crescendo.

Closing her eyes tight, Siri waited for the end.

And waited.

And waited.

And waited.

By the time she realized her growth had stopped, a whole minute had passed.

“...Hm?”

Opening her eyes, she flicked them left and right in confusion.

Siri's spherical body had achieved a diameter of five meters, while each breast was two meters wide. She was as large as the orb of Extrus, still hanging silently across from her.

She was no longer getting bigger...but she still felt on the verge of exploding. The internal pressure was immense, and despite magma continuing to outflow from her nipples and crotch, that pressure wasn't dropping. Judging by the continued gurgles from within, liquid fire must still be filling her, albeit only fast enough to offset her leakage.

Languishing in a disoriented mush of anxiety and bliss, Siri lay perfectly still, not daring to twitch even a finger. She was sure even the slightest shift in skin tension would upset the balance and bring disaster.

She was still trying to come to terms with her apparent survival, when –

“I HAVE IMBUED YOU WITH MY POWER. NOW I SHALL TEACH YOU TO WIELD IT.”

Again, the sudden booming voice again made Siri jump – or at least, would have done if she weren't utterly replete. Her taut surface survived the accidental movement attempt, but gave off an extra loud creak of warning.

Peering at the God's form over the top of her orbicular cheeks, Siri regarded it with newfound annoyance. *Now*

*he decides to say something? How was she supposed to wield **anything** like **this**?!*

Her puckered lips prevented her from saying the words out loud...and yet, Extrus seemed to understand what she was thinking. “MY POWER DOES NOT REQUIRE DEXTERITY TO WIELD, CHAMPION. ONCE I HAVE MENTORED YOU, YOU WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE.”

Being called “champion” improved Siri's mood slightly. She still didn't understand any of this...but perhaps, despite everything, Extrus *did* mean well.

\* \* \* \* \*

Back on the lip of the crater, the high priest watched the Ash Raiders continue their raucous worship of Extrus, a self-satisfied smirk on his face.

They were a pack of fools. The Volcano God did not exist. It was nothing but a story for frightening brats he'd once heard. But it had served its purpose. As long as they believed in Extrus, and believed he spoke the God's will, then they were his to command.

He excitedly began to think of future possibilities. Soon, his followers would be sufficient in number to completely destroy that other pathetic tribe, and with them gone, he would control the whole region. Then, maybe, if he played his cards right, he could see about doing a little civilization building, with himself as its ruler. A title change from “high priest” to “king” certainly sounded appealing-

At that moment, his mind registered a change in the sounds coming from the Ash Raiders. The cheering and howls of aggression were petering out; in their place were exclamations of shock, and cries of alarm.

He, along with the two goons who had brought the girl, were still standing halfway along the outcrop sticking out from the crater's edge; they were facing back towards the lip, where the Ash Raiders were gathered. As the high priest refocused on his followers, he realized they were pointing and staring at something behind him.

The high priest looked over his shoulder...and froze.

*Something had risen from the crater.* The smoke filling the air made it impossible to see clearly; what could be seen was a large circle of red light, the same threatening red as the heart of the volcano below them.

The thing rose until it was clear of the tip of the outcrop, then moved forward. As it emerged from the smoke, the high priest stared as goggle-eyed as his followers.

It was a massive sphere, with two smaller spheres hanging from the front of its lower half. Its matte surface glowed red-hot, and yet...something about it looked strangely organic. From the pointed bottom of each of the hanging spheres, a stream of liquid, glowing even brighter, poured and trickled.

Why, they looked almost like a pair of lactating...

Tearing his eyes from the impossible mammaries, he stared at three large divots he could see on the main sphere. Peering at the right most one for a moment, he suddenly recognized a human hand, rendered tiny by the sphere it was attached to. Looking at the leftmost divot, he saw another hand there.

But that must mean in the middle...

Sure enough, the middle divot contained a face. And while its cheeks were inhumanly distended, the high priest found the face oddly familiar.

*...It couldn't be...*

It was the young woman they had just sacrificed. And she looked *angry*.

From between the bulging cheeks, a set of plump lips opened slightly, and from the gap-

**“BLAAAAARRRRRRRG!!!!!!”**

-A torrent of lava, as strong as a fire-hose, erupted forth.

Sensing the danger a moment before it arrived, the high priest turned and ran. His two goons were not as lucky though; hit in the chest, they were knocked from their feet, and their screaming and flailing was over in moments as the liquid fire incinerated them even as it smothered them.

The cries of alarm from the Ash Raiders became screams of terror. Some began frantically prostrating themselves, while others followed the high priest, who had charged through the mob and away down the mountain.

One exceptionally brave tribesman hefted a spear and flung it at the looming entity. The weapon streaked towards its target...

...Only to stop short, halting instantly in mid-air. For a moment it hung suspended, then it burst into flame, crumbling to ashes in under a second.

His bravado disappearing along with his spear, the offending tribesman fled. Having also witnessed the futile attack, the remaining Ash Raiders gave up their prostrations and joined the scramble to escape.

And not a moment too soon.

**“BLAAAAARRRRRRRG!!!!!!”**

The next lava torrent swept from one end of the crater lip to the other. Incendiary droplets sprayed the backs of the retreating tribesmen, leaving them howling and burning.

The torment however had only just begun. Even as they barreled down the mountain track, the spherical monster

floated after them, driving them on with further deluges of molten death.

\* \* \* \* \*

The next morning, a lone figure stomped his way up the mountain, using a spear as a walking stick.

When Dren regained consciousness after the Ash Raider's attack, his first action was asking the healer tending him if Siri was alright. Upon hearing she had been kidnapped, he had immediately tried to give chase; only his family restraining him had kept him from doing so. In the end, he had been persuaded to wait until a proper rescue party of all the tribe's most able-bodied members could be assembled.

The rescuers had set out before the sun rose. While some of the party members had shared Dren's determination to rescue one of their own, a whole lot of them were less than motivated. *How are we supposed to fight a pack of thugs like the Ash Raiders? What if they set up traps along the way? Siri's probably already de-*

The one who had made that comment hadn't been able to finish it before Dren had pinned him to a tree with an arm across the guy's throat. Dren had always been too headstrong for his own good, and until the attack, he had been working on bringing that part of himself under control. Siri seemed to like him more when he showed some restraint.

Without Siri in his life, though, there was no point. There was no point to anything.

The rescue party had still been arguing about how to deal with the Ash Raiders when they suddenly encountered them. But the difficult fight the Forest Dwellers had been dreading never happened. The Ash Raiders did not lay an ambush, coordinate an assault, or even adopt any tactic more complicated than charging blindly through the undergrowth. By the time the rescue party figured out the Raiders were not attacking at all, but *fleeing*, they had already captured or incapacitated three quarters of them.

Interrogating their prisoners proved fruitless. All of the Ash Raiders were insensible with fear. All questions and threats, regarding Siri or otherwise, were met with the same gibberish about how they had angered a God and were trying to escape his wrath.

Continuing on, they had found the Ash Raider's high priest at the edge of the forest, where it met the foot of the mountain. He'd been torn limb from limb, apparently by his own followers, in some misguided attempt to appease whatever was chasing them.

As nonsensical as the survivor's drivel was, it had succeeded at intimidating the rescue party, and with the discovery of the high priest's remains, they decided to turn back with the prisoners. If their enemies hadn't been able to survive whatever carnage had transpired, it was unlikely Siri had.

And so Dren had gone on by himself. He didn't care what was out there. He didn't care if he died and had to drag himself back from the underworld. He at least had to know what had happened to his childhood friend. His hope

of finding her alive diminished with each passing second...but he at least had to know.

It was mid-morning when he reached the Ash Raider's camp...or what was left of it. Every mud hut and animal-hide tent had been burned the ground. Strangely, in many cases the charred remains of the dwellings seemed to have been coated in a layer of black volcanic rock – as if the rock had once been liquid like mud, poured onto them, and had dried.

The plot further thickened when he saw something glowing out of the corner of his eye. Investigating revealed the strangest thing he had ever seen; a trickle of molten, red-hot liquid running down the slope from somewhere higher up. Spear at the ready now, he picked his way up carefully, taking pains to avoid stepping in the fiery runoff.

The strangeness of this discovery however was easily eclipsed by what he saw next.

As he had approached the settlement, he had noticed a oddly symmetrical rock formation further up the mountainside. He'd thought nothing of it, but as he climbed closer, and another formation moved out of the way so he could see it clearly, he realized it wasn't a rock formation at all...

...It was the largest mud hut he had ever seen.

It must have been twelve metres just to the top of the walls, and twenty four metres across. It had no windows, but the entrance, when it came into view, was a huge opening like the mouth of a cave. A whole family of people could have walked through it, shoulder to shoulder, with another family balancing on their shoulders without touching the sides or top.

Dren had not given the Raider's mentions of a God an ounce of credit, but confronted with what he saw now, dismissing them was a lot harder. Especially so when he realized the lava stream he had been following up the slope was leading straight to the entrance.

The mud hut's weirdness didn't end with its size. As he drew close, he realized it wasn't made of mud at all. It was volcanic rock again; somehow molded into bricks the same way as mud, then assembled and allowed to set. The roof was made of it too, instead of the usual sticks and brush. He wasn't even sure it was possible to shape mud to create a conical structure like a roof.

Dren approached the entrance from the side, moving as stealthily as he could manage. He wasn't sure why he was doing this; his objective was Siri, not confronting some malevolent being that had scared even the Ash Raiders. But as single-minded as he was, curiosity was proving irresistible.

The structure was hot to the touch; blisteringly so. He could feel an equally strong wave of heat coming from the entrance. From what he could see of the inside, the far wall was illuminated with an orange glow, which suggested a fire...but there was no smoke, or even a chimney emerging from the roof.

More and more of the interior came into view. Whatever was creating the light was behind the wall Dren was standing in front of; he would have to move right in front of the entrance to see it.

Sweat ran down his forehead and soaked his clothing as he drew as close to the hot wall as he could bear. His



knuckles had gone white from how hard he was gripping his spear. Millimeter by millimeter, he moved into the entrance-way.

The first thing that slid into his view was a wide puddle of lava, spreading out across the floor of the hut. It was from this that the stream running down the hill originated. For a second he thought that was the only oddity he would see in there...but then something else appeared above head height.

The glowing red sphere floated above the molten pool in the same manner the sun floated in the sky, heedless of gravity. It seemed to be the ultimate source of the liquid fire; from two hanging orbs at the front and a point somewhere at the back, the burning fluid fell in streams.

What was that thing? Was that the God? A divine treasure? Some kind of mushroom he had never heard of?

Dren's eyes went to the three divots in the sphere's front surface. With a start, he realized the oddly shaped thing in the center divot was a face...and it had spotted him.

The sphere-with-a-face began to move, sliding silently through the air toward Dren. As it moved beyond the pool, the streams of lava flowing from it began splattering on the bare ground, leaving glowing trails along the floor in its wake.

His body shaking, the young man held his ground. The heat was so bad now, his sweat was drying on his skin as soon as it formed.

He held the spear at the ready at first.

But as the thing got closer...

...as he became able to make out the facial features...

...as he realized the swollen face, regarding him with an expression of surprise and joy, was one he knew well...

...his fingers went slack, and the spear clattered to the ground.

“...Siri?!”

**The End**