

Where It Happened

“Can someone please tell me about the mission?” I ask, stopping Connor from leaving the car. This was getting really annoying. I’m fairly new here, and my boss isn’t the kindest.

It’s a simple reason why he doesn’t like me: I have the ability to understand magical beings, of which most do not. So, normally, we remove magicals from the area or entirely so they don’t harm people, if possible. However, I can talk to them so sometimes we can negotiate instead.

Connor, my boss, sighs, “So much trouble.” I breathe deeply through gritted teeth. “*It* happened here, in a theater. It’s currently under construction, and recently the workers haven’t been able to work.”

I wait for more information. Through a strained voice, “Are you going to explain ‘*it*’?”

“Tch.” He clicks his tongue. “The workers have had trouble moving in the main stage area, like they were wading through honey or mud. Machinery has strangely stopped working inside, but works perfectly outside the building. All construction has been halted. We’ve already seen why it’s happening, but I thought your famous ears could be useful. It’s also better if you see why for yourself.” We both get out of the car, I grab my suitcase, follow Connor. He leads me through the building and opens a door to what will be an auditorium.

To a normal eye, the auditorium doesn’t even have a floor or roof. Completely empty save for a wooden stage.

To our eyes, the auditorium is full with dark gray rocks, each about as big as a grapefruit. They are all haphazardly stacked into random giant piles.

“At first we thought they were a magical’s eggs, but we can’t figure out if they have life. We’ve tried moving them out, but they were back here by dawn and have been increasing each night. Now them being eggs is unlikely.” Lily, who’s much more friendly than Connor, tells me. I jump a bit. Lily was behind us so I didn’t notice her.

Then I realize something.

“Might I ask, why exactly was I specifically called?” I look towards Connor with a forced smile and eyes that aren’t smiling.

“Your ears are so famous, maybe they could help us hear what rocks say.” Connor says. He is definitely trying to get me to quit.

“Don’t be so hard on him, Connor.” Lily chides before turning to me.

“You told me your dad has had you research a lot of myths, right?” I nod. “Maybe you can help us figure out what these are. Plus it looks a bit like they open up, so maybe they can speak.”

“Ok, I’ll do my best.” Lily motions me into the shade by a wall. She has laid out several tools, special flashlights that can find any glyphs, a closed box with ‘DNA analysis kit’ written on it, and strangely a screwdriver. Next to the tools is one of the rock-like beings.

We sit down around the rock and I pick up the rock. It’s heavy, cold, and scaly. Like Lily said, there are ridges and mis-connects, like when a pattern on clothing doesn’t line up at the seam. It does look like it should open up, not like an egg but like it’s currently curled up into a ball.

“Is the screwdriver to uncurl this little guy?” I look back up to Lily.

“Not that it has been working.” She barely shrugs. I hold it up to my ear, closing my eyes and listening for anything. After a moment I set it back down and open up my small suitcase and pull out one of several small boxes.

“Einar, why do you have so many boxes in your suitcase?” Lily blurts out, surprised.

“So they don’t get mixed up or damaged.” I open up the small box and pull out something similar to a stethoscope, only the part that records sound has a moldable putty ridge that helps it stick and stay in place, and only one cord going to one earbud that wraps around my ear.

I set the recording part on the being and the earbud in my right ear. This time I do hear something, breathing and a hum synchronized.

“It’s asleep. They might be nocturnal, and if they keep coming back, we probably shouldn’t mess with them.” Almost immediately I feel a chill from behind.

“Are you suggesting we tolerate these trespassers?!” Connor appears behind me. Just how long has he been there?

“Connor, I have a few ideas about what these are, and if they are the most likely one, we don’t want to disturb them. If I’m right, they’ll be gone in about a week.”

Connor just sighs, “I knew you would be absolutely useless for this.” What? I stare with wide eyes before sighing exasperatedly.

“I think Einar’s right, they probably are nocturnal. So before you both start fighting, let’s come back here at night and see what they are doing.” Lily interrupts us.

“I second that.” I raise my hand.

“Great! With a majority vote, let’s meet back here at around ten.” Lily claps her hands.



I check my watch. It’s about 9:30, I should get back to the theater. Currently I am drinking a late night latte at a local coffee cafe. I have been very productive whilst waiting to meet up again. You see, I know what the rocks are.

In the Racha religion, which is among the most common for Orkney, there is a belief that on the fifth day of the fifth month every five years the major gods of Racha host a banquet party in the sky for all the gods, where many bring special gifts and food. The Racha religion has hundreds of gods, minor, major, and in between. Among the top most is Cyddite, who is known for bringing magical gems extracted from Carbuncles, a small, nocturnal, gray, and scaly beast with a glowing bluish-white gem on their forehead. We are just about a week from the festival, and this is the fifth year.

If these creatures are under Cyddite, we most definitely do not want to anger such a powerful deity. In case something happens, I asked a friend to watch over the site and tell me if something happens.

The moment I leave the restaurant, I hear ringing.

I answer my phone. “Einar, Connor is trying to destroy scaly beings.” my friend, Charlotte, tells me.

“That hrafnasueltir!” I curse. “I’ll be there soon.” I end the call. I’m fifteen minutes away, but that’s just walking like a normal human. It’s night time so it’s fine to transform. I dash to an alley, away from any cameras and lights.

A rush of energy courses through me as my senses sharpen, strength increases, and mostly physical wolf ears and tail materialize. My vision changes, color fades to grays, yellows and blues. I leap to the top of a building, and jump from building to building until I am on the theater, looking down at the auditorium.

I see Connor and about five others to the right, towards the door. They are each holding different weapons from magical swords to seals. To the left, all the Carbuncles are hiding behind a woman dressed and glowing in white. Cyddite.

With one leap, I land in the rough middle. I ignore the shouting as the bright lights sting my eyes. Pushing through the pain, I take my sword pendant and pull it off the magnet on the chain. I hold it between my hands like I was praying, then transition so my hands are clasped and facing out.

“Ajaideep.” I whisper the name of my weapon. Liquid metal stretches out before solidifying. A naginata but the non-blade side is a shakujō.

“Everyone shut up and don’t fight!” I shout as loud as possible, hurting my own ears in the process. The shouting stops immediately.

“Einar-!” Connor starts.

“Blood-wolf human mix, don’t interfere with us.” I hold up my right hand, showing Cyddite my celtic knot bear claw bracelet.

“Know what this means?” I ask.

“A Guardian, why?”

“Einar! What are you doing?” Connor shouts. I don’t respond to either. Instead, I take Ajaideep and using the blade side, slash a line going from wall to wall.

“Whilst most of my kind would settle this with bloodshed, I do not wish for that. For the sake of peace, no one can cross this line. I will act as a translator and offer input, so this may be settled peacefully. There will be no rebuttals. Any questions for me can be answered later.”

“Very well, Guardian.”

“If we aren’t harmed.”

I slam Ajaideep into the floor with the blade side down, creating an audible thud.