

Trust.

Simon was sleeping, finally but his breathing was shallow, irregular. Every pause Judith tensed, ready to leap to help but then he would breathe again and the panic would fade until next time his broken body debated whether to just stop working. She couldn't sleep, while she kept her vigil. She had already thought she'd lost him once, she couldn't go through that again.

Broken ribs, bruised limbs, torn flesh and worse - a litany of sins written on their bodies. She could hear Peter and Julie talking quietly in the next room but couldn't make out what they were saying, she knew she should go and check on them but her limbs were leaden and wouldn't let her move.

They'd taken shelter in an old abandoned house not far from the prison but just far enough that those within had stopped their pursuit. Those upstairs kept watch for anything approaching, an imagined djinn in every noise and ghost in every shadow. Downstairs were those who couldn't make it up the stairs, or those who wouldn't abandon them.

Simon lay on an old sofa, unmoving from where Ed had helped her lie him down. Judith sat curled next to the wall, knees tucked in tight and arms wrapped around herself. As if she could make herself small enough to vanish, hide away and make herself safe again. She missed the comfort of the old hospital vents, the tight spaces that enclosed her, made her feel safe and where nothing could creep up on her. She missed the safety of being alone, of not fearing for anyone because there was no one to fear for. So now she presses her back as close to the corner as she can, wedged between the furniture and hiding away from the world, but it still feels so exposed, like a raw nerve that won't let her relax.

Grace sleeping curled up on the other sofa, watched over with Sleepless Eye by the fallen angel who had so carefully coiled his way around her soul. Judith meets his gaze for a moment, his eyes black pits into which she could lose herself and fall forever. Replayed over and over in her mind the bloody wounds that had pinned Julie and her brother to the wall. His hands, his actions, his choice. It sits uneasily with later, when the shouting stopped and Grace called her over to pray with him. For him. Tell him the story of the footsteps, as she had taken his hands in hers and prayed for his redemption.

Was that forgiveness? For what he had done, for the lives he had taken, for the pain he had caused. To see the blood on his hands and take them in her own regardless? She didn't understand how she could forgive him or even if she really had, but she had prayed with him none the less. It was not her place to forgive, for only God could truly do that, but the words play out on her lips 'we forgive others their trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us'. She still doesn't really understand.

She has vague memories of the fallen angel carrying her away to safety, of him shielding her with his body as the djinn snarled at them. Has he changed? Was that real? How much is pretence and how much contrition?

Primaël nods his head once as he meets her eyes before turning to stare out of the window. Judith drops her gaze and stares at her boots, rubbing her still itching eyes and increasingly blurred vision. She knew she should rest them but she was afraid of what might happen if she fell asleep. That she might wake to find her world irrecoverably changed, to find she'd lost everything that helped make any sense of her life.

Judith starts as Ed kneels down in front of her. He rests a hand gently on her shoulder before picking up a cup of hot tea from where he'd rested it, his broken arm bound up in a sling making his movements awkward. He presses the steaming mug into her cold fingers which grasp at it gratefully. He sits down then, beside her in her cramped corner, but her heart rate doesn't rocket. She has no way out, no escape route but to her surprise she realises she doesn't mind. They sit there quietly for a while as she drinks the tea, memories of the past few days flicking across her mind. She barely knows him but they've been through hell and back, she's seen him work, skilled hands patching wounds and resetting bones. He's saved her life and she's saved his. It feels like more than a few days since they met.

She doesn't trust easily. Not any more. Not after everything she's seen, everything she's lived through. People change, her eyes flick quickly to Grace, and suddenly you don't know them any more or know what they're capable of. So much to be afraid of from those you don't really understand.

"You know, you really should sleep"

She mutters something about needing to keep an eye on Simon and he sighs. Bringing out a torch he turns her head to face him, a gentle hand lifting her chin then shining the light into her eyes. She doesn't pull

away, she isn't afraid. He looks at her for a few concerned moments and sighs again before lowering the torch, his own movements stiff from a myriad of aches and pains.

"You can barely see can you?"

Judith reluctantly mumbles her assent.

"Look, you're not good to him or any of us if you can't see straight."

He catches her glancing towards Simon.

"It's ok. I'll watch over him for a few hours while you rest, he'll be ok. Trust me?"

To her surprise, as she lets her eyes close and sleep claim her, she finds she actually does.