

A Transformation

Odyssey

Art by Jakal
Written by Jakal & Jessie Star

STONE COLD ARTIST

VI

Jakacles winced from the bright light as he rubbed his eyes— someone was slapping him awake.

“— to Jak. Gaia to Jakacles. Hello?” Jessandra said, tapping her friend lightly on the face. “C’mon, get your sandals on. We’re here.” Jakacles groaned, and slowly sat up, wincing as he felt his chest shift at the motion. Weeks later, and the tits still felt weird to him... And yet, a small part of him in the back of his head beckoned him to stretch in a way that might show off or squeeze together his bosom, perhaps to ‘accidentally’ let one slip as he—

Jakacles shook his head groggily, rubbing his eye with his one hand and dismissing the thoughts. He was still getting hints of “Jakie” every now and then thanks to their encounter with Pan, even after Jessandra forced a counter-spell out of god.

“And where’s ‘here’?” He asked, brushing the hair out of his face and finally looking around. Jessandra smiled. She knew he was going to love this.

“We’re in... wait for it... Kos!” She exclaimed with a flourish, presenting her arms outwards and rocking the docked boat in the process.

“Kos?” Jakacles asked, looking behind her at what looked like a crowded little fishing town. Jessandra’s grin dropped, and her arms fell to her side.

“Kos? You know, *Kos!*” She pointed back at the island with dying enthusiasm. “World famous agora? All merchants and artists *strive* to be here at some point... Come on, you claim to be a Greek fanatic, but don’t know about *Kos?*”

Jakacles looked back at what he now realized was a market and tried to fake a smile of recognition. “Oh... uh— yeah! Kos! I remember studying that... Awesome!” He said as he slowly stood up. Jessandra scoffed.

“Poser...”

“So what are we doing in Kos?”

“Heh, you know all about it,” Jess said, stepping off the boat. “Why do *you* think we’re here?” Jakacles sat there for a moment, and then slowly stood up.

“Erm... well, it’s a market— uh, I mean agora...” He stumbled as he took a small leap onto the dock, holding his chest steady as he did. “...so, we’re here for... shopping?”

“I mean, you can go explore and window shop all you want.” She started moving towards the agora. “You told me you liked knick-knacks and souvenirs, so I thought you’d enjoy Greece’s biggest collection of them. But this is where *everyone* comes to get rare and exotic items. Which means I can probably check a few things off our ingredients list— one of which I know for a fact my friend Exandros has.”

Jakacles looked around the crowded market as he and Jessandra walked forward. He saw several fairly attractive people cross his path and felt a sort of tug in his belly as he started veering off course. He quickly shook his head and fell back into line with Jess. “I think I’ll stay with you... The last few times we split up it didn’t really turn out well.”

Jess smiled and motioned for him to follow her.

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“Jessandra! How’s my favorite witch?” A tall, bearded, barrel-chested man with thinning hair and a bit of a gut called over to Jessandra as they approached a fairly chaotic-looking stand. All the carts, shops, and stands seemed to show off a specific trade— fishermen sold fish, blacksmiths weapons and jewelry, artists amphoras— but *this* stand seemed to have a bit of everything behind its beaming owner.

“I’m doing just fine, Ex. How’s the best merchant on the island?” She asked, leaning over the counter as Exandros laughed.

“Oh, he’s fine— he’s spending the day in our villa, but *very* fine.”

“Aww, so Alexos isn’t in? Marital troubles?” Jess straightened up, leaning with one arm on the counter.

“No, no— nothing like that. We’re doing great.” Exandros said, waving his hand and dismissing the thought. “He’s making banners, masks, whatever else might help advertise our little shop. Not everyone has such an appreciation for our goods, you know.”

“What do you sell?” Jakacles asked, and Exandros gave him the once over. Jakacles shifted slightly.

“Oh, just about everything, my dear... But when you’re selling everything, you might as well be selling nothing.” He pulled out a couple togas onto the counter, followed by a chest plate, a messily-made amphora with beautiful art, a funny looking hat, and a dead bird. “If people want cloth, they go to the weavers or seamstresses, if they want pottery they go to a pottery stand, if they want armor they— well, you get the idea.” Jakacles nodded as Exandros sighed. “But, when you don’t *specialize* in anything, when your catalog is a bit more... diverse, it can be hard for people to understand why they should seek out your stand— or understand why they’re at your stand.”

“So Alexos is working on a display?” Jess asked.

“Exactly!” Exandros motioned to an elegant looking statue wearing an all-leather toga, a helmet, and holding an amber encrusted staff. “We need to show the full variety of what we sell! If we could afford more display statues like this, we could show the full variety of—”

“Why don’t you call it a ‘super-store?’” Jakacles asked, a bit amused.

“Hm?”

“A super-store...” Jakacles asked carefully. This wasn’t some sort of butterfly effect thing, right? He could talk about this sort of modern concept? Jess had already scolded him for trying to teach a local kid how to high five a few islands ago. “Since you sell a wide variety of goods— an above average, or even *super* amount. Even if it confuses people, they’d still ask about it, right?”

“A super-store...” Exandros scratched his beard. “That could work... I still want some sort of display, but I could also—”

“Before my friend gives you more free marketing advice, I have a list.” Jessandra cut in, pulling out a small scroll and handing it to Exandros. He took the scroll and started reading.

“Ah, let’s see... Nope.” He said, going down the list. “Nope. Had that last week, but not anymore. Oh, *that* I can help with. That too. Not that one. Georgios might be able to help you with that, he’s by the bay this week—” He continued down the list, bringing out a small piece of charcoal now to mark down what he had in his inventory. Finally, he got to the last one on the page. “— now, that I *did* have... until this morning.”

Jess groaned and rubbed the bridge of her nose. “Damn it, Exandros— I came here *specifically* because I thought you had that.” Exandros shrugged.

“I’m sorry, and for what it’s worth, I thought I’d have it for much longer too. Nobody seems to want a sphinx’s bezoar.” He pointed to the statue on display. “Traded it for that. Along with a couple other items—” He underlined an item higher on the list. “— including my last sun-touched-ruby. But, if you’re willing to wait, I’ll have another in a month or so.”

“You said you traded it this morning? Maybe we could try to buy it off your buyer?” Jessandra asked as Exandros started collecting and piling the other things from the list onto the counter. He shrugged again as he pulled a jewel-encrusted ring off what looked like a mummified hand and dropped it on the counter.

“It’s worth a shot. I think she went back to her home— but don’t fret!” He said quickly as he saw Jess’ shoulders drop. “She’s a local artist. Lives on the island, up the mountain. Start walking up that path, and it’ll be the huge villa about halfway up. Tons of her statues decorate it. Can’t miss it.” He pointed behind them at the small mountain a little ways away. Jess smiled as she collected the items, and started counting coins.

“Thanks, Ex. How much for all this?”

“For all of it? About sixty gold drachma.”

“How much for me and my friend?” Jess said, batting her eyelashes.

“Seventy.”

“Forty-five.”

“I’m scandalized! Outraged! Done.”

Jessed dropped the gold onto the counter and walked back to Jakacles, who was currently gawking up at the mountain.

“We have to go *hiking*? Up that thing?”

“If we want what we came for.” Jess said, crossing the acquired ingredients off the list. “Or we could take a nice bouncy cart.” She said as a horse-bound cart shook and rattled by, down the roughly cobbled road.

“Fine...” Jakacles grumbled as he started trudging forward.

“Oh, hush. We still have some of this to work off anyway.” Jess said with a grin as she slapped Jak’s ass.

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“Okay, that *has* to be it.” Jessandra said, looking up at a magnificent villa, with statues adorning every corner and the archway entrance to the front garden. “Damn, this place is nice. Might be hard to barter with someone who has a lot of— seriously, Jak?” She looked back at her winded friend, about twenty feet behind her. “C’mon, was all that training with Heracles for nothing?”

“It’s... the extra... fat in these...” Jakal said between heavy breaths, emphasizing his chest, before reaching back and grabbing his ass. “And this. I used to hike all the time, it’s just different.”

“Oh, quit being such a diva.” Jess said, before motioning to her own breasts and turning back to the villa. “You don’t see me complaining— you just haven’t kept up with Heracles’ regimen, have you? Stop blaming your tits and get a move on.” She kept moving to the front archway, shaking her head as she went while Jakal put the last of his energy into one final sprint to catch up, holding onto his chest as he went.

“Any idea what to trade? Don’t know if she needs more gold...” Jakal said, gaping at the ornate archway while they entered a magnificent garden with hedges, fruit trees, ponds, and many more magnificently sculpted statues. Jakal got closer to one of the statues, a man that actually looked quite terrified, shielding his eyes. The posing and detail were magnificent! He hadn’t seen anything like this at art museums from this period— this was far more comparable to something you’d see Michaelangelo sculpt more than a thousand years later. It was impressive. “Exandros said she was a sculptor... did she make all these?”

“I think so,” Jess said, looking at a woman pressing her back against a wall, her face full of ecstasy as her hands seemed to explore her body. “They all look like the same sort of style of realism— I’ve never seen anyone with this much skill...”

“Why, thank you.” Both of them jumped as a breathy voice addressed them, almost a whisper. A woman had suddenly appeared, almost soundlessly, standing between them. She had a thin yet tall frame and was wearing a long, tight black tunic with long sleeves. On her head was a green and red sort of head dressing, and over her eyes, she had a sort of visor with small slits over her eyes— the types you’d see people wear to avoid snow-blindness. It was a strange look, but Jakal had met strange artistic types. One hand was crossed under her chest while the other held a lit long stem cigarette holder. “Are you here to buy one of my creations? You were right,” She said, motioning to Jakal as she took a drag from her cigarette. He didn’t know they had cigarettes this far back. She then did a flourished bow. “I am Dusa, and these are all my children. I take either gold or trade— whichever one turns out to be more interesting. If you have—”

“Actually,” Jess interjected. “We’re hoping to get something else from you...” She pulled out the list she had given Exandros. “Earlier today, I believe you traded a statue to Exandros for a sphinx’s bezoar and a sun-touched-ruby?” Dusa cocked her head curiously as Jess continued, and then looked back at Jakal, a raised brow seen rising from behind her odd face wear. “We were wondering if there was any chance you could part with—”

"It's yours!" Dusa exclaimed, clasping her hands together with a grin.

"Excuse me?" Jess said, surprised and taken aback. This wasn't the way to barter a trade. "What do you mean it's ours? Both of them?"

"Yes, both of them—"

"Just like that?"

"— Oh, no, no, my dear." Dusa said, slinking next to Jess and putting a hand on her shoulder. "I do require something in return, something simple, and it'll be yours!" Jess smiled but raised a curious brow.

"Oh, so you have something already in mind?"

"Yes, yes— looking at the two of you specimens," She said, motioning first to Jess then to Jakal. "I have found my new muse! Oh, you're both just so beautiful, I can't miss the chance to try to make some statues from your form! I'll just need a few hours of your time as I rough out your likeness in paper and clay so I can capture it in stone!" Jess smiled while Jakal's face became red.

"So if we pose for you, we can get the bezoar and ruby?"

"That's correct. What's more, your beautiful forms will be immortalized for all to see!" She said with another flourish as she slinked over and stroked the arm of one of her statues. Jakacles and Jessandra exchanged a look— *artists*.

"What do you think, Jakal?" Jess said, stepping over and patting her friend on his back. "Want this form to be immortalized?" Jakal looked down at his heavy cleavage and gulped. He wasn't sure if he wanted *this* form immortalized in stone... but if they wanted what they came for, did he really have a choice?

"Yeah, alright..." He said in resignation. And Dusa grinned and snapped her finger as she turned, indicating for them to follow her.

"Splendid! This way!" She led them through the garden, snapping her fingers again when Jakal stopped to look at a statue of a beautiful woman wrapping her arms around a tree. How did she get the stone around the tree? Did it separate into parts?

"Here we are— where the magic happens!" Dusa said as they came to a small open-air studio in the back of the garden, with several finished statues off to the side. There was a sort of raised platform, like a stage, with a few chairs, props, and a shelf full of vials off to the side. A solitary chair was placed off stage, where it could be assumed Dusa would sit and observe.

"Alright, strip and get up on the stage." Dusa said, rustling through the various props, and setting a chair onto the stage.

“Strip?!” Jakal squeaked in surprise. “Erm... do I have to? Couldn’t I be clothed?” He asked, tightening the sash around his waist. Dusa placed a small side-table that looked like a column onto the platform, nodded as she finalized the scene, and shrugged as she turned back to Jakal.

“Nude or clothed, I suppose it doesn’t matter too much— my vision just called for the body in its raw form, but it makes little difference in the end.” She said as she looked the two of them up and down again.

Jakal breathed a sigh of relief and turned to Jess, who was already undressed. He jumped back in surprise and shielded his eyes. “Jess!”

“What?”

“Y-you’re clothes.”

“What about them?”

“Give me some warning next time!” Jakal said, looking awkwardly in the opposite direction. Jessandra crossed her arms and rolled her eyes.

“Oh, please. It’s nothing you haven’t seen before.” She said, taking a seat on one of the off-stage chairs. “We’re just posing from art, calm down. You’d think our last little adventure would have loosened you up a little—”

“That’s it!” Dusa said, snapping her fingers. “I have it, I have the scene. I want you both to think outside the box, embody something different, new! You—” She went over to Jess, kneeling down. “You are shy, bashful. Imagine you’re a late bloomer, your wonderful curves still hold some mystery— maybe you want to explore, maybe you want to hide, but you’re unsure yet ready to go forward!”

“Sure... It’s not really me, but—”

“And you!” Dusa rushed over to Jakal, grabbing him with both arms by the shoulder. “You, my dear, are the queen of the world. A strong, independent woman, who—”

“Erm, I’m a man—” Jakal interjected uncomfortably.

“Not for this scene, you’re not.” She patted Jakal reassuringly on the shoulder. “You are an actor, a player, and in this scene, you are embodying a strong, confident woman— on top of the world!” She kept a hand on Jakal’s shoulder but turned back to Jess. “I’m going to go get my supplies, but in the meantime, I want you both to find that energy— find it and use it! If you have trouble, we have some solutions to strengthen the nerves.” She pointed to the shelf full of tiny vials. “Bring it to a ten, and we’ll pull it back from there.” She hurriedly slinked off into the villa.

Jess got up curiously, as Jakal glanced at the shelf, but turned away as soon as Jess got up and entered his eyeline, inspecting the vials closer.

“Ugh, Jess— can’t you at least wear a towel or something until we start?” Jakal asked, walking toward the shelf while keeping his eyes on the ground.

“Are these alcohols to ‘loosen the nerves?’” Jess asked, inspecting the vials and ignoring her friend’s request. She opened one of the purple vials and gave it a waft. “Or are they... Oh, yep.” Quickly closed it. “That’s magic. Elixirs. Not sure what they— Oh...” Jessandra suddenly felt incredibly hot as a small wave of pleasure surged through her, her nipples becoming erect, warmth spread between her legs. “... Oh no... these are— oh!” She moaned slightly as another pulse of pleasure spread through her body, this time slightly more intense. She shuttered and dropped the vial. “Shit! These are mood vials!”

The vial shattered on the ground, but instead of liquid spilling across the tile, gas started hissing up from the remains. Jess and Jakal started coughing as the vapor wisped around them.

“Don’t breathe it in!” Jess said, grabbing for her disrobed tunic and covering her mouth with it as Jakal brought his tunic up, holding it above his nose as he continued to cough.

“Too late...” Jakal said between coughs. “What’s a— *cough cough*— what’s a mood vial?” But soon a similar feeling started to wash over him, a pinch of pleasure with each cough as he felt his feminine mound tingle and plump with warmth and pleasure.

“It’s... Hnng— oh god...” Jess leaned against the chair. “I-it is what it sounds like. Vials that create moods, feelings, emotions. My guess— oh!— my guess is that Dusa uses it to enforce whatever scene she wants to set up for her statues. I think that was... Essence of orgasm...”

‘*Oh gods, yes!*’ A breathy feminine voice erupted into Jakal’s thoughts as she tried to control the urge to rub down her body.

“Oh, no... Jakie?” Jakal said aloud in a panting, breathy voice as he felt the pleasure build further and further, soon to reach a pinnacle.

“Jakie? Are you hearing her agaaaaaaaain—” Jess asked as her knees buckled while she tried to hold back the inevitable.

‘*Oh, this is wonderful— a way to pleasure yourself without even having to touch yourself? Amazing.*’ Jakie’s voice continued. ‘*And back? I never left. Do you really think Pan would admit he was wrong like that? Here, let me help.*’

“I don’t want, OHHHH GODS!” Jakal fell to his knees as another pulse of warmth and pleasure went through him, this time helped along by a flood of images and memories from his last few weeks as a nymph flooding his brain. Jakal shakily got back to his feet, his tunic drenched as his womanhood continued to throb and buzz.

“What on earth is going on out there?” They heard Dusa say as she returned to the scene. “I do approve of any sort of warmup to get you in character, but there’s an awful lot of shouting and— oh...” She glanced from Jakal, shakily getting back to his feet to Jess, who was equally as shaky and seemed to be holding onto the chair for dear life— both very flush.

She sighed as she glanced down at the broken vial. “I see you went snooping into my mood vials? That’s a shame. This wasn’t the vision that I had in mind for you two, but I guess this will have to do. We can fix some things in post.”

Jakal opened his mouth to explain what happened and ask for help as Dusa started to unravel her headwear, but only a moan came out as the pleasure continued to build and build, bolstered by Jakie’s bombardment of dirty thoughts, and he was struggling to stand now as an orgasm threatened to bubble to the surface.

With all the distracting feelings and emotions, it took Jak and Jess a moment to realize that there was no hair under the head dressing, but a collection of black, slithering snakes. It started to dawn on the two of them how much trouble they were in and how stupid they could have been not to notice the telltale signs of a gorgon, of *the* gorgon as she took off her eye coverings and revealed two snake-like eyes.

Statues. Lifelike expressions. The head dressing. ‘Dusa.’

Medusa.

Dusa took another drag from her long cigarette holder, as the snakes on her head started to rear up.

“Oh, shit...” Jess muttered as Jakal screamed, first out of fear but then out of pleasure as he reached climax and struggled to stay standing as he spasmed, and a bright, blinding light flashed from the eyes of the snakes of her hair as everything went dark.

There was another flash of light, and the two adventurers started to come back to— slowly and feeling incredibly stiff and sluggish.

“Alright, now—” They heard Dusa say, though their vision was still off, sort of blurry. “Just going to make some small adjustments here to better fit the scene... here you go, dear, now stand up—”

“Wasshappening...” Jakal said groggily as he was slowly, and heavily, brought to his feet. He could still feel the pleasure buzzing through him, but it didn’t feel like his body could react the way he wanted it to.

“There you go, now how about arms up here— yes, that’s it. Chest out.” His arms were shifted around slightly, as was one of his legs, and his head tilted back slightly as a hand pushed his chest forward. “And now off with that...” He felt some kind of fabric pass over his body, but he couldn’t look down to see what.

“And now you— my dear, you’re a natural.” Jess saw the blurry form of Dusa come closer. “Let’s just change out this chair— I’d rather keep that— for this... column! Yes...” Jess felt her fingers get shifted slightly, and the chair that was once supporting her was gone, yet she was still leaning out into space, her balance maintained before a small column-like side-table was placed under her hand.

“Perfect!” There was another flash of light from the snakes on Dusa’s head and there was darkness once more.

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“—J-Jakal, you there buddy?” Jakal started to come back again as he heard Jess’s voice, though it sounded fairly odd and echo-y. Were they in a cave?

“Hello?” Jakal tried to speak, but found that his mouth couldn’t move. As he started to wake up, he could still feel a warm afterglow of pleasure, but once again his body couldn’t react in any way. In fact, he couldn’t move *anything*. He was stuck staring at the sky, in what felt like the back of a cart judging by the way he was shaking around so much, trees passing by overhead.

“Okay, I can feel you’re waking up,” He heard Jess’s ethereal voice again. “Don’t bother trying to talk, try to *think* at me. I’m talking to you through a psychic connection.”

“Jess?” Jakal asked in his head. “What’s going on?”

“Well, good news and bad news—” Jess’s voice seemed strained and shaky. “Don’t freak out, but bad news first... We’re statues.” Everything suddenly came back to Jakal— the garden, the mood vials, Medusa.

“Shit. Shit shit shit...” Jakal chanted in his head. “I’m so stupid. How did I not notice? The statues? The head and eye coverings? The *name?!?*”

“Yeah, it really was obvious, huh? You were out for a while— took me a few hours to try and do this psychic connection while totally petrified to try and poke you awake.” Jess made an odd grunt and continued. “She had us loaded onto a cart, my guess is we’re headed down to her stand at the market.

“Are...are you ok? You sound a little-”

“No, I’m not okay!” Jessie growled. “That slithering bitch froze us on the cusp of orgasm! I’ve been mentally squirming in this mineralized form for hours!” The ginger witch whimpered. “How can you stand it?”

“Oh, well I guess I was a little ahead of you. I’m trapped in the ‘after effects’... Which I suppose isn’t the worst feeling in the world.” There was a silence, and Jakal could feel the daggers Jess was mentally staring at him. “W-well, What’s the good news?”

“The good news, besides you getting to bask in your post-orgasm while I’m freaking dying to cum over here... is that I know how to fix this...” Jess said, trailing off in the end.

“That’s great! Fix away, and let’s get out of here!” Jakal said as the cart came to a stop, and he could hear the hustle and bustle of the agora around him.

“That’s the thing... I can’t do it myself. We have to be dipped in the waters of a sacred river in mainland Greece, near Athens, while burning a special incense and then dumping its ash into the river as well.”

“Oh... So we, two statues, have to make our way across the Aegean?” said Jakal, his astral voice dripping with contempt over this revelation. “Great. No problem.”

“Wait wait, I have an idea,” Jess quickly said, “And if this all works out, you should also be able to return to your old form, hopefully. This river cleanses curses.”

“Okay, so what’s the idea?” He asked eagerly.

“Alright, so I’m going to try to astral project— it’s a bit tricky given the amount of concentration needed with how obviously distracted I am... But if I can pull it off, and do it right, I may be able to pull your astral form out as well. We can go get help.” Said Jess as they felt the cart come to a stop. A few burly hands grabbed them and hosted them up, and they were dragged out of the cart.

They were pulled across dirt, then smooth ground, and finally came to a stop. They were shifted and turned until they could finally get a good idea of where they were. In front of them was the edge of a platform they could see in the peripheral vision, and a small crowd of people gathered in front of it. Behind the crowd was the agora, and beyond that the ocean.

“Oh, shit...” Jess said as she got her bearings. “This is where they hold auctions— we’re being auctioned off!”

“Hurry with the projection stuff then!”

“I’m working on it—” She said, her voice sounding slightly strained. “— how about you get to the edge of culmination, get stuck there for hours, and then have to pull two souls from their petrified bodies... hnnnnng!” There was a slight popping sound as an ethereal-looking

Jessandra was jettisoned from the statue. “Okay, now you— oh...” She turned to their statues and a look of distaste formed on her face.

“What?”

“Oh, you are not going to like this... are you sure you want to come out?” Jess asked. “It’s... not exactly a PG scene...”

“Just get me out of here already!” Jakal whined as Dusa took to the auction stage.

“Welcome, one and all! I have a few new entries for you today!” She walked out of Jakal’s field of view. “Over here, we have *The Fallen Warrior*. Engaged in combat! Dashing, fighting for his life, his love, *Yearning Love*, who awaits him— who you can also purchase as a set, with his lady love— laying down, pining for him to come home as she dreams of his embrace!” She walked back between Jakal and Jess’s statues. “And for this set—”

“Can’t she see you?” Jakal asked curiously as Dusa strode right through Jessandra’s form.

“No, remember at Circe’s? My astral form is only visible to you because of our current connection.” She explained as she stuck her transparent hand into Jakal’s stone head. “Hold on, getting a hold of your astral form now. Try to clear your mind, it’ll make things easier.” She started pulling, and Jakal tried to relax his mind as he felt himself move forward, and soon all feeling returned to his body— or rather, his astral body.

He looked down to see that, like Jess, he looked sort of ethereal, slightly transparent— but best of all, he was in a male form again!

“Amazing, Jess, now who can we—” Jakal froze as he turned around and looked at their stone bodies.

“Dude, stop talking for a second.” Jessie’s ghostly form bent over, sweaty and panting. “If I don’t focus we’ll slingshot right back into the statues. Getting out is easier than staying out. Gods, even my spirit nipples are hard.”

“—represent something I think we can all relate to. This one is called *Anticipation*—” She said as she motioned towards Jess’s statue, which was leaning against a small pillar with one hand, the other creeping towards her inner thigh. Her legs were pressed together with her toes curled in the ground and her hips thrust out. Statue-Jess’s head was arched up, a needy and pleased expression painted her face that looked like she was painfully close to orgasm. There was a small element of shock hidden in the features that made it slightly unnerving.

“— And the other part of the set, *Relief*.” The crowd broke out into small chuckles at the name of the two as Dusa pointed at Jakal’s statue, which— unlike when he was initially frozen— was also now nude, with his breasts thrust outwards. His statue’s legs were pressed together,

still in the unsteady stance from when he was trying to stay standing as he orgasmed. One hand was tracing his body and the other up and draping his fingers over his shoulder. Like Jess's, his face had an odd element of shock and surprise, but otherwise captured the exact look of bliss that hit him post-orgasm.

"Like the others, these two can stand on their own, or work well in a set. Let's start with *The Fallen Warrior* and her *Yearning Love*?" She walked off stage as another gentleman rose up and started shouting prices.

"C'mon..." Jess said, snapping Jakal out of it as she pulled his ghostly figure away from the statues and towards the agora. Soon, they found themselves back where they started this whole mess at Exandros's stand.

He was starting to pack up shop, counting drachma and putting away his merchandise when Jess floated up next to him. Being careful not to possess him, she very carefully poked a finger into her shoulder.

"Exandros—"

"*AH!*" The merchant jumped backward in surprise as he heard the disembodied voice of his old friend. "Who, what—"

"Okay, don't freak out again..." Jess said, poking her finger again into Exandros so he could hear her. "It's me, Jessandra."

"Jessandra, wha— are you astral projecting again? And why do you sound so flustered" Exandros said, giving a breath of relief as he clutched his heart. "Dear gods, I thought Despoina had come to collect... Oh, nevermind. What is it? Need a delivery done again to wherever you're at? I can do it, but it'll likely cost more—"

"No, no— it's actually a bit more serious than that..." Jessandra then continued to explain their current situation as Exandros first started out by nodding as he listened, but then paled, and remained fairly still during the rest of the story. When Jess was finished, he looked over at the statue currently equipped with his wares and shivered.

"So, you think that means that statue I traded was also—"

"Y-yep."

"And your friend? Is she here with you now?" He asked, looking around despite the two of them being invisible to his eye. Jakal reached forward and awkwardly poked his finger into Exandros's other shoulder.

"Present. And I'm a *he*." Jakal said as Exandros flinched slightly at the sound of a new voice.

“Okay... and how do you want me to help?” The merchant asked as he stroked his beard nervously.

“Well, our petrified bodies are currently at auction—” Jess started to explain.

“Shit..”

“Yeah... and I’d ask you to try and steal us, but the stone is pretty heavy.” She continued, her voice still a mix of fluster and panic, leading up to a request. “So I need you to buy us.” Exandros shook his head.

“Buy you? You know how much that’s going to cost?”

“You bought a statue this morning!” Jakal said.

“Well, yes, but I *traded* for it.” Exandros said, pacing in front of his shop as Jakal and Jess tried their best to float alongside him to keep connection. “I had something very specific she wanted. If you two are at auction, they’ll only be taking drachma!”

“That money bag doesn’t look *that* light.” Jess said, referring to the pouch from which Exandros had been counting the day’s profits.

“Oh no, I can’t spend all of that, Alexos would kill me! We need that for our advertising—the weavers have this new silk that would work perfectly, but it’s worth its weight in—”

“Exandros!” Jess dug both her ghostly fingers into Exandros’ scalp “You listen to me and listen well Ex, not only am I petrified right now but she did it when I was on the frickin cusp of orgasming. I’m one frickin grope from going off and I can’t get relief cuz marble has no feel! Now, I have helped you out more times than I can count on procuring rare finds, so unless you want to lose your insider as her mind becomes mush from eternal girly blue ball statueitus, spend... the damn... money!” She was huffing like a mare in heat, her astral voice booming. “You’re our only chance to get out of this, I can’t think of anyone else on this damn island who would even *think* about doing this.” Exandros broke free of her grasp and continued to pace worriedly, muttered under his breath a few times, growled, and then finally threw his hands up in defeat.

“Fine!” He grabbed his bag of money, and then reached under the counter, snatching a small clay pot that rattled like a piggy bank as he picked it up. “Fine, I’ll get you out of this, Jessandra— but only because I feel bad for sending you her way in the first place... and you do know some very nice Minoan antique spots *that I expect you to visit* when all this is done.” He started to storm off, and Jessandra rushed forward after him.

“You’re a lifesaver, Exandros— literally! When this is done, I’ll owe you big time. I’ll make sure to pay you back every drachma—”

“Oh, I know you will.” Exandros said, still sounding fairly frustrated. “I’m going to make the two of you work off your debt. You’re going to help me advertise my shop, the both of you!”

Jessandra and Jakacles exchanged a questioning look as Exandros went forward into the crowd of the auction.

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“Can’t you talk to him again?” Jakal asked Jessandra from within his statue, now positioned in front of Exandros’s stand, their two petrified forms framing it. “See if he’ll accept anything else as payment?”

“I’ve tried over and over, he won’t budge.” Jess said, her voice slightly strained. It had been a long day arguing with Exandros. “We’re lucky I got him down to just *two* months! He’s still mad at how high the bidding ended up going— so is Alexos. I got him down from a year to a couple of months, give me time and I can m-maybe work that down to..um.. to one month at most. It’s just... trying to um...astral project has become... t-trickier. I’m having difficulty finding the mental s-space for it.” It sounded as though she was suppressing a moan. Despite her ability to focus enough for astral projections eventually fading, their statues had both been present during the fight that erupted after Exandros told Alexos he bought another two statues. Alexos calmed down when Exandros explained the full situation, but they both agreed to use the two of them to their advantage until they got at least a portion of their drachma back.

And so, to pay off their debts, Jessandra and Jakacles were dressed up in the wears of the newly dubbed “super-store.” Jessandra held a spear in one hand with a helmet perched on top of it, had a gauntlet on each wrist, and was now leaning on a polished shield. A banner was draped around her shoulder like a sash.

Jakal had a small flag wedged between his fingers that were tracing over her body, and was wearing a nice necklace, a choker, and a few rings adorned his fingers, along with a well-made pair of sandals on his feet.

Exandros and Alexos had been decent enough to give them clothes, but the tunics weren’t exactly made for their curves; the tiny cloth had trouble fitting around their curvy bodies— especially since they were stone rather than squeezable flesh. But still, the white tunic and the sash on Jess did fine covering her up, and the black tunic on Jakal did the same— though their stone nipples still poked fairly obnoxiously out from the fabric.



“A *month* is still too much! This is so agonizingly boring.” Jakal complained as a younger man who was passing by froze, staring like an idiot at his petrified body— focusing primarily on his chest, and he was sure his erect nipples. “And embarrassing...”

“You know that I would fight Sparta for a chance to have a boring month!” Jess practically screeched. “I’m looking at 30 days of toe-curling, pelvis bucking, moan-ridden need— and that’s if I can calm down enough to negotiate down from two months! I can’t spend that long like this Jakacese. I can’t! I’ll lose my frick’n mind!”

“I’m sorry! I just wish they would at least change my view now and then.” He groaned as the shopper looked over at Jessandra, then back to Jakal, and approached the super-store, still glancing at the two busty statues every now and then as he started looking at their products.

“If I can’t calm myself I’ll try wearing him down with mental overshares... It’s not like we have anything else to do.” Jess said with a whimper as an interesting young man approached the stand, looking at their forms, not with lust but curiosity.

He was dressed simply, yet carried an intensely polished shield on his back, a pitch-black helm under his arm, a sword strapped to his hip, and he wore a pair of fancy-looking sandals. After taking a close look at each of their statues, he went up to Exandros.

“Excuse me, but I was wondering where you got these beautiful statues?” The stranger asked. “I heard a wonderful artist lived on this island, and was wondering if this was her make?” Exandros paused, not quite sure what to say for a moment, before saying,

“Yes, I purchased these from her about a week back. Wouldn’t recommend seeking her out though, she’s... fairly disagreeable. You know these artist types.” He said, rubbing the back of his neck.

“Oh, I’ve heard.” The young man laughed. “But, erm— well, I’m looking for a good gift for my mother and soon-to-be stepfather’s wedding, and I think she has exactly what I want. Where can I find her?” Exandros sighed.

“Look, I really wouldn’t recommend—” He stopped as the stranger placed a few gold drachma on the counter. He sighed again, and reluctantly looked back up at the boy. “I really wouldn’t recommend giving her a visit, many haven’t come back the same, but if you must know she’s in this villa about halfway up the mountain. Covered in statues. Can’t miss it.”

“Thank you, kindly.” The stranger bowed his head and started walking away, pulling the helmet up from under his elbow.

“Wait, you should really know—” Exandros gasped as the man disappeared after putting the helm atop his head. Footprints in the dirt could be faintly seen heading in the direction of the mountain.