

1013: Black Rose Pilot

By

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Red, Orange, and purple swirl combining to make the sky, as the sun begins its descent below the horizon. An endless sea of trees stretches beneath a mountain range.

The Ipomean's homeland is beautiful and serene.

A calm breeze rustles the leaves and brush off the forest floor. A grotesque fly buzzes as it flies through the air.

Its translucent wings flap up and down rapidly. An Athletic woman with smooth mahogany skin can be seen through the fly's wings, **BRE**. Her head rests against the tree.

The fly flies close to her nose. The faint flapping wanders into Bre's ears. A flash from a knife slices the wings, grounding the fly.

Bre examines her knife with her deep amber eyes, fixating on the tiny remnants of the fly's wings at the tip of the blade.

Elsewhere, three rustic Harley-Davidson-like hoverbikes speed through the forest, sending forest debris into the air. Bre gives chase, quickly dashing through the forest with ease and dexterity.

The hoverbikes continue racing down their path, each toting a large chunk of animal flesh. As the last bike drives past a tree, Bre jumps down, landing on the back of the hoverbike.

With a knife in each hand, Bre pierces each knife through the biker's neck. Bre jumps off the bike as it wobbles. It crashes into a tree line and explodes.

Sound waves from the explosion ring in her ear. She retreats into the nearby tree line.

The explosion catches the other bikers' attention and they brake and spin around. Their bikes continue to hover, searing the ground below.

BIKER #1

What the hell happened?

BIKER #2

The idiot crashed into a tree.

From their left, a knife flies through the air and strikes Biker #2 in the helmet. Leaping from the brush, Bre scales the front of the hoverbike. She pushes on the knife, sending

the biker to the ground. Driving the blade through his helmet of biker #2.

Biker #1 grabs a poorly-crafted blunderbuss, but it's too late. As Bre uses the knife in her left hand to knock up the blunderbuss. The knife in her right hand cuts through the air at a maddening speed. Right through the base of Biker #1's neck.

A twist of the handle ends his life.

Bre retracts and sheathes her two knives. She walks over to Biker#2 and retrieves her final knife from the biker's decimated helmet.

BRE

I hate fucking poachers. They have no respect.

Bre takes in a deep breath as the sun descends below the horizon and the sky darkens.

BRE

(cont.)

I should head back.

Bre dashes into the treeline and heads deeper into the forest.

EXT. IPOMEAN CAPITAL VILLAGE - NIGHT

2

Bre walks past tree after tree in the dark, until the path before her becomes illuminated by moonlight. She follows the path.

Buildings of clay and various stones surround a large gold and marble cathedral in the center of the village.

The Ipomean Capital. The mood is lively, with many women, men, and children wandering the night.

Many of the Ipomeans wave and speak to Bre as she passes by. A few even go out of their way to acknowledge her presence. Bre smiles at each as she makes her way toward the Cathedral.

INT. IPOMEAN CATHEDRAL - MAIN HALL

3

Several rows of seats extend and face a large altar that rests at the back of the cathedral. Several older women are conversing in front of the altar. At the center of them stands a shorter woman with beautiful glowing dark skin,

ALBA, Bre's mother and matriarch of the Ipomeans.

ELDER #1

Many of the herds have moved deeper
into the forest.

ELDER #2

It's the poachers, they've been coming
in droves. The forest is out of
balance.

ALBA

Ladies, rest assured I am aware of the
uptick and have a plan to deal with
these intruders

Alba looks up and sees Bre and motions for her to step
forward.

ALBA

(cont.)

Here comes the key piece to that plan.

Bre bows to the elders and then embraces her mother.

ALBA

I praise the moon for your safe
return, and she never disappoints. I
hate when you venture out alone.

BRE

I'm fine and can handle myself, ma.

ELDER #1

How many were there?

BRE

Just three.

ELDER #3

If only there were copies of your
daughter Alba, we wouldn't have
anything to worry about.

The other women nod their heads in agreement.

ALBA

Unfortunately, we only have one
Brenda-

Bre shudders at the sound of her full name.

ALBA

(cont.)

- luckily I want my daughter to head a group of elite warriors to combat these pests.

Alba confesses with a dose of pride. Bre turns to her mother shocked at the revelation, as the elders grow excited with the disclosure of Alba's plan.

BRE

Really?

ALBA

Yes, and I want you to hand-pick the members.

Bre grabs her mother's hand in excitement but let's go, recomposes herself, and bows to her mother. Alba stops her mid-bow and stands her up.

ALBA

As the future Matriarch, I want you to stand tall and never lower your head to anyone. Not even me.

BRE

Okay ma.

Alba places her hand on her daughter's shoulders.

ALBA

Now go. I want you to have your party assembled quickly.

BRE

Understood.

As she is leaving, she turns to her mother and the elders.

BRE

(cont.)

May the moon's light be with you.

ALBA

May it shine on you as well.

Bre rushes out the door.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - NIGHT

4

Miles away from the village, a group of poachers lay and wait. Sitting around them are several cages housing the beasts of the forest. One of the animals is an Ottele, a glyptodon-like beast with a long athletic build.

Most of the poachers are gathered around a singular bike. The owner and rider of said bike is a portly individual with a bull ring piercing, **GAVIN**. All attention is on the video call projecting from between the handlebars from a **MARSHAL**.

GAVIN

(with a southern dialect)

Everything is going accordingly.

MARSHAL

Good and how is the cargo?

GAVIN

We should make a killing from selling the skin of these beasts-

MARSHAL

I do not care about the beasts, the girl.

In a nearby cage, **MONA** a young girl with dark skin and silvery-white hair sits quietly. Slightly shaking with fear in a far corner.

GAVIN

Oh, she's quiet and hasn't been any trouble.

MARSHAL

Good, make sure she is returned to us intact.

RANDOM POACHER

We ain't idiots.

MARSHAL

I doubt that. I'll put it simply, no girl, no payment. Understood?

GAVIN

Crystal.

MARSHAL

Good. Contact me when the job is done.

Marshal hangs up and the screen turns off.

RANDOM POACHER
Fucking wise ass.

GAVIN
Who cares, he pays well and the jobs
simple enough.

RANDOM POACHER
Yeah, unless we get caught.

Beat.

Gavin gets up and walks over to Mona's cage.

GAVIN
So, don't get caught. Besides, she'll
be doing all the dirty work.

Several poachers follow Gavin to the cage and the group dawns
a greedy smirk. Gavin bends down to Mona's eye level.

GAVIN
Hey kid, don't get cold feet. We have
a lot of dough riding on this.

EXT. IPOMEAN CAPITAL VILLAGE - NIGHT

5

Bre walks through the village until she comes to a home with
various electronics and wires sticking out of the roof and
walls. She walks around the home and hears a steady amount of
electric buzzing coming from a small garage on the side.

Bre walks up to the closed garage and knocks, but no one
answers. She knocks again. Same result. She bangs on the
garage door, catching the attention of those who pass by.

After a few seconds, the door draws upward quickly. There
stands **AMURA**, a stocky woman with dark almond skin, well-
toned arms, and bright orange hair, wearing a black apron and
safety goggles.

AMURA
And why are you banging on my door
like that?

BRE
Nice to see you too. How is my
favorite cousin doing?

AMURA
I'm your only cousin.

BRE
True, but you're still my favorite.
Can I come in?

Amura hesitates and then motions for Bre to come inside.

INT. AMURA'S WORKSHOP

6

The workshop is lined with various equipment: torches, hammers, a heavy-duty lift, and a soldering gun are just a few. Many of them old and rusty, but functional. Bre walks around the workshop admiring her cousin's many toys.

BRE
What is the brilliant Aj working on today?

AMURA
Just tinkering. Why the visit?

Amura leans on one of the counters and crosses her arms.

BRE
I just wanted to check in. You spend so much time inside your workshop, I wanted to make sure you were getting your dose of moonlight.

Amura's eyes squint, her and Bre's eyes lock for a moment.

BRE
Ok, ok. Ma asked me to get a team together to help with the poacher problem and-

AMURA
Not interested.

BRE
Wow, you didn't even let me finish.

AMURA
Don't need to. You want me to join your little poacher hunting party. I said no.

BRE
Come on Aj, please?

AMURA

I'd rather work in my workshop than hunt poachers. Besides you can do it yourself. You're a big girl.

BRE

But it'd be fun and we make an efficient team.

AMURA

Like I said not interested.

Amura starts tinkering again, soldering something on her counter. Bre starts to leave the workshop, her head down. She lifts the door and turns around.

BRE

Amura.

Amura stops tinkering at the sound of her name and turns to face Bre.

AMURA

Brenda.

BRE

I could really use your help and you are one of the only people I trust. So, would you please reconsider?

Amura turns back around.

BRE

(cont.)

You can have any tech that we find.

Amura takes off her goggles and apron, turns around, and sighs.

AMURA

Fine, I'll join you.

Bre lights up with jubilation, and quickly darts to her cousin and gives her a big hug. Even engulfing her larger cousin.

BRE

You will?! YES!!

AMURA

I keep any tech I want, and we are

doing this as a team. I don't want to be your lackey.

BRE
(smiling)
Deal.

Bre and Amura shake hands.

BRE
I promise this will be fun.

AMURA
I already agreed. Now if you don't mind, I was busy.

Bre waves as she leaves Amura's workshop with glee and spring in her steps. Amura puts her goggles and apron back on as she returns to tinkering.

EXT. IPOMEAN CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

7

Alba and the elders have gathered outside and are saying their goodbyes. The others walk their separate ways leaving Alba alone with **IRENE**.

IRENE
That went well.

ALBA
One of the more productive ones of late.

Alba and Irene walk through the village together. Passing Ipomean citizens who bow at them. Alba waves and acknowledges each as her and Irene continue on their way.

They come to a large stone archway nestled between trees.

Irene turns to Alba.

IRENE
Who do you think will join Brenda?

ALBA
I assume she'll ask Amura.
(pause)
She can be strong willed.

Irene chuckles.

IRENE
Both of them are.

Alba chuckles as well.

IRENE
(cont.)
I'm worried about her asking others.
Failing your future leader can be
intimidating.

ALBA
Ipomeans don't get intimidated.

IRENE
(sarcastically)
Whatever you say my moon.

Irene and Alba laugh together and hug each other goodbye.
Alba takes the path under the stone arch and Irene continues
down the road.

At the end of the pathway, Alba comes upon a stone-adorned
wooden cabin.

INT. MATRIARCH VILLA

8

The house is dark, only illuminated by the moonlight peering
through the windows. The front door opens, and as Alba walks
in, the moonlight intensifies lighting the room.

As she walks through the house, moonlight swirls around her
body, turning from a misty white to a sparkling deep grey.
She enters another room.

Inside, vials of flowers, herbs, and powder of varying colors
line a counter and the cabinets above it. A beautiful
apothecary is highlighted by the skylight in the center.

The grey moonlight swirling around Alba combines with the
light from the skylight, turning it grey.

Alba's eyes glow a deep grey-black and she falls into a
trance.

A wave of images cycles through her brain. The first of a man
in an icy mountain range. The second of a giant shadow bird
spreading its wings over the Forest of Moons. Next, a giant
explosion. Finally, Bre engulfed in a large and massive red
aura.

Alba's eyes stop glowing and she collapses as the trance ends.

EXT. IPOMEAN CAPITAL VILLAGE - MARKET AREA - NIGHT

9

Many Ipomeans are out shopping and conversing in the market. Several merchants are selling various furs, meats, vegetables, flowers, and even weapons.

Bre walks through the market and a weapons merchant, **DAMON**, calls out to her.

DAMON

Bre! How the moonlight kisses your skin. Come, come, I have new knives you'd love to add to your collection.

BRE

Hey Damon. Maybe some other time. Have you seen Natasha and Dahlia?

Damon grabs his chin in contemplation.

DAMON

Natasha came by and bought a new bow earlier. I haven't seen her sister though.

DAMON grabs a knife from one of his displays. He brings it to Bre. Her amber eyes grow wide as the moonlight reflects off the flawless blade.

DAMON

A blade fit for a future Matriarch.

Bre grabs the knife and runs her finger down the blade, leaving a singular, surgical cut. As blood trickles down, she puts her finger in her mouth.

BRE

(finger in mouth)
It's beautiful. What do you want for it?

DAMON

It comes in a set of three and for you, it's free.

Damon retrieves the other two identical knives and places them before Bre. She takes the knives and mimics slashing and thrusting in the air.

BRE
Free huh, what's the catch?

DAMON
No catch.

Bre stops testing out the knife and gives Damon a stern look.

BRE
I've known you my whole life, you never give anything away for free. Not even to my mother.

Damon leans in.

DAMON
(whispers)
I have some really special stuff planned. Highest of the highest quality. With your endorsement, I can aid in a well protected Ipomea.

Damon laughs. Bre stabs and leaps over the counter. A frightened Damon falls to the ground.

BRE
If our people ever needed weapons, I would think you to donate them willingly. For you to ask me such an egregious thing is blasphemous.

DAMON
I...I meant no disrespect, please forgive me.

BRE
Your request was disrespectful.
(beat)
You're lucky mother likes you Damon or else you'd be selling dust to lunar crickets.

Bre withdraws and takes the upright knife out of the counter as well as the identical knives resting beside it.

BRE
(cont.)
I'll be taking these.

Bre chuckles as she walks away through the marketplace. After a few steps.

A sharp voice catches Bre's attention.

NATASHA

(o.s.)

Is that the iron fist we should
prepare for in the future?

Bre turns and finds **NATASHA** and **DAHLIA** sitting under a nearby tree giggling.

Natasha has golden bronze skin with wide shoulders and scars covering her arms. Dahlia favors her sister, just shorter and lanky.

Bre steps towards them.

BRE

Did you two enjoy the show?

DAHLIA

It was quite funny.

Dahlia looks around Bre, back at Damon's shop.

DAHLIA

(cont.)

Especially the part when he pissed his
pants.

Several of the Ipomeans are gathered around Damon. Some helping him, and others laughing at his folly.

NATASHA

What did he say?

BRE

Funny, from this distance I would
think you heard everything.

DAHLIA

Ha! She wishes she could hear that
well. I on the other han-

NATASHA

Liars use words. I judge people by
their actions. Like jumping over a
table and stealing.

BRE

I didn't steal these, they were given
to me.

DAHLIA
That is true. Anyway, I heard you were
looking for us.

BRE
I'm assembling a hunting party.

Natasha turns to her sister.

NATASHA
Ohh, you hear that D, she wants us to
join her hunting party?

DAHLIA
Sounds fun. What exactly are we
hunting?

BRE
Poachers.

Natasha smirks and gives a shrug.

DAHLIA
Well, we'd love to help, but

DAHLIA
It's a no for us.

NATASHA
It's a no for us.

NATASHA
You see, we'd rather hunt poachers on
our own.

Natasha stands up and towers over Bre. Dahlia stands up and
stands beside her sister.

DAHLIA
Don't take it personally-

BRE
It's cool, I understand. 'Tasha dear,
pride is only admirable when it's for
the betterment of our people.

Bre walks off, waving at the sisters as she walks back
through the marketplace. When they lose sight of Bre, Dahlia
sits down, and Natasha hits the tree causing it to shake
viciously.

NATASHA
She thinks she's so great! I'll show
her! Come on D, we gotta get ahead of

little miss perfect.

DAHLIA

Now?

Natasha gives Dahlia a fierce look.

DAHLIA

Alright, alright.

The sisters gather their belongings and head into the forest.

INT. MATRIARCH VILLA

10

Bre opens the front door and walks into the house.

BRE

Ma! Ma!

No answer.

She looks around the front room then continues down the long hallway. She sees the door to her mother's apothecary ajar and pushes it open.

She finds Alba struggling to pick herself up and breathing very shallow. Bre rushes to her mother's side at great speed.

BRE

Are you ok? What happened?

ALBA

I'm... fine, I just had a vision.

Bre helps bring Alba to her feet and helps her sit down.

ALBA

Thank you.

Bre runs out of the room and returns a few seconds later with a cup of water in hand. She gives it to Alba who takes a sip.

BRE

Are you sure you're ok ma?

ALBA

I'm much better now, don't worry.

After another sip of water, Alba's breathing returns to normal, but a look of concern plasters her face.

ALBA
Did you gather your party?

BRE
I only got Aj to agree.

ALBA
That's fine for now. Take her with you
and be careful.

BRE
Yes ma'am, we'll leave tomorrow night.

ALBA
No, I want you to leave in the
morning.

BRE
Why the rush?

ALBA
I feel we are in much more danger than
poachers.

Bre rests her hand on her mother.

BRE
What did you see Ma?

ALBA
I'm not sure, I'm still a little
foggy. For now, go prepare for the
morning.

Bre nods and heads toward the door.

ALBA
Brenda, can you get Irene for me?

BRE
Sure.

Bre rushes out the door and out of the house. Alba grabs her head, wincing in pain. Her hands start to illuminate with dark grey moonlight and her pain goes away, as she breathes a sigh of relief.

EXT. IPOMEAN CAPITAL VILLAGE - NIGHT

11

Bre runs into Irene's villa, several moments later she exits and runs off in the opposite direction. Irene leaves shortly

after and runs towards Alba's villa.

INT. AMURA'S WORKSHOP

12

Amura sits at her workbench, diligently sketching a blueprint. Suddenly the door of her workshop flings up and Bre trots in breathing heavily. Amura turns to face her cousin, slightly annoyed and concerned.

AMURA

Yes?

Bre says nothing and approaches Amura with her head down. Bre grabs Amura's shoulders with both hands and then looks up at her, revealing a large smile.

BRE

We leave tomorrow morning!

AMURA

Wait, what?

Amura jumps up from her chair.

BRE

Mother needs us to leave in the morning.

Bre walks over to look at her cousin's blueprint, while Amura walks around the room distraught.

AMURA

When I agreed, I didn't think we'd have to leave so soon. And why so early, sleep is important.

BRE

I know, that's the part I don't like. I'll take you to the poacher bikes I took down today. I'm sure you could use them for this thing.

Bre points at the blueprint.

Amura composes herself. Walks over to her workbench and takes the blueprint from Bre. She rolls it up and puts it in a drawer filled with blueprints.

Bre walks around the workshop and stops at the back wall. Something pinned on the wall catches her attention and her amber eyes grow wide. Amura walks up behind her.

BRE

You HAVE to bring this.

AMURA

I guess she needs a test run.

Pinned to the wall is a large metallic rifle masterly crafted from second hand parts. It has a few wires running from its barrel to the stock with a large electronic display & scope.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - DAWN

13

The moon sits boldly in the dark sky. The horizon brightens up slowly, and the moon slowly fades and then disappears as the sun rises.

Outside of the Ipomean village Alba and the elders have gathered and are talking amongst themselves. Many of them look tired and some mutter that they want to be in bed.

Bre walks up wearing a long sleeve black shirt and matching pants that holster a total of 6 knives; the largest of which are the ones she took from Damon. The large ones rest at the top of her hips and the others line her thigh. She carries a large backpack as well.

Alba turns to Bre.

ALBA

How'd you sleep?

BRE

Well, for what it's worth.

She massages her neck.

BRE

(cont.)

You and the others don't look so well; did you get any rest?

IRENE

We'll be fine child, we wanted to make sure you had everything you'd need.

Bre turns around and sees Irene walking towards her.

IRENE

(cont.)

Now, where is Amura? Don't tell me she's still asleep.

BRE

She'll be here soon; she was doing last-minute checks when I saw her earlier.

Moments later Amura walks up, all while wrapping gauze around her wrists and hands. She is wearing a burgundy short sleeve shirt and slim-fitting cargo jeans. On her back rests her large rifle wrapped in cloth.

AMURA

I hope I didn't keep you all waiting.

BRE

I just got here. Is everything good?

AMURA

We shouldn't have any problems and if we do, they won't be problems for long.

Amura pats her rifle and smiles.

ALBA

Are you two ready to head off?

Amura and Bre look at each other and nod, then they nod to Alba. Alba and the elders surround the young women, placing a hand on their shoulders.

Alba begins to pray.

ALBA

May the moon and her light protect you. May it give you strength and guide you, even during the day. Now rise and be off.

Bre and Amura rise and jet off into the forest.

ALBA

(whisper & concerned)

Be careful Brenda.

Alba's words travel along the wind and directly into Bre's ear.

BRE
 (whisper)
 I will.

The pair run deeper and deeper into the forest, towards the Mountain range looming in the distance.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - DAY

14

Much deeper in the forest, Natasha and Dahlia are creeping up on a poacher's camp. They watch the poachers eat and converse from behind one of the cages.

RANDOM POACHER
 Man...I miss the city. These fucking bugs are eating me alive.

RANDOM POACHER #2
 I miss the third-district restaurants.

RANDOM POACHER
 Especially Porthos' Diner.

Natasha signals to Dahlia, who nods, and descends into the brush behind. Dahlia flanks around the poachers as Gavin walks over to the group sitting and chatting.

GAVIN
 Too many things need to be done for y'all to be sitting on your ass.

RANDOM POACHER #2
 Aren't we supposed to wait until the girl comes back?

Gavin grabs the handkerchief wrapped around his subordinate's scrawny neck and lifts him a few inches off the ground.

GAVIN
 You don't think I know that? How about you wait for her and bring her back. Better yet wait for those idiots who are just as dead as the girl will be.

He lets go of the man's handkerchief, returning him to the ground and points to the cages.

GAVIN
 Now hook them up, I'm tired of looking at these fucking trees.

Several poachers start to hook up cages to hoverbikes, while Gavin sits down and pulls out a cigar from his pocket.

Dahlia creeps up behind Gavin and unsheathes a crescent-bladed scimitar.

At the same time, Natasha stalks one of the poachers who separated from his group. As Natasha draws closer, the Otter inside the cage lets out a loud bellowing growl.

RANDOM POACHER #3

Shut up-

Just as the last syllable leaves his lips, Natasha wraps her muscular arms around his neck. The poacher flails ferociously as he struggles for air.

This catches the attention of a comrade.

RANDOM POACHER

The heretics!

Dahlia leaps at Gavin, sword raised.

Gavin sees a reflection of Dahlia's blade against the metal hoverbike across from him. He leaps to the right just in time to dodge the blow, which chops the table in half.

Dahlia follows up with two sweeping swipes of her scimitar, the second of which grazes the side of Gavin's cheek.

Meanwhile, Natasha finishes strangling her victim and tosses his body aside. She draws her bow. Aims at Gavin when two other poachers charge toward her. Each brandishing an electric weapon. One wields a pronged spear and the other gauntlets.

Natasha fires an arrow that flies past the spearman and hits the other between the eyes.

The spearman thrust his electric spear forward, but Natasha rolls to her right and grabs the middle of the spear. With a strong yank, She pulls him closer and lands a perfect headbutt. Knocking the spear man unconscious.

A strong jab of the spear through the prone poacher's skull ends his life.

Dahlia has Gavin retreating, as she slashes and thrusts her scimitar. Aiming for his neck and above.

He grabs her wrists with his massive hands and kicks her, dislodging her from her weapon.

GAVIN

Gotcha!

Natasha aims at Gavin again.

Beat.

A bolt of plasma strikes her shoulder.

NATASHA

AH FUCK!

As she lies in pain, a poacher closes in. Pistol in hand.

Gavin now has Dahlia's scimitar. He swings the blade at her, but he is terribly inexperienced. She dodges him gracefully, but she now has her back against a cage.

Gavin thrusts and again Dahlia dodges. Instead, he strikes the beast in the cage. The beast lashes out and strikes Dahlia in the back, sending her to the ground.

Natasha crawls along the ground and turns to see her sister fall.

Another poacher runs up to Gavin and hands him a pistol. Natasha tries to crawl away, as the poacher raises his gun.

Beat.

A cross-hair centers on the head of the poacher standing over Natasha.

An exhale of breath. A shot is fired.

A puck-shaped bullet enveloped in electricity flies through the forest and into the poacher's temple.

Bre jumps down from the cage, kicking the gun out of Gavin's hand. Then she throws one of her knives into his shoulder. She creeps low and sweeps the other poacher's leg sending him to the ground. When it collides, his body bounces upward. Bre drives her other knife through his chest.

Gavin jumps on a hoverbike, and drives off, dragging a cage with him. Bre runs after him.

AMURA

Bre!

Bre stops.

Amura bends down to tend to Natasha, placing her hands on the wound in her shoulder.

NATASHA

Ow! Gentler please!

Aj tightens her grip, causing Natasha more pain.

AMURA

Do you want to be alive or me to be gentle?

NATASHA

(in pain)

Both if available.

Bre runs over to Amura and Natasha.

BRE

Are you ok?

NATASHA

I'll live, most the pain is because dear Amura has my shoulder in a vice grip.

AMURA

Im going to check on Dahlia. Can you finish wrapping her up?

BRE

Sure.

Amura gets up and walks over to Dahlia, who lies unconscious.

Bre reaches into her bag and grabs an earthy-toned gauze. She helps Natasha sit up and begins wrapping her shoulder.

NATASHA

Thanks.

BRE

You shouldn't be thanking me.

Bre finishes wrapping Natasha's arm and helps her to her feet. They walk over to Amura and Dahlia.

BRE

How is she?

AMURA

Not good, she isn't responsive and the gashes on her back are pretty nasty.

Amura rolls Dahlia over, revealing large claw marks on her back. Amura tends to Dahlia's wounds.

Bre goes into her bag and pulls out a small clay vial and hands it to her cousin.

BRE

Here.

Amura takes the vial, uncorks it, and pours. A dark greenish mush plops onto Amura's hands. Bre brings over several long thick leaves and Amura coats them with the mush.

Bre strikes a coarse stone with a knife, igniting the leaves. The fire melts the mush, coating the leaves, and giving it a shiny leather-like texture.

NATASHA

I bet you want to rub this in my face, huh?

BRE

Almost getting you and your sister killed isn't enough?

Amuras takes the treated leaves and places them against Dahlia's back. Then she stands up.

AMURA

She'll probably be unconscious for a few hours, but she'll live.

Natasha picks up her sister and throws her over her unbandaged shoulder.

NATASHA

(somber)

Thanks.

She trots back into the forest towards the village.

Bre and Amura survey the destroyed poacher camp and the leftover cages.

BRE
Want to talk about it?

AMURA
What? Natasha? No.

BRE
No need to get defensive.

AMURA
Just help me open the cages.

The pair break opens the leftover cages, releasing the beasts. Several of them run into the forest, while others run over to the dead poachers and start to feed.

Amura examines the hoverbikes.

BRE
Think we can use them?

Amura points to a star-shaped keyhole on the hoverbikes.

AMURA
Eventually, but it looks like we need a key to start them.

BRE
They're probably on their bodies, but...

Bre and Amura look at the beasts eating the dead poachers, and some begin fighting over the corpses.

BRE
Let's get going. I want to catch up to the ugly mutt and ask him a few questions.

Amura nods in agreeance and the two run through the forest toward the mountains.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - MOUNTAINS - AFTERNOON

15

The afternoon sun shines through the ice capped grassy mountain range. Between several of the peaks lies a rocky valley. The sound of a hoverbike engine and metal cages rattling echoes throughout the terrain.

Gavin rides through the valley, his face balled in frustration.

GAVIN

Fuck! At least it isn't a total loss.

As his hover bike floats and pulsates over the ground, it glides over a metal sickle sticking out of the ground. The sickle pulsates and shoots a pulse of electricity. Stalling the bike.

GAVIN

What now?!

The hover bike comes to a stop. Gavin turns the key.

Nothing.

Another Attempt.

Again, nothing.

The beasts in the cage begins to grow restless.

GAVIN

Shut it!

From a rocky ledge above him a hairy mound wearing tattered clothes approaches from behind, **CLARENCE**. As he draws closer he pulls on a long chain wrapped around his wrist. The sickle burrows through the ground and into his hand.

He begins swinging the sickle around and around slowly building an electrical charge with each rotation.

Gavin reaches for the blaster holstered on his hoverbike. He quickly turns and draws.

GAVIN

Come on out. I know you're there.

Gavin reaches for the key. Moments later a chain wraps around his throat. A pulse of electricity runs through the chains and stun him. His body goes limp straddled over the hoverbike.

Clarence looms, sickle dangling from other end of the chain.

Gavin watches Clarence walk up, helpless.

Now headless.

Clarence takes Gavin's clothes. He is especially enamored by Gavin's leather jacket.

Clarence walks over to the cages. He opens the first and the beast flees. He goes to the second. The beast is smaller, but round and supple.

Clarence kills the beast and carries its body out of the cage. He carries it deep into the mountain range.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - AFTERNOON

16

Natasha walks through the forest, her unconscious sister draped over her shoulder. A few beads of sweat run down her temple, as she starts to breathe heavily.

She spots a nearby tree and sets her sister down. Then plops down beside her.

NATASHA

The sun is so draining. I wish it was nighttime.

Natasha looks at her sister who is resting peacefully.

NATASHA

Karma I guess.

A branch snaps. The sound catches her attention. She kneels. Scans the brush for movement and sounds.

Nothing, but idle forest.

Natasha picks up her sister and awkwardly places her over her shoulder.

NATASHA

I should keep moving.

She starts walking.

DAHLIA

(murmurs)

'Tasha...smells.

Natasha grows irritated and carries on into the forest toward their village.

Mona hides behind a nearby bush. She watches the sisters leave and follows them, with a small bag on her back.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - FORKED RIVER - AFTERNOON

17

Bre and Amura run until they meet a river that splits in two.

They run up the riverbank until they reach the point where the two rivers join.

Large wooden trunks break the surface of the water crossing from one riverbank to the other. Bre prepares herself to cross, sizing up the distance from the riverbank to the first log. During her preparation, a loud bite distracts her.

Amura is eating a sandwich wrapped in a dried leaf.

BRE

What are you doing?

AMURA

(Bluntly, between bites)

Eating.

BRE

We don't have time.

AMURA

Make time. We fought poachers, ran here, probably have to climb the mountain, and may have to fight again. So, I'm eating.

Amura holds out another wrapped sandwich toward Bre. The smells of the sandwich blitz her nose.

Bre's stomach growls.

Bre takes the bundle and sits across from Amura, unwraps a thick and colorful sandwich, and takes a bite.

The cousins sit and enjoy every bite of their meal. Bre finishes first, walks over to the river, and lowers her hands into the cool clear water. She brings the water to her mouth and drinks.

BRE

That hit the spot.

Amura finishes her sandwich and does the same.

AMURA

Isn't this odd?

BRE

What do you mean?

AMURA

This. A two-person party to deal with poachers and such short notice.

BRE

I guess so.

AMURA

Something I'd expect from you. Not Aunt Alba, she's usually so diligent.

BRE

What's that supposed to mean?

AMURA

You know what it means. Are you ready?

BRE

Yeah, lets get moving.

AMURA

Not that, to become matriarch?

Bre, who now is on her feet, pauses, and glares at Amura.

BRE

Mother is still alive, so I don't think about it much. Why are you asking about this now?

(playfully)

Is this a pitch to be on my council?

Amura stands up and laughs as she grabs her belongings.

AMURA

One, you need me. I'm literally a genius baby. Two, soon you'll have to think about these things.

BRE

I've spent my entire life preparing for it.

AMURA

I'm aware.

BRE

So, when the time comes, I'll be ready; I hope you'll always be there with me. Until then, let's just get up this mountain. Every second here is

more distance between us and the mutt.

MONTAGE:

Bre and Amura take the log bridge across the river.

They run through the forest toward the mountain, as they gain elevation.

They come to a valley at the mountain's base and begin scaling it.

They finish climbing up the wall and before them is the heart of the mountain range, a beautiful array of rocky plateaus and ice-tipped peaks.

END OF MONTAGE.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - MOUNTAINS - AFTERNOON

18

Bre steps forward and takes a deep breath. The scent of flowers, creatures, rocks, animals, and etc. rushes into her nose. In her head, she gets a colorful silhouette of the source of each smell.

Gavin is among those silhouettes, as well as an unknown figure. Bre starts walking around, sniffing the air every few seconds.

AMURA

Found something?

Bre ignores her and continues searching. She catches Gavin's scent again and follows it. Which leads to a small valley between several peaks.

BRE

This way.

Amura follows Bre. Soon she too smells Gavin's scent.

AMURA

What is this other scent?

BRE

Not sure, but it smells familiar.

They pass a boulder and the unknown scent wafts into Bre's nose. This time an image of a frail beast-like boy drenched in blood enters Bre's mind.

The Ipomean women follow both scents to a cave.

Bre readies herself, taking out two knives, and Amura readies her rifle. They nod at each other and enter the cave.

INT. IPOMEAN MOUNTAINS - CAVE

19

Bre takes the lead, with Amura shortly behind as they walk cautiously through the cave.

After a few meters, the afternoon light no longer illuminates the way. As they go further into the darkness their amber eyes glow slightly.

Bre uses the scent in the cave to guide them. They come to a small corridor that splits into three paths.

BRE

This way.

They take the right-most path and walk until Bre halts abruptly.

AMURA

Why'd we stop?

BRE

There's a trip wire ahead of us.

Bre points to a chain that runs from one wall of the cave to the other. They creep forward and step over the chain then continue down the path.

Shortly after, the chain vibrates and then slowly retracts into the wall.

Bre and Amura see a small light at the end of the path. They enter a larger corridor. Which is illuminated by two large holes in the roof.

Bre looks around. She sees a dimly lit campfire beside a natural bed made of rocks and grass.

Amura looks around and finds a stash of animal bones on the ground and animal furs pinned to the wall. She pulls one revealing that it is hung up by magnetic rocks.

AMURA

Wow, resourceful.

Bre bends down at the campfire. She notices the small embers

and stands up quickly.

BRE

The fire was put out recently. Be on your guard.

A sickle slowly descends from the top of the corridor. It flies directly toward Bre. She evades backwards and the sickle crashes into the ground.

The large sickle glows as bright purple electricity pulsates and then expands outward, sending a shockwave throughout the corridor.

The pulse knocks Bre to the ground, but she rebounds quickly. Amura braces herself, but the pulse knocks her into a wall.

A second pulse of electricity descends from the roof of the corridor, down the chain attached to the sickle. Clarence now, wearing Gavin's jacket, blinks beside the sickle.

He grabs it, swings the chain, and throws the free end toward Bre.

The chain flies and wraps around Bre's knife and right hand. Clarence pulls but Bre's hand holds strong, pulling the chain taut.

A pulse of electricity passes from Clarence's hand through the chain, down Bre's blade, and into her hand shocking her.

She drops the knife but spins and kicks it into the ground. The blade goes through a link in the chain and pierces the ground. Bre sprints onto the taut chain toward Clarence.

She stabs at him, but Clarence weaves. Quickly she pulls her blade back and slashes, but he parries with his sickle.

He swings his sickle at her neck, but Bre ducks and performs a spinning kick, her heel lands square on the man's chin. He stumbles but uses his momentum to pull his chain and Bre's knife free from the ground.

The chain and knife fly toward them. Bre catches the knife out of the air and wraps the chain around her wrist. She closes the distance and bombards Clarence with a flurry of stabs and slashes.

Some of her offense gets through Clarence's guard but it mostly grazes him, as he uses the sickle to guard his most vital areas. Bre performs a lead kick, that lands square on

the sickle guarding Clarence's chest.

He falls, but his body becomes electricity on his descent to the ground. He and his sickle phase through the ground pulling his chain and Bre with him. Her hands are buried.

Clarence reappears and pulls on the chain taut. Bre's hand sinks deeper into the ground. He swings his sickle around as he walks closer, building electricity. Bre struggles to free herself as Clarence stalks her.

He raises his sickle over his head to strike Bre down.

Beat.

A bullet from Amura's rifle races through the air toward Clarence. At the last second, he blocks the bullet with his sickle. The force knocks him to the ground and knocks most of the "hair" off his body.

NOTE: The hairs are actually fragments of iron.

Clarence is now unkept hairy, instead of a sentient hairball.

His sickle and chain are knocked aside

Bre pulls her hand free, pulling up Earth, a portion of the chain, and her knife. She stands over Clarence, both blades at his neck.

They lock eyes. Her's amber, bright, and wide. His purple with elongated oval irises, like a cat.

Amura walks over with her rifle and points the barrel in Clarence's face.

AMURA

What are you waiting for?

Bre doesn't answer. Her and Clarence still glaring at each other. an image of the blood-soaked boy re-enters her mind. She looks down at the jacket.

CLARENCE

(disinterested)

Do it already.

BRE

Maybe we will. Where did you get that jacket?

CLARENCE

All this, over a jacket?

Amura presses the barrel of her rifle against Clarence's cheek. A small pulse of electricity emanates between the barrel and his flesh.

AMURA

Answer. The question.

CLARENCE

Killed a man for it.

Bre and Amura look at each other. Amura lowers her rifle.

BRE

No sudden movements or I'll cut you down.

Bre stands and twirls the knife in her left hand into its sheathe.

Clarence sits up slowly, massaging his neck while the Ipomeans hover over him.

BRE

Describe him.

CLARENCE

What?

AMURA

(impatiently)

The guy you killed, what'd he look like?

Amura raises her rifles toward Clarence.

CLARENCE

Round and fat, like a pig.

BRE

Show us the body.

CLARENCE

Why?

BRE

Show us, or you die over the jacket.

Clarence stares at the Ipomean women. They are not bluffing.

CLARENCE

It's a shitty jacket anyways. Fine.

BRE

Get up and lead the way.

Clarence stands up slowly. Amura and Bre ready themselves to fight.

AMURA

Start walking, and don't try anything.

Clarence leads Bre and Amura out of the corridor.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - MOUNTAINS - LATE AFTERNOON

20

Clarence leads Bre and Amura through a small valley. Bre is almost step for step with his shadow, with Amura trailing a few feet behind, rifle in hand.

AMURA

(whisper)

Bre. Bre.

Bre yawns and covers her mouth.

BRE

(whisper)

What?

AMURA

(whisper)

I don't trust him. I say we drop him and go home.

BRE

(whisper)

Think he's lying?

AMURA

(whisper)

Yeah, think about it. The man was jetting away on a bike. How'd he stop him and kill him? He's probably covering for him.

Bre goes silent.

BRE

Hey, you. How'd you kill him? If you did kill him.

CLARENCE
Check for yourself.

Clarence points at Gavin's hoverbike and the empty cages several feet ahead of them. Gavin's lifeless body is draped across the hoverbike.

Bre walks up to the Bike. She walks around the hoverbike and finds Gavin's severed head on the ground.

BRE
Well, he's not lying.

Amura walks over to Bre. Her body and rifle barrel angled toward Clarence.

Amura sees Gavin's head completely detached from his shoulders and neck.

AMURA
Well, we can't just let him go.

BRE
We should take him to mother. She'll decide what to do next.

Bre and Aj walk up over to Clarence.

BRE
You need to come with us.

CLARENCE
No.

AMURA
Not an option.

CLARENCE
It's my option.

Clarence waves and walks the way they came. After a few steps a knife is thrown at his feet. Clarence stares down at the knife.

CLARENCE
This feels...famil-

Clarence turns around and Amura wacks him with the stock of her rifle, knocking him unconscious.

Amura lifts him up and then throws him in one of the cages.

BRE
I guess we head back now.

AMURA
Agreed. Lets use this. Look.

Amura walks to the front of the hoverbike and turns the key Gavin left in the ignition.

The hoverbike turns on. Lifting itself off the ground.

BRE
Nice, I'd rather not run back.

Amura sits on the hoverbike and Bre sits behind her.

BRE
You know how to drive this thing,
right?

AMURA
Drove one before, crashed it but I
didn't die so...

Amura speeds off before Bre can respond or change her mind. As they head down the valley, the rattling of the cages echos throughout.

A light bulb on the hoverbike's dash begins to flash.

BRE
Whats that?

AMURA
How should I know?

Soon the flashing stops and a map is projected from between the handle bars.

The map consists of the mountain, the river before and after it splits in two, a moving blue marker and a blinking red marker.

HOVERBIKE A.I.
Report to rendezvous point C. I
repeat. Report to rendezvous point C.

Amura stops the hoverbike and the blue marker on the map stops as well. She points to the blue marker.

AMURA

I'm pretty sure this marker is us; it hasn't moved since we stopped.

Bre points to the red marker.

BRE

It looks like it's on the Forked river. Isn't there a quarry around that area?

AMURA

Yeah, it's hasn't been used for a long time. Why is this here?

Amura points to the hologram. Above the red point, there is a large passage through the mountains.

AMURA

(cont.)

I've never seen this passage before. Have you?

BRE

No.

Amura digs through her bag. After a few seconds she pulls out a scroll, bound by engraved wood. She unravels it, revealing a large detailed map of the Ipomean lands.

Bre and Amura compare the map to the hologram. Bre points to a path on the scroll map.

BRE

We can head down this trail and get to the quarry.

Amura scans over the hologram map and the scroll map again. She points to a spot on the scroll map.

AMURA

What about here. Better vantage point and it's uncharted on this one.

Amura points to the corresponding area on the hologram map and it is greyed out.

BRE

Sounds good.

The blinking red dot on the hologram map looms.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - QUARRY - LATE AFTERNOON

21

The Ipomean mountain range.

One of the many peaks appears gutted. Layers of earth and rock exposed, descending into many small pools of misty blue water.

The quarry.

Several poachers rest and converse around their hoverbikes.

A sniper scope surveys the quarry and the poachers below.

Amura lays on the ground, her eye plastered to the scope of her rifle. Bre sits to her left.

AMURA

I count 5. Nothing special.

Amura pulls away from her rifle. Bre stands up and stretches her arms over her head.

BRE

Cover me.

She jumps down into the quarry. Acrobatically leaping down each rocky level until she reaches the bottom.

Bre hides behind a large boulder a few yards from two poachers.

RANDOM POACHER

What you going to do with your cut?

RANDOM POACHER #2

I don't know.

RANDOM POACHER

Why don't you know?!

RANDOM POACHER #2

How can I? Don't have the money.

Bre readies two daggers.

RANDOM POACHER

You're telling me you need money to know what to do with it? You lack imagination.

RANDOM POACHER #2

Maybe I don't want to waste the mental energy?

RANDOM POACHER

Not like you had much to begin with.

The poacher lets out a raspy laugh and seconds later a knife is hurled into his temple. He collapses and falls into a nearby puddle of water.

RANDOM POACHER #2

Fuck you, I'm smarter than you.

The poacher looks around for his comrade, and he suffers the same fate. Knife to the temple.

Bre crawls around the boulder as she measures up the remaining poachers.

Rocks start to rumble as Bre's ears pick up humming. The hums multiply.

Amura's ears also registers the incoming hums and she turns her rifle toward the sound.

Her reticle scans the mountains, and paths around the quarry. After a few seconds, the large front grill of a humvee comes in focus. About 20 poachers ride along escorting the humvee.

The convoy drives into the quarry. The humvee tows several cages filled with beasts of the Ipomean homeland.

The humvee stops on a mini plateau. The escorting hoverbikes and the rowdy poachers riding, join the others at the bottom of the quarry.

Bre retreats towards the wall of the quarry and hides in a ditch that forms off a plateau.

BRE

What the starry-fuck is going on?

With each passing bike, Bre keeps count of every head.

BRE

(Cont.)

2, 3, 5, 9, 13.

The group of hoverbikes come to a rest and their riders disembark.

BRE
 (Cont.)
 17, 21, 25.

Bre's eyes dash around as the leather wearing and smelling men and women congregate. The sounds of their voices and vehicles mend together into an inaudible buzz.

High on the ridge Amura looks on through her scope. She finds Bre crouching behind the rocky wall below her.

The doors of the humvee fling open. From the passenger side, a large round man, Gavin's twin **BUBBA**, hops out. **ANNA**, a slender woman with wicked eyes jumps out of the driver side. Both have a ghastly tattoo of a snake bearing its fangs on their neck.

Anna begins clapping and many of the pools of water vibrate which catches everyone's attention.

ANNA
 Well done everyone, well done. We have a wonderous haul of beasties and they are going to make us rich.

BUBBA
 Filthy rich.

The crowd of poachers erupts into applause and jubilation. Many high-fives and embraces are shared.

On the ridge, Clarence begins to wake inside the cage.

ANNA
 Simmer down. I know you are all excited, but the job is not finished.

BUBBA
 So, before you start planning your district moves and fancy upgrades.

ANNA
 And you don't want to die in the forest-

ANNA
No more fuck ups!

BUBBA
No more fuck ups!

A deafening silence.

RANDOM POACHER

If any one gets in between me and my money, I'll kill 'em!

Many in the crowd agree.

ANNA

That's the enthusiasm I'm looking for!
Now hook up the beasts and prepare to move out.

BUBBA

Also, has anyone seen or heard from Gavin?

Silence.

BUBBA

(Disappointed)
Get to it.

The group disperses into smaller cliques. A few start dragging cages toward the humvee.

On the ridge, fully awake Clarence tries to phase into electricity to escape but is prohibited by the metal bars.

The sound of his failure alerts Amura.

CLARENCE

Would you mind letting me out?

He is ignored.

A wandering poacher sneaks away. He makes his way to a boulder and unzips his pants.

Before he can relieve himself he sees Bre.

RANDOM POACHER #3

Ah... one of the savages!

Bre bites down with rage. She leaps up her with a knife in each hand.

BRE

The only fucking savages around here are you worthless pigs!

One knife is thrust at the poachers exposed pelvic region and the other across his neck.

Many poachers heard the exchange, more saw the body fall. Including Anna and Bubba.

Anna looks at the lone Ipomean and shoos her hand in her direction, prompting the crowd to march towards Bre. Several of the closest poachers make their way toward her with pistols and electric lances in hand.

A bullet flies through the head of one poacher and pierces the skull of another, dropping them both.

AMURA

Could she be anymore reckless?!

Bre waves on the incoming poachers. Two charge her with lances which she dodges quickly, then slashes them swiftly with her blade. More follow, this time with blasters in hand, but they are dropped by Amura's rifle.

Amura reloads her rifle.

CLARENCE

Sounds hectic.

AMURA

Shut up!

CLARENCE

You're right. I wouldn't want my help either.

Clarence stretches and rubs the slight contusion on his forehead.

Amura takes aim at the cages. She fires, striking a lock that bursts and destroys another. Releasing two beasts.

Amura fires again and frees more beast. Her rifle glows, charged with electricity.

She takes aim at a hitch securing many cages to the humvee. she fires, completely shattering the hitch.

Many cages short-circuit, releasing dozens of beasts.

ANNA

No, no. NO!

Several of the animals stampede and trample a few poachers.

Many turn their attention toward the wave of animals. They

try their best to avoid them, to no avail.

Amura takes aim at Anna, pulls the trigger.

Nothing.

Her rifle short circuits. She watches as Bre fends off oncoming poachers.

Amura walks over to Clarence.

AMURA

I let you out, you help save her. Got it?

CLARENCE

Fair, but I'll need a few of those magnets you took.

Amura unlocks the cage. As Clarence steps out, she reaches in a pocket and tosses him a few of the magnetic rocks from his wall.

Clarence becomes a bolt of purple electricity that descends into the ground. Leaving behind two rocks.

Below Bre disposes of two more poachers and finds temporary reprieve in the chaos.

She darts along the wall of the quarry and leaps to scale it.

She loses her footing and falls back in the fray. The sound of beasts and poachers yelling starts to overwhelm.

From beside her, some of the rocks and earth of the quarry glow purple. Clarence's arm and torso emerge from the wall.

CLARENCE

Take my hand.

Bre hesitates. More carnage as poacher and beasts blood and flesh flings everywhere.

CLARENCE

Just take it!

Beat.

Bre grabs Clarence's forearm.

CLARENCE

Take a deep breath.

Bre inhales big and closes her eyes. Bre is surrounded by Clarence's electricity and plunges into the wall.

Two magnetic rocks plop out of the same spot.

On the ridge, the magnets from before become charged and glow. A quick flash of purple lightning and Clarence and Bre appear.

From behind Amura rams the stock of her rifle into the back of Clarence's neck.

Unconscious once again.

He is thrown into the cage again and the cousins ride off on the hoverbike.

In the quarry, Bubba and three impressive looking poachers struggle to control the chaos. Anna seethes as she watches the Ipomeans escape.

EXT. IPOMEAN CAPITAL VILLAGE - MARKET AREA - DUSK

22

Half of the sun is tucked into the horizon, as the Ipomean village is just now starting to come alive.

Damon wipes his eyes as he starts setting up his store in the marketplace. He waves at a neighboring shop owner who is pruning some of their flowers.

A few stalls down, rests a large basket of various fruit that rests on a table. Mona creeps up to the basket. Her silvery hair stained with dirt and debris.

She ogles the fruit and takes two. Then buries the small bag towards the middle of the basket. She runs out of the village and into the neighboring brush.

Damon is fidgeting under a table when a shadow cast over him.

DAMON

I'm still closed. Comeback once the moon kisses the sky.

ALBA

Oh, no time for an old friend?

Damon quickly stands and strikes his head on the underside of

the table.

DAMON

Ow! Anything for you my moon, what do you need?

Damon rubs the crown of his head.

Alba motions for Damon to come closer, who lowers his head and leans in. Alba's eyes glow a deep dark grey as does her palms. She hovers her hand over Damon's head.

ALBA

Better?

DAMON

Much better, thank you.

ALBA

I've come for them.

DAMON

Them? Oh, OH! Give me a minute.

Damon frantically searches his shop.

First he looks through two large cabinets. Shuffling through weapons and tools, tossing aside one after another.

He shifts his focus to a bin. Alba looks on patiently, but a look of concern slowly dons on her face.

ALBA

Damon.

DAMON

(searching)

Its here somewhere your grace, I promise.

He shifts his search to a large locker.

DAMON

(cont.)

I must have placed it somewhere so
safe that even I can't find it
quickly.

Damon leaps to the other side of his shop and kneels in front of two chests. He pulls a necklace out of his shirt revealing a golden key.

He uses the key to open the chest on the left and unlocks it. He looks through the contents, tossing aside more tools and weapons.

He throws a white key out of the chest in his haste, and it lands at Alba's feet. She picks it up and examines it.

The key is white and slightly porous as if made of bones.

ALBA

Damon.

DAMON

I've almost found it.

Damon clears all the contents of the chest and turns to the second one. He jams the key into its keyhole; but the chest won't open.

ALBA

(barks)

Damon!

Alba's voice echoes through the air, instantly grabbing the attention of those near.

Damon raises to his feet and stands at full attention with his brow and face drenched in sweat.

Alba holds up the key. Damon takes it and opens the second chest. He reaches in and grabs a large bundle of dense fur. Sticking out of the bundle are two white porous handles.

Damon is relieved and he hands the bundle to Alba.

ALBA

Thank you. I was starting to think you'd lost them.

DAMON

Not on my life.

(concerned)

Alba, is everything alright?

(whisper)

Are you stepping down?

ALBA

(chuckling)

It is inevitable, but not yet. I have a feeling these deserve to be in the hands of their owner. Thank you again.

DAMON

My pleasure.

ALBA

May the moon bless you, my friend.

Damon bows and Alba walks away.

Damon returns to his shop, which is a mess from his chaotic search. He begins cleaning. More and more Ipomeans awake from their slumber.

Alba caresses the bundle against her small body. She nestles her face against the robust fur, gliding over every hair with her cheeks.

ALBA

(whispers)

Oh, Os. I wish you were here and could see how far our pup has grown. A true Ipomean, fearless, caring.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - MOUNTAINS - DUSK

23

Amura tugs at Bre as they ride through the mountain range. Bre is standing, her head tilted back as the wind kisses her face and her hair.

AMURA

Are you crazy?! Sit down!

The wind drowns all sound. A calmness and silence rushes over Bre.

She laughs.

Finally, she relents to Amura's pleas and sits. After a few moments, Amura joins in on the laughter.

EXT. IPOMEAN CAPITAL VILLAGE - MARKET AREA - DUSK

24

ALBA

Still, I worry about her.

Alba lifts up her head and rubs her hand against the fur.

NATASHA

My moon.

A voice calls out to Alba, who turns, finding the bent head of Natasha. Natasha raises and reaches for the furry bundle.

NATASHA

Allow me to carry that for you.

ALBA

Thank you, Natasha.

Alba who unloads the bundle into Natasha's waiting arms. Who is surprised by the weight of the fur and bone, but she gains her composure. The pair walk toward the cathedral.

NATASHA

Thank you for tending to my sister's wounds.

ALBA

Worry not child. I only finished what Amura started.

Natasha goes silent. as the two walk. Alba greets the Ipomeans who wave and bow as she passes. They reach the end of the market where they are greeted by Irene. Who is holding a basket of fruit.

IRENE

(sharp)

My stars, do either of you understand the concept of rest?

ALBA

Relax, she's young and I'm fresh as dew.

Irene follows Alba and Natasha into the cathedral, continuing to bend their ears for their less-than-ideal sleep patterns.

EXT. FOREST OF MOONS - DUSK

25

The Ipomean women and their captive stop at the river split. Bre hops off and walks up the river.

BRE

Looks like we are walking the rest of the way.

Amura hops off the bike, collects her belongings, then snatches the key out of the bike.

Bre takes her knife out and walks to the cage. She strikes the cage bars waking Clarence.

BRE

We walk from here.

Clarence exits the cage, yawns and stretches. The Ipomean women walk to the edge of the river.

Amura goes first leaping across the standing logs with ease.

Bre waits at the edge, nodding her head towards Clarence for him to cross. He creeps forward, staring at the river and the logs jetting out. He yawns again.

CLARENCE

Any chance I can get a ride across.

Bre flashes her knife in his face, the tip of her blade mere millimeters from his nose.

CLARENCE

Of course not.

Clarence turns around and slowly hops across the logs. Bre follows suit, a few logs behind him.

As he gets half-way across, Clarence chuckles.

BRE

What's funny?

CLARENCE

Life.

BRE

What?

CLARENCE

You'll see.

Clarence comes ashore, then Bre.

The trio walk through the forest as the sky grows darker.

EXT. IPOMEAN CAPITAL VILLAGE - NIGHT

26

Night has fallen. The Ipomean village has come alive, the marketplace is full of life.

Right outside the village, Bre and Amura walk briskly towards their home. They look toward the sky.

A new moon. A deep grey ball sits on the navy sky seperated

by a sliver of white light.

BRE
(relieved)
It's good to be home.

AMURA
I can't wait to get back to my lab.

BRE
Home less than a minute and you're
already trying to lock yourself away.
(jokingly)
Was it that bad joining with me?

AMURA
(boastful)
The burden of my intellect, I have to
keep myself busy.
(cold)
We aren't actually done.

Amura points her thumb over her shoulder. Bre turns and looks, she sees Clarence sleep walking 20 yards behind them.

BRE
You should keep up, can't promise your
safety if you lag behind.

Clarence continues sleepwalking. Bre shrugs her shoulders and continues on.

Clarence trips on a stone and falls face first. At the last second he catches himself with the palms of his hands, saving his face from impact. He rolls over and opens his eyes.

He stands to his feet and his eyes finally focus. They dilate, bouncing like purple cat irises.

CLARENCE
Its so alive.

Clarence stands before the village entrance, the bustling marketplace in view. He trots to close the distance between himself and the Ipomean women.

EXT. IPOMEAN CAPITAL VILLAGE - MARKET AREA - NIGHT

27

In the marketplace people are dashing from stall to stall, buying, bargaining, and chatting.

Bre and Amura navigate the traffic effortlessly, bobbing and weaving through the many customers.

BRE

What do you want to celebrate. I was thinking lamb chops.

AMURA

I'd prefer a steak. And I get to pick. Moon knows I would rather have a succulent steak in my mouth if I have to be front row for a "Brenda adulation congregation".

Amura grasps her hands.

AMURA

(sarcastically)

Oh Bre, how many poachers did you kill? Alba must be soooo proud.

Bre chuckles at her cousin's funny and accurate mimicry.

BRE

Well, I'll tell them how you saved Natasha and send them to you. They'll surely fawn over you.

AMURA

Please don't. That would ruin my steak, which we are having. So don't pull that stunt again.

Having struggled to make his way through the crowd. Clarence wonders the marketplace, stopping at a few stalls.

The first sold rabbit meat. The second sold weapons, but the merchant was too busy cleaning to notice him stop and look at a long chain.

He stops at the final one, a small stall adorned with a variety of flowers. Clarence takes his time looking over the many flowers available.

Clarence takes his finger and ever so slightly runs it across several of the weaker flowers. Electricity pulsates on his fingertips as he passes over each flower. The petals of each bounce and slightly expand.

Unbeknownst to Clarence, a small crowd of Ipomeans have begun to clammer behind him. Each following the scent of an unknown

person who ventured into their homeland. A large, towering mountain of muscle steps forward from the group. **HENRY**.

Clarence feels a tap on his shoulder and turns to face the towering Ipomean man.

The gathering and commotion catches Bre's attention. She looks around the marketplace for the source.

BRE

I guess a bargaining, became an argument.

AMURA

Nope, someone got lost. Hopefully, he is de--. There he is, alive. Unfortunately. I'll let you handle this, I'm going to tell Auntie were back.

Amura walks towards the Cathedral.

BRE

Great, leave me for your steaks.

Bre heads toward the group surrounding Clarence.

BRE

Alright, break it up.

Bre makes her way through the crowd. She reaches the center and finds Clarence stoic under Henry's gaze.

BRE

That's enough Henry, this one is with me.

Bre steps beside Clarence.

HENRY

Ah, Bre. I'm glad to hear he's accounted for, but-

Henry and others in the crowd simultaneously inhale Clarence's scent.

HENRY

(cont.)

Still doesn't change the fact that he smells like bad luck and shit.

Many in the crowd share similar sentiments. Clarence sniffs himself.

BRE

I agree, but it's mother's call not mine.

HENRY

I guess I'll leave it alone.

He glares and then scoffs at Clarence as he and the crowd disperse.

BRE

Tell Cherry and the kids I said hello.

HENRY

I will.

Bre and Henry wave goodbye. Bre turns to Clarence and shakes her head.

BRE

You're like a newborn crescent fawn,
just wandering around all oblivious.
Come on.

She walks off and Clarence follows behind her as they head toward the cathedral.

EXT. IPOMEAN CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

28

In front of the Cathedral Alba and Amura are chatting as Bre comes walking up with Clarence in tow.

ALBA

Thank you Amura. I'll be sure to get
the finest steaks for the celebratory
feast.

Alba turns to face Bre and holds out her arms. The two embrace. Holding her daughter tight, she whispers rejoicing words into Bre's ears.

For several moments Bre, gets lost in her mother's words. An elated smile whips across her face. The mood, tone, and enjoyment of Alba and Bre's conversation catches the attention of nearby Ipomeans. Many turn and become entranced in the matriarch and matriarch-to-be's embrace.

Finally, Bre takes notice of the glances and staring faces

around them. Bre coughs and lets go of her mother.

BRE
(dutifully)
Mother, Amura and I stumbled upon an
outsider.

Bre points to Clarence, who is captivated by the Ipomean
homeland and people.

AMURA
Bre found him, I don't want my name
associated with him.

Amura bows to her aunt and walks toward the marketplace
scoffing at Clarence as she passes.

ALBA
Well, what is an Ipomean if not
honest.

Alba turns her attention to Clarence. She studies the man and
takes in his scent as she walks toward him.

ALBA
Ah, Young Clarence, you've grown quite
well given the circumstances.

Clarence bows.

CLARENCE
Than-

BRE
HOW do you two know each other?!

Alba chuckles.

ALBA
You've introduced us before. Try to
remember these things dear.

BRE
I did?

CLARENCE
Greetings your grace and thank you for
your hospitality.

ALBA
You're welcome. I hope the forest has

been kind to you.

CLARENCE

I have no complaints...about the forest that is.

Clarence glances at Bre.

ALBA

Oh? Do tell.

BRE

Mother don't listen to the-

Bre is interrupted by her mother's pointer finger springing upward.

ALBA

I can discern the truth myself. Please continue.

Clarence continues starting off on an anecdote about hunting rabbits and coming home to rest.

CLARENCE

Before long I was attacked and restrained by your daughter and company. Then she picked a fight with a group of poachers. Which I saved her from.

As Clarence finishes his retelling of the afternoon, his body relaxes a bit. Moments that Alba's large dark eyes notice, in addition to other minor changes in his body.

ALBA

Well you've had an eventful time. So, who won this fight?

BRE

(Prideful)

I did!

CLARENCE

I wouldn't call getting saved winning.

Alba raises her hand, grabbing the attention of the bickering parties.

AMURA

That's enough. Thank you for aiding my

daughter and please join us for a celebratory feast as an extension of my gratitude and as an apology for the trouble.

CLARENCE

Thank you.

Clarence bows.

ALBA

Young Henry.

Alba calls out to **JUNIOR**, a young boy around 10 or 11, who is a spitting image of his father. Junior had been lurking behind a nearby cart listening to their conversation.

He steps out timidly.

ALBA

Please take this man to Damon to be clothed properly, he'll be joining us tonight.

The young boy bows and leads Clarence towards the market.

Now alone with her daughter, Alba turns to face her. Bre stands fidgeting her leg at a feverant pace.

BRE

I know, but I was following the scent of a poacher and it led straight to him.

ALBA

And that's when you two got into this fight and etc.

BRE

Yes...

Alba chuckles while interlocking elbows with her daughter.

ALBA

I'm just happy you and Amura made it home safe. It'd be nice if you'd stop bringing in poor Clarence like this, but I know your hearts always in the right place.

Alba leads Bre around the front of the Cathedral. They cut

through a neighboring section of the market.

Bre recounts the events of her mission, from saving Dahlia and Natasha to finding the poacher camp.

They stop as the two come upon an alley between the Cathedral and a neighboring building.

ALBA

Brenda, what did I tell you about going into the quarry area without prior notice?

BRE

Ma, I was following a lead and didn't have the luxury. Amura can vouch for me. It was necessary.

ALBA

Even so, an agreement is an agreement, and we should uphold our word.

Bre slumps at her mother's disapproval.

ALBA

Come now. I have something for you.

The allure of a gift perks Bre up.

BRE

What is it?

ALBA

You'll find out soon enough. Only if you can beat me in a game of chess before the celebration.

BRE

I've won the last five times ma.

ALBA

Because I let you win.

Alba and Bre smile and walk into the alley. On the Cathedral side, a hidden door rests in the wall.

INT. IPOMEAN CATHEDRAL - ALBA'S CHAMBERS

29

Beyond that door lies Alba's chambers and on the massive wood desk in the center rests a fruit basket.

The basket pulses with black energy. completely different from Alba's aura. Wicked and sinister.

EXT. IPOMEAN CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

30

Alba reaches for the door.

Beat.

The cathedral explodes releasing the wicked black energy.

The energy erupts through neighboring buildings, carts, people, etc.

As it carries in the wind, the energy morphs into a crow-like creatures.

These crows of malice shred and rip through anything in its path. After a few seconds all that is left is a large crow-shaped mushroom cloud and ruins.

THE END.