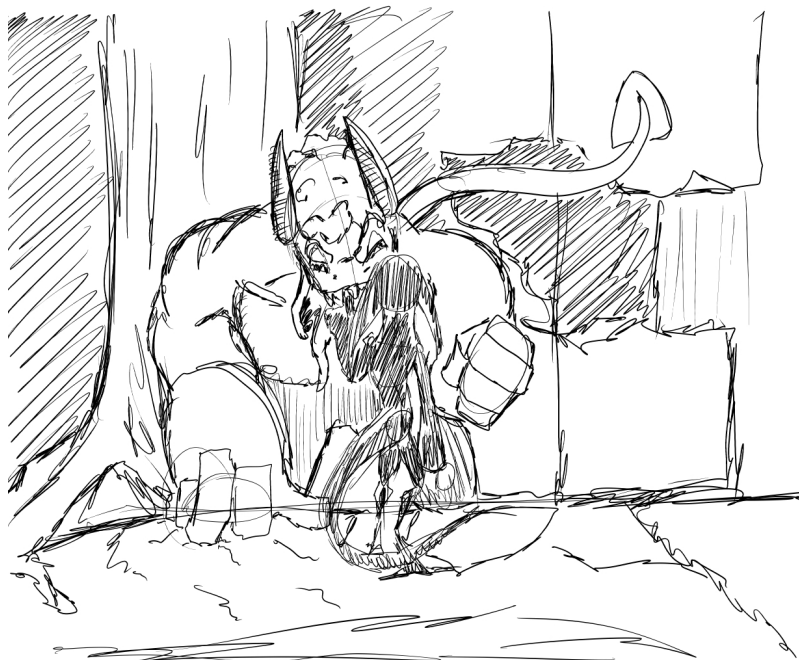




"Forgive me. You must have many questions. Most chiefly among them, 'where you are,' yes?"

"Among others..." Beezle told the strange wanna be angel grem, "Namely just one question." he said as he walked next to him, looking the cobalt grem up and down, "What, and I can't emphasize this enough, THE FUCK?" Beezle wasn't about to sugar coat things, this asshole was going to get him at his saltiest. Why? Because Beezle didn't trust the whole goodie two shoes nice angel grem schtik. There was something rotten about all of this.

The Cobalt grem gave a small tight smile of patience, continuing in the same unperturbed manner as before, "We are in what higher beings call a Starfix Realm. A manufactured place. Starfix Realms come in many forms, and are made to serve a multitude of purposes." The Angelic grem began to explain as they walked along the broken asphalt road where Beezle was being careful where he planted his feet since pieces of the road seemed to just be floating with nothing actually tangible holding it up. It was messing with his senses, and gave him a severe case of vertigo that made him want to retch, but Beezle was too angry about being pulled into this stupid broken version of his world, and his worrying about his girlfriend, Neo, to give into that just yet, so continued his rather salty dialogue with Mr. Angel.

"Multitude of purposes, right, like kidnapping a bunch of innocent people from their daily lives, blacking out the sun for three days and generally giving everyone a case of the heebie jeebies That is probably going to cause a market boom for therapists to deal with the trauma of all this?" Beezle asked with a wide sweeping hand gesturing to the broken landscape around them.

"This one was created as a preventative measure..." The Angelic grem continued without comment, much to Beezle's irritation, but despite his temper, he continued to listen. "Something terrible seems to be unfolding here. The results of an ancient atrocity committed long before this planet even harboured land."

Beezle squinted his eyes for a moment then let out a small groan, "Are you about to lore dump about a war with dead gods or something?" he asked sounding genuinely exasperated, raising his hands to rub at his temples, feeling a wicked headache coming on.

The Angelic grem paused, blinking at Beezle shocked, "You already know what happened here?"

It was Beezle's turn to stare at the Angelic grem like he was insane, and after a heart beat or two of silence, Beezle threw his hands up in the air and half shouted incredulous, "I WAS FUCKING JOKING! HOLY SHIT!"

The Angelic grem flinched back at the shout, staring at him for a moment and with a quiet look of chagrin for a moment before they cleared their throat, "Oh... I apologize, but... you are closer to the truth than you realize." the Angelic grem explained, trying to compose themselves again before continuing on; "You are in grave danger, my friend. You aren't supposed to be here..."

"You think?!" Beezle half barked with an irate laugh, his hands on his hips as he listened to this weirdo grem, who continued without pause.

"... but there was a weakness, a flaw in the realms that has allowed you to be pulled by force into the middle of this mess. You're not the only one either, many other innocent souls now wander this place with no way of escaping. I've been working to collect them as best as I can so that I can guide you all out of here before it is too late."

"Out? Out sounds good!" Beezle said about to start stomping in the direction the other grem had been leading him, but paused mid step turning around as it struck him, "What do you mean 'too late'? What the fuck is going to happen?"

"You've seen them right? The beast that stirs just underfoot, and the flood of cursed shadows that roam these lands in search of wayward souls to feed to their master." the Angelic grem continued, in a calm tone that just GRATED on Beezle's nerves, but Beezle, the red boxer grem, held his tongue and just waited for the stranger to continue, raising a brow and gesturing towards him with an expression of, 'Yeah, and?!'

"Hm.. Perhaps it is better that we start with a story. One as old as time itself..." The angelic grem began solemnly, and Beezle let out a small groan, covering his face and rubbing it briefly, trying to calm down before he let out a short harsh growl, "NnnnRAH!" he felt that rush again, like his whole upper body swelled, the feeling of molten lead filling his fingers as he clenched them tight, and out of sheer frustration he punched the first thing near them which happened to be ANOTHER chunk of concrete, which had already been fractured from whatever building it came from and exploded into shotgun spray of pieces. The Angelic grem took half a step back in shock at the sudden violence, and another with an uncertain, tentative expression as Beezle turned on him next.

"Get to the fucking **point**! Thirty words or less, or I swear I'm going to pancake your face in!" Beezle barked at him with a heaving breath as his eyes showed the recessive rush, his ears were pinned back, black teeth glinting in the unnatural light of their strange surroundings. All of this was wasting his god damn time, and he had to find Neo dammit!

The Angelic grem stared at Beezle for a moment slowly bringing themselves upright again, Beezles behavior had been a little shocking. Getting a briefly distant look as they tried to think of how to condense the current events and past up so succinctly. He wore a well practiced expression of serenity as he tried to fulfill the request, "Well... the short version is your world had five moons, and each moon had been a god once..." he began, pausing briefly, warily watching Beezle's reaction. Beezle crossed his arms over his chest, scowling grimly and just waited for him to get on with it already.

The Grem continued, and summarized the history of how each of the gods had a role in taking care of this world, however one, Lapsus grew angry and resentful of the hierarchy, stewed in his own anger and bitterness he attacked two other gods, consuming Mare and Echo to add onto his own power and grow stronger. Fel managed to escape and told Galla, the greatest of them of the tragedy. Together, they managed to defeat the corrupted Lapsus, banished the cursed moon within the planet below, sealed away for eternity. The world he had been to protect, becoming his prison to hold him.

Beezle was growing impatient with how long he was taking to get to the damn point, because he went WAY over the '30 words or less' limit, but Beezle held his tongues for the moment. When the angelic grem stopped however, Beezle uncorked and let loose, "Okay! Let's just for the moment assume I believe ANY of this shit..."

he said and glanced around briefly, "Not that I have much choice when our fucking world looks like a crack addicts's jigsaw puzzle..." he snorted, "Why the fuck would they seal him INSIDE of a fucking planet just to fuck OUR shit up millions or whatever years later, why not just KILL the fucker? Problem done!" he demanded angrily, "No, instead you gotta fuck all our lives over because some gods had to have a power struggle because they were butthurt about not being the big fancy leader or some shit." Beezle ranted as he paced, arms flailing and gesticulating with disgruntled rage.

The Angelic grem looked HIGHLY offended that Beezle boiled down the entire tragedy to 'Butt hurt god', however decided not to get into it at the moment as there was still so much work to be done, and pressed on; "It would seem that eternity has a limit, and somehow Lapsus has awoken. Seeing as Galla and Fel are locked into a deep slumber, it instead falls to you, and all of the souls that were pulled here, to offer aid to the higher beings."

"Of. Fucking. Course. It is." Beezle half barked as he stopped, shoulders slumping with his arms hanging down and rocking back his head, like a petulant child being told he had to do some extra chores and was just so absolutely freaking done with everything in the moment.

"FINE!" Beezle bellowed finally, "I'm here to find my girlfriend! The sweetest grem you'd ever meet, she's cute, and blue, with the prettiest eyes, and adorable giggle, and when she wears yellow it's like a sunny day! She's too dang pure for OUR world, let alone this fucking hellscape you brought us to. And I plan on MARRYING someday, and if I have to deal with your god's inferiority complex to do it, FINE! You want him to take another dirt nap? FINE! Point me in his direction and I'll punch him until he goes nite nite!" he bellowed at the supposedly angelic Grem, "Because if one of them HURT her, I'm taking it out on EVERYONE!" he snarled pointing a finger at him, "You, the gods, what the fuckever!"

The Angelic grem took another small step back, his ears sweeping back as he listened to Beezle's enraged diatribe, it wasn't what he was expecting as many of the Grems he had encountered so far were far more... passive, terrified, but Beezle was angry. And anger could be useful. He decided that other details about what was happening perhaps weren't terribly important to tell him. "Well... I believe in this, I may be of some service. In order to confront our demons, we must first become like them. With a bit of luck, this should allow you to sneak past Lapsus' guard undetected. They will think you are one of them. That mistake will be their undoing."

Beezle squinted his eyes at him scowling, "That makes sense... but I really hate where that line of thought is going..." he said with a warning growl, "This is what, a disguise?"

"Of a sort." The angelic looking Grem said with an expression of uncertainty, then he blinked and relaxed, opening his eyes with a more determined steely look. Beezle REALLY didn't like that look, but before he could demand anything he was already doing something, "What I give to you now is not a blessing, but a curse.. I hope that someday you will be able to forgive me."

Beezle stepped forward about to demand just what the fuck did THAT mean, when he felt pain in his chest that stopped him cold, he opened his mouth to scream but nothing came out. He clutched his chest, his dull claws digging in as he felt every beat of his heart now, but every pulse seemed to throb like there were knives in his chest. His eyes went wide as every bit of him felt like it turned to ice, he tried to breath but it hitched in his chest from the sudden pain. 'Am I... having a heart attack?' he asked himself, but already knew this had to be something else. Something WORSE.

Then it began to feel like a rush again, but so much... BIGGER! TOO BIG! TOO MUCH! He dropped to his knees, not because they felt weak, but because suddenly he felt like he weighed hundreds of pounds more

than he should. He reached out to the ground bracing himself and he could see his arms bulge and swell. He was used to that in a way when the recessive rush would hit, he thought they always felt like balloons filled with lead, but this?! No, he could see the muscle groupings growing, pulsating moment by moment bigger and bigger until he felt his skin burn, he saw his skin stretch, marks going across and he thought his body might rip right through his own skin! He could hear the crackle and snap of bones forcefully rearranging in his body, growing thicker, longer, changing the shape of his hands. Then pain in his head, it was so intense and growing, he thought his skull might split open. For a moment, for a fear filled moment, he almost prayed for death to end this pain.

Then, suddenly he retched, his body convulsing as his mouth filled with blood, he retched all over the ground, his jaws splitting open revealing his 'Pred grem' nature, his tongues, all six wriggled out in convulsive movements from the pain that rippled through him. The something else, something deep in his belly it felt like at first, like a fire that seemed to burn through him, it was like a balm as it spread through his body, not lessening the pain but making it bearable as he rose to his feet feeling so heavy, yet at the same time stronger, MUCH stronger, though he felt like he wanted to peel off his own skin if it'd make it all stop! He leaned his head back, maw gaping and howled. A cry filled with pain and fear, anger and grief that ripped through the otherworldly silence around them.

Beezle dropped down to all fours again, hands thumping into the broken asphalt, cracking it as he panted. The pain was subsiding a little, though everything burned and ached, however he could finally THINK beyond that pain. He looked up at the Angelic looking grem, whose hand was still raised, a blue light flowing from his fingers, with strange little swirly runes or letters following it, Beezle noticed a small cloud of them hung around them. Realizing this Grem was the source of his pain, rage swelled and he reared up swiping his arm wide at the air to dispel them before lunging forward, resting on the knuckles of one hand and slammed the other into a fist in the ground in front of that grem, "WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU DO TO ME?!" Beezle bellowed out, not recognizing his own voice as it came out warped, deeper, like he was trying to talk around a mouthful of gravel and taffy.

The Angelic grem didn't pull away but lowered his hand, looking quietly remorseful. His head ducked for a moment but looked up at Beezle with tears in his eyes, regretting that this was necessary at all, having heard his pain from the transformation, "I'm sorry..."

Beezle just saw red creeping in the edges of his sight, and he had the presence of mind to try and get a grip on himself, but the only way that was going to happen is if he hit something! And since this asshole was his ONLY lead back to Neo, he turned instead to one of the strange, dark trees that stretched to the sky and raised both hands to smash them against the base of the trunk, bits of bark flying off as he heard the crackle of wood splinter under his fists, striking again and again in a brief, blind fury until his fists started to ache enough to bring him out of his rage. His shoulders heaved as he caught his breath, his jaws open and split as he gasped. He opened his hands and rested them against the trunk realizing that his hands had changed more than their sheer size now, across the knuckles of both hands glowing crescent shaped bands of gold sparkled in the dim light. He turned his hands and saw the pads of his hands had changed entirely, where there had been red, with a cyan blue finger tips, now was dark blue and swirled with light like he was looking into a night's sky within his hands, flexing his hand to watch the pattern, he noticed too his claws, they were larger, longer, sharper from the dull rounded tips he was used to.

He rocked back on his feet, almost over balancing as his weight was all wrong now, he was so much heavier now, and top heavy too! Looking down at his body he saw his torso had expanded, bulging with muscle, but his torso was longer, his legs shorter, completely changing his balance he was used to as a fighter. He leaned forward slowly and it felt more natural, even falling to his hands, feeling like a five ton gorilla in that posture. A

small part of him was astonished by the strength he felt in the size of his thick arms, and massive shoulders, but the overwhelming majority was repulsed by the changes. He glared at the grem who did this to him, wanting to rip his head off as he bellowed at him, "You turned me into a monster!" he screamed, as it felt all wrong. All wrong and unnatural! All this change FORCED on him, and he HATED it. Worse, he realized with a cold realization, a sick worry blooming in the pit of his stomach as he couldn't help but wonder what Neo's reaction would be. Would she even recognize the beast he was now? Would she just be scared of him?

The Angelic grem remained silent as Beezle realized the full depth of his transformation before he spoke, "It is the only way you can get close enough..." he explained, "With practice, you can control the transformation. To call on it when you need it, and return to your true form at will. But this is the sword I must give you to strike down the corrupted Lapsus, so that you may save your world..." he said, using the familiar line he had given already to so many others he had to transform, but realized something else would likely work far better, "And save your Neo." he added solemnly.

Beezle looked sharply at him, and as much as he wanted to punch this irritating, wanna be angel of a grem, he snarled resting on his knuckles, towering over the grem by several feet, "Just tell me who needs a dirt nap and let's get this over with."