

## **Cait**

A shout with actual words does, though. "Hey!" Cait yells. "Jerkface!"

He turns to the side, not knowing what's about to come, but you do — and you screw your eyes shut just in time. The demon doesn't, which means he gets a flash of the sun of Jassira right in the face. Howling, clawing at his eyes, temporarily blind, he releases the pressure on you, while turning a stream of barely-intelligible invective on Cait. Even if he could see, he'd be focused on her instead —

## **Brint/Brienne (Same text, just swap the names)**

A minotaur fist does, though.

Brint's blow knocks the demon clean off your body, almost over the edge into the chasm. To his credit, your foe recovers quickly, rolling quickly to his feet and missing the drop by inches, but Brint's just as quick to step between him and you. He meet the demon strength to strength, hand to hand, hooves digging into the cavern's ashy floor, pushing furiously into the grapple — and your mino-lover's winning. The raw test of muscle and might isn't over yet, but at the very least he's focused on Brint instead —

## **Atugia**

Even if that doesn't, Tui's fist, encased in her spectral magic, does.

The blow knocks the demon back, and the dullahan follows it up, raining enough blows on his armor to dent it. He swipes blindly at her with his claws, but she steps out of reach with a well-practiced rhythm, then summons her halberd out of nowhere to slash away at him in turn. The crimson-haired warrior's caught the demon off guard, and now she's got his full attention —

## **Etheryn**

A winter storm does, though.

Even the heat of the magma below fades away in the face of Ryn's boreal onslaught. The snow elf shouts in furious Alvarin as she conjures magical ice and frost from nothingness, buffeting the incubus with a northern wind that reaches hurricane force. His hands freeze, grow ice crystals, come close to shattering, and he recoils from you in panic. But that panic turns swiftly to rage. Clenching his fists, he manages to shatter the ice crystals and extend his talons once again. But now he's focused on your elven companion instead —

"Goddess," Ryn whispers, as if she's only just managed to collect her thoughts. "You did it. You saved Princess Iveryn's blade — but are you okay?"

You think so. It... it feels weird, like there had been something awful inside it and you had to force it out. But you're pretty sure it's not there anymore.

Once she hears that, most of the worry in her face drains right away. "Oh, thank Lumia. When I heard you yell, I was so worried. If you're okay, and if the sword... well, I never knew anything about it before now, but the way it is now, it looks much more like the kind of thing our goddess would've gifted her warriors."

Maybe the demon changed it somehow — or maybe it'd been like that for longer. Hopefully it won't be able to change back, though, now that you've got it. With a little flicker of will, you make the blade's golden light vanish into nothingness, then figure out your next move: talking to Sanders. Hopefully he has some idea about what was going on.

"I hope so, too." Ryn's smile brightens. "No matter what, though, I'm glad you were able to fix it. If this really is Princess Iveryn's sword, I can't think of anyone more deserving of it than the woman I l..." She swallows nervously. "Um, you."

Grinning broadly, you offer her a gentle peck on the cheek in return, then whisper a question in her ear. Is that an official grant from the Winter City's ruler?

"It's not the Winter City's ruler's to give," she reminds you; thanks to the smooch, she can't keep an adorable giggle out of her voice. "It's the Sword that chooses. But... I'm happy that it chose you."

(Low con)

"I hope so, too." Ryn's smile brightens. "No matter what, though, I'm glad you were able to fix it. If this sword really did belong to Princess Iveryn, it's better in your hands than that demon's for sure."

Heh. You will gladly take that compliment. Does that mean she's gifting it to you?

"I can't do that!" She blushes. "It's... it's not mine to give anyway. I'm just happy it turned out this way."

## **Quintillus**

What does is a whipcrack of bright pink magic that lashes across his nose. "Wha—?"

The incubus turns just in time to see Quin, alight with his firewalk's brilliant glow, bound in from the side. A magical blaze wreathes his short sword as he slashes at the demon... indeed, wreathes his whole body, and makes his demonic foe howl when he tries to counterattack. And it works. The cries of pain, the flames licking at the demon's body: they're a lot, too much for most mortals to bear, and even give someone like this corruption-augmented blackguard pause. Even if he doesn't fall, though, the important thing now is that he's fighting Quin. The valiant taeleer's keeping your foe's attention well away from you —

## **Kiyoko**

A flurry of foxfire does, though.

Kiyoko's magical barrage knocks the demon back, singeing his already-leathery skin. It does more than singe, too. Soon, your foe's yelping in pain as flames lick at his body. Your foxen lover's too clever to come within range of his talons, too accurate with her magic to need to get any closer, so all the demon can do is try to protect his face with his hands and ward off the magical energy with less-essential body parts. Does it work? It doesn't really matter. What's important is that she's given you an opening by distracting his attention —

## **Arona(Dom/sub)**

"Hey! Dipshit!"

That makes the incubus turn.

He's met with a malicious, tusk-filled grin. "That's my bottom bitch. Go find your own."

Before he can even finish his "what", a meaty green hand yanks him bodily off of you and reverses him in midair. His head catches right between her knees. Then Arona drops both of them down at blazing speed, hard enough to make the top of his head crack against the cavern floor. You can breathe again, and now Arona's keeping him busy

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## **Agni**

What does distract him, though, is a piercing bottom-lip whistle.

You and he both turn to see Agnimitra standing over you, gittern in hand. "I hope your head isn't as hard as this thing is," she sighs, and cracks him right in the face with it.

Somehow, the instrument stays in one piece — but so does the incubus' head. He slashes away at Agni, who dodges with all her consummate avian skill. Now that she's got his attention, her hands weave into a loop, then set off a series of magical fireworks, all flame and spiral and light, right in the demon's face so he can barely see. Despite his murderous intent, she's got his attention in her own inimical way, at least for a few seconds —

## Azzy (Normal/Bimbo)

### (Intro)

"Hey, if this is a sword for the worthy, I think you've got a shot at getting its favor! I mean, you've got faith, purity of heart, strength..." Azzy trails off into a wordless blush. "Um... yeah."

"I guess. Thanks, you guys. No matter who it goes to — if any of us — the important thing is that it comes out of whatever hole Dad left it in." She pauses. "... goddess, I'm sorry, I've been just kinda presumin' this whole time without askin'. Do you actually **want** to come along?"

"Of **course** we'd be willing to help you, Liaden. Isn't that right, [pc.name]?"

Liaden sighs. "I'm not gonna lie — I know what I have to do, but I don't know if I have the strength to do it. A pair of reliable someones at my side would help a lot."

### (Set Out)

"Yesss!" Azzy cheers, rushing up to Liaden for a hug. "Goddess, this is going to be so much fun — a lost holy relic, a treasure hunt, [pc.name], **you** — I mean..." Her cheeks darken and she raises a few fingers to her mouth. "I mean..."

Lia blushes, but manages to keep her voice under control. "I know, I know. But hey, Azzy, no chicken-countin' yet, not 'til they've hatched. There's no guarantee that the Dawnsword will be in my hands at the end of the day, even if we find it. Who knows? It might go to [pc.name], or even to you." Then her gray eyes meet yours. "And the same goes for you, [pc.name] — thanks for takin' the time to come along with me on my treasure hunt. Dad keeps on tellin' me how much you're working not just for Hawkethorne, but for the people of the Marches as a whole. Seein' you here, well, what he says seems pretty true. You're the kind of person I wouldn't mind seein' themselves prove worth of the Dawnsword either."

"Hey, don't worry," Azzy offers. "We got this! Lance and polearm, you and me and [pc.name] together against them — mmm..."

Lia blushes. "C'mon, Azzy, there're people around..."

Oh, really. The two of them need to get a tent already. And look, there it is — the sinkhole she's been looking for. That's it, right?

### (Gnolls)

"Are you sure this is what you want, my flower? I know the blade is important, but..." Azzy sighs. "You shouldn't do something you're uncomfortable with."

"Well, that's my decision. Or rather, it's my decision to leave the decision with [pc.name]. I'm just statin' that I'm willing. she's by far the more experienced adventurer here, Azzy, and I trust her judgment."

"Well... yeah." Azzy chuckles. "Isn't it great? We'd better get after her, though — splitting up would be a pretty bad idea, especially down here, and I don't want to have to explain anything bad to her dad!"

### **(Post-quest; Liaden owns the sword)**

"I am, too!" Azyrran buzzes up close enough to give Lia a big, sweet hug. "Goddess, you're a real-life heroine, aren't you? Brave and steadfast and... and really pretty..."

Azyrran's eyebrows shoot up, and not in the 'impressed' way. "I don't like the sound of scars. Goddess, you weren't kidding when you said it was dangerous. Maybe there's some way w — uh, **you** can practice, Lia!"

The hornet's misstep flushes Lia's face and has her instinctively bringing her hand up to run the length of her ponytail. "Practice. Yeah. That. That sounds like a good idea. I don't even really know how to, um, swords."

"Neither do I," Azzy admits. "But maybe I could go with you when you're training with Garth or Gwyn or whomever. It could be a whole thing, you know? You figure out how to use the Dawnsword... I watch you use the Dawnsword..."

The blonde paladin's nod comes quickly after that. "That sounds great! It's a date."

"Yesss! Okay, okay. You want to get started? I'll be right there."

Without another word, Lia reaches up and kisses Azzy right on the lips. Then she turns to you, offers a thankful salute, and heads for the door.

"She's great, isn't she?" sighs the Hive Knight as she watches Liaden go. Then she turns to you for a grateful hug. "But you are, too. You — goddess, I don't even know what to say. You were so brave in the fight against the demon, and you gave up a chance for the sword so Lia could take it. You helped my beautiful flower have a chance to really blossom, [pc.name]. Thank you so much. I... well, if you want your cuddlebug to show you how grateful she is..." Leaving the implication in the air, she squeezes the hug just a bit tighter, then gives you a kiss and a headpat before heading to join Lia.

"Ah, well," Sanders murmurs quietly. "Being a lovesick fool for a beautiful, courageous woman seems to run in the family, too."

Sounds like he's happy they found each other.

"I very much am," he chuckles. "I've no right to approve or disapprove of my daughter's choice in lovers, and I wouldn't even if I'd been the one to raise her. But seeing her with such a marvelous partner delights me all the same. Despite everything I've done and failed to do, I'm blessed with a wonderful daughter who's worked hard to fix my own mistakes, and a good friend who's done much the same." He claps you on the back. "Speaking of the latter, I'll be sure to send the Order of the Oriflamme your way with your well-earned reward. And now, unless you have something more for me, I think I'll go get a drink. You might wish to do the same. It's been a long day."

### **(Bimbazzy)**

"It's okay! Sometimes parents can be stinky." Azyrran wrinkles her nose. "Mommy didn't always tell us stuff either. But that's just how lots of people do, even with the ones they love lots and lots. Not me, though!"

Azzy lets stream a fountain of giggles. "Sure thing, cutie! We'd both love to help, right?"

Liaden sighs. "I'm not gonna lie — I know what I have to do, but I don't know if I have the strength to do it. A pair of reliable someones at my side would help a lot."

(If have had 3some with lia and azzy or not)

Well, while you aren't as friendly with her as Azzy is and wouldn't want to presume, you wouldn't have asked Sanders to sit down and fill you in with a long talk if you weren't interested in this whole Dawnsword thing to begin with. So... yes.

Well, think of this as a way for the three of you to build up your relationship a bit more! Besides, you wouldn't have asked Sanders to sit down and fill you in with a long talk if you weren't interested in this whole Dawnsword thing to begin with. So... yes.

### **(Set out)**

"This is so exciting!" Azzy all but squeals as she bounds up to Liaden and gives her a hug. "Going after a holy lost treasure of your family's — aw, I remember the way Mommy kept her family heirlooms, each one with their own story. It's only fitting that you should have yours, Lia."

### **(Pre/post gnolls)**

"It'll be fiiiiine," Azyrran insists. The bubbly bug flutters her eyelashes. "But I do feel super grateful that I've got a brave paladin to protect me..."

"Azzy, we're in public!"

The hornet gestures theatrically at the open skies and rolling grasslands of the vast valley. "C'mon, cutie! It's not really public. Live a little!"

"Ugh," Azzy groans. "They're so stinky. I wish I could do a magic hand thing and make them go away. Lia? Can **you** do a magic hand thing?"

"What's up with them?" Liaden wonders aloud. "Why aren't they engaging?"

Azzy shrugs helplessly. "I dunno! It's weird, right?"

Azzy huffs and bounces on her heels hard enough to make them click together. "It is **super** mean to pressure you into it and stuff. But, um, I guess if you're okay with it — the world could use a little more love!"

"Yeah," the paladin says, swallowing. "Anyway, it's up to you [pc.name] But I'm ready to do what we need to do."

Azyrran just giggles from where she's sitting. "Too bad you can't fly like me, Lia."

Actually... it's best that everybody uses the rope, wings notwithstanding. You have absolutely no idea how deep this hole goes and the descent is bound to be slow and careful. If she were to tire midway, there mightn't be anywhere for her to rest and there could still be a long fall to the bottom.

"Oh, come on. Let's say that the rumors Lia heard are true and the magic sword burned a hole into the earth. How deep could it possibly be? My mother used to tell me and my sisters that there was a dark, gigantic network of caves deep below the earth, complete with seas and whatnot. Or are we simply going to fall straight through the world and come out the other side?"

Liaden pats Azzy's shoulder. "You don't have to look tough for me all the time, you know. [pc.name]'s right. There's no point in taking senseless risks. Let's just all use the rope."

### **(Pre/Post Incubus fight)**

As Lia squeezes into the new passageway, you turn to Azyrran. She knows her squeeze better — is Liaden always like this?

"I meeeeeeean... yeah," the bimbug giggles. "She's super cute, isn't she? Um, except for the part where we're falling behind, anyway. We'd better catch up fast!". Taking Azyrran in tow, you hurry down the tunnel and into the depths.

Azzy steps forward with alarm. "Are you suuuuuure that's safe, my flower? What if...?"

### **(Post quest)**

"Me too, sweetling!" Azzy squishes Lia into a tight, loving embrace. "I knew you could do it all along. Goddess, you're a storybook heroine, aren't you? And super pretty, too..."

"Oooh! That means we need to practice with it, right?" Azzy cheers. "I hope you want to use it for all its shiny, holy goodness instead of just being a symbol, Lia. 'Cause if that's true, you probably need lessons, right? And, well, we could maybe..."

Liaden can't keep a smile off her face. "Y'know, you're not really a swordswoman either."

"Yeahhhh. But, like, I could be there for you when you're learning from someone else! Like Garth and Gwyn! They're kinda swordy. And we could do it together —"

Even before the vesparan's done talking, Lia interrupts with a kiss and a very heartfelt "I'm in."

"Eeeeeee!" Azzy bounces up and down. "I'll be right behind you!"

The young paladin grins. She turns to you, offers another thankful salute, then waves on her way out the door.

Azzy gives you a big, squishy, sticky hug, the bimbug's specialty, along with a grateful headpat. "And as for youuuu-uuu... you can have these! Thank you soooo much for being such a help. Telling Lia to go for the sword really made her dream come true. You're such a good bean! And you know how I treat good beans." With a final squeeze, she flounces off in the general direction of the doors.

"Ah, well," Sanders murmurs quietly. "Being a lovesick fool for a beautiful, courageous woman seems to run in the family, too."

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