

Forbidden Magic

The innkeeper winced as the sound of a whetstone being drawn expertly across metal cut through the tavern room.

If there had been any customers then the scrape of stone on blade would have driven them out. Instead the few customers in the tavern had left already when the Thrakkian woman had entered.

Thrakkians were a rare sight on the mainland and they were never good company. They were a violent and aggressive tribe who delighted in bloodshed and wouldn't think twice about killing.

They were easy to provoke and had a single minded purpose. The fact that one was here meant she was looking for someone and it was not going to end well for that person.

She had already claimed ownership of a table by the open fire; the previous occupants had scurried away as soon as she approached. There she had set about sharpening her twin axes until the entire tavern had emptied.

He needed to be rid of her soon so he could close, there would be no business while she was here. The Thrakkian had not spoken since entering nor ordered anything to eat or drink.

The innkeeper approached her as close as he dared before speaking. 'Eh, can I get ye something to drink...maybe something to eat?'

There was no answer, just the steady sound of axes being sharpened.

He waited a short time before trying again. 'Can I get ye anything? Are you looking for someone perhaps?'

Upon finishing the last word, the sharpening stopped abruptly and the Thrakkian woman slowly turned her head towards him. The innkeeper took a step back such was the intensity of her gaze, the eyes were filled with a grim determination and shadows from the fire made phantoms dance across her face.

One side of her head was shaved in the customary Thrakkian tradition; the rest of

her black hair fell down the side of her face. As if she wasn't wearing enough vicious bladed armour, her face was decorated with other small pieces of metal mainly her nose, ears and lip. There was something in her stare which hinted at danger, the way a rabbit catches the scent of a wolf. The innkeeper could not maintain his resolve so he turned to flee.

Before he could make it two steps, the woman was up and had snatched a handful of his collar. She was surprisingly strong even though he was taller and bulkier and he suddenly found himself slammed face down on the table. He squirmed to escape but her grip held firm and he stopped altogether when one of her axe blades honed into view.

'Puh-please, no...' he began but the woman silenced him with a sharp hiss.

'A man,' she spoke in a cold, calculating voice, each word was efficient and dripping with danger.

'Wh-what man?' The innkeeper stammered; sweat starting to roll from his face as his

eyes fixed on the keen edge of the axe hovering before his eyes.

In response, the axe was buried into the table top just short of his nose. Splinters sprayed up into his eyes and he was forced to blink rapidly to clear them. It was then that he realized he was whimpering.

‘A wizard,’ the Thrakkian spat out the words with a certain hatred.

‘N-no wizards here...’

Before the innkeeper could say anymore, the second axe came swinging down to sever three of the fingers on his right hand which were gripping the table corner. At first there was remarkably little pain but then the blood began spurting and his whimpering turned into screams.

He barely heard the woman speak to him again until she shook him violently. He peered into her glaring eyes as she spoke again.

‘Wizard. Where?’

This time the innkeeper nodded weakly and managed to blurt out some coherent words through the pain. ‘Gone...was here...now gone.’

The Thrakkian snarled and brought the axe down again with a scream or rage. The blade cut his hand off at the wrist, the blood literally spurting from the wound.

The innkeeper was growing an unhealthy shade of grey as he slipped into shock. His eyes fluttered as his body tried to shut his brain off from the pain. His mouth worked to gain a breath like he was a gasping fish.

‘WHERE!?’ The woman screamed into his ear to rouse him.

‘Cave!’ he shouted into the table. ‘On the coast!’

That was all he could manage as darkness took him but the woman was not finished with him. She yanked his unconscious body towards the fire, kicking and scattering some of the burning tinder so embers singed the air.

The innkeeper felt the intense heat and woke at the wrong moment as the Thrakkian pushed his bleeding stump towards the burning hot fire. Blood sizzled and spat as it got nearer but he had little strength to resist as she forced his arm onto the cast iron cauldron resting there.

He smelled cooking meat as his wound cauterized; he thought he heard someone screaming but it couldn't be him – it sounded too shrill and intense. His final thoughts were that the Thrakkian was stopping him from bleeding to death.

Then she pushed his face into the boiling stew and held him there as his face bubbled and the flesh sloughed from his bones. He knew then that this Thrakkian had lived up to her brutal reputation.

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The Thrakkian woman was known as Faria and she had come from the Guild in Kovia to hunt down a renegade wizard. The wizard had been studying an alternative technique of reanimation which was banned by the conclave.

He had fled but not before killing three of his fellow magic wielders and stealing a number of body parts from the local cemetery. The posted contract was to hunt him and kill him and any of his associates.

Unfortunately for the innkeeper, he had been named as one the associates who had aided and hidden the wizard from the militia when they had come searching for him.

Faria's unique interrogation of the innkeeper had revealed where the wizard was now cowering like a frightened rat. A cave on the coast where it was rumoured he had hired a half dozen ruffians from the village to protect him while he conducted his experiments.

She did not fear magic, she was quicker with an axe than any spell and she intended to finish this job as quickly as possible. The inn was beginning to smoke and several small fires had started where embers and caught from the inn keep's demise.

Faria casually left the tavern as it continued to burn and looked towards the coastline. It was no more than an hour away; she could

see the iron grey ocean and white foamy waves as they crashed against the rocks. The light was fading and it would soon be dark, trying to find a cave amongst the rocks while the tide was coming in was not advisable.

Still, she was not put off by a simple thing as danger and her bloodlust had been stoked. So much so, she felt a tingling sensation between her legs as she became moist with anticipation of her next kill.

Her black stallion was waiting where she had left him, chewing long grass and watching the tavern as it was slowly consumed by flames and smoke. A small group of trembling villagers had gathered to see what was happening but one look from Faria sent them scuttling back to whatever dwellings they called home.

She smoothly stepped up into the saddle; a skirt of chainmail protected her mount from her bladed armour, and watched the flames consuming the tavern. A hint of a smile pulled the corner of her mouth as she set off towards the wizard's hideout.

Faria hoped she met some resistance along the road, perhaps some sentries patrolling the wizard hideout. It was unlikely though, wizards were a cowardly sort in her experience and they preferred to surround themselves with steel. If she found the hired muscle then the wizard would not be far away.

She pulled out a chunk of mutton from her saddlebag she had purloined from the tavern. It was a fatty piece with streaks of gristle but she bit into it with relish, crunching cartilage, meat and skin until there was nothing left but a clean bone.

The journey passed quickly, she saw no other travellers on the route, not even a bird in the trees. That meant she was close, wildlife was sensitive to magic and there was often a general stillness in the area where arcane spells were being used. Even the sound of waves on the rocks seemed muted.

Dusk was not far away, the sun was an orange fireball which was rapidly being swallowed by the dark ocean. The skyline was striated with purple and red clouds, in

her homeland of Thrak it was a good omen. An omen that blood would soon be shed.

Faria knew she would have to act fast to find the cave entrance as the light was fading and the tide was drawing in. She urged her stallion down a narrow path down to the sandy shoreline.

She quickly urged her mount to a full gallop while she surveyed the cliff face. Her current location was too low, the rock face would not have a cave large enough. In the distance though, the cliff rose sharply and looked a far more likely place for a wizard to be cowering.

The ocean was lapping at her stallion's hooves by the time she reached a small cove almost hidden from view. It was covered with moss and vines but it was definitely the entrance to a cave.

Faria vaulted from the saddle with a shout of victory and batted the vegetation aside with an axe. It shimmered and then faded revealing a dark tunnel ahead. An illusion, made to look like nobody had entered. The

vines had been created to conceal the entrance.

Inside the cave, the water rose rapidly, almost rising to thigh level and she had to feel her way through the darkness as pitch black eventually took her. Suddenly her leg gave way and she managed to cling to a rock to stop herself falling.

No, she hadn't stumbled, the floor had given way. She carefully ducked into the water and felt around, the cave floor dipped dramatically which meant there may be an underwater passage nearby.

She could not tell how deep it was though and there was no way she could swim in heavy armour. The water level had risen to waist level and it would not be long before the entire cave was flooded. She did not fear drowning though, instead she began to unbuckle her armour.

She removed her bladed leg armour first, tossing it high onto the rocks to avoid leaving it in the water. Then came the armour on her arms and then torso, leaving her naked apart from a belt holding her

axes. The water was cold and nipped at her bare skin but she ignored it. She would soon bathe in the blood of her enemies to warm her soul.

Without hesitation, Faria took a deep breath and plunged into the water, kicking powerfully with her feet and using her hands to stay in contact with the cave walls. The underwater tunnel was deep, she had been under for a while in pitch black until she felt the cave surface begin to rise. Her lungs burned as they began to crave oxygen but her determination drove her on and her head suddenly broke the surface and she gasped in a huge lungful of air.

Her eyes quickly adjusted in this new area as there was a light source not too far away. She had emerged from a small pool of water where a trickling waterfall bubbled into. Beyond the water pool laid a sizable tunnel which sloped upwards and curved around to the right. Beyond that curve was a warm glow of light, most likely from torches or a campfire.

Faria allowed herself a wolfish grin, she had been right, there were people here and it

was mostly likely the wizard and his hired hands. She wasted no time in splashing from the pool and striding naked and dripping towards her prey. Her nakedness did not concern her, let them look –it would be the last things these souls saw before her axes greeted them.

The glow became brighter as she neared the bend in the cave and she began to hear noises. Scuffling noises as if people were moved around and the odd grunt here and there. Faria pressed her back to the rock and readied her axes.

She let out a war cry and dashed into the new passage only to be greeted with a scene of utter carnage. She had mistaken the scuffling to be that of boots on rocks but she froze with mouth agape and axes frozen in mid-air at the sight before her.

A large cavern lay before her dotted by stalagmites and stalactites where a number of burning braziers had been placed to light the hideout. It had to be the hideout, the hired thugs were here but something had already beaten her to it...and they looked up

as one from their kills to stare at the newcomer.

Her eyes darted around as she surveyed the scene. The cavern was full of Cave Ghouls, wretched thin creatures with pasty grey mottled skin who lived in the deep places of the earth. They were around human height but completely naked and hairless with broad skulls and sharply pointed ears. Their eyes were baleful, the colour of rotten egg yolks and their nostrils flared out into large flaps of unsightly skin. Their mouths were large and full of sharpened, crooked teeth which oozed saliva and the other fluids they had been feasting on.

There were at least ten of them who had fallen upon the hired hands – she quickly counted six but couldn't be sure. Cave Ghouls were a frenzied race of beasts that ripped apart their prey with their three fingered hands and toes which were adorned with razor sharp talons. They were extremely adept at climbing and agile as a cat.

Faria seemed to have interrupted their festivities with her unannounced entrance.

There were two crouched down no more than ten paces away who were feeding upon severed limbs. It was difficult to tell if they were arms or legs as they were so mutilated and savaged they just looked like chunks of stringy red meat.

Another was thrusting its hips into a severed head, its gore streaked member fully inserted in the neck stump. One was walking around, fully erect, its bulbous penis was misshapen and mushroom headed while chewing on a string of entrails. An unfortunate man had his breeches pulled down and was being sodomized aggressively by one of the Cave Ghouls. Luckily he was as dead as the others.

Faria snapped out of her trance, tearing her eyes from the atrocities to focus on the creatures that were all standing, their malformed genitalia bobbing and pulsing with anticipation at the sight of their visitor.

This was not a good time to be naked so Faria did what she did best. She charged forwards and swung one axe hard at the

nearest Cave Ghoul while throwing her second at the next.

The first blow nearly took the Ghoul's head clean off as it crumpled to the ground. The airborne axe cleaved into the second's sternum where it cartwheeled backwards with a screech and lay still. She quickly yanked her second axe out of its chest but then the others were on her like a horde of hissing vipers ready to strike.

They attacked as one, attempting to overwhelm her but she ducked low, taking the legs out from one and rolling clear of them. She backed away, her eyes focused on the slightest movement as their grey bodies bunched together, crouching like they were ready to pounce. She had to try and separate them otherwise they would cut her down like the wizard's hirelings.

She felt her bare feet step into something soft and unpleasant but she didn't let it faze her. To her left was a small shelf of rock which looked like a good place to try and funnel the Cave Ghouls into. She quickly broke into a sprint, hurdling a burning brazier and a dead body to try and reach the

incline. The monsters gave chase with a wail of outrage as they scuttled after her.

In the frenzy of the chase, one of the Ghouls was jostled into the brazier, a heavy sizzle could he heard as it went head first into the hot coals. It thrashed and howled for a while before it laid still, its flesh bubbling and crisping.

That left seven.

Faria reached the foot of the incline but the Cave Ghouls were quick and one snagged her leg as she powered to the top. She tumbled but turned as she did, swinging an axe as one of the monsters leapt at her, it's tongue lolling out in a savage snarl. The blade cracked into its ribs sending it sprawling over the edge of the incline where it was impaled on a rocky stalagmite.

As soon as her back hit the ground, another was on her as it attempted to pin her arms. Its erection brushed her breasts as they struggled and the Cave Ghoul grabbed her head as it tried to guide its jiggling penis towards her face. She got an arm free just as the engorged mushroom glans touched

her cheek. She drew the blade of an axe across its throat.

Black blood spurted from the wound as it let out a strangled gasp and fell to the side. Another Ghoul was holding her legs in taloned hands while its head lowered towards her vagina. Her other axe came down and crunched into its skull, killing it instantly.

The blade stuck fast though so Faria abandoned it and got to her feet, one axe remaining. She expected another onslaught but the Ghouls had disappeared. She turned around quickly but the cavern was empty apart from the dead bodies littering the ground.

The Thrakkian woman tried to free the axe from the Cave Ghoul's skull when she heard a small scraping sound behind her. She spun around quickly to see one of the monsters drop from a recess in the ceiling and land right in front of her. It screeched into her face so she responded by planting a hard kick between its legs.

The top of her foot connected with the Ghoul's clammy testicles. The monster wailed and went to its knees and Faria obliged by bringing her axe down across its neck to completely sever its head. The head rolled off down the incline while the body continued to dance spasmodically.

That left three.

Her breathing was getting heavier from the exertion but there was so respite as another dropped from the ceiling and bounded towards her on its knuckles. She swung her axe hard but the monster met her full force. Metal bit into the Ghoul's flesh but its momentum took it over the incline and her axe went with it.

The last two dropped down, one either side of her. She was now weapon less, she could try and go for the axe in the skull but that meant taking her eyes off the ghouls. Instead she slowly manoeuvred herself on the spot so she could keep both in her eye line, waiting for them to make a move.

Seconds seemed like hours as human and monster assessed each other. Finally one of

the Ghouls charged towards her. It was bigger than the others so it took Faria by surprise when it went airborne in a flurry of movement.

Both went down in a tangle of limbs, she didn't feel anything tear luckily enough. Although she had the breath knocked out of her, the Cave Ghoul was slow to rise and she viciously elbowed it in the face. The blow knocked it against the wall and it briefly lost its senses. She grabbed its pointy ears and rammed the back of its head against the wall. It tried to resist feebly but Faria yelled into its face as she continued to crack its bloated head against the rocks until pink brain matter smeared the wall.

Her Thrakkian rage was almost her downfall as she suddenly realized one more Ghoul was in the cavern with her. She was on hands and knees over her latest kill and the monster had crept up behind her as she finished her work.

Its three fingered hands gripped her waist and its erection pressed against the inside of her thigh as it attempted to find her

opening. Faria quickly lowered her backside to one side and lashed out with a kick. It only caught the monster on the thigh as it put two hands around her throat and yanked her to her feet.

Her strength was starting to wane from the battle and the Cave Ghoul sensed it. It pushed her front against the cave wall and pinned her arms to the side. She felt its rigid penis stab towards her buttocks. She clenched as tight as she could to deny the monster entry and flung her head backwards as hard as she could.

It connected but sent white stars dancing in front of her eyes. The monster came again, ducking under a wild punch and seizing her arm. They struggled against each other, Faria's breasts heaving and shaking with the effort of keeping the monster at bay.

Neither of them noticed how close they were getting to the edge of the incline as they traded blows. The Cave Ghoul scraped its talon across the skin of her shoulder in a shallow cut and the Thrakkian responded with a bit to the monster's arms which tasted of rotten fish and filth.

Faria delivered one final blow with her knee which sent the monster over the edge of the incline but it gripped her arm firmly and dragged her over the edge with it. Both tumbled down the small drop into the waiting rocks below.

Darkness took her soon after and she felt her head hit something solid and her body lay motionless on the ground. The Cave Ghoul lay still as well but then it started to twitch and slowly rose.

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Faria's eyes snapped open to a blur of light and dark. It took a while for her vision to clear but the cavern slowly came into focus. Her body felt sore and lethargic and the scratch on her shoulder burned like crazy. She tried to move her arms but they did not respond. She remembered that Cave Ghoul talons had a temporary paralysis effect on their victims to make their feasting less troublesome.

Her head buzzed with pain but there was another sensation which was worrying her. She looked down aghast as she saw the last

Cave Ghoul's head between her legs. It looked up as she exhaled a sharp intake of breath and hissed at her. Its tongue was several inches long and forked like a snake. The lower half of its face was slick with vaginal juices where it has been lapping and suckling her tender areas while she lay unconscious.

It lowered its face into her groin again and she immediately felt its tongue flickering over her labial lips and stimulating her clitoris. Shockwaves went up her system as the Cave Ghoul continued its cunnilingus. Its tongue probed her slick opening and she felt it wriggle inside her. Her gritted her teeth against the feeling, it felt like a slick worm was burrowing around inside her.

Faria tried to move her hips to escape but the venom in her system reduced her struggles to little more than a wriggle. The Cave Ghoul tongue rolled around inside her, almost as if it were tasting the walls of her vagina for a tasty morsel.

She could she how disgusting its erection was, it was almost touching the monster's belly it was so rigid with excitement. It

seemed much bigger than the other monsters in terms of girth. The shaft was a mottled dark grey and throbbing with veins and the mushroom like head was slick with viscous fluid.

The monster withdrew its tongue finally from her and roughly reached over to squeeze her breasts. She yelled into its face to make it stop but it just responded by squeezing them harder until her nipples were erect. With its other three fingered hand, it stroked the sickening appendage between its legs. Its breathing was getting more and more rapid as it made small clicking sounds in its throat.

Faria knew what was coming next and there was nothing she could do about it until the paralysis wore off. The Cave Ghoul placed both hands on her knees and roughly forced her legs wide apart while it positioned itself between them.

Its horrific phallus was twitching so much it missed the mark several times, the head prodding her anus and digging into her groin. Eventually the tip found her opening and the Cave Ghoul hissed with delight.

Faria gritted her teeth as the grey knot of flesh disappeared inside her right up to the monster's swinging testicles.

She refused to cry out, her Thrakkian pride demanded she face up to this creature that was violating her. The head was the problem, it was the widest part and there was some form of nodule behind the glans which bumped against her inner walls as the Cave Ghoul began to pump in and out of her.

Wet smacking sounds filled the cavern and Faria could not help but let out small grunts of disdain as the monster built up rhythm. Its legs shuffled forward to touch her thighs so it could achieve maximum penetration and pound into her hard. She realized it was trying to cause her as much pain as possible with its ferocious pace but it would last long if it kept going. Afterwards she would likely end up as dinner.

She tried to throw some insults at it, although it didn't understand, it recognized the tone and it lashed out with an arm that struck her face and pushed her gaze to the side.

It was perfect, her head started to ring again but she saw one of her axes laying nearby, no more than a few paces away. If she could move then she would easily be able to reach for it and take her revenge. First she had to break the paralysis.

She willed her muscles to respond, any of them but nothing happened at first. She spat at the Cave Ghoul who stalled its vigorous rutting for a moment to screech at her. It resumed by withdrawing its penis almost fully before thrusting all the way back in. It hurt like crazy but it served a purpose, the momentum was gradually inching her body towards the axe. A few more thrusts and her fingertips could almost brush the axe handle.

A warm glow began to spread through her body and her fingers twitched following by a few muscle spasms in her forearms. The paralysis was wearing off but she couldn't move too soon in case her body failed her. Likewise she couldn't allow the monster to finish with her otherwise she would share the same fate as the other humans in the room.

Over the next few minutes, Faria done all she could to halt the Cave Ghouls incessant sexual activity. She shouted, cursed, spat and even tried to defecate to halt the creature. It was growing close to ejaculation, its body was slimy as if it was sweating and the phallus was battering her something fierce.

The time to strike would be soon, her fingers had already loosely fitted around the handle of her axe. Luckily it was not stuck in Ghoul flesh so she would have a clean swing when the time was right. It was only a matter of seconds away, the Cave Ghoul was jerking spasmodically and thrashing its head from side to side.

It threw its head back, tongue lolling out and saliva dripping from its mouth. That's when Faria shot bolt upright and crunched the handle of her axe across the monster's face.

Teeth and blood flew from its mouth as it was hurled backwards, it's penis wrenched from her vagina with a hideous squelch. Foul yellow ejaculate spurted from the head

just as it withdrew, splattering her stomach and the ground beneath her buttocks.

The Cave Ghoul lay unmoving on the ground, it's breathing rapid and wheezy.

Good, it was still alive.

Thrakkian rage built within her and he slowly got to her feet, stumbling slightly and extremely sore. She quickly searched the dead bodies for what she wanted, three leather belts and a wineskin. With the leather belts she trussed the creature's hands behind the back and at the ankles. The third she cinched loosely around its head and under the chin.

The wineskin she used to douse herself of blood and semen as best she could, wincing as she squirted the remaining into her vagina to clean away the monster's filthy slime. It stung like fire but it was necessary, she had no idea if this was the same Cave Ghoul who had been sodomizing the dead human.

She hurled the empty wineskin to the ground, tugging the Cave Ghoul across the

floor by the belt binding its hands. She heard a crack as its arm's hyper extended and it started to stir. Faria propped the monster up who opened its eyes and stared at her warily. Its jaw looked crooked, possibly broken from where she had hit it but it still sported an erection.

The Thrakkian wasted no time, she seized it's testicles in one hand and slit the blade of her axe down the scrotum all the way to the anus. She reached into the dripping sac and puled free the pink testicles. The monster howled as she pulled and yanked each one until they broke free. Faria didn't cut them, it caused more pain if they ruptured.

She shoved the first one in the monster's mouth, pulling up on the belt so it couldn't spit it out and it was forced to chew. She repeated it with the other testicle before splitting it's penis in two, slicing slowly from the urethra down to the root. The Cave Ghoul died eventually when she began to feed it on its own intestines.

Faria retrieved her second axe from the skull of one of the other Cave Ghouls and

stood in the middle of the cavern taking deep breaths. None of the dead humans looked like a wizard; she could see no robes or jewellery like wizards were wont to wear. As she was exploring for more clues she heard a creak from off to her left.

Her head whipped around and she saw a cowed figure at a small wooden doorway she hadn't spotted until now. It went to raise a hand covered with rings but before the figure could do anything else, she launched one of her axes towards it.

The figure ducked back behind the doorway quickly but not quick enough as the axe sliced off two fingers before thunking into the door.

'Fucking wizards!' Faria exclaimed and prepared to give chase.

This hunt was not over yet.

She stamped on the severed fingers with her heel and grinded them into the ground. Faria had heard some wizards could regenerate appendages easier than blinking their eyes so she intended to make this as

difficult as possible for her target. There was nowhere else for him to run but Faria wasted no time in shoulder barging the door open to pursue him.

Beyond the doorway was a narrow, rocky corridor that led in one direction and was illuminated by candles. The candles were melted to the walls wherever there was a flat surface which gave the corridor an irregular looking glow. Faria proceeded slowly but steadily mainly to avoid any sharp areas of ground that would cut into her bare feet.

Her keen senses picked up spots of blood on the ground and flecks on the wall where the wizard's severed fingers had left a gruesome trail. She thought she heard his shuffling footsteps ahead and then some mumbling. She quickened her pace, not wanting him to have time to conjure a spell. If a fireball came roaring down the corridor then she would have no place to hide.

Faria hurried through the passageway and emerged into a dead end chamber. It was half the size of the previous area where she had battled with the cave ghouls but it was

still quite spacious. It was roughly circular in shape and at the far end, the wizard had a collection of shabby shelves and even a half broken table to serve as his lab. Various bottles filled with colourful liquid lined the shelves a number of other implements lay around, most notably surgical tools Faria had seen used on a battlefield for amputation and cutting.

All were bloodied and some looked freshly used. There was a stench in the air of putrid meat and the coppery scent of blood could not be mistaken. The wizard was standing by a large object covered by a dirty white sheet. Faria couldn't tell what was beneath it but it was leaking yellow and red fluids which had formed huge crusty patches on the material concealing it.

It was this hidden object that the wizard was focusing on. His arms were outstretched towards it as if he was in reverence. His eyes were closed tight in concentration as he mumbled his arcane words. He looked slightly pale which may have been attributed to the shock and pain of losing some fingers.

He was an average sized man with long scraggly hair going grey at the temples. Deep lines creased his face, especially around the eyes which made him look old and weary. A dark shadow of stubble shadowed his face although his chin was almost white with old man whiskers. Faria was used to seeing wizards in fine silks and well-tailored clothes but this one wore a simple grey robe smeared with dirt and dried blood.

The only indication of his previous life was the rings he wore on his fingers. Those that were still attached to his hand anyway. The appendage which was missing some digits looked like a bloody glove which was already swelling. Faria let out a shout and approached with her axes raised above her head.

The wizard's head snapped towards her and his eyes bulged. His mouth formed a perfect 'o' where he had stopped halfway through his incantation. His brow furrowed in confusion and then he snarled in anger.

'You fool!' He snarled, spittle flying from his lips. 'Do not interrupt the animation!'

The wizard's good hand shot out towards her and an invisible shockwave of energy knocked Faria backwards and off her feet. She landed on her back but used the momentum to roll her shoulder and pivot into a low crouch. She watched the wizard in silent fury, poised like an angry predator for him to make another move.

He was clearly preparing another spell but as he began his attack, something erupted from beneath the white sheet. An arm, three times the size of a normal man's gripped the wizard's other arm as it rose in the air. He gasped and a brief moment of fear crossed his face before whatever lay beneath the sheet tugged his arm clean out of the socket.

The wizard was too shocked to cry out initially and just sunk to his knees as he looked at the white sheet and the creature beneath it. He raised his good arm to gently touch the hand and arm like a father would their child. The hand slowly formed a fist and then came crashing down on the wizard's head, audibly snapping his neck and killing him instantly.

Faria slowly rose to her feet, watching in fascination as whatever was concealed under the sheet raised its arm and dragged the cover from its frame. What was underneath made it clear why there was a bounty on this wizard. Even Faria took two steps back from the monstrosity which now faced her.

The creature was twice her height and corded with thick muscle but nothing about it was natural. Its limbs were completely disproportionate to each other. One arm was thick and strong while the opposite was long and spindly and ended in talons. One leg was shorter than the other which gave it a lopsided stance especially as its left side seemed twisted and misshapen.

The creature's flesh was a patchwork of oddities which had been sewn together and even held together with metal hooks in some places which exposed large gashes and sores which wept pus and blood furiously. On the right side of its chest was what looked like a human face sewn into the skin as if it were a sightless second head. Some parts were covered in coarse hair

while others were smoother portions of skin of various pigments.

It was a grotesque jigsaw of body parts and the head looked like it was somehow only half formed. The skull was a bulbous malformed thing which tapered into an elongated jaw that exposed the teeth and tendon on one side where skin had not yet been grafted. A long red tongue hung from its mouth and saliva dripped freely from the large mouth. Small tufts of hair sprouted from the skull which was crisscrossed with cuts and metal fastenings.

One eye focused on her, a huge bulging orb that was watery and bright red with blood. It seemed as if it would almost burst at any moment compared to the other eye which was much smaller and set back further into its face. A low moan escaped the creature as it took a faltering step towards her and then another.

It was only as it stepped away from the shadows that Faria noticed the foul thing swinging between its legs. She had no idea what the wizard was going to use this creature for but its penis looked to be made

from several lengths of fused arm that ended in a hand. Instead of fingers, a glistening red shaft replaced each digit. Wherever they had come from, they weren't from a human source. The appendage was so long it reached down to the creature's knees and swayed as it lumbered towards her.

Faria had come here for the Wizard's but now this creature stood in her way. It looked slow and clumsy but Faria was never one to back down from a challenge. She stood up and allowed the flesh golem to take several more steps before charging with her twin axes raised above her head. The blades sunk into the creature's chest and Faria screamed bloody murder at it as she twisted and applied force to the biting weapons.

The flesh golem looked at her passively, cocking its head to one side in confusion. Then it looked down at the axes in its chest and a low grunt of understanding rumbled from its throat. Before Faria could move, the golem seized both of her arms and tugged her arms. She lost her grip on the axes as

they were pulled up and to the sides as if the monster wanted to crucify her.

Her feet left the floor as the creature started to move again. Faria kicked and wriggled but the creature's grip was like iron and her kick were not making any impact on the thick flesh. Eventually her back was pushed up against one of the cave walls where there was a small shelf of rock. Faria aimed several double footed kicks at the golem's sternum but they had little impact.

She watched with horror as the weird thing between its legs contorted and writhed as the arms joints moved into a new position. Too late she realized what was happening as the five glistening penises pointed between her splayed legs. Faria gasped when the first one penetrated her and then cried out as a second squirmed into her anus.

The strange shafts felt soft and wriggled around like fingers, the remaining three left sticky trails over her inner thighs as the bobbed and jerked. The flesh golem was standing still as the bizarre arm manoeuvred to gain further penetration.

Faria turned her head to the side, letting out small gasps as she was abused for the second time in these caves by a creature even more disgusting than the Cave Ghouls.

The flesh golem forced a second penis into her slippery vagina and Faria contemplated bashing her own head against the rocks to lose consciousness. Better that then watch this foul monstrosity use her body as a plaything. Another shaft forced its way into her anus and then the last penis somehow thrust into her vagina so all five were now inside her body.

Faria bucked and writhed at the humiliation and the uncomfortably painful violation. She could not stop the small gasps of pain as the invading shafts filled her insides and rubbed together with a sickening wet slurping. She gritted her teeth and forced herself to look down at the mess between her legs. It looked like a vast amount of raw meat had been inserted into her and was now trying to burrow deeper and deeper inside. A bad stench of corrupted flesh and stale sex washed her which made her eyes roll up into her head.

She was going to have to something quickly, she had no idea if the wizard had given this creature testicles but she certainly didn't want its foul seed exploding inside her. The penises were moving in a more rhythmic sequence now, thrusting and moving in circular motion in both her holes which was making her whole body quiver with false pleasure.

Faria felt the golem's grip shift on her left arm and she noticed this was the weaker of the creature's limbs. The grip had shifted somewhere near her inner elbow, allowing Faria to move her hand to the creature's forearm where there was a large stitched area.

With great fury, she began clawing and scratching as the creature's arms and soon felt the stitches break open and the wound gaped. She tried her best to ignore the pounding happening between her legs and dug her nails into the wounds, tearing and pulling at the tendons and muscles under the skin.

Although the golem showed no sign of pain, it began thrusting into her with all five

penises at the same time, causing an especially sharp pain in her anus which made her lose her grip on the creature's arm as her body went into spasm.

She was close to losing consciousness due to the violent ministrations of the phallic intrusion. The grip on her left arm was definitely looser though, two of the fingers stiffened and lost their hold on her arms and she was able to slip her arms free.

Faria seized an axe handle, which were still protruding from the creature's chest, and yanked it free. She didn't hesitate to aim for the creature evil looking eye and the blade cleaved clean through before grinding on the bone of its skull.

The flesh golem roared as ocular fluid gushed from the burst socket, splattering over Faria's naked breasts and belly. She screamed as the penises aggressively pulled out from her with an audible sucking noise. The golem hurled her across the chamber with its remaining good arm.

Faria's arms and legs pin wheeled in the air as the brute force of the throw sent her

crashing into the shelves on the opposite side of the chamber. She may have blacked out for a few seconds but her survival instincts told her to rise and fight. Only there was a problem with her lower back and her arms didn't respond to her commands.

One side of her felt numb and tingly and her vision was blurry as two flesh golems wavered before her briefly. She shook her head to clear the cobwebs and tried to stand. One of her legs gave way though and she had to support herself and use the shelves to drag herself up to a standing position.

Faria fixed the golem with a steely look as it turned and began to move towards her, the axe still buried in its face. Now it stood between her and the exit, she was sure if she could get back into the main cave, the creature's larger frame would not fit through the door. Her only problem now was that she wasn't sure she could move any faster than the lumbering mound of twisted flesh moving towards her.

The golem seized the desk in the centre of the chamber with one arms and flipped it up and to the side. It shattered against the walls, showering the area in splinters and forcing Faria to cover her face with an arm to avoid any sharp splinters.

Speed was not going to save her and if she got within the reach of that huge arm then she was not going to last long. In an act of desperation, Faria began picking up the potions and coloured fluids from the shelves and hurling them at the advancing creature with her good arm.

Most had no effect and just shattered into harmless colours but there was a bright green bottle near her feet with a fire symbol on it. She lowered herself to the floor, wincing in pain and tossed the bottle towards the creature that was no more than a few steps from her now. The bottle bounced off its body and shattered on the floor but the effect was magnificent.

The bright green liquid sizzled and immediately began melting the flesh on one foot. Being oblivious to pain, the golem took a further step into the liquid and within

seconds, the bones had been exposed and then, even they started to disintegrate into black smoke.

The golem looked down in confusion as it wobbled unsteadily and then went down to one knee. Now they were even, both the golem and Faria were having difficulty using one side of their bodies. The determined Thrakkian began shifting her body away, rolling and wriggling around the perimeter of the room in an ungainly heap to put some space between her and the golem.

The creature tried to grab her flailing feet but it missed and growled in frustration as she slithered away. Faria hauled herself over to the corner of the cavern, half crawling and half stumbling to safety. She managed to get herself into a sitting position, her breathing coming heavily with the exertion of dragging her own body weight with only one good arm and leg.

The flesh golem was copying her movement, using its far stronger limbs to pull itself towards her. In desperation, Faria fumbled around the rocky walls, looking for

anything she could find to defend herself. Her hands were scolded on an oil lantern sitting askew just above her head. It was burning low but she seized it, ignoring the hiss of hot glass and metal on her palms and launched it at the golem.

It landed on the ground just under its head a small fireball erupted where the oil ignited. What Faria didn't expect was that the many coloured potion bottles she had thrown earlier were clearly flammable. A huge whoosh of heat went up as a multi coloured set of flames engulfed the golem's skin. There was a high pitched groan as the flames dies down to a fierce orange as it blackened and charred the creature's skin.

Faria laughed, her eyes glinting in victory but then her smile faded as the flame consumed features of the golem looked at her and began moving forward once again. She flung her body to the side, landing hard on her front but putting enough distance between herself and the golem to begin crawling away. She had to make it to the doorway and get through before the golem got to her. If she could just make it that far then she would be safe.

Faria gritted her teeth and pulled her body back through the passageway to where she had first entered the wizard's lab. She didn't look behind, she felt the heat and stench of searing flesh behind her and even though she felt the brush of charred fingers on her ankles several times. Sweat streamed down her body as she finally saw the doorway and with the last of her strength she flung herself through it, falling and tumbling in a heap on the other side.

The golem's seared face came into view moments later but the small entrance way stopped its progress as its shoulders wedged it tight. The creature mewled and groaned as it thrashed, trying to still get at her as the flesh melted from its bones. She was just out of reach as its huge arm attempted to reach her.

Faria watched as the golem's movements slowly began to fade. It took a long time for it to completely stop moving, it was nothing more than a charcoal skeleton by the time it ceased all movement. When it did, Faria broke out into a fit of laughter, hugging her injured body but revelling in the temporary pain and the sweetness of her victory.

This had been a good hunt, henchmen dead, Cave Ghouls defeated and now the world had one less wizard and flesh golem to deal with. Of course, her axes were probably ruined as they had still been embedded in the golem but she would find new ones to replace them.

She would still need to remove the wizard's head as evidence of her success but her body was tired and wasn't responding. She needed to sleep although there could be more Cave Ghouls in this cave system. She decided it wasn't worth the risk and she forced her body to respond as she made it to her hands and knees.

Faria found a small club on one of the dead henchmen's bodies and limped over to the smouldering flesh golem. She began clubbing the dead bones until they cracked and broke leaving nothing but a melted mess. Her axes had indeed half melted and fused with some of the bone and would not be recoverable.

This was a shame.

She had won them in a tournament, defeating a Thrakkian clan leader for the weapons. Faria scattered the dead bones as best she could, she didn't know how powerful the wizard's magic was but she didn't want an animated skeleton coming after her.

Now she just needed something sharp to cleave off the dead wizard's head.

Then she would rest.

And probably kill the first person she saw outside the caves to make herself feel better.

Faria did so enjoy being a bounty hunter.

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