

A Clockwork Myth

Laela was having an awkward moment.

She had just been pitched the most ridiculous bounty mission of all time and tears were literally streaming down her cheeks from laughing so hard.

Only the country bumpkin villagers who had gathered around her in the tavern weren't sharing in her merriment. In fact they looked a bit pissed that she was laughing so hard at their request. It was one of those situations when everybody was looking at each other trying to work out what was so funny and if the person laughing was somehow deranged.

Laela composed herself, wiping away the tears and letting out a small cough. She looked at the dirt smeared faces before her who stared back with solemn stoicism. At any moment one of them would crack and one of her fellow bounty hunters would appear to jibe her about the wonderful joke.

Nothing of the sort happened though and the tavern had fallen into a dangerous silence. The tense atmosphere didn't escape her so she thought saying something was better than nothing.

‘You are fucking kidding me, right?’ Laela asked.

‘No Miss!’ One of the villagers said. ‘This is no joke.’

Laela had to take a sip of her drink to steady herself. It tasted like dishwater but she didn’t think it wise to spit it out and insult them even further.

‘It’s not?’ Was all she could muster at this point.

‘No, we have planning this for a whole year, all of us saving every penny to hire the first bounty hunter that came to us,’ one of the other villagers with a felt hat explained.

‘Luck me, I was the first,’ Laela mumbled.

‘What’s that Miss?’ An old crone smiled showing a mouth of gums.

‘Nothing, just thinking out loud,’ Laela answered. ‘So, can we go over this one more time?’

‘Yes!’ the tavern almost answered as one.

‘You want me to go to the end of the rainbow and bring back the pot of gold which is there?’

‘Yes!’ The small choir of villager answered.

‘And you also tell me that the treasure is guarded by vicious leprechauns?’

‘It’s true Miss,’ one villager answered. ‘Old Jopeck went himself a few days ago and nobody has seen him since.’

‘Poor Jopeck,’ Laela consoled. ‘How old was he?’

‘Oh eighty odd winters young Miss!’ Another piped up. ‘Was a bit funny in the head, always loses his bearings.’ The rest of the tavern chuckled, murmuring their agreement.

‘So an old man who gets lost easily...has got lost?’ Laela confirmed.

‘Yes Miss but no doubt it was those Leprechauns!’ The villagers all nodded and grumbled their agreement.

‘Of course,’ Laela smiled warmly. It should probably be a crime to take money from the

simple minded but she was a bounty hunter for hire. 'So how much gold are you going to pay me?'

The villagers quickly hoisted a small chest onto the table and lifted the lid. It was full to brimming with gold and silver coins with the odd jewel glinting here and there. There must have been close to a thousand pieces of treasure before her.

'Where did you get this?' Laela whispered, never letting her eyes leave the contents of the chest. There was no earthly way a group of farmers could gather this much.

'The Leprechaun's treasure Miss,' the toothless crone explained. 'I remember the last bounty hunter who helped us. He brought us back a pot of treasure so large we lived like kings!'

'This is all that's left,' the felt hat yokel explained. 'Before long it will all be gone. We've been keeping this last chest back as payment for whoever can retrieve the Leprechaun's treasure.'

'But if you've already stolen it once?' Laela raised her eyebrows.

‘Every rainbow brings new treasure to the pot Miss,’ the crone explained.

‘Of course it does,’ Laela sighed. ‘Pardon me for saying but you don’t look like folk who have lived like kings?’

The villagers shared that communal look with each other as if confused. A robust bearded man who stank of manure leaned close in and spoke in a low voice. ‘You’re right Miss. But those Leprechauns have followed us everywhere since we took their treasure. We thought if we posed as simple folk, they wouldn’t find us. But they are always following. Long as we leave a piece of treasure out in the open it satisfies them but they come every night. If we don’t leave them nothing then...one of us goes missing.’

‘So you plan on giving this treasure back and stealing more?’ Laela had to take an even longer swig of her drink this time as her head was starting to hurt.

‘Yes!’ The orchestration of peasants confirmed.

‘Only this time we were hoping you’d be killing these Leprechauns so they can’t find us?’ The crone cooed.

Laela sat back in her chair completely exasperated with the situation. ‘What of the folk who you have traded with? Don’t they own some of the treasure?’

A grim and guilty silence spread through the tavern until felt hat broke it. ‘Aye Miss. The Leprechauns got them. Nothing stops them from reclaiming what is theirs.’

‘Oh this is...wonderful,’ Laela pinched the bridge of her nose between thumb and forefinger to try and stop the pounding in her head.

‘You can trick them though Miss,’ felt hat continued. ‘Pretend to give the treasure back then kill the little beasts and bring us back an even bigger pot.’

A chorus of agreement went round the tavern, even a few foot stomps provided some primitive percussion. Laela shook her head and raised her hands for silence. ‘Could somebody please get me a drink?’

A mug of foaming ale appeared within moments in front of her. The liquid smelt rather stale and strong but she downed the contents in one and wiped her mouth with the back of her hand much to the delight of the peasants.

‘So Miss? Will ye help us?’ Felt hat asked with a stupid grin on his face.

Laela wanted to punch them all in the face but she somehow smiled sweetly and replied politely. ‘I will let you know in the morning.’

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Of course Laela had no intention of helping these simple minded fools. Back home, in the city of Starfire, her sister used to refer to villagers like these as ‘batshit crazy’. There was no treasure at the end of the rainbow and there was no such thing as Leprechauns. She was hoping they would all get drunk so she could slip out while nobody was watching. They had insisted she stay at the tavern until morning though so she could give them her answer.

Now she was essentially trapped in a mouldy smelling room where a single cot was the only furniture. Inspection of her sleeping arrangements had revealed some very suspicious stains on the bed sheets. It did have a pleasant enough open fire which would mean she wouldn't freeze to death. There was also a small window which was jammed and refused to open.

She could see the village square from out the window and could still see a few peasants moving and dancing around. They couldn't all stay awake forever, she would sneak out in the early hours and leave this ridiculous place behind her. In the meantime, she needed something to keep her occupied while she waited for the fools to tire themselves out.

Laela drew two small black batons from her waist and examined them closely. They looked harmless enough but with a flick of her wrists, blue lightning arced and slithered over them. Her sister was one of the best inventor's in the city of Starfire and she assured Laela these stun rods packed enough punch to kill if necessary. She hadn't tried them out yet although she

could think of several nearby villagers who were ideal candidates.

She flicked the rods off and placed them on the single cot. Next she unclasped her belt and unclipped several pouches. There were a dozen round objects of different hues inside which she also laid out. They were small but deadly, a sudden impact would make them explode and release all manner of death dealing from fire to poison gas. Another deadly gift from her beloved sister.

Laela peered out the window again but the villagers were still loitering. They could not see up into her room so she would be safe to complete her exercises in private. She stripped off her outer clothing and neatly folded it on the cot next to her weapons, avoiding the suspicious stains where she could.

She stood in her white underclothes, a small clinging crop top and briefs which exposed too much of her buttocks. She admired her reflection in the window for a while. Those peasants would love to see her like this she was sure but they would never get the chance. Laela put her back against

one corner, took a breath and executed a smooth cartwheel front flip to land perfectly on her feet in the opposite corner.

She performed the same manoeuvre another nine times flawlessly, her breasts tussling against the fabric of her top as they attempted to escape several times. Next she pressed her back flat against one wall, raising her arms above her head so both palms were flat against each other. She took two steps away from the wall and then placed the sole of one foot against the opposite leg, slowly raising it until it was above her knee. Laela held the pose while staying perfectly balanced, her thigh muscles burning pleasantly with the strain. She repeated it with her opposite leg, breathing in and out calmly.

Before her next routine she jogged lightly on the spot, shaking out her tense muscles which had bunched up tightly from the tavern conversation earlier. When she was ready she planted her feet and arched backwards, her hands reaching back to touch the floor to form a bridge. She held kept her body arched to a count of one hundred before lifting her legs and raising

her body into a handstand and flipping onto her feet.

Laela's routine got no less intense as she contorted her limbs and body into a myriad of complex positions and exercises few humanoids could master. She only stopped when a thin sheen of sweat covered her body and all her muscles were tingling with the exertion. She was starting to feel much better although from the look of the dwindling fire she had been at it for a while.

When she peered out of the window, the villagers had all dispersed. She waited a few moments but could see no movement. A small smile spread across her face. Now would be a good time to leave this place behind.

As she was about to turn away, a flurry of movement caught her eye. She craned her neck and head to try and get a better angle. She saw it again darting from one side of the village to the other. It was far too small to be one of the villagers, it was child size but she hadn't recalled seeing any kids in the village. The next time it appeared it lingered longer and she saw it was no child.

Whatever it was did not appear human, it was dressed in green and scurried from one place to another on all fours although it had no trouble moving on two legs.

When she thought she heard it cackle the words 'Gold' over and over she went to her bed and picked up her two stun batons. If this was some weird trick the village was playing on her then she was going to show them how bad the joke was.

She unlatched the door and flung it wide open, storming along the corridor and down the stairs into the tavern common room. She met nobody on the way fortunately for them as she strode towards the front door, unbolting it and stepping outside. Laela half jogged to where she had seen the creature last and found it only a short distance away crouched out in the open.

It had its back to her and was admiring something it held between its thumb and forefinger. It crooned softly as it gently moved the item between its fingers, bringing it close to its face and then moving it further away in examination. Laela noticed its hands were grey, the fingers long and

bony and ending in small hooked nails. The green clothes it was wearing were a little torn and bedraggled but they still resembled a well-tailored set of breeches and jerkin with waistcoat.

Laela had never seen a well-dressed creature such as this before. Its hair resembled that of an old man, it was white and thin showing more of the grey skin beneath. Was this some kind of deformed villager? Or a very eccentric Dwarf or Gnome even? There were many Gnomes back home in Starfire and they had a similar tone to their skin.

She'd never seen one dressed like this though or behaving so strangely. Laela decided to approach closer and slowly moved forward a few more steps. She saw the item the creature was admiring was a golden coin. She remembered what the villagers had said earlier about Leprechauns coming each night to reclaim their treasure. If they found at least one piece, they left the villagers alone for the night.

Was she actually staring at a Leprechaun?

That would certainly explain the odd clothes and fascination with a gold coin. As she tried to get closer, her bare foot kicked at a stone. The Leprechaun quickly closed its fist around the gold coin and whipped its head around to snarl at her.

Two yellow eyes narrowed to slits as they focused on her, a double row of needle teeth grinned at her that almost went from ear to ear. The facial features were sharp and pointed not unlike an emaciated skull with a gloomy film of skin stretched over it. Two pointed ears stuck out from the side of its head much like other ancient races descended from the Fey world of Faerie.

The horrid looking mouth opened and a long pink tongue rolled out in a cascade of saliva. Surprisingly the creature spoke in a lilting accent. 'Do not try and steal our gold!'

It scurried off with the treasure before Laela could even half raise her arms. She took a deep breath and shook her head in astonishment. So perhaps there was some truth in the stories after all? She watched after the Leprechaun for a while, debating

whether to give chase but eventually decided against it. If Leprechauns actually existed then so did the mysterious rainbow and an overflowing pot of treasure.

Laela turned around to go back to the tavern only to jump back in fright. The villagers in all their glory were standing clustered there with expectant grins on their faces. Laela stared back at them aghast and wondered why a few of them were making odd noises. Then she realized she was still in her underclothes and the cold air was making the outline of her nipples quite obvious.

‘Well miss?’ The crone spoke up. ‘Do you believe us now?’

In response, Laela screamed in frustration and activated her stun rods with a flick of her wrists. Blue sparks danced across the surface and she clashed them together to emit a shower of sparks which elicited a few panicked cries from the villagers.

‘I said I would tell you in the morning!’ She screeched and charged towards them. Fortunately most of them scattered in time as she stomped back to the tavern and

slammed the door so hard behind her that the whole building rattled in its frame.

'I think that might be a yes,' felt hat chuckled and the rest of the villagers rumbled their agreement.

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The villagers may have escaped Laela's rage temporarily but the poor innkeeper at the tavern hadn't. Being the only other human residing at the tavern meant he got the full force of the young Bounty Hunter's ire. When her incessant pounding on the door to his private quarters did not rouse him, the sudden jolt of blue light and sparks certainly did as she forced her way into his room.

The poor man nearly keeled over seeing so much young flesh jiggling furiously before his eyes as Laela gesticulated and pointed wildly. He caught something about new bed linen and a fire and read between the lines that she was not happy with her room. He staggered out of bed and set to work making it right, all the while trying to avoid staring at her ample bosom and firm buttocks.

When he had finished, he bowed low, keeping his eyes to the ground and her grunts signalled his retreat. She thought she may not get any rest thinking about the bizarre confrontation with the Leprechaun but sleep took her almost as soon as she closed her eyes.

She had a peculiar dream where the ground was made of fluffy white clouds. Trees grew out of them that bore fruits of every colour of the rainbow. There was even a multi coloured unicorn prancing around and whinnying in musical tones. It kept pooping sweets and snorted sugar dust from its nose.

Fat round birds tweeted and flapped around her head as their wings dropped cinnamon powder with each beat. Green bunnies hopped around offering her brightly coloured chocolate eggs and small mushroom people cheered her on as she walked through the dreamlike landscape.

As she walked along waving cheerily to the mushroom people, the ground began to change. Her feet sunk into the clouds until she was up to her knees but she still carried

on even though it felt like walking through mud. The creatures started to thin out and stop following her, the waves of joy turned into cries of warning and Laela felt a large shadow loom over her.

She turned her body sluggishly, as she was now waste deep in the sticky clouds, and saw their concern. A huge black cauldron was in front of her, twice the size of her own body, and almost overflowing with gold and jewels of every colour. The plump cauldron began to spin on its axis until a large face was visible on the surface. The mouth was huge and the eyes were slits of green light.

Laela cringed as the mouth opened and chomped down with a grating of metal and flurry of sparks. Then it began to sway and move forward, chomping all the time as it approached. She struggled and wriggled, trying to free herself from the clouds that held her while the monster treasure pot waddled closer. As she stared into a mouth of molten metal, she finally came awake from her dream by sitting bolt upright in bed.

Her body was covered in a thin sheen of sweat and she was gasping as if she had really been struggling in quicksand. The bed sheets were tangled and wrapped around her like pythons which may have explained the sensation of being trapped. A strap to her top had fallen down one shoulder and one of her large breasts had escape. She quickly corrected herself and glanced towards the window to ensure none of the creepy villagers were watching her.

Nobody was there but the sun was shining and a number of ragged looked villagers were setting about their daily tasks in the square.

‘Damn! I overslept!’ she muttered.

Her plan had been to slip away during the night but for some reason she did not feel disappointed. The strange creature she had seen last night had intrigued her and a little spark in the back of her mind was telling her this mission may be worth investigating further. She got dressed in a hurry and prepared some questions for the dim-witted peasants who were no doubt gathered downstairs waiting for her.

There was nobody waiting for her though, in fact the tavern was almost empty. The innkeeper was there looking bleary eyed and idly cleaning the counter top with a cloth. He never made eye contact with her as she walked towards him.

‘Can I have some breakfast?’ Laela asked and the innkeeper disappeared into the back without answering.

There was only another two patrons in the common room, both sitting at opposite ends. One was staring into a congealing bowl of porridge and another was coughing heartily into a mug of beer. She didn’t recognize either of them from the night before. Laela tuned her back to the bar and leaned against it, watching the main entrance to see if any of them were going to make an appearance.

She lost patience after about thirty seconds and stomped towards the entrance and flung open the doors. The stench of body sweat and manure hit her but she walked out into the sunshine and started to accost the villagers. She turned and poked them to get their attention, staring straight at them

to see nothing but unfamiliar and bewildered dirt streaked faces.

None of them were from the group the previous night. Laela had accosted every peasant in the open and she was thinking about invading homes next when she remembered what the villagers had told her the night before. Hadn't they said they had lived liked kings and queens on the stolen gold but the Leprechaun's kept finding them?

If what she had seen last night was a Leprechaun then they had found them again and the villagers weren't villagers at all. They were on the run!

Laela started to run towards the perimeter of the village. After being so keen to employ her, they had now fled. It was suspicious and she was going to catch up to them to find out what was going on. It was as she was running that she heard a peculiar noise. Her gear was always secure but there was an annoying clicking sound coming from her clothing.

She stopped and rattled her belt. The sound was coming from one of her pouches that

stored her bombs. She reached in and explored with her fingers and felt a cool, circular piece of metal. She withdrew it and found a golden unmarked coin. It looked remarkably like a coin from the treasure trove the villagers had shown her.

What did this mean? Had they hidden a coin on purpose in her clothing?

As she was pondering the coin there was a shout from her right and a horse drawn cart jerked into view from a small barn. She made eye contact with the villager driving and her eyes narrowed. The felt hat was unmistakable and the man visibly jerked in his seat as he spotted her. The wagon was covered by a large burlap sheet but there didn't appear to be any other passengers.

Felt hat attempted to jerk the reins of the cart but the horse was slow to respond. Laela leaped onto the driver's seat and kicked the man square in the chest as he tried to raise his hands to ward off her attack. He went tumbling backwards and landed hard on the floor where Laela leaped down to greet him. He was trying to scoot backwards on his backside but the air had

clearly been knocked from him as he grimaced in pain.

His ridiculous hat was askew on his head and a nervous sweat was already beginning to run down his face. Laela jabbed one of her stun rods into his sternum and brandished the coin in his face.

‘What is this?’ She snarled at him.

Felt hat looked between the coin and her eyes and shook his head. ‘Never seen it before Miss!’

Laela raised her stun rod and activated it. Immediately, lightning snaked around the surface and she tapped it against a small rock by the villagers head. The stone shattered into a hundred shards, some of them drew blood from Felt hat’s face and he let out a low cry like a dying farm anima. Laela de-activated the rod and rested it against the underside of his chin.

‘Your head will do the same if I don’t get answers,’ she never broke eye contact with the feeble man.

For a while there was silence and then he started to blubber like a child. 'I'm sorry Miss, we never meant for this to happen.'

'For what to happen? Where did this coin come from?'

'It is part of the Leprechaun treasure,' he sniffed.

'And why would I want one coin?'

'One coin, one jewel, it is enough!' Felt hat whined back at her. 'We didn't think you would help us so we have forced you to!'

'How? With a coin?'

'Once you possess a piece of the treasure, you are cursed like the rest of us.'

Laela remembered what they had told her back at the tavern. How merchants and others had fallen to the Leprechauns as they hunted the spent treasure. She was tempted to turn his head into pulp now but somehow she kept her composure. 'So what if I give it back to you right now?'

Felt hat actually laughed this time. 'Doesn't work like that Miss. You think we haven't

tried over the years? You saw the little beast last night. Once they find us, we have to move on. Now you have to help us to help yourself.'

'How do I break the curse?'

'Kill the Leprechauns.' Felt hat spat to the side to show his contempt.

'Easy enough, they didn't look too scary to me,' Laela murmured. **'How many are there?'**

'Two that we know of but you can't kill them in this world Miss!'

'What do you mean?' Laela jabbed the stun rod further under his chin.

'They are not from this world, killing them only delays them. You need to go through the rainbow with a piece of their treasure and destroy them.'

'This is ridiculous!' Laela stamped her foot in annoyance.

'Is it? Are you willing to bet your life that the myth isn't true?'

Laela stared at felt hat and saw the fear in his eyes, not just of her but of the creatures that had pestered them for possibly years. Now she was part of it if she was to believe the myth. ‘Fine, you will take me to the rainbow.’

**‘R-rainbow Miss? I don’t know where it is!’
Felt hat squirmed under the pressure of the stun rod.**

‘They appear near water, right? Take me to the nearest lake. Now!’

Felt hat got to his feet gingerly, readjusted his headwear, and climbed up into the driver’s seat. Laela hopped into the back with her stun rod pointed at his back. They rode in silence, Laela had to readjust her position several times due to the bumpy road and poor driving. She suspected one of the cart wheels was slightly shorter than the other as well due to an unpleasant dipping motion as it moved.

It didn’t last long though as they soon reached the crest of a hill where a rocky shoreline gave way to a small lake. Laela told felt hat to wait and jabbed him in the ribs to emphasise her instruction. She

walked around the perimeter of the lake but saw no rainbow. How did you make a rainbow appear?

Laela stood on the shoreline staring at the still water. She idly ran the Leprechaun coin between her fingers, flicking it up into the air and catching it as she pondered the situation. As she flicked the coin up in the air it caught the sunlight and she could have sworn there was a faint glimmer on the surface of the lake.

She frowned and pursed her lips as an idea sprung in her mind. She looked back at Felt hat who was looking on from his cart intently.

‘I guess there is only one way to find out,’ Laela muttered to herself and she flicked the coin high in the air so it twinkled in the sunlight and then plopped into the lake surface.

Nothing happened apart from a few ripples in the water.

Laela was thinking she was going to have to go in after the coin when a sudden cascade of colour saturated the lake. Another myth

she had heard of was that mirrors could form portals to other worlds so why not a lake which was like a huge mirror? She had no idea if this was going to work but she took a few steps back and then done a running leap into the lake.

Her body was sucked beneath the surface and Felt hat smiled.

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It took some time for Laela's vision to clear, mainly because she had her eyes screwed up tightly. She could breathe fine and there was no sensation of being wet. Perhaps one of her bombs had triggered and she was actually dead and floating in the middle of the lake.

There was only one way to find out.

She slowly opened one eye and then the other to find herself in a very familiar place. It was almost as if she was dreaming again but this didn't have the slightly detached feel of a dream. This was real and the clouds she walked on were as real as dirt and the sky was a gigantic rainbow of colours. There was no prancing unicorn or

happy mushroom people though. This strange, new environment was deathly quiet and very flat.

There was no horizon, just a fluffy white floor without even the most minor deviation. There were no trees or buildings, just a nothingness that was disturbing. Laela took a few steps and the ground was as form as anything she had trod upon before so she took a few more steps. She looked around as she walked without any kind of bearing – there was no sun or moon to gauge her direction.

She lost track of time as she walked, sometimes she ran just to break the tedium but no matter how far she walked, there was no changes to the landscape. She started to panic, she would not last long here without food or water. In desperation she started to spin around and shout at the desolate reality.

‘Hello! Can anybody hear me!?’ Laela repeated as she walked. It was on her seventh attempt that she got some form of response. She had sunk down to her knees

in false hope when there was a disturbance in the ground.

Laela frowned and started to crawl towards it. 'Hello?' She asked the empty ground.

A high pitched laugh came from the ground a shrill voice mocking her own. 'Helloooooo!'

Laela scooted away from where the voice had come from, fumbling for one of her bombs from a pouch. She stayed on her backside, poised to throw the device if anything unexpected made an appearance. Nothing did and the area was silent once again. She slowly got to her feet and tiptoed towards the area the laughter had from.

Suddenly the laughter erupted from behind her and she turned on her heel to see a plume of cloud rise into the air like a geyser followed by more mad laughter. Then another mini explosion came from her right and then more and more in an ever tightening circle until it was almost beneath her feet.

She flung her body to the side just in time and rolled to her feet as a small figure

erupted from the ground with a shriek of hilarious laughter. It landed deftly in a crouch, staring at her with huge yellow slitted eyes. Its face cracked a smile and the familiar teeth were displayed that she had seen the previous.

So, she was in the realm of the Leprechauns after all.

She noticed the creature was mostly naked now, wearing nothing but a small loincloth. Its whole body looked like it had been stretched over a skeleton it was so emaciated. A long tongue lolled from its mouth and licked its lips and another shrill chorus of laughter came from its throat.

It scurried left and Laela followed its movement – her arms cocked and ready to throw the bomb. Then it scurried right before standing slowly and pointing at her accusingly.

‘You are lost!’ It squeaked at her.

Laela was slightly taken back that it had spoken so she said nothing. If these creatures were ancient Fey then they would

be tricksters and anything she said may have implications.

In reply to her silence, the Leprechaun began dancing merrily on the spot, raising its left leg and then right leg while throwing its arms in the air. ‘You are lost! And you cannot leave!’ It giggled in glorious dance.

Deciding that the dance was stupid, and she didn’t like watching its genitals flapping against the loincloth, Laela armed her bomb and threw it at the creature. It watched in fascination as the device arced towards it and exploded just above its head. Laela’s grin turned sour though as instead of a rain of acid, a rain of flowers cascaded around the Leprechaun sending it in a frenzy of more dancing and laughing.

Laela looked on in shock as the flowers fell from the sky and the Leprechaun pointed at her and hissed: ‘You dummy! Your weapons won’t work here!’

Rage filled her and turned her face red as she drew on of her stun rods and activated it. Instead of deadly blue lightning, a pleasant rainbow glow illuminated its length. Laela threw it to the ground in

frustration which made the Leprechaun laugh even more.

‘How do I get out of here?’ Laela screamed at the little creature who instantly stopped laughing and extended an arm with palm raised upwards.

‘Give us the gold back!’ The Leprechaun said simply and with a hint of malice.

‘I haven’t got your stupid gold!’ Laela stamped her foot petulantly. ‘I threw it in the lake to get here!’

There was another disturbance next to the Leprechaun and another of the creatures rose from the cloudy floor. It was almost an identical twin of the other one. She recalled the villager mentioning there were two that they knew of. No others emerged but now there were two sets of yellow eyes focused on her.

‘We want our gold back,’ they hissed in unison.

Laela was trying to think quickly, she was unarmed and facing two creatures that seemed to be able to appear at will in their

own realm. They started to advance towards her, their eyes gleaming with mischief.

‘Wait!’ Laela raised both hands as if the mere gesture would stop them in their tracks. ‘I know where the rest of your gold is!’

The two Leprechauns stopped dead in their tracks and looked at each other. The one who had appeared first spoke: ‘How do you know where our treasure is?’

‘Show us!’ The second one drooled in anticipation.

‘I don’t have it with me!’ Laela clarified which caused both Leprechauns to hiss at her. ‘But I know who has it!’ She quickly added.

They both narrowed their eyes at her and the first one spoke again. ‘Who has our gold?’

‘Some peasants, at least they say they are peasants. They said they stole your gold many years ago and lived like kings and queens. You have been gradually tracking it down over the years to take it back. Maybe

even killing those who have it. You know who I speak of don't you?'

There had been a hint of recognition on their skull like features as she spoke. They knew of who she spoke of alright so she pressed her advantage and played on their obsession.

'I can take you to them if you let me out of this place!' She said in a quiet whisper although there was nobody else around to hear.

'Not so simple,' the second one shook its head.

'Not so simple at all,' the first one agreed and then the two creatures starting chattering in a language Laela did not understand.

After several minutes of listening to the annoying dialect, Laela couldn't maintain her patience any longer. 'What are you talking about? Are you going to show me a way out of this place or not?'

The two Leprechauns stopped their chatter and looked at her as if she had just appeared from nowhere.

‘Let you go?’ The first one giggled. ‘Yes, but to leave this land means giving us something.’

‘Yes! Yes!’ The second agreed. ‘And since you have no gold to give us...’

Both Leprechauns reached around and unclasped their loincloths so they fell on the ground to stand naked before her. Laela stood with mouth agape as she watched their small grey penises rise steadily to curved shafts of lust. Their insane giggling signalled their intent and Laela shook her head.

‘Oh no way! I am not letting you two things fucking touch me!’

She turned to sprint away but before she got more than a few steps in, the ground bulged and one of the Leprechauns burst from the clouds with its arms outstretched. Laela’s reactions were quick and she ducked easily enough. The creature sank back into the ground to appear again to her

right. She launched a high kick and caught it in the midsection which stopped its insane laughter briefly as it landed in a heap.

Laela moved towards the fallen Leprechaun with the intention of snapping its neck under her boot but the second creature suddenly burst from the ground. She instinctively raised her arms to protect her face but the Leprechaun was not aiming for her face. Its hands latched onto the bodice of her top and yanked down hard.

The material ripped and her breasts spilled out. Laela gasped and staggered back, using both hands to cup each boob to prevent the little Leprechauns seeing her exposed assets. 'What the fuck!' She screamed at them, 'You just ripped my clothes!'

Both Leprechauns laughed as they stood side by side, stroking their erections. Their pink tongue's wiggled obscenely as they licked their lips. Laela aimed a weak kick at one of them but the little creature caught her foot and tugged. She nearly lost her

balance and crashed to her knees and the Leprechauns were on her.

Each one planted a foot on opposite shoulders and thrust their groins towards her face. She turned her head to avoid one of the shafts but the other pushed passed her lips and entered her mouth. She tried to prise the creature away with both hands but they were strong and the invading penis soon filled her mouth.

It tasted weirdly sweet almost like a sugared cane and was solid rather than pliable like flesh. She feared if she bit down on it then all her teeth would shatter. She gagged on the invading organ as saliva leaked from the corners of her mouth to dribble down her breasts. Her eyes watered and she banged on the Leprechaun's scrawny chest with her fists.

It eventually withdrew its penis and she coughed and spluttered trying to suck in air. Her respite was short lived as the second Leprechaun tugged at her hair and forced another erection into her mouth as deep as the first. It scraped against her teeth and filled her mouth. More tears

streamed down her eyes and her vision became blurred.

The duo of Leprechauns repeated this for short bursts for what seemed like forever until Laela's arms hung limply at her sides. Just as she thought they would take pity on her, both shafts pressed against her lips insistently. She shook her head and tried to keep her mouth closed but they pinched her nose until she was forced to breathe from her mouth.

Both erections crammed into her mouth although they both could not reach the back of her throat thankfully as there simply wasn't room. They squeezed and jiggled her breasts in their hands as fresh strands of saliva coated their shafts and leaked from her mouth. The Leprechaun penises were making her choke badly and restricting her airway making her go red in the face.

She finally gagged and almost vomited before the creatures withdrew and she collapsed forward to retch up a puddle of spit and bile. She was so busy trying to catch her breath and wipe the tears from her eyes that she didn't really comprehend

the Leprechauns removing her boots and then her leggings.

She was so desperate for air that she didn't care what they done next, she just wanted to avoid being choked to death by monster cocks! The Leprechauns were chittering at each other again as they tugged and pulled at her clothes. She yelped as one of them pulled at her pubic hair. One of them scrambled towards her as she began to sit upright and slapped her across the face.

It wasn't a hard hit but it was enough to shock her into laying on her back. The Leprechaun roughly pulled her hair and face and shoved its penis back into her mouth. This time it was not interested in deep throat and started to thrust in and out of her mouth, the tip making her opposite cheek bulge.

The second Leprechaun scooted between her legs, pushing her thighs apart and jabbing it's erection into her vagina. She cried out and her eyes bulged as it penetrated her. Luckily the earlier oral administrations had got the Leprechaun shafts slick enough to enter her as she was

dry down there. Who would get turned on by these things??

Both of the Leprechauns were in a frenzy now, the one by her head was aggressively thrusting while the one between her legs was bucking and writhing. As disgusting as this was, Laela allowed them to use her as a plan formed in her mind. Her belt with her bombs was resting by her hip and she slowly tucked her hand into a pouch to withdraw one of them and hold it in her fist.

There was no better time to strike than when an opponent was at their weakest. Even if her bombs now exploded into flowers. The Leprechaun in her mouth ejaculated first, the semen was sweet and thick but she still turned her head and spat it out. The second ejaculated inside her vagina mere moments later, bucking so wildly, most of it spurted over her stomach and thighs.

As the Leprechauns reeled from their orgasm, Laela elbowed the one by her head to stun it and then shoved the activated bomb down its throat. She grabbed the second in a head scissors with her legs and

squeezed hard. It tried to escape but she held firm even with the Leprechaun ejaculate over her body acting as lubricant.

The Leprechaun with the bomb down its throat had inserted both hands down its own oesophagus to try and pry the bomb out. It activated it with its desperate fumbling and a cascade of flowers filled its mouth, inflating its head to double the size. Its eyes almost bulged out and became bloodshot and red as it keeled over and hit the ground. The body immediately turned to dust and dissipated into the ground.

The rainbow sky above her immediately lost some of its colour. The second Leprechaun was trying to bite her legs but Laela rolled and smashed its head into the ground, rolling onto her back again and arching her back to keep it from escaping back into the clouds. Her leg muscles were strong and they were crushing the creature's throat like a python crushes its victim.

As its struggling began to fade and its long tongue turned purple, Laela jerked her legs and snapped the creature's neck. The remaining colour drained from the sky and

the world blurred for an instant before she found herself back on the bank of the lake where she had previously entered the Leprechaun realm.

She was mostly naked still but her weapons were by her side and the idiot villagers were all gathered before her staring at her. Laela didn't bother covering her body or even getting up. Felt hat was at the front of course wringing his hands nervously. Some of them were talking at her but she did not comprehend their words. She recognized all their faces, they were all here.

This was extremely pleasing.

She fished another bomb from her belt clumsily and activated it. There were general murmurs of unrest now as some of the peasants began moving back. Laela tossed the bomb into the air above them and then rolled into the lake. The muted explosion and subsequent screams told her that this bomb hadn't exploded into flowers.

She noticed something gleaming at the bottom of the lake and dived down smoothly to retrieve it. She broke the surface and swam to the opposite side to

the peasants who were still writhing around in agony. Water dripped from her naked body as she turned and watched the suffering as they tried to crawl away and cried for help.

Laela watched as she began to flick the golden coin up in the air, catching it deftly and smiling as the last of the screams plunged the lake into silence. Only then did she retrieve the remnants of her clothes and dressed as best she could.

She found the small treasure chest the villagers had shown her the night before in the back of the cart Felt hat was riding. She opened it and was greeted with a display of coins and jewels.

Laela smiled and slammed the lid shut.

She tucked it under her arms and walked off into the distance, whistling as she went.

The Leprechauns wouldn't be needing this gold anymore.

Nor would the peasants.

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