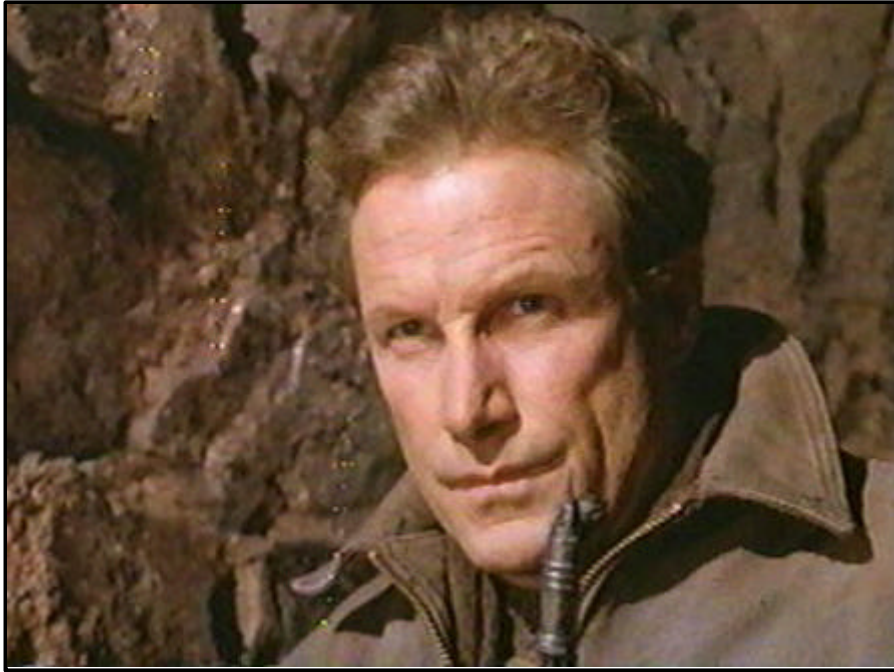


The Witches of Eriadne: Double, Double - Part 2: Introductions

by [The Space Witches](#)

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Max Eilerson

Taken from TNT's official Crusade Site

Chapter 1

Angel led Gideon away from the others; she had to admit it was taking a lot out of her to keep her hold on his movements. It was easy as pie moving an object, but people were another matter. It took a lot of energy now to keep this gorgeous specimen moving as she wanted him to, especially since he was obviously resisting her control over him. She silently hoped that she wouldn't lose her hold on him, though she knew she could handle him if she did and he tried to get away. The thought of what she was going to do with her pet brought a smile to her face.

Gideon was no longer feeling calm. He was being taken somewhere by this raven-haired beauty... Angel, and it wasn't him who was moving his legs one in front of the other. He felt like a goddam puppet on a string... being manipulated at the will of someone else. He cast a sideways glance at Angel; he didn't like the smile he saw on her full red lips. He had the distinct feeling that whatever she was thinking involved him. He suddenly recalled what the Apocalypse Box had told him about this world. Danger, much pain, much pleasure. He eyed Angel suspiciously and wondered which she was. Call him paranoid, but he had the feeling she was all three.

Angel almost breathed a loud sigh of relief when she came to the large, heavy wooden door at the end of the corridor; she was getting a headache with the effort it took to move her new pet. Gideon took in where she had brought him. The corridor was dimly lit, dark shadows hiding most parts. He felt himself come to a stop and he brought his eyes to the door in front of him. It reminded him of something out of an old gothic-horror movie.

Angel turned to face Gideon "I am going to let you move on your own. But I warn you, try to run and I will punish you... severely. Do you understand?" Gideon thought it best to agree. Now wasn't the time to do anything rash. It was wiser to wait and bide his time. He nodded.

"Good boy," said Angel in a low, husky voice. Gideon had to admit it was one hell of a sexy voice. Hell, she was sexy all the way. While Angel unlocked the large door, Gideon took the time to take a good look at her. She was about a head shorter than him. Her long raven hair hung half way down her back... it looked even blacker against the blood-red half top she was wearing. Her midriff was bare and the skin was pale and flawless - her waist was narrow and swelled only slightly to her hips. His eyes drifted to her long legs, to which the red suede pants clung like a second skin.

He couldn't contain a smile of appreciation at her tight, neat buttocks, and he found himself wondering what it would be like to cup them in his hands. Well, he would have considered doing that if he could move. Which he found he still couldn't. [Didn't she say something about letting me move on my own?]

As if on cue, Angel unlocked and opened the door. Turning to Gideon, she lowered those startling blue eyes and looked at him. Gideon felt the control of his limbs return to him. He was busy trying to figure out how control of his body kept being given and then taken away, and then given back again, when he felt himself being shoved into the room, hard. He landed with an undignified thump on the floor. He turned himself around into a half-sitting, half-lying position, and shot her a dark look.

Angel wasn't perturbed by the angry look the Captain gave her; in fact it heightened her excitement. He looked like one who would fight back, and she liked it when they fought back. It was so much more fun that way.

Angel moved forward to stand just in front of Gideon. Angry as he was, he couldn't help but admire the sway of her hips as she came towards him. Her walk was soft and graceful; in fact, it reminded him of how a wild cat moved, with grace and power. But he was angry... damned angry that this slip of a woman was treating him like this and it was time someone told her that. He came quickly to a standing position and glared at her. "Just who the hell do you think you are, lady?" His voice was tight with anger.

Angel cocked her head to one side and said nothing. Gideon was about to give her a piece of his mind when the door slammed shut, seemingly of its own accord. His head snapped up at the loud whack it made. Then, without warning, he was hit by something solid that sent him tumbling to the ground once again.

The something solid he soon discovered was Angel. She had launched herself at him and was now

lying across him. Her face was only inches away from his, and he found his eyes held by her piecing blue ones. They were looking at him so intently that he felt she was looking right inside him, down into his very soul. He was acutely aware that her right hip was pressing into his crotch; when she shifted her weight slightly she rubbed, all too obviously, against him. He decided if he didn't get her off him now... he wouldn't be accountable for his actions.

As he opened his mouth to ask her to get off him, her hand flew up and hit him solidly across the face. That really pissed him off. He raised his arms to move her off him, but as he moved them, some unseen force drove them to the ground above his head, pinning them there. He tried to move, but... nothing.

Angel let out a throaty laugh as she watched Gideon fight against the hold she had on him. Gideon stopped struggling when he heard her laugh, and looked at her.

Angel leaned on Gideon's chest. There was laughter in her eyes when she spoke. "Oh, I am going to have so much fun with you..." Angel paused and Gideon watched as her eyes shifted from his to the name patch on his uniform "Gideon." The way she said his name sent shivers down his spine; her voice was low and sultry when she repeated his name again, as if she was savoring it on her tongue. "Gideon."

Her next movement caught him by surprise. She moved lightning fast as she lowered her lips to his, it was not a gentle kiss as she forced his lips apart with her tongue and entered his mouth. Gideon could do nothing but give in, and he realized that he actually didn't want to resist, even though rationally what was happening was, to say the least... bizarre, and he should try and stop it. He had come here searching for two members of his crew; his attention should be on trying to find out if they were here and if they were all right. He tasted something sweet on her lips, it was something familiar but he couldn't concentrate enough to figure out what it was. His tongue met hers, and Angel deepened the kiss, her tongue dancing with Gideon's in almost frantic movements.

He heard a moan, and realized it was coming from him, and he felt his body starting to react to the woman lying on top of him. He felt the blood rush into his groin and his cock started to swell. She moved her hips against him again, and then stopped. She had obviously felt his swelling response. She raised her head from his mouth and her ice-blue eyes transfixed him again.

"That's very good, Gideon. For that you get a reward."

He wasn't sure whether this was good news or not. This woman's "rewards" could be painful. He felt himself frozen into place again. She knelt above him, astride his hips, and started to struggle with the zipper on his jacket. He could see her biting her lip as the zipper stuck. Patience obviously was not one of her virtues. She reached behind her and produced a small knife from a hidden pocket in the back of her tunic. He suddenly thought of Dureena and wondered if she and Raven had been captured too. Then the knife approaching his throat attracted his complete attention. She slid it under his collar then slit straight down to his waist. His jacket fell open. She moved the knife back to his neck; he tensed and waited for her next move. She slid the knife under the collar at his shoulder and slit the jacket from shoulder to wrist, and then did the same on the other side. She put the knife back in its holster [Worth remembering where that was hidden...] and lifted the remnants of the front of his jacket away from his body. His limbs unfroze.

Before she could do anything else he spoke. "Hey, I liked that jacket. At least I didn't look like a bellhop." She raised her hand to strike him again, but he quickly spoke again. "Wait a minute, let's make this easier. I'd rather have some clothes intact when you've finished doing... whatever it is you have planned. Why don't I just take off the rest, if that's what you want?"

John seemed to have fallen into an uncomfortable sleep, and Max found he envied the younger man that respite, however fitful. He was trying to study his surroundings in greater detail when he heard the door creaking open. Having loosened his neck muscles, he was able to look in that direction without too much pain.

"It's you," he smirked slightly at the small blue haired girl. The previous time he'd seen her, she had been in the company of the red-headed woman, her so-called sister. This blue-haired beauty looked far too one-of-a-kind to have any relations. Despite his predicament, he'd been hoping that she would come back. There was something about the way she had looked at him; a mix of curiosity, lust, eagerness, and perhaps loneliness. When he'd seen her before, she looked like a child on the verge of blossoming womanhood. In the few hours since he'd seen her, she seemed to have grown several years. Her sapphire blouse was now rounded nicely in the front, accentuating the silvery pattern on the black vest. Max found his body responding involuntarily, and shifted against the hard stone of the floor.

"Of course," she said sweetly, her tinkling voice strangely arousing. She seemed to glide closer, her curves moving invitingly.

[Dammit! This is no time for that! She's probably come to gut me!] Max unconsciously licked his lips as she moved closer.

"Were you expecting someone else? One of my sisters, perhaps?" She was now standing over him. He couldn't help but notice how tiny her waist was. Or maybe it just seemed tiny when compared to her full breasts.

"Well, yeah." He flashed her what he hoped was a calm grin. "I thought that red-head would be coming back for him." He cocked his head towards the still sleeping Matheson. "Seems I was mistaken." He looked up and met her exotic eyes. "For once, I'm glad of it."

She giggled quietly. "You're cute." A pale, delicate looking hand reached out and traced Max's jaw. The unexpected touch sent faint shivers down Max's spine.

"You're not so bad yourself," he replied, trying to keep his cool. Or at least, trying to pretend he wasn't imagining this woman naked, in a thousand impossible positions. Max could feel himself begin to sweat, despite the coolness of the dungeon.

Her delicate hands reached out to stroke Max's hair and he found himself leaning into the touch like an affection-starved kitten. Fluidly, she sank to the floor and straddled him, her fingers still running through his hair, sending a thousand tingles down his spine. He wished his arms were free, wanting to hold this woman close, feel her soft-looking breasts pressed against him, [Stop

that! You have to get out of here! Remember?!] Max chided himself. [I know... but it's been so long...] Any further thoughts were cut off by Ilas's soft lips pressing against his. It didn't take long for Max to respond. Her mouth was sweet, tasting vaguely of honeysuckle and brown sugar. Max had never thought of plain kissing as an intoxicant before, but the longer their mouths were fused, the drunker Max felt.

Ilas finally broke the kiss, pulling away, leaving Max breathless. "Oh we're going to have fun." She looked sharply to her right as Matheson let out a low moan. Max glanced over to see the young Asian raising his head painfully. Ilas sighed quietly, almost as though disappointed. "I never did like an audience," she muttered. Pressing her lips gently to Max's ear, she let out a sonic wave that rendered Max unconscious. Matheson didn't hear it.

Max slumped in his chains, which Ilas quickly released, letting him slide gently to his side as she stood. Matheson's eyes were dark and wide as she moved over to him.

She glanced around, as though afraid of getting caught. "I really shouldn't," her voice was sweet and childlike. Ilas gave him a look of undisguised hunger, which sent his heart racing. She reminded Matheson of a child trying to talk herself out of stealing a tasty morsel from the table. "You're not my toy, after all." She crouched before him and leaned close. Matheson could feel her warm breath on his lips. "But Demon does tell us to share..." with that final justification, she pressed her mouth to his in a heated, but all-too-brief kiss. Her mouth was sweet and he responded quickly. "I'm going to go play with my toy now." She stepped back and Matheson could swear she grew. At least her arms seemed to thicken. She winked at him, and bent to scoop Max up as though he were a rag doll. Matheson watched in awe as she carried him off, leaving him wide awake to ponder his rather dubious future.

Luke Raven looked around the room where the red-haired woman with the incredibly green eyes - Lilith - had closed him in. It was a small, plush bedroom, but it lacked the signs of permanent habitation. Probably a guest room, though from what Matheson had told them about the planet, he couldn't imagine that they ever had any visitors. [Except us now] he thought sarcastically, [but what do they want from us?] He did a quick search of the room to see if there was anything useful to help him get out, but there was nothing except the furniture, lots of cushions, a carpet and a few tapestries showing different landscapes adorning the walls. He stared at his reflection in the dresser's mirror and asked, "And what do we do now, Dr. Raven?"

After a few seconds' thinking, Luke turned back around and experimentally tested the door, but it was locked firmly. Of course he'd heard the lock click into place, but he had to try everything. He sighed and stuffed his hands into his pants pockets, head hanging -- and froze, his mind racing. Then suddenly he dove to the ground, looking at the base of the door -- and the crack that gaped between it and the floor. [Now if she only left the key in the lock, and if it's thin enough to pass through...]

His eyes betrayed his excitement when he got up into a squat and peeked through the key-hole. The key seemed to be there, all right. He looked around to find something he could use to push it out. [No, no, no... wait!] He stepped over to the dresser and picked up the object that had caught his attention. It was an ancient writing device from Earth - a pen. A really ancient one, he decided, or

at least it was made to look that way. [That must've been one of the first models after they had stopped writing with bird's feathers.] Luke frowned. [F band emissions, castles and ancient pens? How does that fit? Nothing I've seen here indicates that they are technically more advanced than us. I'd even say they are less advanced than we are. The only exception is the F band emissions and the illusions they create. If their source is technology, that is...]

Luke shook his head and went back to the door. [Concentrate on solving your immediate problems.] He looked at the pen in his hands and allowed himself a small smile. [The back end should just fit.] He carefully inserted the pen into the keyhole, felt it touch the key, and pushed gently.

Matheson swore and tore at his manacles in frustration. He still couldn't get through to Gideon or anyone else of their crew. His sweat-covered face betrayed the fatigue he was feeling. Trying over and over to get through that strange block had cost him a lot of energy. [Is it the redhead blocking me, or do they have a technology that can do this?]

At that moment he heard the door being opened, and in stepped three Brakiri guards. Two pulled at the chains his manacles were connected to, while the third helped him get to his feet and stand. "Where's my friend?" John asked, but didn't get any answer. They refastened the chains to his manacles and left, leaving the door open and standing at attention in the corridor outside. He was just starting to wonder what they were waiting for when the petite redhead entered, closed the door behind her and leaned against it for a few seconds, regarding him with the slightest hint of a smile on her face.

Matheson couldn't tear his eyes off her. She had a way of commanding his attention by just being there. Nonetheless, that remark Ilas had dropped -- "You're not my toy, after all" -- gave him a funny feeling in his stomach. "What do you want from us?" he asked. The redhead's smile grew as she walked up to him, her hips swaying with every step she took. She stopped barely a step away from him, and though she was more than a head shorter than him, John had no doubt who was in control here. She reached up and stroked his cheek, making him flinch and seriously messing with his hormones. Especially since he had an interesting perspective of her décolleté when he looked down at her...

"You look tired... I felt you try to send all the time. You can stop trying; I won't let you, Sweet-Face." She leaned her head to the side.

Feeling slightly embarrassed, he answered. "My name's not Sweet-Face, it's John Matheson - So it is you who's blocking me. But - I don't know any telepath who's so strong..."

Redhead's fingers covered his lips. "Shhh... now's not the time for questions..." Out of the blue she produced a small, thin dagger and placed it at the side of his throat. Surprise and fear were clearly showing in John's eyes, although he was trying to control his emotions. "Don't be afraid, Sweet-Face, I won't hurt you." She gave him a lascivious smile and added, "much." She lightly traced the dagger's tip down his throat, and when it touched the collar of his uniform jacket, she increased pressure the slightest bit. To Matheson's surprise the sturdy fabric gave way immediately. He didn't dare to breathe as she quickly covered the jacket with dozens of slices from

collar to hem, her moves almost impossibly quick and efficient. He was even more surprised to find that his skin didn't seem to have suffered one scratch by the sharp blade when she stepped back to admire her handiwork. His jacket and the shirt he wore below it hung down in rags.

John swallowed hard and finally remembered to resume breathing. She again gave him that lascivious smile, a somewhat discomfiting sheen in her eyes. "I told you -- nothing to be afraid of." With one fluid movement she placed a single cut on the skin over his heart and locked her lips around the wound, sucking at the blood, her arms closing around his chest, the dagger gone. John inhaled sharply as his hormones were sent on a roller-coaster ride and that made the last traces of fatigue disappear. His head rolled back and leaned against the stone wall, eyes closed, while Lily's lips wandered over his chest, kissing his skin, licking it with her tongue, biting his nipples with her sharp little teeth, a perfect balance of pleasure and pain. For what seemed like an eternity all that could be heard were John's soft gasps and moans.

Suddenly he felt Lily's arms around his neck, pulling his head down until their lips met in a kiss that was even more ferocious than the first one, partly because this time, he found himself responding immediately, parting his lips and entering her mouth with his tongue. He was painfully aware of her full breasts pressing against his chest and his growing erection, and he desperately wished to have his hands free.

Finally, they had to surface from their deep kiss to get some air. Both were breathing heavily. Lilith's arms still lay around John's neck. "Let... me go," he gasped between breaths, tearing at the manacles, making the chains jingle.

"I'm afraid I can't do that... not yet, at least," Lily purred, her index finger tracing his lips. "I have other plans for you now..." She pulled his head down with her left hand and caught his lower lip between her teeth, softly suckling at it. He could feel her lift her left leg and wrap it around him, moving her hips, grinding their crotches together, smiling against his mouth as she felt him grow harder still. The rhythm of her movements increased, making him desperate. [If only I had my hands free...]

He tried to break free from her mouth, but her hand held him firmly in place. "Mmmm mmmhshhhh..." She loosened her grip the slightest bit and whispered, "I know what I'm doing... trust me." Her forehead leaned against his, and she wouldn't let him go. "Please," John gasped, "Let me --" Lily's hand covered his mouth. Her eyes were closed, her face ecstatic, hips pumping constantly, mercilessly. John could feel himself lose control; he was desperate to be inside her, but knew he couldn't hold back much longer. At that moment Lily's eyes opened, and her ecstatic look was too much. He exploded with a loud moan, with her following close behind. He could feel her nether muscles spasming even through her skirt and his pants. For a moment they stood there as if frozen, breathing heavily. Then her left leg slid down, and she let go of his neck, closing her arms around his chest and leaning her head against it.

Matheson's head sank to her shoulder. He felt seriously groggy. "You... you're crazy, Redhead", he whispered, eyes closed. He felt her rippling laughter more than he heard it. "My name's not Redhead, it's Lilith... but you can call me Lily if you want to." Matheson smiled at her imitation of his earlier tone. "Lily," he repeated, his voice barely audible.

Finally his earlier fatigue from trying to send to his friends, combined with the new physical

exhaustion, proved too much. He nuzzled his face in the curve of her neck as he drifted off to sleep.

"Yes, darling, rest," he heard her murmur, "You'll need your energy later."

He barely felt his hands being released and strong arms lifting him up before he fell into oblivion.

Lilith walked beside the Brakiri guard carrying Matheson through corridors and up stairs to their final destination. John was sleeping soundly. She regarded his face, marveling at the innocent look it carried. [He must be very loyal to his friends,] she thought, remembering how stubbornly he had tried to contact them with his sendings.

When they came to her room she let the guard carrying him enter first and stood there, thinking for a moment. [Now where?] She looked at her four-poster bed a bit to the left on the opposite wall, sheets, canopy and tulle draperies all in medium blue. [No, I don't think so.] She bit her lower lip and looked to the opposite right corner, where a circular "lounging pit" -- at least that was what she liked to call it -- was let into the ground. Four steps led down to its base, which was covered with hides and cushions.

"Put him down there, gently. We don't want to wake him."

The guard obeyed and gently laid Matheson down on the furs, letting his head rest on a cushion. "Leave the door open, just a crack," Lily said on a hunch when he walked out. He bowed and left, leaving Lily to ponder the amusements of the evening.

Angel's eyes lit up with excitement. The thought of having Gideon strip in front of her created warmth between her legs and she felt her nipples harden. She lifted herself to her feet in one lithe motion.

"Yes, strip. Then go lie on the bed over there. On your back" He looked round to where she pointed. A bed with a headboard and footboard was positioned in the corner. He turned back and realised her breathing had accelerated and she was becoming aroused. Well, it was going to be an interesting afternoon.

Angel watched as Gideon got to his feet, her breath coming in fast puffs. She watched with hungry eyes as Gideon crossed his arms in front of him, his hands hooking his red T-shirt and pulling it out of his pants. With a swift motion he pulled it up and over his head.

Angel sucked in her breath at the sight of his broad chest. He wasn't built big... not like some of the boys she'd played with. But he was lean and muscular. A light dusting of dark hair covered his chest, and a narrow line of hair went down his hard flat stomach, disappearing into his pants. Her eyes centered on that area with hungry anticipation.

Gideon watched the way Angel was watching him. He could feel his cock responding to the hungry look in her eyes. He hesitated a moment before his hands moved to the buckle of his pants.

He could hear Angel's breathing stop for a moment and then resume. Then he slowly undid the buckle. He was going to do this slowly... really give her a show. Of course, he realized that he was probably playing with fire teasing her like that, but he was actually enjoying the effect he was obviously having on her. He bent and pulled his boots and socks off quickly.

Angel's eyes were transfixed as she watched Gideon undo his buckle, then slowly, with deliberate movements, his strong hands began to push his pants down. Over his narrow hips, down over his thighs... Angel's stared at his long muscular legs... very nice legs. And she followed the pants' path all the way down to his ankles where they came to a rest with a soft rustle. Gideon stepped out of them and kicked them to one side. Angel watched them and then her eyes slowly returned to where Gideon was standing, now only clad in black briefs.

Gideon's briefs, he realized, did nothing to hide the effect this woman had on his body. His stiffening shaft was straining against the fabric and he realised they served only to accentuate that fact. Angel was staring at him now... well, more correctly, at his crotch. Her eyes had darkened slightly with hunger. And she made a strange little sound.

Oh, yeah, he was having an effect on her, all right. He had obviously kept her waiting long enough, because she moved forward slightly and pointedly looked him in the eye and then down to the briefs. "Everything," she ordered in a husky voice that sounded slightly raw with emotion.

Gideon decided he didn't want to get burned... besides the fabric was rubbing against the now very sensitive skin of his cock. Their eyes locked, and as Gideon started to remove the briefs Angel tore her eyes from his. She almost collapsed when he removed the briefs and his hardening cock spilled out. He was big. Angel licked her now dry lips in anticipation of having her mouth tasting him. She moved forward, but stopped herself. No, she wanted to have him on the bed first, tied down just in case he tried anything while she was enjoying herself. She had the distinct feeling, that despite his obvious reaction... she looked again at the impressive erection... he was biding his time, waiting for an opening to get away.

She found it difficult to speak. "Now... go and lie on the bed." Gideon turned to look where her eyes were looking, then back at her. "If you don't I will move you myself..." Gideon turned - it was difficult to move now because of his erection. He reached the side of the bed, and lay down full length across it. He was vaguely surprised to find that it wasn't as uncomfortable as it looked.

Angel watched him lie down. She was now very excited. She was trying to rein herself in; she wanted to savor every moment with him. But she was rapidly losing control. She moved in a fluid motion to stand beside him at the head of the bed. Her eyes roamed over his body slowly, hungrily. Gideon wished she would stop staring at him that way. It kept raising his pulse a notch higher, sending the blood rushing to his cock.

Gideon tried to concentrate on something else. He turned his head to look up at her... he was surprised by what he saw. She was holding ropes in her hand. [Where the hell did those come from?] He watched in stunned awe, as she grabbed his left wrist and began tying it to the bedpost. He was even more surprised when he felt a rope snaking around his right wrist and both ankles. "What the hell...?" Gideon tried to get up, but Angel pushed him down, and then hit him.

"You will speak only when I say you can."

Gideon couldn't respond, as his head was ringing again. Then he gasped as he felt the ropes tighten, biting into his skin. He felt himself being stretched down the bed. He felt the muscles in his arms, back and legs being strained.

Angel finished tying his left wrist, while her mind finished tying the other ropes.

Gideon felt the ropes tighten one last time. He couldn't move. The ropes cut into him when he tried to test them... it was apparent that he was not going to be able to get out of them. He also realized that it would be easier on his skin if he didn't try. He couldn't help but think that this was what it must have felt like to be stretched on the rack.

Angel took one last look at the ropes, sure that they were tight enough, then looked down at Gideon. He was magnificent. In one quick movement she sprang cat-like onto the bed, straddling his hips and pushing him down into the mattress.

Reaching her chambers, Ilas set Max on her bed and glanced around. The door was large, made of the native wood. Both sides were roughly finished, and Ilas liked it that way. The wall to the left of the door contained a large four-poster bed. Directly across from the bed was a fireplace that warmed the entire room. The wall opposite the door held a large tapestry. The hanging was a large picture with a wide border containing many smaller pictures and symbols. Hand-woven by Ilas, the tapestry represented everything she was. Woven in such a way as to never look the same exact way from any two angles, the tapestry always held the same basic images. In the center was a picture of Ilas and her three sisters. Their faces held only kindness - that was the way Ilas had always known them. Angel and Demon often fought, but sisters always do that sort of thing, Lilith had told her. Ilas's entire life was her sisters. Unlike the other three, she had no recollection prior to forming their family. She also had no memories of exactly why they had been brought together, trained, and then abandoned. The others knew more, but Ilas didn't ask. She was content with her life. It was all she knew and all she needed. Or so she always told herself.

Beyond the bed was a doorway leading into a bathroom, which Ilas walked towards. The tub was a bowl that seemed to have been carved out of the rock itself. Ilas toed a discolored stone and the tub slowly began to fill up, light bubbles forming at the top. Moving back into her bedroom, she saw Max beginning to stir, though he was still quite unconscious. Seeing that he was going to be out for a few more minutes, Ilas locked the door and picked up a bowl of ripe fruit from a table in the corner of the room. Carrying the bowl, she walked into the bathroom, glancing at Max just as he rolled onto his back, groaning softly.

Luke could feel the key give way and slowly pushed on. Suddenly it caught somewhere; he felt the urge to swear but suppressed it. [Calm!] He cautioned himself, and wiggled the pen slightly, keeping up a tiny bit of pressure in the hope of freeing the key. Finally he succeeded, and after a few more seconds his efforts were rewarded with a soft "pling" as the key fell to the floor. Luke listened carefully for sounds indicating that someone had noticed and came to investigate, but didn't hear a sound. He let out a breath he hadn't even realized he'd held. [Now...]

He lay down flat on his belly and peeked through the crack. He was relieved to discover that the key was quite close to the door. He stuck the pen through the crack and tried to nudge it nearer. [Not quite enough... but if I can get my fingers in the crack - YES!] Anyone with thicker fingers wouldn't have had a chance to get them under the door far enough, but he did, and he succeeded in nudging the key a tiny bit nearer, then another bit, and another, until he could draw it in through the crack.

Luke sat up, looking at the key in his hands. He realized he was covered with sweat and wiped his forehead. [And to think that the members of the Thieves' Guild do this for a living...] He smirked at the thought that followed. [Luke Raven, apprentice lock-picker and tunnel-rat... maybe I should ask Dureena where I can enroll when we got out of this!]

He got up and placed the pen back on the dresser -- in case they'd put him back in here, he didn't want them to know just how he'd been able to open the door. Then he inserted the key, listened carefully for a few seconds, and when he still couldn't hear anything turned it. He winced when the lock opened with a loud "click," and strained his ears. After a silent half minute, he finally took a deep breath and pushed down the handle, opening the door just enough so he could peek through the crack.

He couldn't see anyone nearby, so he opened the door a bit more and carefully stuck out his head. The short corridor seemed to be empty. He stepped out and shut the door with as little noise as possible. Then he locked it again with the key, so no one walking by would suspect anything was amiss. [Okay - what to do now?]

He looked to his left, to the end of the corridor, and out of the window. He could see another part of the castle, and behind it -- His heart ached when he looked at the rolling hills out there. [Is this real, or is it all just an illusion, and this castle is in the midst of a rock desert?] He sighed and tore his eyes from the landscape, redirecting them to the castle's interior. [Time to find the others and try to get out of here.] Careful not to make any noise, he walked down the short corridor, staying close to the walls so he could enter one of the other rooms in case he heard someone. When he came to the spiral stairs leading downwards, he listened again, but only silence answered. Slowly he walked down, step by silent step, always alert. When he arrived at the next floor below, he peeked into the corridor. This one was longer and wider, high-ceilinged, and had colorful tapestries showing landscapes adorning the walls, whereas the walls above had been bare. But it seemed just as deserted.

Luke stepped out and walked down the corridor. When he was about mid-way, the corridor widened to a circular space, with the corridor re-emerging on the other side, as if it would lead through a round tower. The light coming from above seemed like natural daylight. Luke craned his neck, and looked at an incredibly blue sky -- the roof consisted of a transparent dome. He sighed, drinking in the vivid colour. [Just like in my childhood...] He tore his eyes from this beautiful sight and looked at the curved wall to his right. It was covered with more tapestries, though something was different about them. Casually, he stepped nearer and glanced up at one of the man-high tapestries. What he saw made him stop dead in his tracks.

He saw an angel-like being floating on a black background, which wasn't surprising in itself, but the realism of the tapestry was incredible. The light the "angel" was sending seemed brighter than he had thought possible for any thread or fabric to convey, almost like real light. He turned to

look at the tapestry next to it, which showed a very strange being. Its "head" with one eye in its front - or was it a helmet? - reminded him of a cobra's head somehow. The being wore a colorful cape that covered it to the ground so he couldn't see any detail of its body.

The next one seemed to combine two pictures, with the blonde and black haired woman, seeming asleep or unconscious, being taken away from separate places by "angels". He went on, looking at each of the tapestries, amazed as much at the detail that had been put into the designs as by their content. One showed the four women that held their prisoner floating in a circle of light, with one "angel" at its centre sending out this light. There were twelve tapestries, each as amazing and fantastic as the other. The content of the last three seemed more realistic to him than the others: a strange ship leaving the planet, the four sisters lying in stasis tubes in a dark chamber below, then a group of Brakiri around the open tubes and the awakened sisters. The last one showed the four women sitting on four throne-like chairs, with uniformed Brakiri guards forming a lane towards the viewer, giving Luke the impression of walking up to them. [What is this? Either someone has a very lively fantasy, or...] He shuddered and studied the empty spot at the end of the wall for a moment, then turned around and glanced at the other curved wall, which was empty, confirming his suspicion. [In mediaeval times, they used to hang tapestries with scenes from legends and fairytales... or from the ruler's life. Is it possible? Can these be scenes from the lives of the four women?] That brought back the memory of their capture. [I have to find the others!] Reluctantly, he left the room, continuing his lonely journey.

Max's eyes blinked open, revealing a rough stone ceiling. He found himself lying on a soft bed. [Bed?! When the hell did I get to a bed?!] The last thing he remembered was being chained to the wall when that woman, Ilas, had come in. After a heady kiss, she'd knocked him out somehow. He didn't have a headache, so he didn't think it was a blow to the head. For a moment, he suspected a drug of some kind, but they always left a bad taste in his mouth. Unless his memory was doing strange things, she'd kissed him on the ear, and that had somehow knocked him out.

Raising his head, he looked around the room. There was a fireplace at the foot of the bed with a roaring fire. The room was something straight out of a mediaeval adventure. His eyes widened when he saw the door. Max stood quickly, then sat down hard on the bed as the room began to spin. Moving more slowly, he rose again and approached the door. Remembering what he'd seen so far, Max decided he couldn't be too cautious. Reaching out slowly, he lay his hand on the door. It felt like any proper wooden door should. He inched his hand towards the handle, preparing himself for... whatever. His fingers wrapped around the wooden handle and pulled. Nothing. No alarms. No shock. No give. It was like the handle was bolted into solid stone.

Turning, he faced the rest of the room, looking for some other way out. There were no windows he could see. "Aha!" he said aloud, striding towards the tapestry. Before he reached the hanging, however, his eyes flickered to the right, and he decided escape could wait.

From his vantage point, Max could see Ilas, eyes closed, blue hair spread over the stone as she lay in the tub. Her hair was longer than he'd guessed from seeing it pinned up. He could see the upper swell of her breasts above the bubbles, but the rest was hidden from view. Moving slowly and, he hoped, quietly, Max walked to the edge of the tub, gazing down at the woman's almost unnaturally pale face. The stone was a dark gray, which was a sharp contrast to her impossibly

white complexion.

"Are you going to stand there all day or come in?" She finally spoke. Her tone was inviting and her almond shaped eyes still lightly closed.

"How's the water?" Max asked, wondering how he'd gone from manacled to a dungeon wall to being invited to bathe with this ... temptress. Not for the first time, he found himself hoping his captivity lasted for a while at least.

"Hot," she said simply, finally opening her eyes and looking at him. One arm slid out of the water and she reached back, raising her breasts out of the water as she plucked a ripe piece of fruit from the bowl. Unfortunately for Max, bubbles concealed her skin from his view. He could only see their round shape amid the bubbles.

"Just the way I like it." Seeing no other way out, Max decided that joining her would be prudent and wise. [And self serving,] he reminded himself. Quickly he stripped, his courage failing him when he came to his briefs. He felt that somehow by keeping his erection covered, he would hide it from Ilas's view.

Ilas's lavender eyes fluttered to his crotch, a delicate blue eyebrow arching as she noticed the sizable bulge that Max was apparently trying to conceal. Max thought, [oh lord, this is going to be quite enjoyable.]

Lowering one foot slowly into the water, Max found a step. A few moments later, he was chest deep in water just hot enough to seem hotter than it really was. The shape of the tub was such that Max could sit comfortably on the warm stone, his legs stretched out under the water. He glanced at Ilas and saw her taking a bite out of a small, juicy, dark red fruit. Noticing his gaze, Ilas turned to face him, her pink tongue flicking out to lick a drop of juice from her lip. "Hungry?" She asked, swishing closer in the water, extending the fruit towards him.

Max regarded her for a long moment, wondering how much he dared. If he were any judge of women, she wouldn't stop him.

Rather than take the fruit as she had expected, Max wrapped his hand gently around Ilas's wrist, and pulled her hand closer. He couldn't help notice that her skin was dry, and there didn't seem to be any residue from the bubbles. Looking carefully at her, Max sank his teeth into the tangy fruit, letting the flavor wash over his tongue. Licking his lips, he saw bright red juice running down Ilas's pale fingers and wrist. She didn't seem to mind his boldness so far, so Max flicked his tongue across her skin, tasting the juice, and an intoxicating spice that could only be her.

"I shouldn't be letting you do that," Ilas pointed out, making no move to pull away. In fact, she seemed to shift even closer, her bare thigh brushing Max's left leg.

"No, I don't suppose you should." Max was still holding her wrist lightly. He took another bite, sending more juices onto her fingers. Her hand trembled slightly as he ran his tongue along the side of her wrist, chasing a small river of redness. "But you could easily stop me," he pointed out, his voice husky with desire. Max continued to meet her hungry gaze as he took another bite, the tip of her thumb slipping between his lips. He sucked the digit gently for a moment before

swallowing his bite. Max had hoped that by concentrating on the fruit and the hand that held it, his own desire would be held in check. It wasn't working, not by a long shot. The warm water swished gently around his crotch, stimulating his already hard cock. The briefs he'd insisted on wearing seemed to chafe. At this moment, he wanted nothing more than to pull this vixen onto his lap and bury himself deep inside her, driving into her warmth.

"Yes, I probably could," she replied softly, snapping him out of his fantasy.

Forcing his eyes to her hand, he noticed there wasn't enough of the fruit to be worth another bite. With his free hand, he took the red fruit from her and set it on the side of the tub. Tugging her arm closer, Max brought her fingers to his mouth and slowly began to lick the juice from them, sucking the tips. "I'm really going too far now," he murmured.

"Much too far," she agreed, gasping softly as his tongue found a particularly sensitive spot at the base of her thumb where it met her wrist.

Ilas began to pull away, smiling at Max as she tugged her hand free. Her breasts rose above the water just enough to afford Max a split second glimpse of her light blue nipples before she sank completely under the water, the bubbles closing over her head. He couldn't see her in the water, but the tub wasn't big enough to hide her completely.

Before he could begin searching, Max felt her hands on his legs, moving up towards his thigh. [She should be running out of air soon.] Somehow, Max doubted the truth of his own thoughts. He felt what could only be her face brushing the inside of his knee. Dipping his hands under the cooling water, he tried to find her head. His hands met only water, and the floating tendrils of her hair before her hands found his. With a strength that surprised him, she pushed his hands away, and Max got the message. His heart pounded as he gripped the side of the tub, trying to anticipate what was going on. She'd been underwater for longer than anyone he'd ever seen, and he began to worry. Her hands tugged at his briefs, pulling them off and freeing his rigid cock. He was so aroused by this time, he groaned loudly when her lips squeezed the head of his cock. The water had cooled enough for her skin to feel hot against his. She took him fully into her mouth with an ease that shocked him. [Oh gods, if she keeps this up...] In an act of desperation, Max plunged his hands underwater, and yanked her off of him, bringing her head above water. He was unable to speak, instead only staring at her with a mixture of disbelief and passion. Water ran down her face and neck, making her skin look ripply for a moment.

Ilas surged forward, wrapping her arms around his shoulders and kissing him passionately. Her legs wrapped around him as he moved forward to meet her. His throbbing cock was trapped between their bodies. Ilas broke the kiss, both of them breathless. Their eyes met as she raised her hips, Max's hand slipping between her legs to find her entrance. She gasped as he found her clit, stroking it for a moment before pulling away. Their faces were inches away, their eyes locked as she lowered herself onto him, her walls stretching to accommodate his considerable size.

With their bodies fully interlocked, they were still for a moment, holding each other tightly. Max held her hips, trying to keep her still a moment longer before he lost control. He moved one hand along her hip, his fingers once again finding her clit. She moaned softly and arched against him, beginning a slow rocking motion. For now, Max was content to let her set the pace, knowing he'd be coming soon enough no matter who was in charge. A moment later, she moaned loudly, and

Max could feel her tighten around him as her body convulsed with pleasure. It was too much, and he pushed himself up hard, emptying himself deep inside her. She slumped forward, panting softly against his neck as he held her tight. Wrapping his arms around her, Max leaned back, feeling her soft breasts pressed against him, their bodies still joined. It was far, far better than his imagination had led him to believe.

Finally lifting her head, Ilas kissed Max softly, her lips playing with his. Cupping the back of her head, Max deepened the kiss, slipping his tongue between her lips. Again the feeling of being drunk washed over him, and Max also felt his body responding in other ways. [What the hell?! It usually takes longer, especially after something like that!]

Not wanting Ilas to think he was some sex-crazed maniac, he lifted her gently off of him, moving her to sit beside him as she had before. Turning, he kissed her again, wondering idly if her mouth held some addictive substance.

After a long, slow kiss, she pulled away, giggling softly. Max watched as she got out of the pool, her back to him. She wrapped the robe around her body before Max could see if all of her hair was blue. Smiling at him, she walked along the edge of the tub. She stopped beside him, and he watched her step carefully on one of several discolored stones -- lighter than the surrounding stone. The tub began to drain quickly and she dropped a robe beside him. Saying nothing, she sauntered into the bedroom, leaving Max to follow. "Don't talk much, do you?" he muttered as he pulled himself from the tub, donning the robe. In spite of his words, Max found her near silence almost appealing. Also, her voice usually had an arousing effect on him, so he was almost glad she wasn't talking at the moment - he was aroused enough!

Tying the belt around his waist, Max noticed his skin seemed dryer than it should have been. The robe was of some material he couldn't identify, and seemed to attract the moisture away from his skin. [Wonder if I can get her to let me keep it, IPX would love this ...] he thought idly, feeling more like his old self. For the first time in a while, he felt guilty about it. "Fuck IPX," he whispered to himself. [Well, something should get fucked, anyway,] he amended, thinking of Ilas.

Ilas was standing before the fire, apparently drying her hair, facing away from him. As Max approached, her hair seemed to shorten. Stopping to watch for a moment, Max tried to dismiss it as a trick of the light. Watching, he saw her hair shrink from a blue mane hanging to her waist, down to a faint blue fuzz surrounding her skull.

Sensing him behind her, Ilas turned, smiling at him. "It's just easier than brushing or drying it when it's long," she explained with a shrug, her hair already beginning to grow again. Max took a step closer, and Ilas's hair grew several more inches. By the time he was standing in front of her, her hair had regained and exceeded its previous length, and hung nearly to her knees.

"What are you?" Max asked the mysterious woman. "Besides my jailer, that is," he added, unable to sound as bitter as he felt he should have.

"For now," she whispered, stepping closer. Her hands rested on his chest, parting his robe slightly. "I'm whatever you want me to be."

"Uh-huh," Max breathed, his arms encircling her waist, and pulling her close. "And what if I

asked you to be my savior -- to let me, and the others go?" His lips grazed hers, and her arms moved up around his neck. Even as he asked, he hoped the answer would be 'no.'

"Would you really want me to?" Ilas met his eyes and pressed herself against him, feeling his reawakening shaft. This time Max wasn't going to deny his returning erection and the demands it was placing on his body.

"No," he admitted, capturing her mouth with his in a crushing kiss. Max felt the knot at his robe loosen and stood back, letting Ilas push the black garment off his shoulders. Reaching for her, he returned the favor, glancing downwards and smirking slightly. "Blue all over, hmm?"

"I like blue," she replied, kissing him again. Max returned the kiss eagerly, stooping slightly and lifting her. Max felt his muscles strain as he discovered Ilas was heavier than her small frame and light weight in the water had led him to believe. Grunting softly, he tossed her onto the bed, enjoying her giggle as she bounced on the soft mattress.

Gideon tried to shift his position, but Angel pushed down on his chest "No!" was all she said. Then she lowered her head, her lips seeking out his throat. Gideon lay dead still as Angel's soft lips brushed along his throat to his Adam's apple, then back to the side of his throat. With her head bent low over him like that he could smell a soft earthy fragrance on her hair. It was intoxicating, and he took in a deep breath. The breath was caught in his throat when he felt Angel sink her teeth into the soft skin of his neck.

Gideon bucked upward and let out a loud yelp. Retaining her position on him, Angel raised her head to look at him. Her eyes were filled with mirth. [She's taking pleasure in hurting me], thought Gideon with shock.

Angel giggled at the expression on Gideon's face "Oh did Angel hurt poor Captain?" Her tone was teasing. She giggled again, Gideon had to admit she looked breathtaking with that naughty expression on her face, her raven hair falling across her eyes. He wished that his hands were free so that he could brush it aside - hell, he wished his hands were free so that he could touch her all over. She lowered her head slightly and whispered. "Angel will kiss it better." Her lips lowered onto the area where she had bitten him, Gideon gasped as her lips brushed the tender spot. He almost stopped breathing when he felt her tongue flicking lightly over the area, bringing pleasure where there had been pain.

Angel continued to gently kiss Gideon's neck, enjoying the taste of his skin. But there were other areas begging her attentions. So shifting her position slightly, she started to kiss his collarbone, especially the sensitive hollow above the bone. Her tongue licked a trail along the length of the collarbone, moving to the hollow at the base of his throat, her lips feather-like as they kissed him. The sensation was driving Gideon wild. When she had shifted her position her suede clad thigh had brushed up against his cock, and he found himself wishing that she would pay attention to the part of him that throbbed almost painfully now.

Gideon knew she was aware of the effect she was having on his body, and that she was intentionally not paying attention to his cock. She was trying to drive him crazy.

Angel shifted again, this time so that she could move down to his chest, where her hands moved over him. She loved the feel of the soft hair on her hands. She lowered her head again, this time to take his right nipple between her teeth. Gideon sucked in his breath, when he felt her tongue lick the hard bud and shuddered. Angel smiled over his nipple as she felt him shake. Her eyes rose to meet his and then she bit down roughly, drawing a deep groan of pain from Gideon. Gideon strained against his restraints, and felt the rope cutting into him. He stopped straining when he felt Angel once again gently sucking his nipple, her tongue tracing circles around it. [Damn her!] The feeling of pleasure and pain was causing Gideon to experience a sensory overload. He watched as Angel lifted her head, her focus now on his other nipple. "Can't pay attention to one and not the other." Gideon realized she wasn't talking to him, but to herself.

Angel moved to take his neglected nipple in her mouth. Taking it in her teeth and teasing it with her tongue, she raised blue eyes to hazel. Gideon seemed to be holding his breath, anticipating what she was going to do next. Instead of biting down, she suckled at it for a while and then released it, so that she could move down to his stomach. She was anything but predictable.

Angel's lips brushed down his flat stomach, slowly making their way to their ultimate destination. She stopped long enough to trace a circle around his navel with her tongue. Then she moved so that her head was only inches away from Gideon's erection.

Gideon's attention was now solely on Angel's face, just inches away from his cock. He could feel her warm breath on the tip of his engorged shaft. She hesitated, then her hand moved to take hold of his cock. She stroked upward, and Gideon groaned when he felt her nails scraping the back of his shaft. Then her head lowered and her tongue flicked out, just on the tip of his penis. She moved her tongue back and forth on the sensitive area. He felt like he was on fire. He thrust his hips upward wanting her to take him all the way into her mouth. But at his movement, Angel raised her head away. She laughed. "Uh Uh Captain...."

Gideon's hips sank back down into the bed, frustration clear on his face. If he had been free he would have thrown her off, ripped off her clothes and taken her hard. But he wasn't. He was at her mercy, under her complete control.

Seeing Gideon's frustration, Angel lowered her head again, deciding to give him a little of what he was looking for. She lowered her mouth onto his penis, her tongue licking up his length, and back down again. She opened her mouth and took one of his balls in her mouth and sucked. Gideon writhed beneath her. The ropes cut into him again as he moved, but he barely noticed the pain. Angel continued sucking his ball, then stopped, moving to the other one, giving it the same attention as the other. Gideon was breathing hard. His cock felt like it was going to explode from the inside out.

He groaned in disappointment when she left his balls and raised her head to look at him with those intense blue eyes. Then she gave him a wicked smile and Gideon swallowed hard. Angel again lowered her head, and this time, taking the head of his penis in her mouth, she bit down gently. Gideon almost lost it when her lips closed around the head and then took him all the way into her mouth, her tongue moving back and forth. Gideon was fast losing control, and he felt himself building up to release.

Angel felt his cock throbbing against the inside of her mouth. It was time to let him cool off; she didn't want him coming... not yet. She moved her lips off his penis. Then she blew on it, cooling the burning flesh. Gideon felt like he was spiraling out of control, one minute like an old 21st century airplane as it plummeted to the ground. Next minute she was blowing cool air on him, bringing him down slowly, not enough to release the pressure in his hard shaft, but enough to bring him back from the brink.

Suddenly she was no longer on the bed with him. [Damn, she moves like lightning,] thought Gideon with a strange sense of loss that she was now standing at the foot of the bed.

All his attention was taken away from his own body, when he saw why Angel was no longer on the bed. She was taking her clothes off. Gideon's eyes were riveted to her as with graceful movements she undid the knot that held the midriff tunic in place and removed it. Gideon's eyes became hungry at the sight of her breasts. They were exquisite, full and round. Her nipples were hard, their dark pink a startling contrast against the pale skin of her breasts. They swayed gently as she moved to untie the holster that hid the knife she had used to cut off his jacket. She let it fall to the ground on top of her tunic.

Angel was fully aware of Gideon's eyes on her, and the hungry look on his face. She hid a smile at how much she enjoyed the way he was watching her.

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The Witches of Eriadne: Double, Double

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