

The characters Torvald Arend 'Tor' & Victoria Angela (nee Connell) Svensen, Virginia Elise Connell, John Conrad & Cathryn Annette 'Cathy' (nee Hunter) Svensen, Brett, Dana Lynn (nee Svensen) and Sabrina Angela Kasbnikov, Roger Baine, Gytha Louise (nee Svensen), Roger Baine Jr. & Heather Louise Delancey, Axel Torvald & Madelyn (nee Barrett) Svensen, Bradley Torvald 'Brad' & Janet Lee (nee Mondragon) Svensen, Trenton, Nancy Jeanne (nee Svensen), Trenton Junior 'TJ' and Chelsea Corbin, Ronald Arend 'Ron' & Brenda Mae (nee Cartwright) Svensen, Lawrence James 'LJ' & Alicia Leanna (nee Svensen) Hood, Valerie Connell, Walter Lee Sr. & Harriet (nee Bishop) Connell, Walter Lee Jr., Michelle Annette 'Misha' (nee Kazinski), Walter Lee III, Joseph Franklin 'Joe' and Sarah Noel Connell, Robert James & Elizabeth Ann (nee Caine) Sands, Barbara Caine, Edward and Mary (nee Leese) Caine, Richard Tisdale & Wilhelmine Marie 'Willi Marie' (nee Kurzweil) Delancey, James William & Nancy (nee Roland) Kurzweil, Erich Martin & Ivanova Marie 'Ira Marie' (nee Schmidt) Kurzweil, Anna Marie (nee Sorenson) Schmidt, Hilda Jean (nee Reed) Sorenson, Canton Rexcall Hill, Troy Long 'Tank' & Amber Lee (nee Cook) Hill, Maxwell Tinglee 'Max' & Julianna Theresa 'Julie' (nee Hill) Longacre, Rafael Manolito Montoya, Jason & Natasha 'Tasha' (nee Porter) Cummeron, Lieutenant Kenneth Aldrin LaCourt, Robert, Jennifer 'Jenna' (nee Ten Bears) & Amanda Longbon, Gerald 'Jerry' Ten Bears, Duncan & Lorna (nee Gibbs) McNichol, Doctor Bruce Peyton, Tina Wood, Peter the dispatcher, El Casa Del Burrito[®], Leonard's Restaurant[®], Hunter Auto Parts[®], Right Way GroceriesTM and Steven Nanomantube are the property of Kellan Meig'h and may not be published or reproduced in any form without express written permission. Any resemblance to any fur or person, either living or dead is purely coincidental

Aslang "The Angelbreaker" Larsdatter and Varghöss are the copyrighted properties of Joan Jacobsen, 2005-2010 Her writings may be found at a wonderful place called "Aslang's Axe Shed" and the URL is as follows; <http://www.aslaug.eu> Please have a look and enjoy her writings.

The characters of Joe and Annie Latrans are copyright The Silver Coyote 2003 - 2010, and are used here with permission.

Stories containing Joe and Annie Latrans along with The Silver Coyote's writings may be found at <http://thesilvercoyote.net/>

Tell them Kellan sent ya. ;-) Note This is a shameless plug for Aslang and The Silver Coyote! What are friends for, anyway?*

The character 'Constantine' is copyright The BioCobra ans is used with permission.

Camille 'Cami' Carter is from the 'Trisha' series by Kellan Meig'h but is not canon to that series. Theresa Rose Westmore is from "A Change Of Profession" by Kellan Meig'h but is not canon to that story. All other characters property of Kellan Meig'h unless otherwise noted.

Copyright© 2010 - 2012 by Kellan Meig'h, All Rights Reserved <http://www.kellanmeigh.com>

“Redemption”

By Kellan Meig'h

Chapter 21 – “Covenants Broken And Covenants Renewed”

Canton looked at his watch once more, nodding to his relatives that it was time to take cover. No sooner than the last member of the Hill family took refuge, a minion made its entrance into the kitchen, materializing with a cloud of sulfurous smoke that took a few moments to dissipate.

“Canton Hill?” the black furry creature asked while he sized up the dapple gray stallion.

“That would be me.” he agreed. “I hope you brought the payment with you.” he added.

“I brought your money but I need to see if the sorceress is still here and that she's fettered properly.”

“Oh, I'm here all right.” Willi put forth as she stepped into the room. “Too bad for you, though.”

“You can't hurt me, bitch. You have your powers . . . blocked . . . by . . .” The small operative stopped talking when he noticed the femme sorceress was not magically impaired in any way, shape or form.

“Sucks to be you, since you just called me a bitch. I guess I should point out that I do not care for other furs to call me that.” Wilhelmine stated coolly. “I'm going to make you suffer, you little asshole but I'm not going to kill you.” she added. “Maybe one of my family will do that instead, just to put you out of your pending misery, you bastard from Hell's depths.”

“Oh, Fuck This, I'm out of . . .” The minion suddenly realized he was being blocked from leaving the scene of his imminent doom. “Hey, maybe we could, you know, talk this over? I didn't really mean it when I called you that name. It was a slip of the tongue,” he suggested, knowing it was either parlay with the Hill family or die a horrible death. It appeared that he did piss off the palomino femme to some high degree, since she was failing at covering her building anger.

“We want answers.” Willi put forth in a malevolent tone, putting her paws on her hips. “We want to know who you work for, for starters.”

“I’m not sure I can say that,” the minion replied, looking a bit smug. That was until the silver dragon’s scale was tossed on the floor at his feet. His face dropped from shock.

“That scale belonged to a very dead drac named Eldon,” Tank offered up while the rest of the family entered the room, making the space seem just that much smaller to the Dark Operative. “He had something to do with this so we all suspect he worked for your boss. Give us a name. Now.”

“I, uh . . .” the Dark Agent sputtered as he picked up the war trophy and examined it. “Erm, I work for this canid, Ted Essey . . .” His statement was cut short when Rafael made a motion with his paw, sending the Agent into the kitchen wall, hard.

“We know of this Señor Essey.” the maned wolf explained. “He is but a minor player, my little minion. We are searching for his boss, the one *Devil’s Spawn* who causes grief for Wilhelmine’s adoptive family.”

“I . . . I can’t . . .” the small black fur was growing scared for his very existence. “I can’t tell you. He will kill me, or worse . . .”

“We’re growing impatient!” Julianna growled as she strode up to the small fur with fire in her eyes. “You tell us who you work for right now, before I just vaporize you!” she shouted as she lifted the Agent from the floor and pinned him to the wall single-pawed. The minion could see the energy orb that the diminutive mare was building in her other paw, one that would destroy him for good.

“Don’t!! Don’t hurt me!!” the Dark Agent screamed. “I’ll tell you but you’ll need to protect me or hide me!!” he added.

“If I move you to some place you’ll not be found, you will tell me your employer’s name.” the mare said very coolly.

“I’ll tell you. Hide me first.”

“No, you say your employer’s name first, then I’ll move you to a world where your boss would never in a million years dare to step foot on it and live to tell about it.”

“Uh, and where would that be, if I may ask?” the small fur asked.

“Consortium home world. You could be a bus driver, since I have the connections with that fur who’s in charge of the transportation around the capitol city.”

“Bus driver?!?” the small one lamented. “I was a taxi driver in New York City when I was a human! Oh Geez . . .”

“Deal?”

“Okay, it’s a deal, but only if you get me a good bus to drive and a good route.”

Julianna pursed her lips. “You wait right here.” She sat him back on his feet and went into the dining area to make a call.

The small equine femme dialed a seventeen digit phone number and waited patiently for some fur to pick up. After a moment or two, she began to have a very quiet conversation with some fur. Several minutes later, she smiled and ended her call.

“That was my second cousin Bruno Santini, your future boss.” she informed the small fur. “He says he can get you on the Route Seven-A line that services the medical complex, the legal sector and some downtown shopping and residential. That is an okay line that goes by a park with a small lake in it. He says you had better be a quick study on operating a Mag-Lev bus.”

“Okay, you kept your end of the deal.” the Dark Agent stated. “I’ll tell you who I work for but we gotta leave as soon as I say his name. Just in case I’m being watched, you know.”

“Fair enough.”

“Ted Essey and I work for Zagam. There, now let’s go.”

“Okay, we’re out of here.” Julianna said with a smile as she popped out with the small black fur in tow.

Canton nodded as he thought about it. “Yeah, that makes sense.” he offered up. “Well, now it’s time to go bovine demon hunting. Time to call a close friend, one Alexi Saiga, for a bit of help.”

Willi Marie brought something to her Grandfather’s attention. “There are a few other fursons that would probably like to be in on this.”

“Your Adoptive Aunt and Uncle?” he queried.

“You guessed it.” she replied, smiling at him.

“Get in touch with them.” Canton directed. “It will take a few days to get this all sorted out, so they will have plenty of time to prepare.”

###

Doctor Peyton put his stethoscope away and shook his head in amazement. He had checked the younger tigress over thoroughly only to find her in obviously perfect health. Even her foot and wrist injuries were fully healed, something he would not have expected. All of the Dark energy that surrounded her wounds in the beginning should have caused them to heal very slowly, in his estimation. Giving it some thought, he looked up at the femme feline.

“So, your other iteration will be here soon?” he questioned. “I would like to examine her, too. It might give me a clue as to what has went on, concerning your injuries.”

“She should be here any moment.” Victoria replied. “I might be able to feel her presence . . .” That thought was sidetracked by footfalls and hooves clopping on the porch. “That would be them.” She got up and headed for the door to meet her other iteration.

Aslaug came in through the primary portal to the coach, followed by the elder tigress. The two femme felines stood facing one another for a moment before the younger feline made a comment.

“Um, I don't remember you being a white tigress the last time that I saw you,” she stated, taken aback by the elder tigress' appearance and cobalt blue eyes.

“It was a parting gift from my doctor.” the elder femme replied. “If I'm going to be Virginia Elise Connell, I'll have to be a white tigress to look the part.”

“Gah, what a realization.” Victoria put forth. “You're now the sister we lost. I . . . I remember playing dolls with her that evening, the night she passed away. She . . . I . . . We were so . . .” the younger tigress began to sob openly.

“I remember it, too. It was hard, to be the one that found her dead,” the white femme agreed as she wrapped her arms around the distraught Victoria. “Well, I'll be Virginia Elise Connell now. You'll have your twin sister back.”

Torvald walked up to the two femmes and took them both in a strong embrace. He was gritting his teeth to keep the tears back but it wasn't working. His muzzle was wet from his emotions getting away from him.

“We will make this situation work for all of us.” he said in a strained voice. “Willi Marie called just now and told me who it was that's screwing with us; it's Zagam again. Her family is preparing to face off against this bastard and I told her that we would like a return match with him.”

“I want a chunk of his ass for a war trophy.” the femme now known as Virginia agreed.

“Me too.” Victoria chimed in. “This time we have numbers in our favor. Zagam doesn't stand a chance in Hell of surviving this.”

“I'll want my piece of his hide.” the Valkyrie stated firmly. She then nodded as she added, “You never know, a certain part of his anatomy might make a good coin purse.”

“We wouldn't want it any other way.” Virginia agreed. “You, of all furs, are most welcome to join us in destroying his ass for good this time.”

“And join you I will.” the filly countered. “I will make sure that he doesn't leave the playing field in one piece.”

Doctor Peyton joined them and got their attention. “I would like to remind all of you that there are more than a few furs that would want a piece of that bastard's ass, too. Jennifer will no doubt want in and Amanda may want in, too.”

“I hadn't given that any thought.” Virginia offered up. She kind of shook her head, then continued. “Why do I think you want to give me a checkup?”

“Wow.” the physician replied. “I was told about how your 'sister' could see through your eyes and now this. I earlier suggested to Victoria that I would like to check you over, too.”

Virginia gave the younger tigress a kiss on the nose and followed the doctor over to a stool where she took a seat at his direction.

“So, how do you feel?” he asked as he began to listen to her lungs.

“My chest is still sore from that dragon falling on me and my sight is just a bit blurry.” the white tigress offered up.

“Hmm, I'm surprised you actually survived being crushed by a dragon.” Bruce put forth. “They weigh more than a ton on the average. All of that gold in their system, you know.”

The berserker spoke up. “He was heavy. I barely got him off of Vic . . . I mean Virginia.” Tor chimed in.

Bruce took that information in. “Well, I would give it a few days, just to be sure.” he put forth. “As far as your sight, I suspect you will be fine by tomorrow.”

While the moose continued with his examination of the white tigress, Maryanne came into the coach, leading her Great-Granddaughter by the paw. It was clear that both femmes were upset. The elder equine femme pulled Nancy and her former husband into the short hall between the kitchen and the front bedroom.

“Tor, we have a problem.” Maryanne offered up. She then turned to her descendant. “Nancy, tell your Grandfather exactly what you just told me.”

“What is it?” the huge stallion asked.

“You know when Grandma Victoria came to retrieve me, I was told that I would be mortal again if I came back down to Earth.” She sniffed, then continued. “Well, I'm not mortal. I cut my paw rather badly but before I could clean the blood off, it was healed.”

“Dammit!” the stallion spat out. “I'm beginning to believe that we will never be allowed to retire!”

“Tor, don't say that!” Maryanne asked, knowing how much they all wanted to get out of the business.

“Well, you tell me.” he retorted. “Nancy was given a very hollow promise. All of us have been given hollow promises. What should we expect from our bosses?”

“I called my Dad,” the young femme offered up. “He told me that he was supposed to be retired, then he was asked to do another mission, on very short notice with my uncle Ron. I don't want to do any more missions!” the small equine blurted out. She then broke down sobbing.

The stallion was upset by this turn of events. “Listen, this is just between the three of us. Do not say a word to Victoria or Virginia about this.”

“Virginia?” Nancy queried. “I'm lost, here . . .” She was interrupted by the two feline 'sisters'.

“Um, care to share?” the white tigress offered up, causing her Great-Granddaughter to look at the femme felines, as if she were comparing them. Looking at the pale tigress, she started to make a statement.

“Uh, you look like you could . . . be . . . related . . . to . . .??” the young femme equine began, noticing the distinct similarities between the two femme felines.

Victoria smiled. “You share your secret and we will share ours.”

“You'll be madder than Hell if I tell you what's up.” Nancy offered up.

“Go ahead.” Virginia replied. “I think we're open to just about any wild, insane thing you might have to share with us.”

“You were there when I was promised a normal life. Well, I'm still immortal.” she put on the table.

The workers over at the permanent residence heard a stereo feral tigress' scream that caused their skin to crawl.

###

Canton and Tank stood at the counter, patiently waiting for the Bailiff to return with a 'perceived amount' owed to the courts by one Alexi Gregorovich Saiga. The elder Hill brother looked at his watch again, just to confirm that it had been over an hour since the aging Andorean had went to call a clerk to look up a credit amount. They could see him through the window, kicked back in a chair, feet up on a desk while he waited for the information he needed. At least that was what Canton hoped he was doing.

The elder Hill had warned Alexi years ago about the dangers associated with this sector of the universe and the possibility of ending up in jail. Well, the stag had ignored his friend and landed up in the slammer in the city of De Morro Blas on Vega Six. While they were waiting, that small femme clerk walked by the desk again, carrying some papers. Canton cringed when she stopped to chat with them.

It wasn't that she was annoying or anything like that, it was her coloration. She was a buckskin equine, if a buckskin were pale lavender with a deep purple-black mane, tail and points. Equally disturbing to the elder stallion were her eyes. The irises were a yellow hue, which seemed just-not-right to the older brother.

“So, you two males still waiting?” she asked, giving them that 'khat that ate the avian' smile. “You know, I could probably speed things up if one of you handsome stallions would come check out a loose leg on my desk.” she suggested. She made a show of it, unbuttoning the two top buttons on her uniform, showing off a ton of cleavage to the two males.

“No, that's all right.” Tank spat out. “We're not very good with paw-tools.” he added.

The elder equine built upon that statement. “He's right, you know. Not good at all. We might just make things worse, you understand.” Canton interjected.

“Well, you don't need to be good with your paws.” she suggested. “You just need to know how to use a tool.” she implied with a sly grin.

“My wife is a sorceress.” Canton blurted out, hoping that would scare her off. It didn't work.

“Oh, your wife is a witch? Say, that would make an awesome three . . .” The small femme was interrupted by the bailiff, who seemed bothered or put off by her presence.

“Canton Hill, your 'friend', Mr. Saiga owes the courts some seventeen thousand Darseks. Payable before his release, I have been instructed to point out.” the bailiff stated flatly. “If you pay us now, we can have him available to pick up in twenty units of time.”

“Hold it.” Tank said, thinking this over. “That's . . . that's over one hundred thousand US Dollars!”

“One hundred twenty-seven thousand, nine hundred and fifty-three dollars and twelve cents.” the blue-skinned male offered up. “Dependent on what the Universal Worlds stock market opens at.” he added.

Canton face-pawed himself. “Highway robbery. Nothing by plain old highway robbery.” he suggested curtly.

“We do say 'Thank You Very Much' when you pay.” the court official brought up with a smile. “Cash, credit-slash-debit card or storage crystal?”

“You're serious?” Canton asked.

“We do want to be polite while we monetarily screw you over, I mean, take your currency.” the bailiff replied with a slight nod of his head.

“He is serious.” Tank suggested. “Okay, we have cash. Gold-pressed latinum okay with you?”

“Ten percent discount for latinum.” the bailiff replied with a smile. The officer then lifted a receiver and punched the All Call button. “Get that sorry stag up here! Now!!” he shouted, then turned back to the two stallions with a smile that seemed a bit forced. “Please follow me and we will get Mr. Saiga's bill settled.”

###

The two stallions had paid the 'bill' for the cervine's indiscretions and they were now just waiting in the lounge for Alexi's appearance. Tank looked over at his older brother, who was still upset at the cost of the payment due.

“Canton, we can make that money back in a year or two. One good movie is all we need.” he suggested.

“I know we can but I was so looking forward to retirement.” the elder stallion replied. “All I know is I want a chunk of that bovine ass-hat's hide for my collection. He has cost me a huge chunk of change today.” After a moment's thought, he added, “Either Zagam's hide or Alexi's hide. I don't really care which one right now.”

Before Troy Long Hill could refute his brother's thinking, the lift doors opened and two muscular Andoreans forcibly vacated the stag from the elevator. Alexi picked himself up from the floor, straightened his clothes and turned to give the guards a piece of his mind, but the elevator was already on its way back up.

The cervine turned again and located his benefactors, smiling as he headed in their direction. Once close enough to converse, he smiled widely and spoke up in his thick Russian accent.

“Canton, my friend! I am so grateful that you liberated me from this *Ад дьира* of a prison! If you would, I need to get some decent clothes. These . . . rags . . . that I wear are very worn and smell of this prison. If you could please drop me off on our French Riviera . . .”

“No can do right now. Maybe later.” the elder equine said very bluntly. “Your ass belongs to me for the time being, Alexi.”

The cervine smiled. “Canton, Comrade, you know I'm good for for the money. Just let me get a change of clothing and . . .”

“It's not that.” Canton put forth. “I know you're never going to pay me back. What I wanted you out of jail for is a job. A simple little job that we need your tracking expertise for.”

“Oh. Some little job?” the stag mused. “No problem, my friend. Anything for you and your family.”

Tank looked over at the antelope. “We want you to find Zagam for us.”

Alexi stopped walking and held up his paws in a dismissing manner. “What? I do not think I heard you right.” He made a show of checking his ears with his fingers, as if they were full of something, blocking his hearing.

“I said, we want you to find Zagam.” the younger equine male reiterated. “You don't have to kill him, just find him and bring him to a prearranged location in one piece.”

“No! Nyet, nyet, nyet!!” the cervine said in an excited tone. “I may be crazy, but I am not insanely suicidal! No, you find yourselves some other insane fur to go . . .”

“Did we mention that I currently own your fuzzy butt?” Canton pointed out.

“You are both bat-shit insane!” the stag blurted out. “Lunatics, do you know that?!?”

The elder stallion made his cervine friend face him. “Listen, we may be crazy but I would like to think that we're crazy like a fox. Crazy enough to go after a demon that's been screwing with my family, particularly my granddaughter and her . . .”

Alexi seemed shocked as he interrupted his friend. “You, 'Mister I don't want kits', have a granddaughter?”

“It's a long story.” Canton admitted. “That tale would be best left for a time when we can enjoy it over some cold Stolichnaya and some of Anna's fresh, home baked bread.”

That information seemed to knock the stag for a loop. “Well, I do not know what to say, except that she is your family, so I, Alexi Gregorovich Saiga, will do whatever . . .” He was cut short by the elder equine.

“Can the Russian theatrics, please? My granddaughter has some very interesting family connections so she can get us a few thousand rounds of these.” He passed a rifle round to the cervine.

“Ablative tip armor-piercing, 7.62 Eastern Bloc chambering.” Alexi commented, giving the two equines a smug grin. “Da. I like.”

“Just the thing for getting out of tight places.” Tank offered up.

“Yes, I agree. *This* little gem and its friends will get us out of many tight places.” the stag retorted.

“Well, since we're going hunting day after tomorrow, we will need to get you kitted out.” Canton stated.

“I will need RPK machine gun, one AKS-74U '*Suchka*' for backup, two bandoleers with twenty magazines each. Magazines must be forty round steel from Molot factory, no plastic or phenolic and some

fragmentation grenades, preferred is Polish manufacture.” the Russian antelope put forth. After a moment, a thought crossed his mind. “Tell me, how did you know . . . *exactly* . . . where to find me?”

“Went to your mother's home.” Canton replied.

“Ah, my dear *Mamь* Nadia. What did she have to say?”

“Your mother said to say '*Prevyet*' to you, then kick your ass for her. According to her, you still owe her twenty thousand rubles that you haven't paid her back yet. I'm leaving out all of the extra adjectives she used.” Tank replied. “She is pissed at you, my friend.”

“Oh well.” the stag lamented. “Better add Glock Nineteen to list. It is good bet she will not let me retrieve my Makarov PMM.”

###

Rumjal was sanding the new casework around the front entry windows of the residence under renovation and as demeaning as it was, it allowed him a good view of the coach where the Svensens were staying. All in all, working for a living wouldn't have been all that bad, since it allowed him the ability to relax and not have to worry about what deed to do next. His musing was interrupted by his mortal boss, the black canid.

“Hey, Ron. I need you to help the feline, Ken, put up the upper cabinets in the kitchen.” he asked. “The little fur needs some muscular fur to hold up the cabinets while he levels and secures them.”

“I can do that.” the pachyderm replied. He put down his sanding implements and headed to the dining area of the home to assist this 'Ken' fur. Looking around at the work already done, although not a demon's castle, this was a nice home in his opinion. One where a fur could relax. Walking into the kitchen area, the gray one stopped in his tracks when he observed just who this mysterious 'Ken' really was.

“You! Kenji! What the blazes are you doing here?!?” 'Ron' blurted out.

“Rumjal! It wasn't good enough to banish me, but you come here to watch my demise???” the snow leopard retorted.

“I did not come here to spy on you!” the minor deity spat out. “I have my reasons to be here . . .” He stopped shouting when he heard a stereo scream come from the temporary residence across the way.

“What was that?” Kenji asked, cringing from the sound.

“I don't know but I'm going to go check on the Svensens.” the deity blurted out.

Ken stopped the pachyderm from leaving and asked an important question; “Who did you say you were going to go see about?”

“The Svensens.” Rumjal replied. “Here, you're coming with me!” he stated. The gray one then made a pair of Mossberg 500 shotguns appear, checking each one to see that they were charged. Giving one to the shocked feline, he grabbed Kenji's arm and headed out the side door in a fast sprint.

They were almost to the temporary residence when Cami came from out of nowhere, dropped her head and used her shoulder as a battering ram, splintering the front door to the coach. By the time that the deity

and the banished feline entered behind her, the wolverine femme was sweeping the coach with the barrel of her Rock Island 1911, looking for signs of trouble. She then spun and caught the two with her firearm, much to their surprise.

“Cami! It's me, Rumjal!! Don't shoot!!” the gray deity shouted, raising his paws up so she could see them. It wasn't that she could kill him, it was that it would sting like hell if she shot him, particularly in the trunk or ears.

“It's cool,” Cami retorted, lifting her paws and taking her finger out of the trigger guard. “You gave me a start, there.”

“We heard a scream from over here.” the leopard brought up. “I'm Kenji Nishiguchi, but you can call me Ken. Rumjal and I are acquainted with one another.” he explained.

“Kenji!?” the femme feline behind them blurted out. “Oh, you just stand still, you little *sonuvabitch* . . .” Victoria said in a murderous tone. That was when the small male feline took refuge from her behind the pachyderm. “Rumjal, get out of my way.” the tigress demanded from the entrance to the hallway. “I want his hide for a throw-rug in my office!”

The gray one held up his paws to stop the enraged femme “Now hold on a min . . .” Rumjal stopped talking when Virginia stepped out of the hallway behind her sister. “Oh no, you're . . .” He felt both femme's life forces and blanched. “Look I had nothing to do with this,” he stated in his defense. “I do not know how you became two beings, please believe . . .” Virginia stopped him from rattling on.

“Don't worry, we know how it happened.” she explained. “All my twin and I want right now is a piece of Kenji's hide for attempted murder against us.”

“I didn't mean it personally!” the spotted feline blurted out. “Zagam said he would pay me a nice, fat reward if I wiped you out! When I went to collect, he denied that he had ever told me that!!”

“Zagam . . . that bovine ass-hole's name keeps popping up.” Victoria commented in a low tone. “Well, it's a good thing we're going after him to destroy his winged ebony ass once and for all.”

“You're serious?” the elephant asked.

“Oh, we're dead serious.” Aslaug agreed from behind Rumjal, making the male deity cringe. “The only reason you still exist is the fact that you're giving my friends protection. Otherwise, I would have already taken you out.”

The deity turned to face what amounted to his contemporary. “Aslaug, if they're going to go to the underworld in search of Zagam, I guess I'll have to go too, just to protect them as I have promised to do.”

“I don't like this one bit,” the filly put forth, fondling the handle of one of her franciscas. “Don't fuck up or I'll be all over you like flies on fresh shit. Just remember what I did to Anane. I could very well give you the same treatment, you know.”

Virginia spoke up. “Not to interrupt, but we want to know, just what in the Hell Kenji is doing here?”

“I was banished here.” the small feline stated. “I could not leave this general area so I accepted work from the fur renovating your home.”

“So, what are you doing, specifically?” Victoria asked coolly.

“I am rebuilding your kitchen.” he replied. “I am a master woodworker in my homeland of Japan. Your cabinets are no longer available new, so I am making replacements that match. Since I now know whose kitchen it is, I suppose I'm trying to redeem myself, in some way.”

“This I have got to see.” Virginia put forth. “A Dark Agent that's a master woodworker?”

“I have been told that my work is top notch.” the spotted feline put forth. “I will show you, if that would please you.”

The twins agreed so they followed the leopard over to the home under renovation, accompanied by Torvald, Cami and Rumjal. Once inside, the tigresses were shocked to find out he was not joking with them. The work already done did resemble the undamaged kitchen in every way.

“Well, I wouldn't have believed that my kitchen would ever look this way again.” Victoria commented.

“I hope I get to use it, from time to time.” Virginia put forth.

“Virginia, listen, I want to bring up something.” the ruddy tigress began. “I want to build a guest house, not real big, mind you, but every bit as nice as this home on that flat area just south of the garage and I want you to stay here, with us.” she told her sister.

“I can't.” the white tigress replied. “I don't want to impose. I'll get my real estate license and find a place to stay, maybe with Valerie and Barbara. They do have a number of spare bedrooms.”

“No, you will stay here.” Torvald stated very firmly. “We will build a guest house and you will get your life back on track. No more discussions, it's settled.”

“If you're sure . . .” Virginia started to say, but she found herself interrupted by Tor and Vicki, at the same time.

“We are very sure.” they both blurted out at the same time.

The white tigress suddenly found herself being hugged by Torvald and her twin sister. The ruddy femme spoke softly, trying to keep from crying. “You'll stay here with us, because this is where you belong right now.”

Torvald then spoke after hugging the twins. “We need to let Kenji get back to work because we have some work to do of our own. If we're going to go kick a demon's ass, we had better get our heavy artillery out of the storage pods.”

###

Kenji watched the furs head back towards the fifth-wheel coach, shaking his head in amazement. He was still alive and not a throw rug, which in itself was amazing. He wondered if they would allow him to further redeem himself by allowing him to participate in their demon hunt. If there was something he would like to do, that would be to get his piece of Zagam's hide. *You never know, he mused to himself, it might make a nice wallet.*

“Ahem,” the minor deity said quietly, nudging Kenji to get him to stop gathering wool.

“Oh.” the feline blurted out. “Sorry, I was daydreaming.”

“Well?” the gray one questioned.

“Well what?”

“Our mortal boss told me that you needed some help.” 'Ron' put forth.

“Oh, yeah.” Kenji agreed. “It's nothing hard. I put some temporary cleats on the wall to set the cabinets on, but some fur needs to hold them while I check them for level and screw them off to the wall.”

“Well, show me what to do.”

While Rumjal held the cabinets for the feline, he mused about this situation. Maybe being mortal wouldn't be such a bad thing after all.