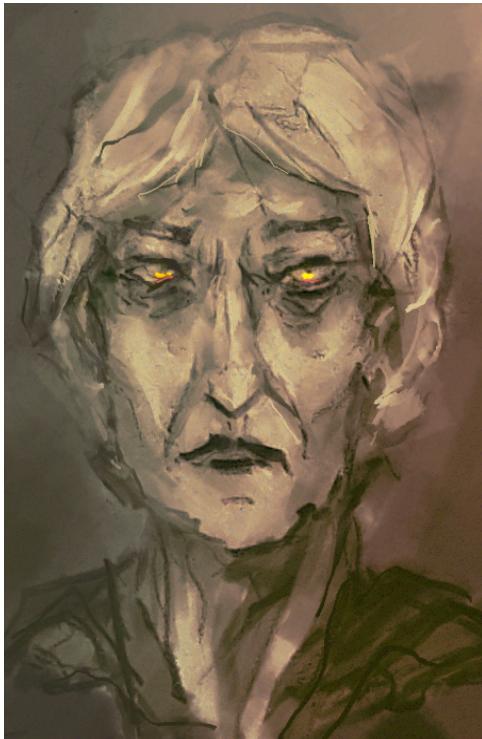




i r a e t i u s



@jatazak

ira et ius / 2021
exul mater / ProJam 2018 / (un)continuity 2020
bistability / AO3 2016

THE TEMPLE MOON

ACADEMY EXTERIOR.

IRAE:

I am beloved in the sight of the World, yet the Earth can find no place for me. Therefore, I go to earn my commission in the Sky. I shall find my mother and have her report, which is twenty years overdue.

If she is dead, I will report as such, and it will be simple.
She had founded this temple on the site of a terrible battle.

In those graves kept by the priests, the motions of other minds reproduced themselves in mine. Their images became my familiars.

I sought out pain and glory, believing each as noble, and heroic. I won many victories against myself. We will answer a question I cannot ask.



My mother is gone, and I cannot go to her.

My father said:

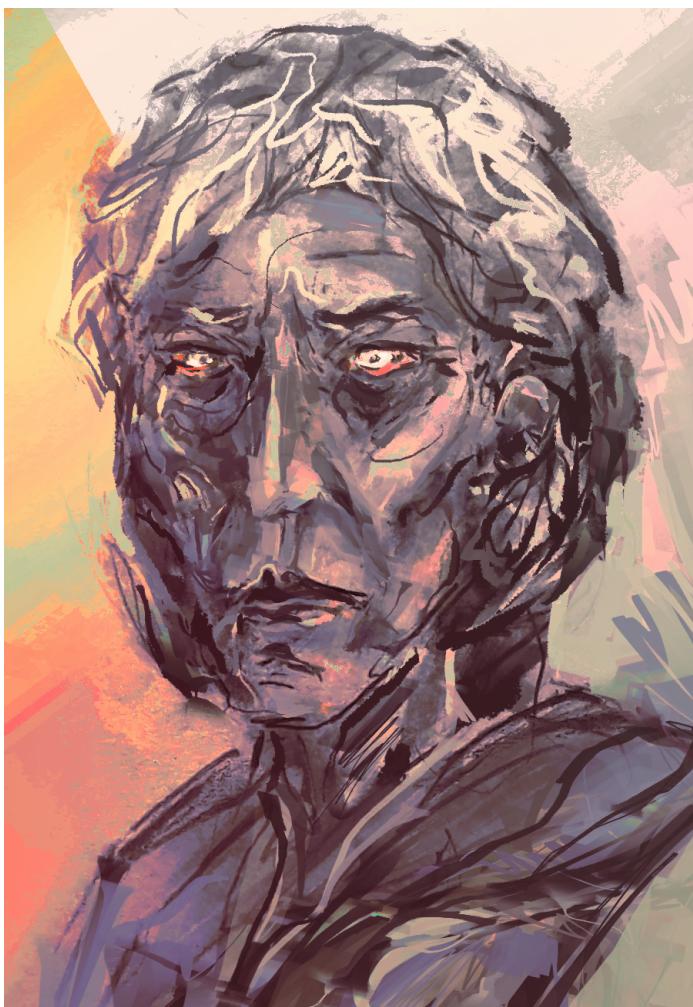
She is apart from the Holy World, and it is no crime to kill her.

Therefore:

I will ask if she was free, and so chose.

THE MARAUDER FLEET

PRISON INTERIOR



IDA:

The first time Irae and I met, we meant to kill each other. My master defied the World, and threatened the Earth. She sent me to combat the Lord of Sacrifice, whose agent was a young priestess.

I did not expect a daughter of the Sky. We all thought she was my prisoner until the end. We caught my master by surprise.

She uncovered my sisters' counter-plots against me, for my service. I saw her bring them all to ruin, her painted hands over mine.

IRAE:

When you had conquered the Sky, you bore a daughter, who likened to you. Her father then left you, and only then, seeking to protect her.

You concealed your sorrow, when she returned to you.

You are Ansegdniss, and I am Irae.

You have given so much of yourself, sacrificed so much, for so little.

Know that I am a hero. Know that I promised her we would discover the answers to all questions, which arise from the wounds of the past. For no answer can be thought, without its question.

(Does our work heal the World as it will be? When the wounds of its people are known in months, and years, and generations?)

I am wrath born of love, which likens to hate.

For you serve the World, and are consumed by it.

IDA:

She made up her mind to destroy her master, and asked my help to prepare herself. For the sake of the Sky, and all that has been stolen from us. Or because she had turned on herself, long ago.

When she summoned her familiar, it came into her body. Not as her guide, but as a thousand serpents. It should have been beautiful.

I saw her agony and her triumph, each the same as the other. I saw her consumed and consuming herself.

I kept her safe in this process. Until she was subjugated to her self, and all of her was conquered, and turned to her own desires

She lifts my head to hers,
she steps free of her snake-skin.

I see her parasite,
a glimmer of scales,
behind her lips.

She wears an expression
not unlike relief, or gratitude.

Her nails press against tautened
flesh, their tips black and pointed.

Her venom sings in my veins.



THE THRONE VESSEL

STUDY INTERIOR.

IRAE:

I think she is full of deception. Ida is a witch and a witch hunter, my lover and my enemy. I cannot divide them. I cannot see past one, without another behind her. I love her, I cannot know her.

I know her worship. We have spoken, and conversation is a kind of mirror. Like the ocean transfigured by violent skies. She reflects beauty, where the priests could only show me terror, and what is terrifying.

Her worship, an eidolon, lives in me. I have raised familiars on stories, before, but never a person. She reflects wisdom and madness, each indistinct from the other.

I am changed. Her strength will survive in me.
But I know not how to save her.



My lover tells me you parted without violence.
Now she has your throne.

Mine is glory, and that which burns in its name. I am Hesperus and Phosphorus, namesake of the devil's element. I am al-Uzza of the desert and Tanit of its city. I am Baidukh who became Venus.

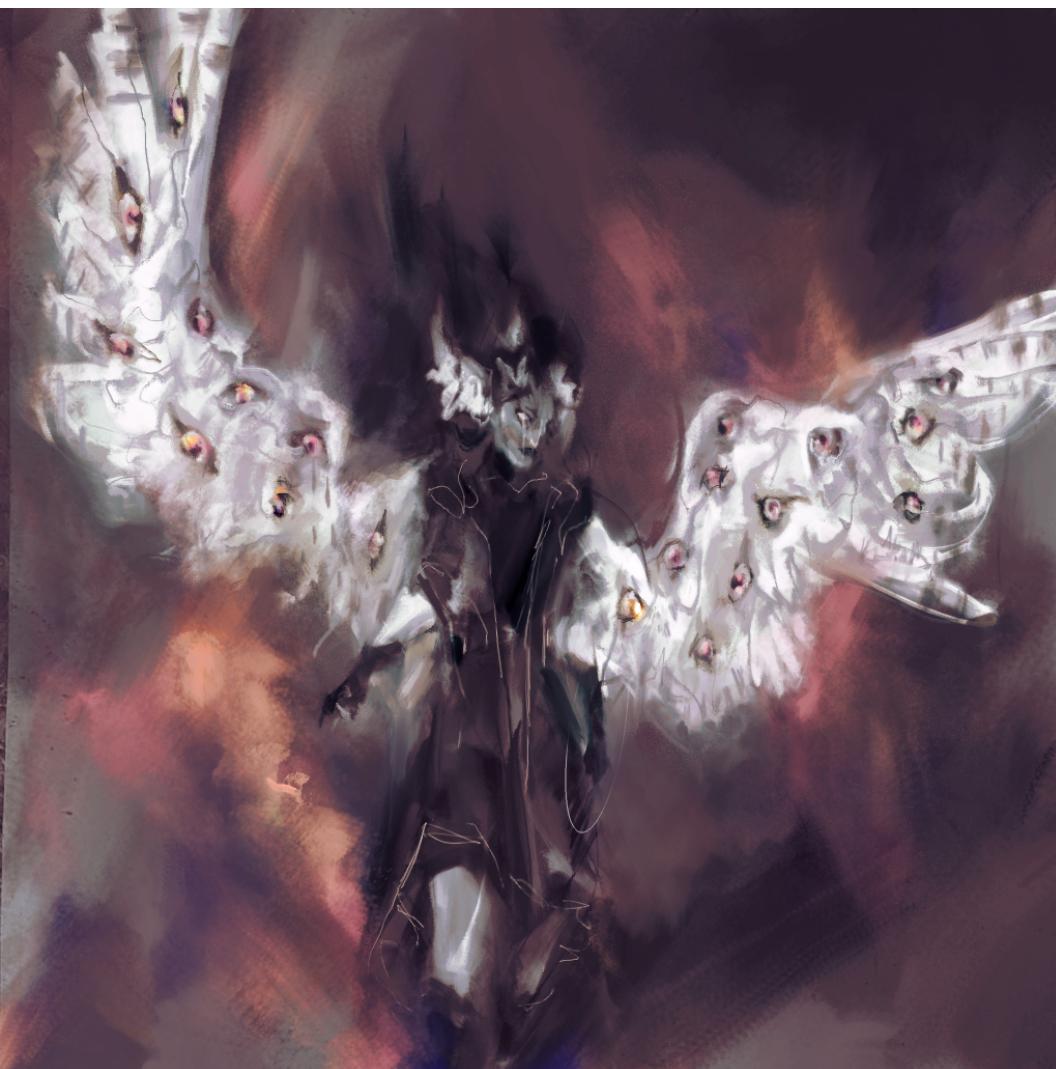
I am every answer of the question I cannot ask, that I ask by existing.

*dies irae, dies illa
sovlet saeclum in favilla*

day [of] wrath, day that
rends [the] world to ash

THE HOLY EARTH

REFINERY EXTERIOR.



IDA: I alit upon the Earth which iridesces.

The heavens gleamed with fire, or an acrid sheen not unlike it.
This was a place of the Earth that had been made into an engine,
to change the subjugation of people into a source of energy.
The hunger of the World bellowed into the upper air.

I beheld the World, where it had rooted into matter.

My eyes saw the long passage of its crystals, the refinery's infiltration of
the Earth, which will bloom in centuries. The people of the Sky are
grasped by the World. The people of the Earth were consumed.

The vast structures around us screamed as they crumpled,
protective of the logics of extraction from which they grew.
I prepare myself to strike at the weakness of this theory.

She looks on at my work from far above. My goddess
holds my image closely. I saw my sigils drafted freshly on her hands.

She hates the World which lives in her.
It whispers to her of pain she has known, in herself and others.
It extrapolates itself into that which they have yet to suffer.

Perhaps, she attempts to spare me.

Her kiss consumes me.