david aes \ av \source notes

*events detailed here in are possible influences in av’s life. as they appear here, they have no say on actual events. these are just ideas. those that merit real attention will be drawn out and realized elsewhere. where an idea is confirmed in actual events, it is highlighted, but otherwise unaltered. apparent order, in terms of presentation of ideas here, are only faintly suggestive of causal relaitonships. as far as av is concerned what lies herein is the stuff of dreams.*

*as it began, she suddenly found herself standing outside of her self. the rape did not bother her as much as the strange behavior of the rapists. she could easily distance herself from the physical trauma, she had been trained to understand that rape was not about sex, but about domination. a ruthless attack on an intimate and vulnerable part of her life, but in practical terms, not much different from being beat up. the only thing she could do was survive, and heal. fortunately, at this time she was not as vulnerable as she could be. av’yn had made her infertile. of course, she was afraid, but most of the fear, the helpless anger, came from their attempts to rape her mind. no matter what they did to her body, she could control herself until that piercing gaze. the instant she felt that mental thrust, her rage would take over. they would wear her down, working her over, depriving her of food and water and sleep, and then attacking. each time, they only succeeded in awakening the rage, putting her back in focus, and reviving her. her only satisfaction was seeing the disappointment in their eyes as they continually failed to break her. of course, reason said that if they decided that she couldn’t be broken, eventually they would simply kill her and be done with it.*

*him. it was personal. he worked her over until there was no energy left in her to rage, and the brutality of rape bled into the embrace of lust, almost love-making, as her body betrayed her with its own needs. he even shared his amusement with her, as he listed off the new conditions of her life as his pet, and delighted in the fact that her memories of his true identity were unspeakable, as part of her banished past.*

*cat. av’s retreat from her body, and her defensive closing of her mind, closed her off from cat. as soon as she lost contact with av, cat risked contacting anathnae again. cat was not able to identify av’s assailants, but there was little room for doubt. unfortunately, cat could not offer a very precise description of where av was ambushed.*

*mother. duty required that she report the contact and her suspicions to her superiors while she considered whether there was any action she could take to save her daughter. the crew shared the frustration of their captain, knowing that her professionalism woulnd not allow herself to use her command resources for such a personal end. at least not while she could think of no excuse that would cover her actions. the terrible certainty that her daughter was certainly being raped, and quite possibly murdered, did not make her burden easier to bear.*

*av. after he was through using her, she faced her crisis. self-hatred warred with self-pity and bloodthirst. she had never been so helpless. she had never been so vulnerable, and she damned herself for finding pleasure in the arms of such monsters. only stubborn self love prevented her from devouring herself with darkness. this was not her doing, this was being done to her. these men were her enemies, and their purpose was her destruction. what had happened had nothing to do with sex, and everything to do with power.*

*av. it was the only weapon she could take back from them. she could not escape rape, but she could transform it. rape pretended to be sex, but it was really war. conquest. the victim subordinate to the act. but she had seen that she could also take from the act. her passion was hate and her lust was bloodlust. taking an active role in this terrible intimacy, freed her from being a victim. using the skills of a lover, and the perspective of a warrior, she fought on intimate ground, with an intimate enemy, to defend her spirit, to protect her self.*

*them. it didn’t make sense. she was enjoying what they did to her. she was challenging them to enjoy what they were dong to her. to feel pleasure and to accept the pain she would cause them if they underestimated her for an instant. they could force her to do anything they wanted, but they were finding her to eager to bend, to quick to anticipate them. she had figured out their weakness with regard to her, and it forced them to deal with her as a hostile ally rather than a prisoner or a slave.*

*him. he saw it happening, and he could not see any way to prevent it. they had a mission to accomplish and she had found a way to become immune to their methods. he continued to try, but until they reached their destination, their methods were limited by their need to travel swiftly. still, there were some attacks he could make against her will.*

*av. her victories came quicker than she expected, along with realization of her assets. they learned that the act was very different with her as a participant, and nothing they did could stop her from participating. especially when she realized that their clear efforts to break her were hampered by the fact that they dared not cripple her. being in heat also aided her in this campaign, for she was not alone in her condition. she could not get pregnant, and her immunity and awakening regenerative capabilities protected her from disease and injury.*

*them. in spite of themselves, they were falling in love with her. it had been easy to admire her, to want to possess her, but this was worse. it got harder to hurt her, as it became easier to possess her. it was maddening. they knew that if they didn’t break her, then they would never be able to make her one of them. if she did not become one of them then they would have to kill her. so they continued to hate her. and she continued to hate them.*

*av. amusingly, she was learning survival skills by observing her captors. they had long since left the road and were dragging her north up the coast. as they had, the first time they had trapped her, they kept her psionic gifts subdued. the psionic coller being the only thing they had given her to wear. as long as she wore it her chances of escaping were grim.*

*him. his patience with her insufferable defiance wore out. conversion had been their objective for her, but her will was impregnable. rather than continue with their fruitless efforts, he decided to shake her possession and ride her until they reached their destination. once delivered, more effective means of attackng her integrity could be employed.*

*av. while struggling with newly deepened bloodlust, it occured to av that she had felt this kind of murderous rage before. when it had come to her on the beach, it had come as an old friend. for the first time in her life, her nightmares offer a hope of salvation. forcing her mind back to the trauma of her childhood, and the birth of her deadly rage. it took her awhile to shake the rage after her enemies had finished maiming and using her. licking her wounds, she was conscious of the fact that they were forced to treat her with respect in spite of their abuse of her. unfortunately, they had learned their lesson with regard to her too well. they knew that if they gave her the slightest opportunity, she would kill them.*

*him. he could tell withiin days that she would recover from the damage he had ordered. severed parts were regenerating. left on its own, her body would recover in a few years, but he suspected that she could restore herself even quicker if freed from the psi restraint. that would be an advantage in trying to break her once they delivered her to their destination. to test his theory, he makes a side stop in a temple ruin, and sets up a psi damping perimeter. he takes off her collar and orders her to repair the damage. he explains his reasons, even, putting himself at risk for this answer. he patiently witnesses her recovery, holding out the temptation of escape for her. she tries several times, and he stops her, forcing her to need even more time to fulfill his command. the two, locked in together in isolation, get to know each other very well. he himself is in love with her, but his duty remains paramount, and he is not coy about it.*

*them. after much too long, the leader and av emerged from the ruin, and their march was resumed. the restoration of their beloved prisoner restores the group’s morale as well. several openly comment that it was a pity she was not already one of them.*

*av. she suspected she knew where they were taking her. if things had been different, their destination would have been her own home. the lands she would have inherited through her title. she confronted the leader of her enemies. she told the story of the massacre she witnessed and then challenged that—whatever it was they had been trying to do to her mind—they had tried to do to her on that night. he said only that the estate was important to them, and actions would always be taken to preserve their interest in it. if she were one of them, then their position would be secure.*

*av and him. in privacy, in the embrace of respectful enmity, she asks what they are trying to make her become. she debates the possability of a compromise or arrangement between them. she pursues the possability that there might be some resolution to this situation. he responds that the only way she could ever become one of them would be to surrender herself to him entirely. when she asks him what would happen if she did, he merely replied that the only way she would ever learn that would be the hard way. again, he implies that she has no hope for her fate. only time that is running out.*

*av. tegal yn caoi was the last place she ever wanted to go. her life had been traumatized by the slaughter of friends and family there. the fact that she was heir to the estate was the supreme irony of her life. the most terrible place in the uiverse to her was destined to be her home. she had seen the curse at work as a child, and she had determined to live her life as far from the place as she could manage. only now, she was discovering that the curse might be something that could be fought.*

*av. she finally got the nerve to ask, if she could not be broken, were they going to kill her? she was told that if she could not be made one of them, then she can have no place among them. they would never trust her, and they could not allow her to claim what was sacred to them. av tried to convince them that she had not had any desire to claim the cursed estate. she would never have even approached it if they had not forced her to. nothing she or he could say could shake her conviction that none of their aims would result in anything less than her death.*

*av. she confides at last her conviction that whatever happened, she would not live to speak of it. she also confesses her curiosity why an estate that had been in her family for thousands of years was so sacred to them. the simple response stuns her. tegal yn caoi was where their kind had originated. everything they knew about themselves began here about a thousand years ago. with their arrival only days away, av is aware of her iminent death. when they had given up on breaking her mind, they had stopped raping her as well. whatever they sought to do to her, she was truly immune. the fact that she was still alive only meant that they had something left to try.*

*av. as they came within a day of tegal yn caoi, they were attacked by a dragon. when humans had seen them, there had been no other name to give them. the native name for them was simply death. it earned that name five times before the survivors reached the safety of the estate. av, short an arm, was the luckiest of the victims, having cut her losses to run.*

*av. ironic, how the respect they had been forced to pay her had actually become admiration. as she lay bleeding, she begged them to remove her collar so that she could use her abilities. knowing that she lost the arm trying vainly to fend off a lunge for him, the leader granted her wish. concentrating, she forced her wound to close and begin healing. she explained that it would take days for her to restore her arm, promising not to try to escape for at least that long. she makes no promises beyond that though. she uses her time to learn her way around the estate, remembering her childhood explorations, and the tragedy that brought them to an end.*

*av. the dragon, having feasted, having tasted av, and knowing that meat still hid within the estate, would not leave. av watched it from safety. there were about twelve more of the strangers there. counting the five lost, there were seventeen enemies. woud she be justified in killing them to survive? could she incapacitate all of them badly enough to make good her escape? was she feeling sympathy for their position. she still didn’t really know what they were, but they were something very different from what they appeared to be. they considered her death necessary for their survival.*

*av. her enemies were not powerless. those who had been waiting here for them had greater psi ability than those who had captured her, and they were prepared to fight the dragon. of course, dragons were frighteningly intelligent, and they had powerful psi themselves. the hunting parties came up empty on their forrays, even losing two members in the space of three days.*

*av. the dragon held them under seige for the remainder of the week, and av’s arm was filling out. on the tenth day, it struck inside the estate, catching them all by surprise in the hall. three more died as they fought their way into tighter quarters.*

*av. she pointed out that the dragon was outhinking them at every turn. their traps were being circumvented and turned against them. the only way they were going to get it into a trap was with bait it could not resist. her. of course, she was basing this on a legend, and some observations made by a friend. a dragon would risk death to devour a phoenix, and she was a quarter phoenix by blood.*

*av. fully healed, this gambit was the only way she could think of to keep out of her collar. she still had no doubts abouther fate once the immediate threat was resolved. they would allow her to bait their trap, and they would pretend that her heroics might make a difference, but she knew that hope to be false. she had a chance to save herself, playing prey to lead the dragon into the trap. she would be a predator at the same time.*

*av. she planed her routes into and out of the trap. as expected, she had a shadow. she confronts her enemy as she prepares to bait the dragon. he admits that her help will not change her fate, even if it is successful. she nods, declaring that she would rather take her chances with the dragon then. taking flight into the open, he pursues. the dragon is quick to pounce, cutting off her false escape. Av, ready for this, turns and flees back into the trap, disabling her shadow. the dragon accepts her gift, conveniently giving her time to build up a good lead. she switches to her alternate route, leading the dragon to her enemies, which she happily delivers to him with crippling attacks. having dealt with the reserve, she returns to the plan, leading the dragon into the gauntlet. her enemies are aware of her betrayal, but with the dragon right on her heels, they are forced to deal with the greater threat. av takes out the two set to block her flight out of the killing quarters, and methodically begins to hunt down the rest, who are engaged with the dragon.*

*av. her plan goes well, but not perfectly. realizing the extent of her deadly plan, they break from their engagement with the dragon to deal with her. armed now, she confronts them. they had made no bones about the fact that they intended nothing less than her destruction. they had no right to expect anything less from her. the only difference being, she offers them the chance to walk away. she offers to keep the dragon occupied long enough for them to make their escape. to her surprise, three of them take her offer.*

*av. the four remaining enemies circle av, preparing to feed her to the dragon. av feels the blood rage threatening, but keeps a grip on herself. she can see that these four are adept at working together, and her chances against them are slim. the appearance of the dragon, having finally found a way into the area they had retreated to, creates enough confusion for her to escape. slithering through secret spaces, she eludes them, forcing them to split up. her luck finally runs out. the dragon has figured out what kind of game she is playing and has OUTMANEUVERED her. in plain view of her enemies, the dragon gets her by the legs, and drags her away. sacraficing her legs, she manages to slip into one of the airshafts she has been using and escapes.*

*av. making her way to the nest she had prepared for herself, she turns her attention to her severed legs. the repair of her arm had been excruciating. by deliberately retarding the process, she had bought herself time to plan and explore. this time she would benefit twice from the true use of her ability. weaving her new legs together, she considered her end game. her remaining enemies either thought her eaten, or they gave her credit for being able to escape. they would expect her to hole up and wait while her body healed, expecting her to be vulnerable for a couple of weeks. they would not expect her to attack that same night.*

*av. her enemies were more wary of her than she expected. instead of splitting up to hunt her down, they were waiting for her together. the element of surprise would allow her to take one of them out, but that would leave three to retaliate. each was highly trained and powerful, they worked together seamlessly. she had no idea which one was their leader, for they were all leaders, she recalled. she waited until one of them exposed himself to harm, and then struck. good as she was, she was not good enough. to her suprise, the four were vai. they were even better trained than she. though less creative and powerful, they had the advantage in a battle of attrition. finding herself overwhelmed, ruthlessly dismembered and finally decapitated,*

*av. she is saved by their last attmept to possess her. the last of her programmed restraints shreds and her reawakened power comes to her defense. trapping the demon in her own shadows, she breaks form and embodies herself in thought. av jumped to the body of her attacker, as her own body died. from the body of one enemy, she leaps to the mind of the next, burning it out with her fury before leaping on to the next to last and shoving the demon within into the mind of the last. while the two demons struggled to sort out comand of their body, she struck her final blow. stepping out of the mindless body, she embodies herself in flesh.*

*av. standing on a balcony, she stares out at the dragon that still waits for the chance to devour her. her fear of the place, and the fear of her bloodlust are finally dispelled, and the implications of her awakened power still stun her. with a last caress, she bids farewell to her broken body, and then lights the pyre. ironically, her new body is just as naked and hungry as the one she lost.*

*av and vai \ as they appear here, these notes are more appropriate to the development of the prologue/epilogue proposal.*

*an exile out of exile \ no one knew where she came from. whoever she was, she had survived crossing gods’ reach, the secret paths of the old gods. in all the world there was only one other like her, and they had mistaken av for vai at first. av and vai were introduced to each other when vai’s life long chaperones confronted her with the stranger. vai fell in love at first sight. av, alone and in heat, sees in vai both a friend and a mentor to see her through the av’yn. the only hard part was dealing with the fact that vai was a god.*

*av and vai \ they are two of a kind. they are in love. to av, it is a taste of paradise, but it has a bitter taint. her enigmatic silence, her inability to address her past with others threatens the relationship she has with her lover. the more they grow in love, the harder it is for her to bear. the more vai presses her to embrace the potential she sees in av to become like vai, the harder it is for her to resolve herself. av examines the events that brought them together, and as she conceives of herself, she realizes that she has to go back and reclaim her identity.*

*vai \ after av disappears, vai strives to solve the mystery of where she came from and go after her. she confronts her guardians, pleading her case and airing her suspicions. upon re-examining the prophesies, they realize that they were not prophesies at all but ANALYSES of a proposal made at the beginning of the rift. vai must find one of the old gods and find out what the proposal was. in learning the history of the passion, the severing and the rift, she inadvertantly discloses the unexpected appearance of av. vai is told of the proposal, and the experiment that was permitted in quarantined exile. they also tell her what would signal the end of exile. at which point, the host would be free to test the result.*

*av \ she returns to ao’ajea, making a perilous journey back to face her sentence. forced to return in the manner she fled—on foot, and naked—her steadily advancing pregnancy exposes her to hazzards her formerly sleek athletic body had been able to evade. this time, more than the last time, she is subject to the law of the jungle. she learns from the sophisticated simplicity of animal existence a great deal about herself. well on the way to her destination, she gives birth to her daughter-self. when she regains her strength and tone, she appears at the imperial court to face and survive her absolution. submitting to a potentially lethal test, at best her rape, at worst her execution, she can end her exile.*

*av and vai \ vai was able to follow in av’s wake after her confrontation with the gods. pursuing av with all haste to advise her of what she knows, vai arrives to discover that her love has left ao’ajea on her way into the academy. vai, now far out of her depth among the exiles, finds that further pursuit may not be possible until she learns how to proceed. av, in transit to sol, holds her self in her arms and wonders how she can make it through the academy while raising her daughter-self.*