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.*

She died. She had found nothing but oblivion. And she had no doubts about it. Sivai had torn her body to shreds. Ripped her spirit and mind from the dying flesh and anhilated them. All thought and even dreams of herself were slain. When she lay broken and naked in soul, she had been the barest mote of light. A pitiful, depthless soul vastly overshadowed by the endless abyss of the Devourer. Then, for no reason at all, she woke up on Earth. Nobody. Sivai had passed her being through his own and abandoned her like a peice of offal in a harsh world with no idea who she was. Faced with this inexplicable situation she became, once more, herself.

She had wandered through the invisible world for a while, trying to understand what she was supposed to be doing. She had often slipped into the material worlds to seek for more concrete answers, but each answer she found only brought more questions. Finally she tried to go back to the world where she had died. Before she could do anything she encountered a young woman who had been conceived from the genetic material she had left behind. She took this woman aside and found in her all the potential to be what she had become but not even a hint of the thing in Av that was plaguing her. In her distraction she feel prey to and was raped repeatedly by a man who's power she could not even comprehend. Before she escaped him, she discovered that he had been looking for her for ages. Time beyond time. He believed that he owned her and that through her he could have anything he desired. For some reason, she forced him to kill her, rather than risk fighting him. But this death was barely a shadow to the one that Sivai had given her. But it taught her that she had to confront Amaranth. She had to find the reason for why both a god and a mortal had been allowed to rape her.

As soon as she could, she went back to her god and demanded to know why she had been so abominably used. When Amaranth told her that it had been what Av herself had wanted, she simply walked away. She quit.

For the sake of her promise, she was compelled to keep herself tightly restrained in his presence. After their conversation, there was very little of her true nature she could afford to reveal without giving him something to call proof of magic or even divinity. Now that she was in this bind, she finally understood why An had placed the g(Av) on her in the first place. The kind of proof that Michael could get from seeing what she could do would be false proof.

9

Aware that she is being treated more as a prisoner than a diplomat, Av begins her introductions to the troublesome elite of the delta. Not surprisingly, she discovers she is dealing with a chauvanistic, patriarchal culture. Admired for her beauty, disparaged for playing at diplomacy. Av is dragged to a few audiences, and endures a great deal of angst to get her message across. The local factions are at odds, and her skills and patience as a diplomat are strained to new limits. Her childhood was witness to the consequences of small province politics and intrigue, and here it was especially thick. It was very much like entering a gothic. The leaders she talked with made a very public figure of her, with various tours and introductions. They even put her up very publicly in a posh college district town house. For Av it is awkward to place herself alone among these people whom she finds difficult to read or trust. They treat her with kindness and respect in all appearances, yet like an object or a prize—or worse, prospective property—in substance. Clearly they don't take her seriously. Neither do they seem eager to under estimate her, or at least the dragon she is working for.

10

For such a vulnerable island in this chaotic world, they sure liked to give the impression of being able to sway the fate of the entire world. Mildly annoyed at the constant touring negotiations, she has a sudden insight into the ulterior motive; she was being systematically shown evidence of these people's ability to render her completely helpless, if not thoroughly dead. Her neglected intuition had screamed out "trap!" from the moment she entered. The research group is requesting to go down and join Av, but he puts them on hold while he looks into the sudden mystery. The conspiracy that Rook was investigating was beginning to seem more dangerous than he had suspected. A key thought occurs to him. Vancouver was beginning to seem less safe. Keeping them here would be putting their hope of solving the (caoi yn) Phenominon at risk, if his growing suspicions proved to have any merit. The rumors alone would make them hesitate, but the dissappearances of certain eyes and ears demands it. Every one is beginning to feel the presence of shadows. But the end result is that the key members of the group ship out to join Av, which pleases the natives to no end. It does not, however, improve the course of her negotiations with them.

11

Av has a lot of negative reports to send back to Kzeisza. The local lords are making no commitments and have ready attacks and complaints to lodge against the proposal. They do not like the situation they face, as far as Av is concerned, and soothing their petty fears and paranoia takes a lot of effort. In trying to apply a bit more pressure, she discovers that they have a few counter moves prepared for dealing with her by going over her head, as well. She chides herself, knowing she should have been more aware that the kind of pseudo-monarchy that this was could be unbeleivably dangerous to a normal person. She could have imagined that even she could find herself facing some sudden and outlandish charge of treason, and find herself facing a summarry execution. It would have prepared her for the likely reality.

12

The research group is narrowing in on a revelation with the Upstart project and concentrating its work on detailed studies on individuals like Av. Their request to her is intriguing as well as difficult for her. Mostly due to the exhausting demands on her time by the delta natives. The way the locals were dissembling, she would almost think they had some other offer that they were weighing against hers. She has begun to wonder if the politics in this community did not actually run into and affect the world and shards of cultures around it and in it. She has to work fast to catch up to the things that were falling into place around her. Still trying to secure an allience, she must somehow root around for the makings of the trap which loomes suddenly in her mind. Blanc has stayed watchful in the shadows, fortunately. If there is a trap, she concludes, then it is something of a conspiricy between an enemy of mine, and whoever stands to gain the most from a shady agreement at this time. So she had the beginnings of an idea about whom she could confide in and make her plans with. From there, it is only a matter of disabling the local people who were being used by this, and making them useless for such an exploit.

13

Kzeisza hears this, and other reports and must conclude that he has reason to worry. Something on the wind of possabilities has him watching for hidden influences. He even considers calling off Av's mission. Av makes a quick retreat to Vancouver, braving the continuing animosity of the police. For the most part, her stay is just business details, but a few interesting exchanges occur. One of which is her petition to Kzeisza to submit to the Upstart research. She manages to needle an agreement out of him to help them in this way. They discuss the possability of alternatives to negotiation with the southern lords; as well as trying to determine the reason for their sluggishness. In the mean time, while only the combined influence of SRI and Kevin Zhan are keeping the NLS at bay in their persecution of Av, she is becoming aware of her tendancy to be in the eye of the storm. As can be expected, the subtle temptations of Kzeisza or Kevin, to seduce Av is swallowing her, but the complexity of the situations are demanding her vigilance. Asking her intuition leaves her more confused than before. She feels that even in her dragon dreams she is being watched by some malevolent intelligence. Her dreams are beginning to become a reality of their own. Kzeisza has Av, body and soul. His careful seduction of her has finally consumed her. She has literally fallen in love with him, and not even realized it. Much in part for how much he resembles himself as Kzeisza in the guise of a man. He has stirred her passion, and played her so well, that she loses sight of the lines between dream and reality—laying with her in the flesh as he consumes her in her dream. She, lost in this, does not realize this embrace for what it is, half believing it to be a thing of her own mind's erotic creation. For this reason, this liason is more painful to her than she can can endure.

part iii

14

Indeed, she has become as tempting a thing to the Devourer as she is to the dragon. Of their own accord, due to her own choice, the cards are dealt, and now he must inevitably destroy her, rather than take her under his wing. (Paradox) makes his hidden move while Av and Kzeisza are in their embrace of dreams. After their dream had been invaded, Av and Kzeisza had no choice but to hunt this malevolence down. An unspoken agreement, and a certain ignorance of what they faced supports them. Av goes afield with Kzeisza to define the threat they face, and what they learn is damning. As with her peircing exposure to Kzeisza, Av finds equal measures of attraction and repulsion to what they encounter. Kzeisza finds an almost human kind of horror in it. An entity which seems unutterably devised of some dragon kinship through horrible beauty. Kzeisza fights this thing to a standstill. Two alien powers of inestimable strength. Forces never known to one another, every blow was deep and mortal, but still each had such strength of will that only pain could be traded, for neither was weak enough to lose or to die. Av's influence was just enough to break their consuming embrace. Clearly, this was not a kind of confrontation which should be allowed to engulf this world. They retreat and reevaluate.

15

Av reluctantly returns to the south. The question of that unspeakable encounter weighs at her heavily. With her are a few of her friends; (Anvea) and Kevin included. Av calls upon her hidden assets, the keys of fate, to learn how to oppose this unnatural threat. Assisted by (Anvea) and her special assets, they learn some dark truths. A careless gesture on their part stuns them with its implications. Av confronts thea

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Following the full implications of what has occurred to both of them, takes a bit of this chapter. The long moment of temptation which visits them is agonizing to them in light of both its implications and what they are there to do. Av wonders if the dragon is as fully aware of the paradox which they stand poised over. As they back away, she wonders if such a destiny can truely be avoided.

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16

Her continued association with Kevin brings her into contact with a raven haired androgyne. Av is surprized to learn that the creature is to be her body guard. Av has to be enlightened as to the particular qualifications of Raven to swallow this precaution. A shark shaman adept. The understanding between them is sharp and unstated. Raven is to be with Av constantly; to work, to play, to bed or bath. The thought it provokes in Av is just one more doubt to seed. The exotic and the unique often fascinate and obsess others. Those rare forms are often used by such obsessed admirers. But, is it intentional? Ravenhair perceives the hidden love and sensuality of this pair, as well as the hidden animal natures of each, and lures them into a manage a trois—as sensuality and sexuality are both her curse and her one passion. For Kzeisza, is is but one more opportunity to watch as Av explores her own sensual depths.

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Empty solutions - first drops of bad blood - sabotage... Av turns her mind back to her duty, and binds herself with the key to their salvation. As she does for (Anvea) as well. She finds the way, but implementing it will involve more effort and risk than anticipated. She has to consult with the fleet and Kzeisza. The (AEA/AEGIS) is capable of deep space travel, and FTL movement through folding. If their link could be used to guide their fold navigation, that is. However, they do discover a few ways to thwart a few of the elements inherent to this alien influence. Basically, these entities represent the full evolution of a wholly alien intelligence and its own Arts. So far, this is the first truelly alien influence which has been seen to manifest. The catch being that whatever it is, it is demonically hyper intelligent, capable of comprehending a vast portion of the common language, psychology and thought of the anthropomorphic majority expressed on (caoi yn), and relating with it. The difference, minor though it is, in her own and Kzeisza's reaction to this unknown, and the marginal solutions she has managed to come up with, becomes a point of division which inevitably sparks to life all of the doubts which have been seeded in her. The first drops of bad blood are spilled. To make matters worse, the enemy moves to disrupt the entire frame work of her organization. Sabotage attempts have begun to plague her staff and the department's works.

18

Av is forced to comment that the more she tries to make sense out of the (athenic paradox) and the (caoi yn) Phenominon, the more she seems to be taking herself apart.The bad blood. Kzeisza is the dragon. He intuitively takes things into his own hands and brooks no dissent, nor offers any explaination. This is something Av has not had to confront for the most part, but when he steps in and says what is what, she

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Sixth

snaps. What is what being a set of assignments given to her team members, and the dissolution of his agreement to submit to the research group's studies. Annoyed at the increasing disruptions of the project, he orders Rook underground to weed out the saboteurs. The method required is not hard to guess. Ash is isolated, much as (Anvea) was much earlier, and given the role of messenger to various factions, and the job of trouble shooting within treated faction interests. Av is pulled off of the deep space expidetion and (Anvea) is given the order instead. The explosion being that this is a final decision, and he will not deign to explain it to her.

19

(Anvea) will be given the charge of pursuing Av's solution, as she has the best resource for the task. Av, on the other hand, is not to be allowed to neglect her role as the primary negotiator. Still shocked by her hot retort at Kzeisza, she meekly and gratefully resumes her mission, once more unable to take her closest friends in her team with her, thanks to Kzeisza's dabbling. She actively wonders what all of his attentions will come to. She weighs what they experience together against what it does to them. She realizes that it has mostly confused her. She can only accept what they share for what it is. Explanations and expectations only feed her confusion. What she believes she has shared with Kzeisza has been sensual not sexual. She understands how the game of sex can seem so damning—remembering how it has constricted her between Rook, Kevin, Dirk and Ash. For her, her sexuality is merely a release for her sensuality. For her, the reproductive element of sex is dead—without the possability of a mate. What she has endured has had too much of the politics of mating. She is not yet aware of how deep Kzeisza's obsession with her has become. She has no choice but to recognise how she has come to love Kzeisza, Kevin and Rook, and she wonders if she wants to. As if she can possibly escape it.

20

In Dirk's mind, he was utterly snubbed. For whatever reasons, he is swayed by the manipulations of AO and has involved himself in a conspiracy to discredit Av. In his mind, he intends to turn this province utterly against her, ruin her work for Kzeisza, and have her imprisoned and condemned here so that he can blaze in at the last minute and save her. To that end, he arrived far ahead of her, and began to set her up, while remaining well obfuscated in his manipulations. What he does not know, is that he is expendable to his allies, and that their plans are more thorough about seeing her dead.

21

Disabling the threat to the alliance, and a local threat to her in the power of the locals did not eliminate the opposition to her. She is lured out into the night, where she is visited by the Devourer, who tells her in cryptic terms what she has destined for herself by her choice of divinity. What she understands is that she can not hope to ever escape the inevitable embrace of the devourer. To accent that revelation, she comes to face her possible demise. Her actions did not save her from her enemies. Her wit did not stop the threat. In fact, it only forced it into the open. When the onslaught comes, Kzeisza ignores her plea that he not interfere. His is the rationale that they are his enemies while she is just their intended victim. Dirk is unmasked. Instead of facing his failure and this ultimate devestation of their friendship, he flees. His parting accusation, her blame in all of this and her blindedness to her own seduction, is the thorn which poisons her against the love she has had. Av has to finally declare—she does not want to love them. Not Kzeisza, nor Kevin, or Rook. She does, but she cannot bear to. All she can see is how any devotion to her is damning to them. She doesn't want them to love her. It is almost as if she knows already that she will soon abandon them for her destiny. That her ascension will wash away her concerns for those she loves. Seeing no other choice, she and Kzeisza square off, for neither is willing to give up their love or their honor. Kzeisza is forced to demonstrate how easilly he could destroy her, and abandons her there in the woods. There, Fate finds her. Shattered by the event, she is completely unprepared for the news he brings. She has been named Avatar of Mystery and the Unknown.

epilogue

After embracing her new office, she takes a final moment to try and resolve herself to the aftermath of her ordeal. Moving alone she pays a visit to Rook, Ash, (Anvea), and pines for (Anvea). She is amazed to find so many loose ends. Deprived of an answer to the Upstart scenario, she confronts a new world of possabilities—an open threshold. Av can't help but remember (Paradox)'s promise. Coming at last to Kevin she confides in him openly. Kevin, taking her into his confidence astounds her as well. He relates to her what he has come to realize about himself—a conversation in which Kzeisza rears—it is more a moment of mutual realization. This is, she realizes, only the beginning. Av asks, through Kevin to go freelance. Finally, Kevin asks: Where do you go now? I may never know, she replied somewhat bewildered.