

Where The Magic Happens

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Where The Magic Happens

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Summary

The Vytal Talent Show is a place where Jaune thinks he can impress his classmates. He's always had a knack for sleight-of-hand magic, and while it's nothing compared to cutting a ten foot monster bear down with a massive scythe, it's at least a unique skill. What he doesn't know, however, is people who are used to seeing the supernatural as part of their day-to-day aren't expecting it to just be a trick, and people who know that magic is real... are primed to see an actual magician before their eyes.

Written at the behest of CrazyEyedMustafa

The Man With The Magic Fingers

“And for my next trick, I’ll need a volunteer from the audience...”

Cinder rolled her eyes. She needed to be publicly seen as a student to make her disguise really work, a familiar face in the crowd, not so well known that people could *place* her, but recognized enough that they’d assume she was one of them, to make the infiltration work. But choosing to achieve that by attending the Vytal Talent Show had been a... choice on her part. At the time, she’d just seen a list of events and opportunities, only differentiated by how much time it would take or how many people she expected to attend. She hadn’t been thinking about the reality of watching some Vacuan lunk demonstrating how many concrete blocks he could punch through or some warbly Mistralian work her way through a pathetic rendition of “Mirror, Mirror” as though Weiss Schnee herself wasn’t in the audience. And then this, a magic act, the fumbling blond Valean who Cinder only knew at all because he was Pyrrha Nikos’s partner, standing on stage in a cheesy top hat and cape, a painfully plastic wand in hand. Looking at him, she realized that Ozpin might have finally found a capable countermeasure against her nigh-inevitable victory: she might be *embarrassed* to death if she spent another hour in this auditorium.

But of course...

“Oh! Oh! Oh!” Mercury cried, springing to his feet like a chattering ape, the idiot of course wanted to volun-

“Pick her, pick her!”

Murder.

Cinder felt... *murder* in her blood as she saw that cackling imbecile pointing at her and *smiling* the smile of a dead man who knew he could not be killed in this specific moment. She could not decline either, she simply had to...

Standing up, she gave Emerald a curt *nod* that told her that Cinder would handle Mercury’s castration personally, then strode to the stage, an expertly faked smile on her face as that *witless dunce in a top hat* told the audience to give their volunteer a big hand. Ohhhh, she was going to savor it when they all died horribly. She could only hope to have a hand in some of them personally...

But now, she had to endure this, this... “Jaune the Magnificent,” as the little blackboard introducing his act said. Cinder stepped forward with the sort of dignity she kept prepared for the occasion that, should she be caught by Ozpin and Ironwood, she would call upon as she walked up to her execution.

This might be worse.

“And what is your name?” the imbecile asked.

“Cinder,” she said, inwardly gritting her teeth that this meant her *name*, and not just her face, would now be on the radar. Mercury had made her situation so much worse as she looked over the crowd. She had to become what they expected—an ordinary student feeling awkward and out of place, perhaps a little *embarrassed* for the magician... though not too negative, they might remember that. She had to walk an idiotic tightrope as she reacted *exactly* as an actual student ought to to a magic show.

Trickier than it sounded. Sleight of hand, misdirection, priming the audience’s expectations, Cinder knew all of this as second nature. What the boy was doing as he ran through his patter was all too familiar, even if she did it in a vastly less embarrassing way. But she had to act like she *didn’t* know this like the back of her hand, which was... more difficult.

“Although I see you brought something of your own up on stage!” the boy declared, reaching his hand over her shoulder (*she could not break it as much as she wanted to SHE COULD NOT BREAK IT*) to reach behind her ears and-

HOLY HELL WHAT?

“Why, is this an antique Valean coin?” he said, holding it aloft like- where, how- what was he-

Cinder knew her surroundings better than any other woman *alive*. At any moment, death awaited her, and even the slightest act of carelessness or ignorance could end with her brains splattered over the pavement, and *yet* this- this boy had somehow... somehow...

Where had the coin come from? He couldn’t have *possibly* spirited it behind her ear before this moment, she would have noticed for sure, but... but his hands had been empty, his *sleeves* had been empty, he’d shown her as much during his patter! ...a Semblance? Not an illusion, Cinder had too much experience with illusionists, allied and otherwise, to fall for one now. A portal wouldn’t have worked, even if it was only the size of the coin, she’d have felt the airflow change from the connection between spaces. Could he simply conjure antique coins as a Semblance? But that close to her skin, she’d have felt the use of aura, so...

Cinder trembled, eyes going wide as it slowly dawned on her that this was not the situation she had imagined herself entering. This wasn’t some imbecile—either he was actually magic, or he was superhumanly gifted at deception, and both were decidedly bad for her.

“Alright, on to my first trick-”

Dear gods, that wasn’t even his trick?

“-Ma’am, would you mind helping me with a little card trick...” he held up his hands as though he was carrying something and offering it to her, “Just take the deck, and shuffle it for me?”

Cinder was completely off her footing, her hands moving without thinking as he prompted her to “take” what he was pantomiming. Or maybe not—perhaps it actually *was* an invisible deck in his hands. After the coin, she wasn’t sure what to expect from him, but as she felt *nothing* enter her hand, she realized that it was just a piece of stagecraft, something to add to

the performance... or he was toying with her, she couldn't eliminate that possibility while her mind kept *desperately* racing through options to figure out what he'd done with that coin!

The one thing Cinder had going for her was that she had experience in facing things beyond human comprehension and keeping her cool. She pantomimed shuffling the cards, trying to not let him completely unmake her as she kept her pasted-on smile clear on her face as she passed the "shuffled" deck back to him. She'd kept up her facade with the Queen of the Grimm, she could do as well here.

"And would you mind drawing a card?" he asked.

She, of course, complied.

"And what is your card?"

She stared at him in uncertainty, clearly being prompted to just name a card, but unsure what else he was prompting her for. With Salem, she knew not to assume that she knew the *limits* of what magic could do, and Salem was a sorceress who made her powers blatant—this wizard concealed himself, made him appear to all the world that he was only an afterthought at Beacon.

"The- the Queen of Hearts," she said, trying not to give away any weakness or hesitation as she suggested a card that, perhaps, gave away too much.

"The Queen of Hearts?" Jaune asked, raising an eyebrow as though he knew her true meaning, "Quite an appropriate card for a woman like you, I'd say, certainly of all the Queens you could be..."

To the audience, this was just cheesy, flirtatious banter, but to Cinder, it could be that... or it could be an allusion to what he could see that others could not. She felt... exposed, stripped bare before him, subjected to power she did not understand and wrapped up in the so very many secrets she had to hide. She almost didn't react when he suddenly made the deck of cards *visible* in his hands—she already knew he was capable of conjuring things, why was it different that she had *known* there was no deck, had handled its nonexistence mere moments before?

But he took the deck and spread the cards out, face up, across the table in front of her, her eyes watching each and every card as though they might contain a viper about to strike, a card that would declare her an infiltrator, a card that would reveal her for what she was, every movement of the boy's fingers were under her-

"Oh, what's this?" Jaune asked, as Cinder saw that one card wasn't face up. It was face down. "Ma'am, would you mind..."

She took the card... and flipped it over.

The Queen of Hearts.

She held it up to the crowd, unable to keep the shocked amazement off her face as the crowd broke out into *incredulous* applause. He- he couldn't- *when could he have done this?* Cinder's entire life was built around seeing the forces that moved beneath the common perception, but this- this *magician*, he could do things that Cinder couldn't explain! She couldn't see the trick, couldn't see the deception, she'd watched him like a hawk and yet... only her card was the one that was upside down.

Queen Salem had given Cinder a brief on what to expect of Ozpin, what magic, what power an immortal wizard might have that might give him supernatural perception she wasn't expecting. But Salem had also warned her that there was more knowledge than simply what had been found in her tomes, magics rarer and stranger than what the Queen of the Grimm and her immortal adversary had access to. This young man... she truly had no idea what he was capable of.

He grabbed a wand and in that moment, Cinder knew what *fear* truly was as she watched him brandish it at her, a smile on his face as he waved it, opened his mouth, and...

The wand *popped* into a fake-looking bouquet of flowers... a cheap trick wand, going off too soon. It still left Cinder's heart pounding in her chest.

"Very unprofessional of me!" he laughed, but his carefree voice showed Cinder that this was no mistake, he was only giving her the *illusion* of weakness, trying to *trick* her into letting her guard down, and Cinder wouldn't be fooled. "But the wand's a little cheesy, don't you think? What, will I be pulling-"

The flower-wand vanished from his hand as he was suddenly holding a colorful silk handkerchief!

"-handkerchiefs out of my sleeve? Though as an apology for my mistake, and as a thank you for being such a good sport, Cinder-"

The handkerchief vanished, banished with but a *flick* of his wrist, and with... with another flick...

"-this is for you."

He handed her a single red rose. An actual flower, not the fake bouquet his "wand" had turned into. Cinder had stopped trying to catch him in the act, had stopped even pretending she was in his league. She took the rose, feeling as timid and cowed as she had *sworn* she would never feel again, but... what could she do in the face of such power? This sorcerer had her utterly powerless. *Utterly* powerless. Cinder had no idea what he was capable of, what to even attempt as a countermeasure when she didn't even understand where his powers began.

She stumbled off the stage in a daze, her mind whirling as her thoughts tried to cohere, but... but she'd never *seen* such power. Even Queen Salem's power was nothing so... fluid, so casual. He could make things appear and disappear at will and that was only what he was willing to show on stage. Could he disappear her? Change her? That... Cinder felt woozy as she imagined it. Power was her sole desire, the ultimate object of her fascination and this young man... he had *power* in a way beyond even Cinder's deepest craving.

This... He needed to be claimed as an asset. Contained, controlled, *claimed*. By any means necessary.

She couldn't retreat in the face of power, she had to take action, now. He was powerful, dangerous, but... sorcerer or not, he was still a teenage boy and Cinder...

Cinder had a feeling she knew how to bring him to *their* side.

Wow, he had *killed it* out there!

Jaune had been worried, even as Pyrrha had reassured him over and over again that his act was really good, that it wouldn't impress his nominal peers. Because he had done a really bad job at impressing them in everything else, and this was... really not Huntsman stuff. But he was trying to not let himself fall backwards into self-doubt, he was really trying to put himself out there, and when Ruby had told him about the Talent Show... he was all for it!

And *damn*, that had paid off!

He'd always had quick hands, *really* quick hands, and he knew that he was actually pretty good at some basic sleight-of-hand tricks—he was *so glad* he'd pulled off that rose trick without crushing the flower!—but when he lived across the hall from someone who had literal superspeed that came with literally summoning roses, it kind of didn't mean all that much. But Pyrrha had told him to give it a shot, and—and he still couldn't believe it—the audience was into it! Like, crazy into it.

Maybe they were so used to looking for Semblances and aura that they'd forgotten that a lot of things were just basic deception. But... Ruby got into Beacon fighting an actual criminal, and surely, if she fought Roman Torchwick, she was aware of misdirection as a technique? Well, whatever it was, Jaune had been thrilled to see Ruby's eyes go wide with delight as Jaune had pulled off the Invisible Deck trick, and, ha, *damn*, that girl from Haven, what was her name? Cinder? When he pulled that coin from behind her ear, she looked at him like he was the most talented magician she'd ever *seen*!

Ahhhhh, if only Weiss had been there! He knew not to push it, that he'd gotten on her nerves by asking her out too much, but just one chance for her to see him in a new light, one that *wasn't* defined by Jaune getting beat up or blowing it... well, there was always tomorrow. He'd wow her some day!

Chuckling as he returned to his dorm, Jaune felt like he'd earned some video game time to...

His laughter vanished as Jaune realized that what he was looking at, well...

The dorm wasn't empty.

And it wasn't Pyrrha, Nora, or Ren in there. Not even one of the RWBY girls, considering they almost certainly had "acquired" their own copy of the JNPR dorm key off of Jaune, but it was... it was... it was that girl, Cinder. Lying on Jaune's bed.

Waiting for him.

“H-hi...” Jaune said, not making the best first impression as his mind was struggling to catch up with a phenomenally attractive woman lying on his bed and looking downright *seductive* in her red and gold dress... Jaune was living in a world where very many, very attractive women were in his life—one slept in the bed right next to him!—but this was... this was something else.

“Hi there, *Jaune the Magnificent*,” she said, a sultry purr in her voice that Jaune would normally assume was her making fun of him, but with this... no, no she meant it. “I never got the chance to thank you for making me a part of the show... showing me the *magic* you can do...”

Oh holy shit.

Was this- was this really happening? To him?

But for once, Jaune’s self-doubts didn’t kick in as his instincts saw a gorgeous woman in his bed and told him *do not fumble this*. Even as his brain wasn’t doing so well as he stumbled forward to shut the door behind him. He probably should have said something, maybe a “Hello” or, like, “What are you doing here?” or anything, really, that wasn’t just a long, confused, “Uhhhh...”

She sprang forward off the bed to *clasp* Jaune by the front of his hoodie, looking into his eyes with a blatant and eager interest as she said, “On stage with you... it was so exciting, so *thrilling*, you... you awakened something in me. Something that can't be contained!”

The *blush* that spread across Jaune’s face was almost overpowering, but the *smell* of her perfume simply wafted through Jaune's nostrils and... and he was really unable to do anything about it. He had a million questions that weren't coming together in the face of an extremely beautiful woman who was very interested in him.

“Oh, well, you know,” he said, trying to come off as at least a little cool as he demurred, “It was... it was nothing, you- just tricks, really, all sleight of hand, it's- it's nothing so...”

“Oh no...” she purred, pressing her body into his in a *very* physical display of her interest, “Show me... show me your *magic*, Jaune, show me what you can do to me!”

Jaune had thought maybe this was going to end with him getting to make out with an incredibly hot woman, but as she *ground* against him, as she literally panted with arousal, Jaune knew he was definitely about to get lucky. *Especially* if he played into her magic kink! And *that* gave Jaune a sudden surge of self-confidence as his lips curled up into a grin.

“So you’re a fan of magic...” Jaune said, feeling actually *seductive* as he said it because this girl was *into* it! “There’s a trick I can’t really do on stage... really only appropriate to show it in private...”

Cinder simply *trembled* beneath him, so incredibly turned on by Jaune indulging her magic fetish and primed to cum her brains out to *anything* Jaune did so long as he had an

“abracadabra” ready. Damn, if he had his wand, he could have... no, no, he had to sell the scene. He had to focus.

He drew up close to Cinder so he could whisper his “secret” in her ear. “But what you should know,” he said slowly and dramatically, “is that I have *magic* fingers...”

Cinder *grabbed* him, pulled him into a sudden kiss, and dragged him onto the bed with her. Jaune was caught off guard by the sudden tumble, but as Cinder spread her legs, he saw that she was not wearing panties, and, well, she clearly wanted to see some *magic*.

Jaune’s experience with sex meant he knew how to find the clit and not much else. But Cinder was a kinky girl who wanted to believe he could enchant her pussy with a magic spell, so as he wriggled his fingers over her and mumbled something that sounded like an incantation under his breath, she *tensed*, her whole body priming itself to go off as Jaune made a sudden, unexpected *flick* against her clit and then-

“Oh gods!” Cinder cried, before Jaune was even able to actually start fingering her, “Oh gods, oh Maidens, oh gods!”

Holy *shit* she was into this! Jaune grinned as he started pumping his fingers into her *very* wet pussy, taking advantage of how turned on she was to act like he really was capable of magically bringing a girl to orgasm. Really, all he was doing was going in and out and wiggling his index finger a little, he had *no idea* what he was doing, but Cinder just kept gasping and squirming beneath him as he brought her most potent sexual fantasy to life! Feeling impish, Jaune took his *left* hand and wiggled his fingers before her eyes as he mumbled “al-ya-KASSAM!” and *pinched* her nipple with his-

“Ah-ah-ah-OHHH GAAAAAWWWWDS!” Cinder shrieked as she literally *squirted* over Jaune’s hand, her whole body clenching as her sudden orgasm ripped through her body.

Jaune had... he had not seen that coming. But as he saw her eyes *roll* in their sockets, he knew that what he was doing was *working*, and the last thing any girl wanted was for a guy to get in the *zone* with her, get her really going, and then back off to check “are you okay?” She was able to convince herself that he had actual magic powers to the point that Jaune had just gotten her to erupt like a fountain just by fingering her: she wasn’t about to tell him to stop.

“My, my,” he said, still affecting the persona of the magician, “If my fingers could perform such a prestidigitation, I can hardly imagine what my *wand* could do...”

Cinder gave a desperate, delirious *whine* in response, causing Jaune’s lips to curl up into a wicked grin.

“Oh.. but I suppose I do have a ‘wand’ here, don’t I?”

Jaune wriggled out of his pants, his cock already rock hard as it sprang forth. He brandished it before her eyes, seeing her nearly tremble at the sight of it—Maidens, this woman made him feel like a sex *god!*— before lining it up with her slit.

“Would you like to see some *real* magic?” he asked, and his lovely assistant gave a needy, desperate nod.

“Behold how I make my cock disappear!”

It was a cheesy line, the sort of thing that if Jaune was ever made to admit it later, he’d probably die of embarrassment, but *fuck*, when he said it, Cinder practically *whimpered* and when he drove his cock into her?

Holy shit, Jaune had *nothing* to be ashamed of when it got him *this*.

Fucking Cinder was... she was *fucking incredible*. Jaune groaned as he felt her pussy clasp his shaft, her red-hot, molten desire had been stoked to an *inferno* with her magician fetish and now Jaune reaped the benefits! Her pussy *clenched* down on him, refusing to let him go as Jaune thrust back and forth. It was a *struggle* not to cum, to not embarrass himself on the home stretch, but Huntsman training had given him some bodily discipline that was paying off now, but even Ren’s meditation training wasn’t enough when fucking Cinder was *this* hot!

But once again, luck was on Jaune’s side as Cinder clearly felt no concern about cumming early. He’d barely even gotten five thrusts into her before she was already at the brink of an orgasm, and as Jaune seized her soft, delectable breasts in his hands, she *screamed* out, “OH MAIDENS GODS MAIDENS YES GODS!” and Jaune felt her *cum* around his cock. This... it was all too incredible. *Impossible*. There had to be something going on beneath the surface, but fuck it, Jaune was not asking questions when he was fucking an insanely hot girl who was so into magic that she thought he was some kind of *sex god*. Life never went that well, and if it was... Jaune was going to enjoy it to the hilt!

He arched his back to better *thrust* into Cinder, trying to stave off the climax rising up inside him because it just felt *too good* to keep on fucking her! Every thrust had him groaning with pleasure, his cock practically melting in her silken grasp, her moans practically begging him to cum... it was so good, and Jaune wasn’t *remotely* the sexual wizard he was playing at. Not when he was fucking a woman who looked like *this*! So as his climax rose up inside him and his balls *churned* with a need to release, Jaune realized he couldn’t hold back anymore.

“ABRA KADABRA!” he yelled as he came, not feeling the *least* bit of shame as he spurted wildly into her pussy.

It was an *epic* climax, one that left Jaune seeing stars as he fired off shot after shot, all while Cinder seemed just as overcome by the experience. It took a moment after he was finished, the very last drop wrung out of his balls, for Jaune to even have a thought other than the snug, comforting *grip* of Cinder's pussy. But with time... he knew he had to withdraw, even as Cinder's pussy *still* gripped him, unwilling to let her prize go.

But with that done, Jaune had a chance to look at his incredible lover and take her all in. She was panting for breath, her eyes still rolling in her skull as she tried to find some stability after what they’d done. Jaune was... honestly feeling pretty proud of himself, just as much as he was surprised she hadn’t passed out.

“You... you alright?” he asked, hoping to be gentlemanly about it, but all Cinder could answer him with was an inarticulate *gurgle* as she moaned on his bed. She was... she was out of it.

So Jaune just slipped into bed beside her and wrapped a protective arm around her. She was... definitely not someone Jaune expected to find at Beacon, but damn, was he glad he had found her!

Growing up in Valois, Jaune had never thought he might actually encounter a magic groupie, his skill with card tricks generally *lowering* his appeal among women. But at Beacon... he guessed that with aura and Semblances and all that craziness being so ordinary, they saw magic tricks as genuinely new and exciting. But this Cinder girl... wow! Just... wow! She really *believed* he was magic and she was into that...

What kind of insane fortune was it that Jaune would run into a staggeringly gorgeous woman whose kink just happened to be Jaune's hobby? Seriously, one in a million chance that any girl he met was *this* hot, and she was crazy into magic? Like, Jaune was getting used to the fact that Huntsmen and Huntresses were a lot more attractive than the average person, but Cinder was... holy shit!

What else could he do to wow her? Girl like *this*, he wasn't going to drop the ball. If there was one thing he was learning from Pyrrha here at Beacon, it was that he couldn't get an ego and assume everything would just fall into his lap. Cinder was into magic, so he had to show her some magic. Invite her into his act, show her how to be his glamorous assistant, maybe? ...but she clearly liked the *mystery* of magic, so showing her how the trick worked might not enthrall her. He'd really only done sleight of hand, maybe he should try some other stage tricks, see if she'd enjoy it if he hypnotized her, from how she took the patter in the bedroom, she'd probably put *herself* in a trance if Jaune even took out a pocket watch!

Well, as he wrapped an arm around her and held her against him, Jaune was feeling like he ought to be waiting for the other shoe to drop, but after the sex they'd just had? He couldn't even imagine anything going wrong!

That... that had been close.

Cinder felt her heart still racing as she rested against the sorcerer's broad, powerful chest. She'd been wary of him, knew that this was an extremely risky strategy to go right for him by herself, but every other option of engaging with him was already risky beyond belief. There was no way Emerald or Mercury could have handled this, it had to be her. And if she couldn't handle it... there was nothing they could do. But, she told herself, even as her heart *pounded* in her chest, this... this was working. She'd found the target open to sexual persuasion and, as far as she could tell, he hadn't suspected her to be anything but an eager fangirl.

She couldn't be too confident. She'd managed to avoid facing the full might of his arcane power, but the *hint* she'd received... he had all the cards in his hand, and she couldn't afford to forget that. For all she knew, her “win” had just been a show, stringing her along as he amused himself, pulling her *secrets* from her mind... she'd gotten confident when she saw how *stunned* he was to see her, only to learn that him going slack-jawed with arousal wasn't a

sign that his powers were anything but diminished. But Cinder knew not to defeat herself with possibilities. If she was already beaten, she was already beaten. She had to act as though she wasn't.

Tonight had confirmed that he was a true sorcerer, a man who used magic as casually as breathing and for *devastating* effect when he wasn't just using it for parlor tricks. Just thinking of his "magic fingers" left her... He'd spoken of them like it was just a cheap, porno trick a joke, clearly trying to suss out how much Cinder actually understood of his power, but then... then he'd *used* his magic fingers on her and Cinder had realized just how out of her depth she was.

She'd been bracing herself for it, trying to imagine all the ways a magician could put her under her powers, to heighten her sensitivity, to muddle her mind, to simply cast Greater Orgasm upon her, Cinder really had no context, but she knew it would be *big*. Huge. She'd been anticipating the moment since she set foot in his dorm and even with her heightened expectations... he'd effortlessly turned her into a puddle of lust and pleasure. With just his *fingers*. This wasn't just a skilled seducer, this was exactly what she'd been expecting: a magician.

And then he implied that his *wand* could do so much more!

Cinder was no virgin. She knew sex in a way only a professional did, careful to ensure that the balance of pleasure always ensured that she was in charge, that her target was under her sway. But that was from the manipulation of the biological and the physics of friction—Jaune worked with *magic*, and when he commanded Cinder to feel pleasure, she... felt more pleasure than she'd ever felt in her life. He actually brought her to orgasm, and she couldn't even try to hold it back. How could she? What would even be the point?

She was a seductress. He was a wizard. There was no comparison between them, like assuming a static cling and a thunderbolt were one and the same because they both involved electricity. The slightest awareness that she had ill-intent towards him and Cinder wouldn't be lying with him in post-coital bliss, she'd be hypnotized to believe she was his cheerleader girlfriend or not thinking at all as she cleaned his room in mindless obedience or turned into a candlestick to decorate! When he'd cried out his spell as he came, Cinder had briefly thought he'd transmogrified her into... she didn't know *what*, but in the process of coming off an orgasm and *making sure she was still human*, she came face-to-face with the harrowing reality of her situation.

It was luck. Luck and only luck that had saved her. Couldn't even chalk it up to carelessness because Cinder *knew* his touch was powerful enough that carelessness in this wouldn't really matter. Only someone at Cinder's level could maintain her focus after enduring such a display and stay on her goal to leverage this connection and use it to *extract* Jaune, bring him to Queen Salem and... well, hope that she could manage this situation, or that the Queen of the Grimm's magic was powerful enough to keep Cinder safe as as two titans fought it out.

She couldn't let it get to her. Stick to the plan. Keep Jaune amused, keep him interested in her, and use that to lead him towards extraction and delivery to the Grimmlands. If she could keep her cool, if she could stick to the plan... maybe it would all mean nothing in a contest with *real* power, but... it was her only option.

She just had to stick to the plan.

Prest-o, Change-o

They had prepared for countless possibilities and outside chances. They knew where their strategic weaknesses were—Roman was the flashing red warning sign of potential catastrophe—and they knew that they were in a war between forces Emerald didn't understand. And even without magic being in the mix, Emerald knew that a conspiracy that connected the various Kingdoms meant more than a few things beyond a street thief's imagination were on the table.

But this...

Emerald didn't know what to make of Jaune Arc, but she *did* trust Cinder with her hear- with her life, and she knew that nobody in the world had a better sense of everything—and how to end up on top—than Cinder. So if Cinder was terrified out of her mind about what Arc could do, then Emerald knew that he was as terrifying, that he was even *more* terrifying than General Ironwood and the full force of the Atlesian armed forces. Even if, well... he didn't seem all that impressive.

Only because she didn't understand, of course. To Emerald's eyes, everything he had done on that stage *could* have been sleight of hand, but that was just because Emerald was ignorant and didn't understand things the way Cinder did. Cinder said it was magic because she had been there, she knew the tell-tale signs Emerald simply didn't grasp, even as Emerald reviewed what she'd seen, over and over again in her mind, trying to find that hint, that *secret* that Cinder understood and yet, Emerald couldn't.

It was a reminder to Emerald that she shouldn't get arrogant and start having thoughts above her station. Cinder had come back from the talent show *rattled*, something Emerald had never seen before. Cinder never even allowed a *hair* to be out of place, even after she had to bail Roman out from getting beat up by a girl, but after Arc's talent show performance, she was so out of sorts that even Mercury realized that this was a situation that couldn't be joked off.

Which only underscored how *unthinkable* all of this was.

And then she'd taken it upon herself to personally make a move against the sorcerer. To try and figure him out, to try and gain some control over the situation... and that hadn't worked out at all. It was the first time Emerald even had the sense that Cinder *could* fail, that this was a situation where there were more than just setbacks and, perhaps, an unfortunate need to move up a counter-measure due to some nitwit's failure, but actually outright find herself outplayed... and defeated. Even if the worst hadn't come to pass, Emerald had spent the whole time Cinder was in the JNPR dorm with her heart in her throat, trying to imagine what might go wrong and how it would come down on her head. And now...

"You thought you knew danger, you thought you knew death," Cinder said gravely, "I was once like you—the lowest of the low in society, desperate to claw my way out by any means necessary. And so when I tell you that Jaune Arc must be feared... do not rationalize it, do not question it, simply *know* that a sorcerer of this power is far more dangerous than our

enemy in Beacon. He might even be a peer of the Queen. Whatever fear you have for her, *feel it now for him.*”

Emerald did not question Cinder’s words—if she told her to fear a butterfly with all her heart then Emerald would tremble at every flap of its colorful wings. But even with all her trust in Cinder... the tone of her voice told Emerald that even if she didn’t, her heart would still be *pounding* in her chest.

“And w-what am I to do in the mission?” she asked, nervously swallowing as she tried to think of what they’d do to fight someone who could be as powerful as the Queen of the Grimm. Fighting a Maiden had been a challenge that had very nearly gone sideways, and this was something more. Would poison work? Would he even fall for her illusions, or did he have arcane senses that her Semblance simply couldn’t fool? And was there any way to find out where she didn’t tip off a powerful sorcerer that she was his enemy?

“He needs to be contained until we’re in place for extraction, and that means we need to distract him,” Cinder lectured, “I have messaged the Queen: she’s authorized the full use of any resources necessary, and so I have Mercury setting up the Bullhead with the assistance of Watts-”

“Watts?” Emerald choked out, “But he’ll try to...”

Her words died off as Emerald remembered that she wasn’t here to speak.

“The Queen has authorized all resources necessary,” Cinder coldly repeated, “Watts, for all his arrogance, wouldn’t dare risk a mistake here. And if I can count on *him* to give his full utility, than I expect you-”

“I w-won’t let you down, Ma’am!” Emerald squeaked, desperately hoping that she didn’t come off *too* pathetic in her answer. “Whatever- however you need me, I will not fail!”

“See that you don’t,” she growled, a tone that... never failed to give Emerald a *tingle* even as the adrenaline spiked in her heart, “But the plan is simple: you are to come with me and ensure that Jaune’s focus is kept on us and kept on us... in the fashion that you might expect for us to handle a young man.”

Now Emerald *really* swallowed nervously.

“You want... you want me to seduce him?” she asked.

She had carried out that role before, she was no stranger to being a honeypot, but with a sorcerer... with a sorcerer who could bring his magic into the bedroom...

“Only if it comes to that,” Cinder answered crisply, “We can keep him contained through less physical measures... flirt with him, show interest in what he has to say, keep him thinking he’s the most interesting man alive... if- if it comes to... to another option...”

Her voice trailed off as she turned to her thoughts and Emerald... Emerald had to wonder if there wasn’t a hint of *wistfulness* in her voice. Remember the previous night she had spent

with Arc and he'd shown her the more perverse use of his powers, subjecting her to secret pleasures that threatened to steal her very mind... b-but Cinder wasn't like that! Cinder wasn't- wasn't *weak*, like Emerald, thinking about such things as though- as though she desired them! Cinder was a woman who thought about the *mission* and prioritized her real goals, not the sort of... base, crude, *dirty* desires that swirled in the depths of Emerald's grubby little mind.

Self-castigation was the only way to ensure her focus and focus was the only way Emerald could ever prove that she was worthy of Cinder's... respect. And that was more precious to Emerald than anything.

Cinder's scroll buzzed. So did Emerald's. Mercury had sent confirmation that Arc was alone in his dorm. His text had no insults, no jokes, nothing but serious professionalism for the first time in this entire mission, just a code phrase they both recognized meant that it was time for them to move.

There wasn't much on Emerald's mind as they made their way to the JNPR dorm. It was kind of funny that this was a space she knew to be wary in—she had been assigned getting close to Team RWBY to keep tabs on Belladonna and her needlessly bothersome Team Leader—but what could she even be wary about? Perhaps the feeling of eyes watching her was because he could turn into a spider, perhaps it was because he could read her thoughts. What could be prepared, what could be run through, over and over again, like the plan of a heist? As Cinder knocked on the door, Emerald braced herself... but against what, she did not know.

“Jaune!” Cinder said as soon as the door opened, effortlessly slipping into the role as his besotted groupie as she pushed forward to pull him into a kiss, “*Mwah! Mwah!* Oh, I hope I'm not intruding, it's just that after meeting you, I just- oh, I couldn't stay away from you!”

“Oh, it's- it's cool, it's cool!” he said, blushing as brightly as Emerald had ever seen anyone blush. Once again, the stupid and ignorant part of her asked if he was *really* a powerful sorcerer if he seemed utterly unable to handle the fact that a beautiful woman had just kissed him, but *obviously* he was a powerful sorcerer because *Cinder said he was* and *obviously* he was affected by the kiss because *Cinder was an impossibly beautiful woman!* Anyone would want to kiss her! More than anything!

“And- and who's this?” he said, seeming to shake himself out of a post-kiss daze to turn his attention towards Emerald.

“Oh, this is my teammate, Emerald,” Cinder said with simpering openness, “She was at the magic show, *your* magic show, and she was just so impressed, she couldn't *believe* I'd actually gotten to spend time with you! She got a little, *tee-hee*, *~jealous~*”

“So!” Arc said with a chuckle, “You're a fan of magic, too?”

He flashed a dopey grin that cut Emerald *right* down to her core. Knowing that it wasn't real meant there was only one truth to it. Emerald had learned, in the hard, brutal way anyone who grew up on the street learned, not to trust the outward appearances of men. A cheesy, unimpressive appearance could just as easily be the cover that hid the concealed knife. And Arc was someone who had more going on than he appeared—closer inspection turned up that

he wasn't just an *unimpressive* student: he was an open disaster. Someone with no training, no experience, no competence... so how *did* he end up at Beacon? As Pyrrha Nikos's partner? There were... possibilities, but one of them was that Jaune Arc had a lot more aces up his sleeve than a disarmingly guileless grin implied.

And with Cinder counting on her to hold her own... Emerald wasn't about to let her down.

"Yeah!" she said, emulating her best impression of the sort of sugary gumdrops and bimbo cheerfulness she got from the girls of Team RWBY—the squeaky-voiced redhead in particular, "I just love magic! It's so exciting to try and puzzle out how you did it and just... just not knowing how!"

He grinned—it was clear he was receptive to flattery, enjoyed Emerald's feigned wide-eyed amazement—and said, "Well, you know, a Magician never reveals his secrets."

She feigned a pout as Cinder gestured for the two of them to move into the room and get some *privacy* with the target. Arc was to be kept distracted as Mercury and Watts coordinated his extraction and then, Cinder had a fast-acting sedative to be used... well, they didn't really have a plan for that. This was a situation that had a lot of "pick a move and pray," and they had to just hope that everything they did came together well enough to see them safe for another day.

"In Vacuo, I knew a lot of street performers..." she cautiously ventured as she took a seat, "And, well, I saw a bit of sleight-of-hand tricks, snake charmers, and a few people who could make things appear and disappear. I always spent time trying to figure out how they did it—" *because that kind of misdirection and dexterity paid off in spades as a pickpocket*, "-but I couldn't even begin to figure out your performance! You're really good, or..."

Emerald suddenly realized she was saying something very, decidedly, incredibly, inescapably stupid.

And she couldn't stop herself.

"Or m-maybe y-you're really- magic?" she squeaked, realizing all too readily just how badly she'd already botched the whole thing.

But at least, Arc didn't seem so... taken aback by her question.

"Well! Then let me show you something more impressive than conjuration!" he declared, tapping a finger to his temple and closing his eyes, "I will demonstrate my magical might by *reading your minds!* Let me begin..."

As terrified as she was of what she'd see, Emerald's eyes darted to Cinder's face where... rather than judgment and anger, the looks she feared for her mistake, she instead saw pure, abject *terror*; the kind of fear that unmade Cinder and filled Emerald with a complete and total panic! Panic that Arc would soon...

"Let me begin, let me begin..." he said, tapping his finger against his forehead, making Emerald wonder if this was the time to just *stab* him and hope that a surprise attack could

save their skins, but her fear kept her hesitating too long! Arc's eyes *snapped* open, blazing with intensity as he looked deep into Emerald's eyes.

"You are here... you are here with a great purpose!" he declared, causing both Cinder and Emerald to *lurch* back as they knew he was sure to find out... but instinct told Emerald that his mind reading wasn't *perfect*, not if he spoke so confidently in these vague details. Microsecond by microsecond, Emerald put together every angle, every possible advantage, every desperate card to play...

"Sacred Maidens, how did you know?" Emerald squealed in delight, "You're so good at this, you're so good!"

He laughed. "I haven't even- *mmmmph!*"

Emerald cut him off with a sudden, passionate, and *intense* kiss. She didn't care if it didn't make any sense. She didn't care if she'd already bungled the most important mission of her life. She didn't care that her life was probably about to end. She had to do *something*, and miracle of miracles, *Arc didn't seem to have a problem with her kissing him!* She pushed her tongue into his mouth, moved his hand *right* onto her butt, and made a point of putting her whole body into his. She might be a worthless dimwitted piece of gutter trash, but she was at least *hot* gutter trash and Arc certainly didn't mind her body against his!

He broke the kiss suddenly, but before Emerald could panic, he just laughed out, "Damn, you- you girls *really like magic!*"

"We do! We do!" Emerald squealed, and seeing as how *one* desperate move of erotic desire had thrown him off her trail... she tried for another.

Dropping down to her knees, Emerald aggressively parted Arc's knees and went *right* for his belt. He tried to stop her, but before he could, Cinder had swooped in, babbling praise like an insipid fangirl as she urged Emerald on until her lips met Arc's and Emerald had a clear path to free him of his pants! She yanked them down and-

...well, okay, this might be a bit trickier than she planned.

His cock. It was a big, fat thing that flopped out from his boxers and made Emerald pause before she could wrap her hands around it. She was used to... to men who she valued more for what they could do for her outside the bedroom, men who were generally less impressive and decidedly, sometimes proudly, unskilled, but she could... she could do this.

Emerald didn't know magic, didn't know the *real* power to make reality your bitch, but she was *damn* good at sleight of hand, as a pickpocket and as an illusionist, it was the skill that kept her alive on the streets and made her worth *something* to Cinder. Right now, she had to put all that skill on the line to keep this sorcerer from realizing she was a threat and... and more so, to keep Cinder from realizing that Emerald was actually worthless, nothing more than a gutter urchin who'd managed to somehow trick her into seeing something of value in her.

That was motivation, that was what drove Emerald into putting her *everything* into going down on Arc. He might be a wizard, but he was still a man, and men didn't think so clearly when a girl was sucking his *soul* out through his dick. Even if it was a... a very large, *very* large dick... she could still take it into her mouth and slide her lips down its length. It was getting harder, getting *bigger*; but Cinder was counting on Emerald to suck cock like a pro, so Emerald made sure to not let anything get in the way of pleasuring Arc with her mouth. She put everything she had into it, not just in suppressing her gag reflex as she invited his shaft into her throat, but in her mind as well. She lost herself in the rhythm, moving up and down his length, making his cock nice and big and wet as she soaked it in her spit and ran her lips all over it. Her eyes *rolled* up in her skull as she bobbed up and down on his length.

So focused on this singular task, she only noticed the way Jaune's length *twitched* in her mouth, a sign he was about to cum... and not Cinder's hands on her head and her jaw, pulling Emerald back and away from the object of her lusty worship.

She had been so busy with orally pleasuring Jaune, she'd lost sight of anything else around her... such as the fact that Cinder had pried Emerald's booty shorts off as well as her panties. Revealing that... as her very slick thighs showed... Emerald was very turned on.

It was fortunate that it could be explained away as part of the mission, as just part of keeping Jaune distracted, but Emerald blushed as she realized that she was wet because... because she *was* turned on. Sucking Jaune's dick, the combination of fear and awe *roiling* inside her as she put everything else aside to be the best cocksucker imaginable... it had *done* something for her. Her embarrassment meant that she simply allowed Cinder to move her body into place, turning her around and raising her ass up to show off her wet pussy.

"Jaune," Cinder purred, running her hand up- *oh!* Up Emerald's behind, cupping and caressing her ass as Emerald practically *melted* at her touch, "You've gotten Emerald so hot for you, you can't just leave her unsatisfied... not that I think you can look at *this* and feel satisfied not... experiencing it."

Rationally, Emerald could put together Cinder's real angle here. Keep a man horny beyond belief and all he can think of is sating his arousal, sate that arousal, and then he won't put a single thought to prying their secrets from their mind. Emerald had pulled this trick alongside Cinder before, but...

All she could think about was how Cinder's hands were on her ass. How her fingers sank into her plush curves, openly *groping* her butt, and yes, it was all part of a strategy, it wasn't what Emerald fantasized about in truth, but Emerald couldn't spare a thought for *truth* when she was experiencing Cinder's- oh Brothers, oh Maidens, oh gods, Cinder was pressing her *cheek* into Emerald's ass and if this day was to end with a warlock turning her into a snake or incinerating her in hellfire, it would still be the absolute best day of her life!

But even in her disbelief, her desire, and her boundless joy... Emerald knew Cinder was counting on her, and she wasn't about to fail Cinder. Not when she felt so close to everything she ever wanted.

"Mmmmmmm," she moaned lustily—even if this was all an act, she didn't have to try hard to moan like she was in the throes of desire—undulating her body to better show off her curves

as she looked over her shoulder to say, “Magic makes me so *horny*... all I can think about... is how I can make that *cock* disappear.”

She was laying it on thick. Too thick, an absolutely ridiculous line and she could see the look on Arc’s face, his eyes wide and his jaw slack... but not in the way that came from a man beholding her naked ass and instead a man taking in the prospect of a girl who had “magic” as a turn on. But... even if her acting skills weren't at par, her ass certainly wasn't letting her down. Arc wasn't really asking questions when *this* was on the line. So she turned her face forward and kept up a low, needy *moan* of desire until he-

Emerald *gasped* as she felt him enter her! Oh, she knew he was big, oh, she knew he was-

“Oh gods!” she shrieked before she was able to discipline herself and add, “Take- take me harder, Sir, fuck this- this fatassed slut harder!”

He paused, evidently a little surprised at Emerald's sudden turn to self-abuse, but, *oh*, how could she not as she felt his big, powerful *rod* inside her! It was power, power incarnate! Not just in how it *split* her open, but in how- in how...

In how it made everything so *clear* to her.

Emerald was to Cinder as Cinder was to Jaune. Everything Emerald felt towards Cinder was simply *magnified* with this glorious wizard of cock! And right now, Jaune was... with her. *In* her. And as she humped his dick, throwing her hips back, she knew he was... he was enjoying her.

The night before, he had slept with Cinder. Had experienced the unimaginable pleasure of having Cinder in his bed, the sort of thing Emerald had fant- had thought about, conceptualizing how her leader could use her body, her seductive wiles to turn a target into their ally. From Cinder’s description, she’d given him a *performance*, and yet... he wasn’t acting like Emerald was just an afterthought. Like she was more than just a notch on the bedpost... she bucked her hips back and heard him *groan* in pleasure. The kind of sound that told Emerald he was enjoying himself... enjoying himself a lot. She was enjoying him too, arching her back to better enjoy the feeling of his long, hard shaft going *deep* inside her... and better showing off her ass for his enjoyment. He was powerful. She could be... she could be...

Something dark and greedy wound up from deep inside Emerald, something born of poverty and survival and fed on envy and greed, now rising up to *whisper* in her ear that Cinder... wasn’t perfect. Cinder wasn’t the strongest anymore, she *feared* Jaune. He had power over her, and right now, Emerald was enjoying how he expressed that power. An expression... something Emerald could get used to.

She could offer her obsequious service, her loyalty, her *worship* to Jaune... cut Cinder out of the deal entirely and, if she could become close to Jaune... become invaluable, become essential, become useful to him, *appealing* to him, well then... Cinder would be beneath her.

The thought hit her like a thunderbolt.

She'd never had an *ounce* of treachery in her before. Her gaze *shot* to Cinder, only to see her idol was busy studying Jaune's expression, watching him instead of Emerald as he fucked her from behind. Emerald could *never* betray her, couldn't turn against the woman who had found her on the street and raised her up to such lofty heights, but oh, oh, *oh*, she couldn't hold back the sudden ecstasy that coursed through her as Jaune fucked her *hard* and she felt so *naughty* as she thought about being a wicked, treacherous *slut* who'd do anything to please her sorcerous Master. She'd scrub the floors and warm his bed and suck his cock and serve him so good she'd- she'd- she'd be his favorite!

No!

She banished her wicked thoughts. She- she wouldn't betray Cinder! She would never-

Oh *gods*, but his dick was so good! Emerald had never had a lover like this... probably because she'd never had a particularly good lay before, but also, she'd never had sex with an actual *wizard* before! He was taking her from behind and he was- her was so powerful, so forceful, and Emerald was discovering one thing about herself: she was really, *really* into power! Power was- was a major turn on! The only turn on!

"Ohhhhh, yes, Sir, yes!" she moaned lustfully, making a *show* of her servility to him, "Ohhhh, fuck me *harder*, Sir, harder, show me... show me the *real* magic!"

SMACK!

Emerald's tongue flopped from her mouth as she made a deep, animalistic *moan* of pleasure as he spanked her. And again and again and again, his palm came down on her fat, fuckable ass, *SMACK! SMACK! SMACK!* Each one bringing Emerald to *paroxysms* of pleasure, but she didn't let it stop her from d-doing her part! Not for Cinder, no, not for that shallow and pathetic little bitch who desperately sought a fraction of the power *Jaune* held. No, Emerald did it for herself, a greedy little glutton who'd do anything for proximity to true power!

She fucked him and fucked him and *fucked* him until he came, groaning as he filled her, but, oh, Emerald wasn't done yet! She kept fucking him, spinning around and pushing him back to switch to mounting him and riding his cock, milking it for *another* load. She'd- she'd show him that she was worth it! That even a worthless sow like her could offer him her total devotion and absolute commitment to his pleasure!

Things... things got blurry from there. She was pretty sure she got him off again and... possibly a third time? But she seemed to just drift into a haze that she was only slowly brought out of by what she now realized was Cinder's voice and Cinder's hands on her, shaking her out of her stupor and making Emerald realize she was a sweat-soaked, cum-stuffed *mess* of a girl... and that Jaune was completely passed out beneath her.

But even unconscious... Brothers, he seemed to *radiate* power to her, the promise of so much... so very, very much...

"You see?" Cinder whispered under her breath, the syllables so quiet as to be almost inaudible, while still bearing the strain of the genuine *terror* in Cinder's voice that brought Emerald back to reality, "You see? His power... his power is too great! You... the spell he

had you under, it was like you were transformed into some kind of... elemental spirit of lust!"

Emerald had no reply, her voice too hoarse from... she vaguely recalled a few shrieking orgasms which might have done that. But her eyes stared dully down at Jaune, knowing to herself that she was all too happy to let him transform her into anything he wanted. Her mind, her body, her soul, if it would please him to use her as so much clay to be molded...

"We need to get dressed, fast," Cinder continued, "I've got word from Mercury that the transport is ready and Watts is confident the sedative will last until we get him to the Castle. Salem... Salem is the only one who can contain him. She's our only hope."

Emerald almost giggled. She'd never seen Salem before, but... she'd like to see her try. Jaune was... Jaune was *everything*, and Emerald knew that she had found her new Leader to follow without question. She would help Cinder deliver him to Salem but...

She knew she had a *very* bright future ahead of her with this man among men, this godlike *beast*, this...

This sorcerer.

Something stirred in the darkness of Jaune's mind as consciousness slowly webbed together through a black fog of grogginess. He... had he fallen asleep? He had been with Cinder and Emerald—he was *not* surprised that those girls had tired him out—he'd had Emerald on top of her with those beautiful bouncing breasts and...

His eyes fluttered, where he was wasn't brightly lit, but it wasn't dark, it was kind of flickering and... was something burning? Were there torches for-

"Attempt no magic."

That got Jaune's attention! Half because it was a sudden, *piercing* command that seemed to cut through Jaune's groggy and unfocused mind, half because *that voice sounded like all of his nightmares speaking straight at him*. As his eyes went wide and his vision *lurched* around, he knew he would not be attempting any magic, even if he couldn't *do* any magic, he sure as hell wasn't about to do any now! Not when-

Oh merciful Brothers...

Jaune's gaze had swung around, searching for the source of the voice and tried to make sense of... was he in a dining room in a *castle* or something? Everything was made of stone, but before he could even put those thoughts together, his eyes connected with the source of the voice and Jaune knew fear on a level he'd never comprehended before.

When he first arrived at Beacon, Jaune had been ignorant of what the Grimm truly were. He knew of them in a vague sense, had put a few minor Grimm down as part of the town militia, but until he was running for his *life* from an Elder Deathstalker or going face to face with an Ursa, he didn't know what it meant to face *death* so clearly. The moment after his sword

hand... somehow, luck, blind adrenaline, *however* gave him the strength to take the beast's head off, Jaune felt the sudden, electrifying *terror* that came with a near-death experience. His whole body felt like it was an assembled mess of sticks, held together by electricity and panic.

But that was nothing compared to this.

She didn't have the form of a Grimm. She was... smaller than him. She looked like a woman, an adult woman, but something he had roughly half a foot over. But she was... she was not of this world. Her chalk-white face was marred by radiating veins of what could only be the darkness of Grimmstuff, her eyes were as red as blood and seemed to pierce him right to his core, her gaze fixed on him with an all-consuming authority that was...

Well, second to Ms. Goodwitch in terms of intensity, but Ms. Goodwitch wasn't *half-monster*, so this... this Grimm-woman came out decidedly ahead in her power to make Jaune worry about the state of his pants in response to this abject feeling of utter fear.

"I am Salem," she proclaimed, her voice echoing inside his skull, "Queen of the Grimm, ageless and deathless, oldest practitioner of the Secret Art."

Jaune just stared at her, his mind still completely locked on her appearance and unable to even *begin* to process the words of... oldest practitioner? Secret Art? *Queen of the Grimm*? ...but none of those meant anything when Jaune was still staring into her inhuman eyes, eyes that seemed to penetrate his very soul and look right into his most primal part of his mind, the part that still remembered his primitive ancestors who struggled to tame fire and hold back the danger that lurked in the night time.

And worse, her lips curled up into a smile.

"By reports of my agents," she gave a nod to her side where... Emerald and Cinder stoo-

Wait! The- the *hell*? If they were part of... how would they- *why* would they be impressed with his magic tricks when they- when this- but... but...

Jaune's brain shut down as his captor kept talking.

"I've been told that you are a Magus of some power," she continued, "A human with the gift of magic, true magic... a rare gift indeed."

She stepped forward, drawing closer to him, becoming *larger* as she got nearer, even if Jaune was physically taller than her, the power of intimidation meant that she seemed a hundred feet tall as she seemed to float across the stone floor, the embodiment of his execution drawing nearer and nearer and- and she thought he could do magic? This was about his... *this was about his magic act? He was going to die because of a cheesy magic act he'd done for a school talent show?*

But even that thought failed as the... as the *actual witch* was now close enough to be only inches from his face, a living nightmare whose proximity told Jaune that she was even more horrifying close up. There were no illusions here, no tricks. She was a Grimm woman, and

she triggered every desperate fight-or-flight reaction that turned into so much *nothing* in his frozen limbs.

“Show me, Sorcerer,” she spoke, her words a command etched into Jaune’s very *bones*,
“Show me your magic, and let me see what power you wield.”

He could...

He could...

Here went nothing.

The Wizard King

Jaune felt his heartbeat *pounding* in his ears. Every pulse of his cardiac muscle drove a supply of adrenaline he didn't know he had to every cell in his body. Time was moving almost infinitely slowly as he took in everything around him. The Queen of the Grimm, murder incarnate, standing before him, her eyes piercing through all of his obvious, *obvious* lies, seeing the fake-Huntsman who played at being a fake-Magician and now would soon be real-dead. Behind her, Cinder and Emerald watched him, wide eyed and alert. They were... apparently not magic *groupies*, but two women who thought- who *knew* magic was real and apparently thought he knew magic. And now he was going to die because of their...

But even as death loomed over him and fear *roared* all about him, just looking at Cinder and Emerald reminded Jaune that he knew what they looked like naked. And that reminded Jaune of what it felt like to fuck Cinder. To have Emerald just *swallow* his dick. Or how her naked breasts bounced over him while she humped him like mad... he would die today. But it was a *worthy* death.

His hands were already in motion. Time slowing down hadn't given him any time to think, not when he was terrified out of his mind and when thinking would clearly not do anything to help him. He had only one trick in mind, one trick that could be performed without any of his equipment. He didn't even have a quarter to pull out from behind her ear. All he had in his repertoire...

He held up his left hand, palm towards him, all fingers extended. In spite of his fear, his hands had never been steadier, not as he raised his right and *wiggled* his fingers, trying to give a little patter to the trick. He stared into the Queen of the Grimm's eyes with his own gaze utterly focused, his face a serene mask, before his right hand dropped down. In an instant, he tucked his left thumb behind his palm and squeezed his right behind his index and middle finger... and pulled it away.

The pulling off the thumb trick. Mostly used on small children and babies. And now... for the enemy of life itself.

He held it for a moment, giving his thumb a little *wiggle* to sell the idea that it was still alive, even if severed as he continued to stare at Salem, daring her to just kill him on the spot and be done with it as the seconds stretched on in silence, locked in their staring contest.

"The Act of Division..." Salem murmured, her voice...

Hushed with awe?

"The foundation of all the Secret Arts," she continued, her gaze transfixed on Jaune's thumb, "The partition of the hand, the removal of the thumb, the digit symbolically tied to the power of humanity to use tools, only... only a true Master of the Art, a Magus of the days of the Brothers, could have known to... just as Magus Ramanujan wrote in his treatise, 'All begins with the holy act of division, the creation of two from one. Such is all magic, in truth.'"

Jaune did not know *what* she was talking about but his brain wasn't working so good either, so his poker face remained completely impassive as she-

“Show that you know the Art!” she shrieked, her voice hell itself inside Jaune's skull, “Show me that you can, as Magus Ramanujan wrote, ‘can make whole what was divided,’ show me!”

Whether through all-encompassing fear or just the fact that this whole situation was too *insane* to really accept that it was real, Jaune moved as though he was in a trance, not thinking, not hesitating, simply *doing* as he moved his hands back together, extended his thumb, and then swung both his hands wide, fingers splayed, all to show off his completely intact hands to the awestruck Grimm Queen. She stared, mouth open, eyes wide, unable to process what she was seeing until...

“Great Master!” Salem shrieked as she *dropped* to all fours, prostrating herself before Jaune and making him *really* feel like he no longer understood what the fuck was going on!

But as Queen Salem bowed, so too did Cinder and Emerald, quickly following suit. It was... it was...

Wait, did he just win?

It was the first proper thought that went into Jaune's head since he performed the trick. And with it, came a whole *rush* of cognition as he put together that the situation at hand was very much not what he was expecting! At all! Ever!

But things were moving forward, with or without Jaune's understanding.

“Allow me,” the Queen said, still bowing to him, “to show you the deference I owe to a Master of the Craft.”

Jaune didn't know what any of that meant, but like every insane thing that had happened to him since he did some magic tricks at a school assembly, it led to something he did understand. Understood very well. He hands went to his pants and they came down in a hurry, revealing the cock that, rationally speaking, couldn't be more than a day from fucking himself unconscious with Emerald and Cinder.

But then she put her hands around it and Jaune suddenly felt like a... like a *spirit* of masculine power flowed into him, his cock springing to fill hardness like it was its own animal, taking life beyond Jaune's control. It could have been magic, *real* magic, but it also could have been the way her palm smoothly glided down his length, the soft grasp of her unnatural hands forming a shockingly pleasurable pocket for him. Either way, Jaune's erection came back with a vengeance as an unthinkable monster gave him a truly loving handjob. He heard her mouth some incantation, but the feeling of her breath on his dick was more magic than any spell... especially as her mouth drew closer and closer until her soft lips closed around his head and Jaune could only *moan* as her tongue swirled around him.

On one hand, a terrifying Grimm woman was a living nightmare, and sticking his dick into effectively a Beowolf's mouth made him feel like he'd discovered the worst idea possible.

On the other hand...

Jaune's eyes *rolled* up in his skull as he felt Salem's soft lips reach his shaft and begin to lovingly rock back and forth as she sucked him off. Jaune had been sucked off by Emerald, and she was incredible, but this... this was something of another world. Technique that made Jaune worry that she could liquefy his bones and suck them out of him!

An image just as violent as sticking his dick in a Beowolf, but the combination of primal fear and utter sexual bliss that made Jaune feel like no other sexual experience could ever compare to-

And then the whole thing got even crazier.

“A-allow us to show our fealty, too!”

Jaune blinked, turning his attention away from the Grimm Queen's blowjob to see... to see Cinder *tear* her dress off, rapidly stripping naked to show off her impossibly gorgeous body. She was... she was a *vision*, a woman unlike anyone Jaune knew, a perfect assistant for a magic show... which felt like something a *lifetime* ago, but she seemed so glamorous and confident, something even more true as she stepped out of her clothes and strode towards him.

Emerald was doing the same, smiling at him seductively as she ran her hands over her curvy body, playfully hefting and jiggling her tits as she began to shake her hips from side to side... in no time at all, she was dancing lewdly, a dance that seemed almost closer to masturbation than dancing, but *fuck*, it was turning Jaune on!

But before Emerald could steal his attention, Cinder was kissing him, taking his hand and *placing* it on her soft and inviting breast, closing his hand around it as Jaune simply *moaned* in pleasure. And moaned and moaned as Salem took him all the way to his base and gave him a superhuman level of suction that made him wonder just how long he could last against all *this*. Emerald pushed his self control to its limits: this was so much more. Cinder, Emerald, and Salem all fought for his attention, and he only had so much to give, Salem's inhuman mouth, Cinder's perfect breast, Emerald's jiggling butt...

Eyes rolling up in her skull, Jaune came. He came and he came, pumping right into Salem's mouth as she greedily *sucked* down everything he had to offer. Thank the Brothers for aura, because Jaune didn't know how he could have this much sex out of nowhere and *not* pass out, not as Salem worked to make sure she got every available drop of his seed.

But as she pulled her lips off of him, it was clear that Salem was not about to stop.

“*Magnificent*,” she said, “I can *taste* the potency of your issue... it had been... *so long* since I've been able to do that. Thousands- thousands! Too many thousands of years of chastity ends tonight... and I have so much to make up for...”

Jaune didn't know what to say. But apparently, his instincts had the right of it, from playing on Cinder's “magic kink” to trying to feign telepathy with Emerald, so rather than think...

Jaune used his free hand (the other was still mauling Cinder's chest and he was pretty sure he couldn't remove it if he tried) to cup Salem's chin and incline her eyes to meet his gaze.

“Rise,” he said, as magisterially as possible since... she did say she was a Queen, “Rise, you need not kneel before-”

“No,” she said, shaking her head and smiling, a sticky residue of his cum glistening on her teeth, “You are my King, my Sorcerer King, who I have been...”

She shuddered, a *moan* passing through her entire body as she tried to contain herself, but it failed as she roughly *drove* Jaune to the ground. In his state, a feather could have knocked him over, much less a superpowered Grimm Witch.

“I'm sorry, but it's been, literally, ages since I've last gotten laid and I am *so fucking horny*.”

There was something more than a little threatening in her voice. But then she made her clothes *vanish* and Jaune's concerns vanished as well as he saw her *massive*, chalk-white breasts on display, swaying from side to side as she crawled over him. He couldn't see the lethal *hunger* in her red eyes when he was too busy marveling how the black veins of Grimm corruption really only highlighted how big they were, she had to have a rack bigger than Goodwitch's from how-

Jaune sucked in a *breath* as Salem took his still-hard dick and speared herself on it! And before Jaune could reckon with the feeling, she dropped forward to *smush* him with those large, luscious *tits*. “Colder than a witch's tit” was a phrase coined by an idiot, but Jaune could blame them later. Right now, he had soft, heavy, incredible tits to suck on, kiss, and worship as Salem almost completely lost control, her hips *thumping* against him as she humped him in a mad frenzy!

“Oh I missed this, I missed this, I fucking MISSED THIS!” she shrieked, “I love dick so much, I love your *big fucking dick!*”

Jaune had heard a variation on that from two other women this week, opinions he'd chalked up to then being really into magic, but now, Jaune had to accept that he was actually... good at sex. Or good at breaking an unthinkably long dry spell, but fuck it, he was going with the first option, the one that gave Jaune the spur of confidence he needed to start *thrusting* upwards, stabbing his dick into a Grimm MILF as she *did not hide* her pleasure.

“Oh, I wasted so much time on revenge!” she howled, her pussy *clenching* on his dick as she smothered Jaune with her boobs, “You- you can take over, Sorcerer- Sorcerer King of the Grimm! All I want is to ride this *diiiiick!*”

There were *no* complaints from Jaune on that!

Cinder and Emerald, desperate to be seen completely in line with their mistress—or perhaps, just hoping to be next—descended upon Jaune, both taking a hand and inviting Jaune to use it to explore their bodies. Cinder took him to her thighs and his fingers quickly found their way into the wetness of her cleft. With Emerald, she clapped his palm onto the curve of her ass

and Jaune did not hesitate to *spank* it! The *crack* of his palm gave the percussion as he fucked the Queen of the Grimm with everything he had!

It was mad hedonism, utterly wild sexual excess as three moaning, gasping, *shrieking* women milked Jaune for all he had! And while Jaune didn't know how any of this was happening, or what would happen if his deception was found out, he *did* know that this was incredible and absolutely nothing else mattered compared to giving these three the absolute *fucking* they needed!

Emerald checked her hair one last time in the mirror to make sure she looked her absolute best. With a quick tug, she adjusted her outfit to guarantee her cleavage was properly magnified and her itty bitty shorts just hung off her hips. She was the lowest of the low, the bottom rank, the bitch... which meant that the duty of tending to the Sorcerer King of Remnant's more base needs fell to her.

By that, it meant that she was bringing him his dinner, but it could also mean... other things.

It was difficult to keep Emerald's mind focused when so many *other* things were so clear in her mind. What other things she could be doing for him, but... she was to bring him his meal. One prepared in Salem's kitchens, either from slave-cooks kidnapped from Remnant or just magicked up by the Queen's spellcraft... though if *that* was the case, Emerald had no doubt Jaune could easily exceed it!

It was incredible how quickly Emerald had *completely* fallen for Jaune. She was utterly besotted, head over heels, and she had absolute faith that he was the greatest and most incredible man in the whole world, the Sorcerer King of Remnant who she could only be so lucky as to serve!

Preening as she knocked at his door, she thrust out her chest, held the platter high, bowed her head, and hoped she looked appropriately servile before him when he opened the door and made his choice if she wanted dinner... or dessert!

The door swung open and she saw him standing there, eyes wide... and not for the food.

"I have brought you dinner, Sir," Emerald said deferentially. He gawked, and Emerald felt a *flush* of pleasure, as though he'd complimented her. Cinder had never brought such *heat* to her body, but she... she had to do her job. She brought his dinner into his room and tried not to let her awe at its exquisite furnishings get to her. She had to show him she could be useful. He'd just had sex with a woman whose breasts were bigger than Emerald's head *and* Cinder. She couldn't just hope to impress him with her body.

Setting his meal down on the table, she turned, still making sure to emphasize her breasts (even if she couldn't win on them alone, they were still an asset she couldn't discard) as she pressed them together with her arms. "Will... will that be all, Sir?"

He didn't answer for a moment before he shook himself back into focus. "That's- that would be all."

She knows that she should leave now. She's here to deliver dinner and that is all she ought to do. Be a good servant. Show him how useful she could be. Anything more risked irritating him, making her seem too needy, too uncouth, useless greedy gluttonous Emerald, getting ideas beyond her station...

But something... there was something about Jaune that made Emerald forget everything she had ever learned, something that made her want him so badly that rather than leaving after a curtsy, Emerald paused... and then did a foolish thing.

"Teach me," she begged, "Take me on as your Apprentice, teach me magic, I'll- I know it's above my station, Sir, but please: I'm a quick study and I'll do anything, Sir, absolutely anything to earn your favor!"

It was desperate. Needy. She was throwing herself at him and he had no reason but pity to think she might even be worth the time. It was a crude tactic, so far beneath everything she had ever learned from Cinder. But she had nothing else and hoped, for the first time in her life, that *honesty* might be worth something.

But she could see on his face that, while her bluntness had been an unexpected play and he was... uncertain what to say, it was still a situation where...

"I- I can't teach you," he stammered out. It was something she knew she would hear, it was the simple truth of reality, but at the same time... enough possibility dangled in his words for her to push on!

"You can!" she cried, "E-even if I don't have the, um, the Craft of the Arch or the things Salem said, even if I can't do magic, I wish to know, to understand, to- to be your Apprentice, to study beneath... *mmmm*, to study... *diligently*... beneath you..."

Now she moved to push the aggression *further*; adjusting her top to show off as much cleavage as she could as she pressed her body closer. His reaction... she had no idea what it actually meant, but he very much looked like a man, wizard or not, who was quite overwhelmed by her body!

"No, no. It's all..." he struggled for his words, his mind whirling through arcane impossibilities, "You can't- I can't, you cannot be my Apprentice!"

He gave his command all the force his voice could muster... but it lit a *fire* in Emerald to hear it. She wanted him to yell at her, to bellow, to call her a stupid girl, a clumsy ox, a useless failure... she wanted to feel the shame *bloom* in her breast that she was so inferior to him, so pathetic, only good for her body!

She *flung* herself at him. Showering Jaune in *kisses* to vent the unbridled *heat* now pouring out from between her thighs. She- *mwah*- needed- *mwah*- him- *mwah*- so- *mwah*- badly!

But Jaune just *flung* her away. It should have made Emerald realize what a fool she was, what idiocy now compelled her, but she couldn't think right now! She wanted to be-

"I'm not a wizard!"

Emerald paused. She blinked. The... the mania that had overtaken her seemed to lift for a moment, though her thoughts were hardly turning, not yet.

“You're not-”

“I'm not,” he said, bitterly shaking his head, “It's all- it's all sleight of hand. Basic... I mean *basic* magic tricks, the sort of thing anyone could learn from- from, like, a book! I've got quick hands, but... I have *no idea* how anyone thought that would make me a wizard!”

A part... a part of Emerald, a part of her she hasn't been listening to, told her... that that made sense. That she had... she had believed he was magic only because Cinder told her he was, and then... kind of got caught up in the whole... everything. And then there was another question...

“...why did you tell me this?”

The *look* that crossed his face, the realization that the only card he had was that he was the only person who knew he was a fraud. And now he'd given it away.

“I don't... I don't know why I do anything!” he cried out in utter dismay, “I didn't- I still don't know how anything happened! At all!”

...

Emerald giggled.

Then giggled some more.

Then she laughed. And laughed. And laughed.

She looked upon Jaune, looked upon him as she laughed and yet, as she realized the sheer, utter ridiculousness of it all... she realized it did not diminish him. No, as she laughed, a wild, maniacal laugh, she realized that Jaune seemed to loom larger and larger over her, shining brighter and brighter, becoming, as a deceiver, a trickster, a- a thief, a true thief, a thief who stole just by being, the very incarnate being of theft, someone even more *perfect* in Emerald's eyes!

“You...” she said as soon as her voice was clear enough to speak, though the words still stumbled in her giddiness, “You are the most... perfect man who ever lived. Oh, my Master!” she cried out, clasping her hands together in her plea, “Please, take me into your service, tell me how I can serve you, how I can please you! Tell me, oh, just tell me!”

“Wait, you're not-”

“Make me your Apprentice, Master! Let me serve you, I really only want to *serve*, and to serve the man who could make Cinder, could make *Salem* bow at his feet...” she shivered as she spoke, her whole body tingling as she remembered how it felt to drop and *bow* before him alongside the most powerful women in the world, “That's all I want. I want to serve. I want to be a servant, to be a lackey, to be your undyingly loyal and utterly devoted assistant!”

It was true. It was all true. All Emerald cared about was serving power, being useful to power, worshiping and pleasuring power, and he was power. Accidental power, divinely ordained power, Emerald didn't see the difference in how she longed to serve it!

She *hopped* backwards onto his big, soft featherbed, enjoying how she *bounced* on it as she leaned back and *peeled* her shorts off, her panties fast following, the sexy little thong she was wearing nearly glued to her crack as she popped the string past the globes of her ass. But with that done, she just licked her lips and put it all on display.

Her legs spread, her pussy exposed, Emerald ran her hand up and down her labia, inviting Jaune to see just where he could stick it. She was so wet and ready for him, and seeing him try to resist her allure lit a fire inside her. She wanted him. Needed him. The thought of, *mmmm*, becoming his adjutant, his lieutenant, his bodyman... just so long as she was *his*, that was what mattered.

“Take me...” she moaned, “I know your secret, Sir, so make me... make me *utterly* loyal to you. Fuck me or edge me, I don't care, just so long as you *use* me...”

He *trembled*. Emerald didn't know which one she wanted more! To have him *back* inside her, pounding her into submission, or to have him deny her, putting her in her place by deciding she wouldn't get what her body was craving... it just got her hotter and hotter!

“If I... If I...” he choked out, staring at her pussy, “If I take you as my Apprentice, if I... teach you magic... you will... I can...”

“Fuck me?” she purred seductively, “Go ahead and find out... Sir.”

He looked as though he was caught in the gravitational pull of her pussy, something that filled Emerald with ecstatic glee as she saw herself in competition with Cinder and Salem... and still, Jaune felt overwhelmingly drawn to *her*! As he undid his belt, Emerald felt her excitement grow to new heights, watching him draw nearer and nearer as she *squirmed* in anticipation! Cinder could- Cinder would never make her feel like this, and Jaune-

Emerald *howled* in glee as Jaune penetrated her.

This was not their first time, but their first time... she had been so foolish, so ignorant. She had only seen Jaune while blinkered in her adoration of Cinder. Now, she was *Jaune's* Apprentice, and as his Apprentice, she was serving him in the way she always secretly wished to serve!

“Make me- make me serve you, oh mighty wizard!” Emerald howled as Jaune pounded her, “Claim me, dominate me, make me your devoted Apprentice, Sir!”

“This- this is insane!” he groaned.

But Emerald didn't care. It was *better* that he was a fraud, the way his *cock* pistoned into her pussy, *that* was magic! Real magic, powerful magic, the greatest magic possible!

“Embrace it!” she cried, snapping her arms around his back, her nails raking down his back as her hips bucked upwards to take him deeper inside her, “Give in to the insanity and- and- and-”

The pleasure was building inside her, a swelling bubble that grew higher and higher in Emerald's core until she could take no more:

And it burst.

“AND MAKE ME YOURS!”

Emerald exploded, her climax utterly overwhelming her as it seemed to go off again and again, every inch of her body *rocked* by her orgasm. As Jaune kept *thrusting* into her, Emerald could only think, over and over again, that she had found her place at last. *Beneath* the mightiest power in Remnant, beneath the Sorcerer King, beneath the man who could... could make her feel like this!

This... this was truly where the magic happened.

The rest of the evening was a blur. She had *dutifully* served her Master, ensuring he took his pleasure with her, using her body as nothing more than a doll. She made sure he ate, inviting him to lick his meal off her body. And, after a long and vigorous initiation, she served him as his bed warmer, cuddling him close as he drifted off to a well-earned sleep. He might not have actual magical powers, but there was definitely something supernatural in his ability to satisfy multiple women like this, and that was a talent worthy of praise and adoration.

It was... it was strange for Emerald to feel like she had been wholly honest, not just with Jaune, but with herself. She had found something she truly wanted in just being his devoured and obsequious servant. She had said it and she had meant it. Snuggling close to Jaune, she savored the feeling of her new relationship, one built on honesty and deception in equal measure.

But of course... there was another part to it. A part that now made Emerald *tingle* just to think of what it meant that she might have left out what it might mean to be Jaune's Apprentice in terms of what it meant for her new relationship with Cinder...

But... he wouldn't mind. Emerald just had to do everything to make Jaune happy, and he wouldn't mind at all!

She had never been good at magic.

She'd been good enough with it, maybe, she'd been *effective* with it, but her husband had always been the Mage-Adventurer. He had been both the scholar and the brawler of the two of them and Salem had been all too happy to be his glamorous wife, hosting parties and balls and giggling that she always got a little turned on when her husband talked *magic* to her... but actually casting spells? She never really had the patience for careful study nor the flashes of insight that made brilliance. It was fine back then. Her husband did the magic, she just looked pretty. And she was very good at that!

In the war against the Brothers, she'd mostly rallied those with more power and skill than her to her side. And from there, her attachment to the Grimm meant that she had a massive power reserve to draw from and her immortality meant that caution could be thrown to the wind, but that really only meant she had a very big arcane cudgel to club opponents with. Her husband, the second go around, was still the real mage, he knew how to use the Art to do things more sophisticated than energy blasts and explosions. Which worked for her: most of what she needed to do was blast things down and blow things up.

Had it not been for the fact that she was the only game in town—her reincarnating husband's gift for magic growing weaker and weaker with each new body—she would have been a rather forgettable spellcaster. But more importantly, it wasn't her passion. Being a Sorcerer Queen was... a lot of work. A lot of tedious work that depended on annoying people, when all she wanted to do was look pretty and support a *real* wizard.

And now, thanks to Jaune... she could do just that. She could put all that conquest and violence and just be the glamorous wife once more. Just look good, keep the Castle homey, and cover all the sort of wifely duties she hadn't realized she missed so badly after her divorce. She was... happy again, all that stress and anger just *melting* off her shoulders.

He changed everything.

And as a sign of that, Salem saw her two subordinates, Emerald and Cinder, showing off just how much things had changed. Emerald now wore the formal robes of an Apprentice Wizard, though... skimpier in cut than it was in her day. And Cinder, she looked so *fetching* in her maid's outfit! She had experience in that, if Salem remembered correctly, though it seemed like there was some problem there...

"Do you think," Emerald snarled, "I can present myself before the Sorcerer King in *dirty robes*? Should I suggest to the man teaching me to reduce animals, animals like *humans*, to lower rungs of the evolutionary ladder that I consider his teachings to be but a trivial engagement?"

"N-no, Ma'am!" Cinder stammered out, her eyes on the floor.

She threw the robe in her hands at the maid's face. "Then clean it!" she barked.

Cinder scampered away, robe in hands, a thousand apologies on her lips. Salem had been a little uncertain at first, curious as to what Jaune saw in Cinder's, in her opinion, forgettable number two, but she had to say: his choice had been spot on. She treated the help *exactly* like a proper wizard did.

She gave Emerald a warm nod as she passed her in the hall. She was such a darling little dish, her and Cinder both. And so much *fun* in the bedroom! She loved having the two of them entwined around her, feeling their tongues worship her heaving breasts, the three of them making an unforgettable tableau as the King entered his bedroom, eyes going wide as he thanked the gods for his fortune... So much more enjoyable than those useless twits she used to surround herself with, like... Herzal? Was that his name? Oh, it didn't matter, it was part of her old life, and none of that mattered anymore.

This was all she wanted, really. She had been so many other things in life, an avenging widow waging war against the gods, a tyrant trying to make the ignorant understand what was best, and now, Queen of the Grimm. And none of those roles had given her a fraction of the comfort, peace, and feeling of belonging as came from being a Wizard's housewife.

It almost, at times, at her stupider and more sentimental times, made her wonder if she could... if she could go back to Ozma and try and just pretend things were as they used to be, all cozy and domestic. But... that wasn't possible. Too much history, too much blood shed, and also, she didn't much care for this incarnation, looks-wise.

But with Jaune... she had a new opportunity to start fresh! She'd restyled her look from "imposing Queen of Terror" to "Happy Housewife," and it felt so good to start over again, to go back to caring about her appearance and keeping a home. She fluffed her hair with her hand as she admired her figure in the mirror, seeing her curves filling out a dress rather than her old, form-concealing black robe. For being eons old, she still had it, and "having it" was always what Salem had been best at.

All that stuff with revenge and destruction and artifacts... that was because she had no other options. But now, her Wizard Hubby needed his Wifey Witch to keep the household in line—and that was a full time job!

Licking her lips as she made her way down the Castle's corridors, Salem put a little *sway* in her step, drawing to her husband's Study, thinking of just what wifely duties she could engage in there. Surely, she could tidy up a little... or perhaps, she might consider doing something a little *messier* on the desk... but whatever it was... she was simply *so* much happier to have found the world's only other wizard to share her life with.

And he said he could pull a rabbit out of a hat! Imagine that! Conjunction of a living being within the confines of haberdashery... Not even Ozma in his prime could pull that off, but her hubby, well... he was *truly* magical!

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