

A Demonic Rise

“Wanna drink?” a tall man asked, glancing around at the three girls.

“Only if you are buying them, Konnor!” a dark-haired woman replied, curling her hair around her fingers.

The other two, a brunette and a blonde, chuckled, but the brunette spoke up, “Maya, you know he never buys us anything. Why do you think he’s here? He had no money, and I had to pay for his ticket and room.”

“Kiera’s right,” the blonde chimed in.

“I know that, Sandy!” Maya huffed, “But I did give him some money this morning.”

“Well,” Konnor began, rubbing his head nervously, “I kind of spent that on Kiera.”

“Seriously, Kiera. And you claim to be the smart one!”

“Shush Maya,” Kiera retorted, “I am smart, especially with history and science. Also, when it comes to seeing a dolt that has money!”

Konnor looked apologetically at Maya, “Sorry,” he said under his breath.

Maya rubbed her eyes, “Don’t feel like you owe her anything just because she brought you with us to Spooky Island,” Maya muttered, handing over a fifty-dollar bill, “I’ll sort you out some extra money that Kiera will not be allowed to have! Once we get back to the hotel room.”

Konnor nodded, taking the bill. Maya watched him go, “*He always seems to fall head over heels when a girl asks for help,*” she thought.

The sound of the various conversations was interrupted by glass shattering as several slender demons coated in reddish-purple skin burst through the windows. The guests screamed, panicking as they ran in all directions, with a few tripping over whilst others shoved guests out of the way, trying to get to the exits as the demons gave chase.

“Are people getting scared over this?” Sandra asked, walking up to one of the demons, not even scared by it towering over her.

“Don’t!” Maya called out as Sandy grabbed and tugged at the creature’s face.

“See, it’s just a mask!” Sandy stated.

The demon snarled, snatching the woman bringing her up to eye level, chuckling before it unleashed a wave of green mist over Sandra rendering its captive unconscious. Kiera jumped to her feet as Maya began to back away.

“Hey, put her down this instant!” Kiera demanded, jumping back as another monster jumped up next to its friend.

Maya gulped, watching as Kiera threw her fists at the demon, trying to snatch her up whilst bouncing on the spot like a rabbit. The creature screeched, ducking down and grabbing Kiera by her ankles, ignoring the captive’s attempts to punch it on the nose, breathing a mist onto her.

Maya clenched her fists, biting her lip as her fight or flight instincts kicked in. Spying one of the broken windows, she chose flight, making a quick beeline for the window. Her heart pounded inside her chest as she bolted across the courtyard and into the forest.

“Can’t let them get me too!” she muttered, barging her way through the overgrowth, tears trickling down her face as she disappeared into the night.

The ocean lapped at the white sand as a young girl awoke on the beach. She glanced around frantically, “Kiera! Sandy! Konnor!” she called out, “Where are you?”

Maya sighed, her hands shaking, “That wasn’t a nightmare, was it?” she asked aloud; her mind flashed back to the night’s events, recalling Kiera boxing a tall demon before grabbing her. Maya wiped the tears from her eyes, remembering how she had run like a coward leaving her friends with the monsters, but she didn’t recall if those monsters had taken Konnor.

She stood up, looking around, “What do I do?” she asked, playing with her fingers, “Let’s head back to the hotel and start from there. Maybe it was all a stunt or dream; I’ll find the others, maybe Kiera. She’ll know she’s smart after all.”

Maya carefully made her way through the palm trees and undergrowth, becoming slightly skittish and jumpy at the slightest sound from the parrots squawking to mosquitos buzzing. Voices carried through the air as she reached a small path; Maya ducked down behind a bush peering through the thick leaves at Kiera and Sandy standing under the shade of a tree.

“Kiera,” she muttered; she went to move out from her hiding spot but stopped as Konnor ran up, causing Kiera and Sandy to crack their necks and glare at him.

“Hey Kiera, what happened last night? Have you seen May?” Konnor asked.

“Nothing happened last night other than a performance,” Kiera replied, “Wait, did you miss it?”

“Well, kind of yeah. I bolted out of there,” Konnor began, placing a hand on Kiera.

“Konnor,” Kiera smiled, cracking her neck, “You haven’t been possessed yet.”

“What...are you high?” Konnor asked, jokingly nudging Kiera

Maya clasped her hands over her mouth as Kiera choke-slammed Konnor, screeching like a monster as she breathed a thick green mist over Konnor. Konnor moaned, passing out as Kiera picked him like a rag doll, throwing him over her shoulder and walking away.

Maya bit her lip, “Something’s not right here,” she thought, moving through the overgrowth to follow Kiera.

“Where is she taking him?” Maya thought as her friends entered a large cave.

Maya waited for a few moments, then checked if the coast was clear before hurrying into the cave, sand kicking up around her shoes as she skidded to a stop in a vast cavern. She glanced around, seeing no obvious ways to head deeper.

“Great!” Maya sighed, stepping out into a clearing, “Something’s wrong with Kiera, and the one time I can be smart and a hero!”

Maya paced around the clearing, kicking at the sand, clicking her tongue as she tried to work out what to do, when suddenly the ground gave way under her weight. Maya cried out, rolling roughly down a long slope, groaning as she landed in a pile of sand.

She coughed, spitting out sand from her mouth as she sat up, “Just my luck!”

She glanced around at the cave she had landed in before looking up at the slope behind her, realising there was no way of returning to the surface. Maya stood up, brushing herself off as she eyed a small tunnel in front of her.

“There’s only one way then,” she said in a disgruntled tone.

Maya crept down the long winding tunnel toward the bright glow at the end; her heart pounded inside her chest, her gut kept telling her to turn back and run whilst her mind egged her on, her curiosity burning to find out what was happening on this island. Her jaw dropped, and her eyes widened as the tunnel opened into a vast cave with orange flames flickered burning brightly on the tall square torches.

She glanced around, keeping herself low, scanning her surroundings. Various tunnels ran underneath the cave floor, spanning out in all directions. Finally, her eyes landed above a vast vat in the centre of the cave with jagged spikes rising from the sides.

Taking a deep breath, she made her way over to the vat; the closer she got, the more she could hear faint ghostly voices echoing from the vat. Maya straightened herself up, peering over the sides of the vat. She had to clasp her hands over her mouth to muffle her scream at the sight of a clear blue liquid swirling around whilst several spiritual heads swam around like fish in a bowl.

“What are these?” Maya asked, bringing her head closer to the water.

A head swam by turning to face her; it looked like Kiera’s to Maya.

“Maya, help me!” Kiera called out.

“Screw you, Kiera!” Konnor called out, “You skunk breathed me!”

Maya screamed, jumping back, stumbling over her two feet, grunting as she landed on her arse.

“Ow! My butt!” she groaned, laying against the sandy floor, “What is going on here!” she whined, kicking at the sand with her eyes shut.

Opening her eyes, she could see a large stone altar; she rolled over onto her stomach, staring up at the altar. Maya hummed thoughtfully, standing up, her eyes glued to a bronze and gold pyramid object sitting in the centre of the altar whilst brushing the sand off her clothes.

“A vat filled with weird head things and now a priceless looking thing,” Maya pondered, walking up to the altar, “I was Kiera was here; she’s the brains of the group. I’m just the beauty.”

She rested her hands on the altar as she leaned over the pyramid, the various engravings and inscriptions written in a language she didn’t recognise. Her hand shook as she tapped a finger against the metal surface. Maya shrieked as the pyramid opened, unfolding into a net-based shape for a pyramid. Staring closer, she could see a caveman-styled drawing of a stick figure standing before a monstrous-looking demon with tall rabbit-like ears and canine facial features; between them was a black skull with a tail. A second image opposite showed a human and demon fused.

Maya glanced back toward the vat, “Could that be those soul thingies?” she muttered, “But what does this mean? Do the demons need spirits for food like vampires? No, that’s blood but still the same thing.”

She turned to the strange device, her fingers knocking against the metal. The device whirred, opening further into a four-point star with further inscriptions and drawings engraved into the metal.

Maya moved her hands away, not wanting to open it further. Instead, she peered closer at the images that seemed to be telling a story, from one picture showing the tall demons kneeling

before the pyramid to another picture showing a giant monster holding the pyramid above its head before the ones kneeling. The third image showed the pyramid fully opened as it seemingly drew in a long black trail of skulls, whilst the four and final one showed the demons standing around a planet.

“Okay, Maya, think,” she told herself, “You’ve read picture books as a kid and figured them out; surely you can be smart here.”

She scanned the images closely, recalling the monsters that attacked the resort, trying to remember their details from the reddish-purple skin to the tall ears, “Those monsters are these demons, and they worship the pyramid....no the one who holds the pyramid possibly?”

She sighed, picking up the pyramid, her touch triggering it to reset into its pyramid form. Behind her, several demons leapt up from the caves below, snarling under their breaths at the intruder.

“Best course of action is to get this to the mainland and return with the authorities. However, I hope Kiera and the others won’t mind waiting a little while longer for help,” she stated.

She let out a scream as she turned, spotting the demons; in her fright, Maya jumped, hurling the pyramid into the air whilst she landed flat on her back. The demons watched as the pyramid came crashing down toward the girl. Maya shrieked as the pyramid slammed into her chest, in the centre above her breasts.

A bright blue glow rippled throughout her body as the pyramid fused to her body; one word kept circling through her head, “*Daemon Ritus*.” She yelped, trying to pull it from her body, only to receive a static shock.

She stood up, eyeing the demons closely; they seemed scared, getting down to a kneeling position whilst averting their gaze from her. She stared down as the *Daemon Ritus* opened up, the swirled section of metal in the centre turning in all directions. A violent gust of wind swept through the cave as a glow emitted from the *Daemon Ritus*.

The spirits were mixed within the vat, forming into a giant tornado. The tip of the tornado swirled through the air towards the *Daemon Ritus*.

“No..no..no. Get off of me!” Maya protested, trying to get her hands onto the device, the shocks preventing every attempt.

Maya screamed as the spirit tornado struck the *Daemon Ritus*, being absorbed into it and Maya. She found her body seizing, her ears filled with the spirits calling out in fright and surprise as the *Daemon Ritus* sucked them in.

“What’s happening!” Maya cried out, feeling several strange pulses of energy overlapping across her body with each soul she absorbed.

The water splashed about inside the vat as the wind faded, the last few souls entering Maya; she gasped, stumbling back, crashing into the altar. Her legs wobbled as she steadied herself against the altar. She yelped, reaching her fingers up to the Daemon Ritus, the scorching caress of the glowing metal stinging her skin.

“What...what just...I feel weird,” Maya moaned, rubbing her head.

Beads of sweat trickled down her forehead as she doubled over in pain, clutching her stomach. Her heart beat increased, and pain swelled across her body. A faint yet growing crack of bones emitted from her hands; keeping one on her stomach, she brought up her left hand. A shrill scream echoed throughout the cave as Maya watched on in horror as her fingers lengthened and thickened, her fingernails crackling as they darkened, growing longer into sharp talons. A leathery texture spread across the skin as its colouring shifted from white to a dark reddish purple.

Maya’s head jolted, holding her hands closer together before her eyes. Her fingers and hands cracked and popped, steadily growing.

The leathery material of her trainers groaned in protest against her growing feet. Maya yelped at the anguish of bones snapping within her feet as they started to lengthen. She leaned against the altar, wobbling slightly as her balance faded, her heels rising out of her shoes whilst the laces snapped. Swelling toes burst forth from the fronts of her shoes; her legs quivered as she lifted a foot outwards, the ruined footwear falling from the ever-growing limb. Tears leaked from her eyes at the sight of the monstrous skin and canine paw-like structure her foot had taken.

“This..hurts,” Maya whined, her body spasming as her belly swelled.

She groaned in discomfort as the short zipper and button popped open, her hips widening. Maya stared arm to arm as her muscles expanded like balloons, “Why am I getting bigger?” she whined, her eyes glued to her hands and fingers still growing.

Her thighs and lower legs thickened as the skin across her body shifted, becoming a dark hue of reddish purple. As the skin changes swept across her face, it concealed her blushing cheeks as her shorts tore apart, exposing the white and blue stripy duck pattern panties she had borrowed from Kiera. Maya found herself leaning away from the altar as her vertebrae pressed into her skin, her back muscles ballooned, and her back became bigger. Her shoulder blades cracked, becoming broader. A thick long tail grew out of her lower back, snatching about violently.

“I feel heavy!” Maya groaned, her voice deepening as her neck thickened.

Her breasts sunk into her chest as it thickened, her pectoral muscles tightening as they grew larger. She yelped at the sound of the straps of her top tearing around her bulking form; the Aztec-style print of the top was ruined as her chest pushed outwards, tearing her top apart.

Her eyes widened, pupils dilating as her memories started to twist, flashes of a demonic monster absorbing the spirits growing more prominent. Maya stared at her hands as her ears began to lengthen, glancing up toward the demons kneeling.

“They look like ants!” she stated, spying that the cave’s ceiling seemed closer than before.

Her ears grew longer and broader, reshaping into demonic rabbit-like ears as another memory erupted in her mind whilst her hands rubbed at her engorged belly. The memory told her about the spirits, their actual name, protoplasms. A strong energy source that allowed for a horrifying yet powerful transformation, the same transformation happening to her, but something else grew in her mind that made her clutch her head screaming out in pure terror.

Her nose darkened, popping as it grew rounder and more significant whilst her mouth pushed outwards. Maya snarled at the sensation of newer, sharper teeth erupting out of her gums as her human teeth grew longer and sharper; her canines grew longest of all, hanging over her lips as she clamped her mouth shut. Her dark brown hair fell out of her head as her skull crunched,

She squeezed her eyes shut as the final pops and cracks sounded out from her body.

“Please...don’t let... him...take.....” Maya protested.

A burst of loud sadistic laughter echoed as the demonic monster flexed its fingers, its eyes slowly opening, revealing the brown of Maya’s eyes turning greener, glowing brightly as the whites of her eyes were consumed by blackness.

“That foolish human, her soul tasted good. Who would have thought a human body would be a suitable vessel for me,” a deep voice spoke as the beast flexed its fingers.

More demons leapt up from the tunnels below, bowing and kneeling respectfully toward the giant monster as it toyed with its bulbous belly.

“It’s been so long,” the creature spoke, “But at last, I am freed from the shackles of the Daemon Ritus, and I, Daemon Rex, have consumed enough energy to conquer this world!” Dameon Rex stared at the demons, stroking the small Daemon Ritus attached to his chest, “I still need more. Find me more protoplasms at once!”

The demons chuckled and nodded, jumping into the network of tunnels as Daemon Rex sat on the altar, licking his lips. “Yes, soon, this world will be mine! The age of Daemon will return to this mortal place once more, and there’s nothing those pathetic mortals can do to stop me.”