

## Fate/Charm of the Devil Fae

*This fic is inspired by **Sticky Situation** by **Professor Quill**, **In Bloom** by **Flight of Fancy**, and to a certain extent **Benefits of Saving a Veela** by **WD\_Oneill**. Please check them out.*

### Story Starts

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### Ch 2.3 - The Ladies'

### Remedy

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**Disclaimer: Everyone here is at least 18 years of age.**

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Lady Avalon was bored.

She lay draped across the forge's leather couch like a discarded silk ribbon, chin propped on stacked fists, bare feet kicking idly at the armrest. Typically, she'd be at the furnaces alongside them—teasing gusts of wind through the flames to adjust their temperature and flow, serving as the foil to Vivian's seriousness whilst they forged blade after blade, combining Vivian's aeons of expertise with what Shirou had learned so far from the Muramasa crest.

But this wasn't her project.

This was Vivian's. Vivian, who'd sourced the materials. Vivian, who'd called in debts stretching back epochs—favours owed by phantasmal beings who did not give favours lightly, who measured obligation in millennia and repaid them with the reluctance of glaciers yielding to spring. Well, that was what one got when dealing with beings who treated centuries as though they were the blink of an eye.

Vivian, who'd spent months acquiring components from the reverse side of the world, who'd negotiated with Hesperides guardians and haggled with Baobhan Sith and somehow convinced a Leanan Sídhé to part with three strands of hair without demanding an artist as sacrifice. An artist she could serve as muse

for—one who would burn brilliantly for a time before flickering and guttering out, the way they always did. The sort of inspiration that walked hand in hand with madness.

This was Vivian's design. Vivian's methodology. Vivian's exacting, unforgiving, mercilessly precise standards.

Avalon's role had been reduced to audience member.

She was not handling it gracefully.

Another kick at the armrest. The leather creaked in protest.

Across the forge, Shirou stood before the central furnace with his sleeves rolled past his elbows, sweat tracing clean lines down his temples. Vivian occupied the space beside him—close enough to observe, far enough not to crowd—her pale fingers adjusting a vial of iridescent liquid. Priceless, by any measure. Handled without hesitation. Not a tremor. Not a wasted motion.

If Rias and Taiga were to be believed—and Avalon had learned, through extensive exposure to the young devil's personal library, which Rias insisted on calling her "research materials" but which was, in reality, a room's worth of manga, light novels, eroge, and Blu-ray discs—then Lady Vivian would be classified as a "kuudere." Avalon hadn't entirely understood the term's nuances at the time.

Taiga had attempted to explain it once, complete with hand gestures and increasingly dramatic voice-acting, whilst Rias nodded along with the solemn authority of someone who had studied the concept academically. At least, that was how the pair had chosen to portray themselves.

The broad strokes fit, though: cold exterior. Genuine warmth buried beneath layers of composure and clinical detachment. The occasional devastating moment of tenderness delivered so flatly you could mistake it for indifference.

Rin—herself classified by the group as a tsundere, a label she accepted with the grace of a cat dropped in a bath—had retorted that Rias and Taiga were

both bakadere. Pure idiots, in other words. They'd retaliated by anointing Rin as a tsundere-slash-bakadere hybrid, which had nearly started a war.

Avalon's own classification, bestowed with great ceremony by Rias later, was deredere and hiyakasudere. Openly affectionate and shamelessly teasing. She'd accepted the title with a curtsey and worn it ever since.

Vivian rotated the vial a quarter-turn, held it to the light of the faery fyre, and gave a single nod of satisfaction before tipping its contents into the furnace just as Shirou placed the pendant into the forge.

Yes, Avalon thought, watching the firelight play across Vivian's face and find nothing to catch on—no flicker of excitement, no satisfaction, just that smooth porcelain calm. *That tracks.*

Her hand fumbled beneath the couch, fingers closing around a small book wedged between the cushion and the frame. One of Rias's light novels. She flipped it open to a dog-eared page.

Might as well entertain herself.

Her mind drifted. It did that when the words began to blur—slipped its moorings and wandered into waters she'd rather leave uncharted. On the page, the protagonist had just appeared in a different world, accompanied by the useless goddess he'd chosen instead of a cheat skill. Avalon could relate to being pulled into existence without a say in the matter, though at least she hadn't been dragged there by a teenager who died to a tractor.

And sometimes, when the drifting went deep enough, her thoughts turned to existentialism. It had been happening more often since Rias and Taiga introduced her to what they called a classic—an anime with giant purple, yellow, and red robots, fighting what the people of the internet described as biblically accurate angels. She hadn't been the same since.

The question surfaced, as it always did.

*'What am I?'*

She didn't have memories before that night. No childhood. No gradual awakening. No slow accretion of selfhood the way human children built identity over years of skinned knees and bedtime stories and learning which parent to ask for sweets. One moment she wasn't. The next moment she was—standing at the foot of a dying boy's bed in the Underworld, blinking in confusion that she later understood to be surprise at existing, with silver-white hair pooling around bare feet she hadn't known she possessed until she looked down and saw them.

Pale feet on dark stone. That was her first memory. The curl of her own toes against cold.

She didn't know what Merlin did.

*Summoned* implied she'd existed somewhere else before, waiting to be called. *Created* implied she'd been built from nothing, assembled piece by piece. *Drew out* suggested she'd always been there—dormant, latent, curled inside the scabbard like a seed waiting for rain. *Awakened* was closest, perhaps, but it carried implications of sleep, and she hadn't been sleeping. Sleep required a self to be unconscious. She hadn't had a self. She'd had... awareness. Dim, diffuse, undirected.

No one could agree on the verb. Vivian said "manifested." Runeas said "instantiated." Kiritsugu, the man whose desperate summoning had set that particular night's events in motion, just grunted. Avalon had stopped caring about the taxonomy years ago.

What she knew was this: her body was based on Merlin's own form. She was, in some sense, an alternate analogue to the Magus of Flowers, a female iteration of that insufferable—Vivian's description—not hers, man's physical template, though she'd thank you not to remind her. The resemblance ended at the superficial. She had his colouring. His build, adjusted. His features, softened. Nothing else. Not his personality, not his memories, not his maddening habit of being everywhere and nowhere and helpful and useless in equal measure.

And her consciousness was Avalon itself. The scabbard's dormant sentience given independent existence. A dreaming awareness that had always been there, inside the Noble Phantasm, watching kings and wars and centuries through a membrane of golden light—and which Merlin had simply... let out.

She'd arrived fully functional. That wasn't unusual for phantasmal beings.

Most phantasmal species could operate from the moment of their birth—or in her case, appearance. They emerged knowing what they were, how to move, how to use their abilities, how to exist. A dragon hatchling could fly within hours. A newborn elemental understood its element the way a fish understood water. The rearing and nurturing that human children required—the years of helplessness, the painstaking instruction in basic motor control, the slow education in language and social behaviour—was largely unnecessary.

Largely. Not entirely.

There were exceptions. Some species—particularly those aligned with the Abrahamic faction—mirrored human developmental patterns more closely. Angels and Devils raised their young, taught them, guided them through stages of growth that paralleled human childhood and adolescence.

*'Actually, wait—angels didn't raise young. They couldn't produce young without Falling. Or at least, no one had found a way to manage conception without the angel in question tumbling headlong into the sin of lust.'* She tapped her chin. *'But Fallen Angels were basically angels with extra spice, so the function was the same.'*

A giggle escaped her as, on the page, the no-good goddess the protagonist had dragged along got swallowed whole by a giant frog. Aqua deserved it.

But her mind, having briefly surfaced, dove again.

Even among phantasmal species, some degree of rearing was common. Knowledge of *what* you were didn't automatically include knowledge of *who* you were, or *how* to be that person in the company of others.

Avalon had known what she was from the instant she drew her first breath. Sword elemental. Wind aspect. Incarnation of the Ever-Distant Utopia's will. She'd known her capabilities, her limits, her nature.

She hadn't known how to laugh. Hadn't known why people touched each other gently when no injury needed tending. Hadn't understood why Kiritsugu's face did that particular thing when he looked at the boy in the bed—that crumpling around the eyes that she later learned was called grief.

She'd learned the *who* and the *how* from the people around her—though calling them "human" required increasingly generous use of the term. Runeas had later converted Rin and Sakura into devils—Shirou was already a devil-fae hybrid at the time—and even Taiga, the only actual human still standing in their little household, had been the one to draw a line that none of the others had thought to draw.

It was Kiritsugu and Taiga who'd insisted they not train Shirou to control his lust as a child.

The reasoning was simple, and it was human, and it was right—at least from their perspective. Shirou, Rin, and Sakura might no longer be human in the strictest biological sense, but their origins were human. They'd been *raised* human. And humanity, for all its myriad failings, held certain ethical lines as inviolable. You did not sexualise a child. You did not teach a child to manage a curse of lust by exposing them to its mechanics. You found another way—even if the other way was imperfect, even if it meant relying on a Silene feather that would eventually fail.

Runeas had acquiesced. Between herself and Vivian, Runeas had by far the deeper history with humanity. Long before Lucifer himself had drawn her into the Abrahamic devil faction, she'd been something else entirely—a minor divine spirit, ancient and independent, who had walked among mortals for millennia. When she was conceptually remade as a pillar of the Seventy-Two, she'd carried that understanding with her. She knew what human ethics demanded, even when those demands were inconvenient.

So they'd used the Silene feather. And the feather had worked. And then it hadn't.

Avalon caught Vivian's eye and waggled her brows.

"Are we there yet?"

"Just a few more minutes, Lady Avalon," Shirou said, sweat dripping down his face as he rotated the pendant within the furnace with steady, careful turns. In one fluid motion, he drew it from the flames and plunged it into a basin of water that Vivian had prepared—water that Avalon suspected was not, strictly speaking, *water*, given the faint luminescence rising from its surface. A sharp hiss filled the forge. Steam billowed upward, carrying with it the scent of hot metal and something older, greener.

Avalon pouted.

She watched him now—watched the firelight paint his face in amber and shadow, watched his hands move with that characteristic certainty—and felt the familiar tug of that unnamed thing in her chest. The thing she'd never quite learned the word for, despite all her years of learning words for things.

Then he fumbled a tong adjustment, and Vivian corrected him with a murmured word, and the moment passed.

*'Some minor corrections,'* Avalon noted, watching Vivian guide his hand to the proper angle. *'So maybe a bit longer than a few minutes.'*

Avalon turned her attention back to the forge properly. She sat up slightly, tucking her legs beneath her, and took in the sight—a familiar one, though it hadn't always been.

Three furnaces burned in a line.

The configuration was deliberate, but it hadn't started this way. Shirou's workshop had undergone iteration upon iteration over the years, and it had begun with only the centre furnace.

The centre furnace held Shirou's own fire—the Muramasa crest's foundational flame, the swordsmith's intuition made manifest. It burned steadily and warm, a deep orange-gold that pulsed with understanding.

The Muramasa crest. The inherited wisdom of a master craftsman whose skills had transcended death.

It was Rin—right after being converted to a devil, her mind still buzzing with the sharpness that conversion lent to an already formidable intellect—who asked a question no one else had thought to ask.

Why was there a magus not related to the Holy Grail War in Fuyuki?

Shirou was clearly from a magus family. Twenty-seven natural circuits were a statistical anomaly for a first-generation magus—possible, but exceedingly rare. Someone had bred those circuits. Someone had cultivated that lineage.

So Runeas had sent staff to search the area, and there it was—a magus workshop near the centre of the great fire. Most of the house had burned, and Shirou's biological parents had been caught in the flames. But by some miracle, the workshop still stood, and the family crest sat in a vial within it, intact and waiting.

Rin had reasoned that Shirou's parents were probably already planning to transfer the crest to him—which was why it had been separated from the body and prepared for implantation. They'd simply run out of time.

That discovery was the foundation upon which Lady Vivian took Shirou as her apprentice.

To the left, a furnace burned with devil flame.

Dark. Rich. The colour of old wine held before candlelight. Devil flame asserted dominion over what it touched. It claimed. Subjugated. Rewrote allegiance. Fire that said *you are mine now, and you will serve my purpose, and you will do so gladly.*

This was the second addition to the workshop, born once they'd managed to forge a sword that could serve as a medium for Shirou to channel devil fire.

Shirou had already used this furnace in the earlier phase—enhancing the sin of lust embedded within the virility-draining materials, amplifying their conceptual resonance until the succubus saliva burned with a refined, focused hunger, until the Mara essence pulsed with want sharp enough to cut, until the Baobhan Sith blood sang a note that matched the output of Shirou's curse beat for agonising beat. The drain properties of each material had been turned up—precisely, carefully, under Vivian's watchful eye.

That phase was complete. The devil flame furnace still burned, though—minor adjustments might yet be needed when balancing concepts against one another.

To the right—the furnace that currently held Shirou's attention—faery fyre.

Avalon felt the pull of it even from across the room. Faery fyre was the flame of revelation and conceptual truth. Fire that consumed meaning rather than matter. Fire that stripped away what something *is*—peeled back layers of accumulated identity, burned through the crusted-over barnacles of purpose that accreted on any object over time—and allowed the smith to reshape what it *becomes*. It didn't destroy. It clarified. It said *this is what you are at your core, beneath everything else*, and then, in the hands of someone who understood those truths well enough, it said *and now you will be something new*.

When Summer was at its zenith, faery fyre could adjust the conceptual properties of any material to the smith's intent. Fine-tuning purpose and function with a precision no other flame permitted. Sculpting meaning the way a jeweller sculpted gold—delicately, deliberately, with full understanding that a single misstroke could ruin the whole piece.

And Summer was very much at its zenith right now.

Technically, both Summer and Winter were always at peak power—you simply needed to be in the right place. The Courts existed in parallel to the mortal

world, their influence waxing and waning not with any cosmic cycle but with geographical and seasonal alignment. The Summer Court blazed brightest where the mortal world's seasons mirrored its nature—where heat pressed down, and green things grew with abandon, and the air itself seemed thick with growth and excess.

Japan in August was a furnace in its own right. Outside the forge, cicadas screamed their mating songs into air so humid it felt solid. The temperature hadn't dropped below thirty-five degrees in a week. Asphalt softened. Vending machines ran dry. The neighbourhood cats had retreated to whatever shadow-realm cats occupied when the world became uninhabitable.

The heat inside the forge was something else entirely. Three furnaces burning simultaneously, one of them actively channelling the concentrated essence of the Summer Court's power—the air shimmered, distorted, tasted of hot metal and green sap and something older than either.

The sword they'd forged for channelling faery fyre had been far trickier than its devil flame counterpart.

It would have been simpler to forge two separate blades—one attuned to Summer, one to Winter—but Vivian had refused. If Shirou was going to wield faery fyre, he would wield it *whole*. Summer and Winter were two faces of the same power, and a smith who could only work with half the flame was half a smith. She'd had the pull within both Courts to make it happen, and she'd used it.

The cost had been a negotiation Avalon still marvelled at.

Bringing steel into the fae lands—aside from the lands of Avalon, where iron was simply part of what they were—was strictly forbidden. The Courts enforced this with the absolute conviction of beings for whom cold iron was an existential threat. But Vivian had petitioned both Courts directly, and through some combination of ancient authority, carefully worded oaths, and the kind of political capital that only a being woven from the planet's own will could spend—she'd secured permission. Under the watchful eyes of both Mothers,

Summer and Winter alike, they'd been allowed to bring steel across the threshold.

They forged the sword at the boundary of both lands.

Now it jutted from the right-hand furnace alongside its devil flame counterpart on the left—specially forged blades, Shirou's own work, crafted specifically to serve as mediums. Translators. Bridges between what Shirou was—sword, through and through—and the energies his circuits couldn't parse unaided.

And there were limitations. Significant ones.

Avalon had spent eleven years watching Shirou push against them, work around them, occasionally batter himself bloody against them in frustration before finding some lateral solution that no one else would have thought of because no one else thought the way he did.

Shirou was, at his core, a sword.

Not metaphorically. Not poetically. Not in the vague, hand-wavy sense that a magus might say their element was "fire" and mean simply that fire-based spells came more naturally to them. *Literally*. His origin was Sword. His element—dual, a consequence of the devil-fae conversion that had saved his life and complicated it in equal measure—was Sword and Lust. He was the concept of a blade given consciousness. A living incarnation of the sword's purpose: to cut, to protect, to destroy—and with it also to forge and to create the blades that facilitate this. Everything he did well, everything that came to him with that eerie, instinctive ease that made other magi alternately envious and uneasy, he did because it could be expressed through the lens of a sword.

His Structural Analysis was a sword's edge applied to perception—cutting through the surface of things to reveal their composition, their history, their fundamental nature. His projections were swords, always swords, an endless internal armoury that contained every blade he'd ever seen and understood. His understanding of materials was a swordsmith's—tactile, intuitive, rooted in the relationship between heat, metal, and purpose. Even his cooking, if you

squinted, was a form of blade-work. The knife as an extension of will. The precise cut that separated fat from meat, that julienned vegetables into identical slivers, that broke down a fish with the economy of motion that spoke of someone who understood exactly where to apply force and where to let the edge do the work.

The application of citrus that cuts through the richness—okay, maybe the sword metaphor for cooking was a bit too much, but the rest she stood by.

But that narrow alignment came at a cost.

His magic was highly limited without a medium to bridge the gap between what he was and what he was trying to do. Raw, unmediated interaction with forces that didn't align with the concept of "sword" was—not impossible. Not quite. But inefficient to the point of impracticality, like trying to write calligraphy with a battle-axe. The conceptual distance between "sword" and "hellfire" was too vast for his circuits to traverse without burning themselves out in the attempt. The same for faery fyre, despite his fae nature. His conversion had given him access to the energy, but access wasn't the same as compatibility. A key could open a door without being able to walk through it.

Hence the swords in the furnaces.

Specially crafted blades designed to channel devil flame and faery fyre respectively, converting incompatible energies into something his sword-aligned circuits could process and direct. They were translators. Conductors. Bridges across the conceptual gap between what Shirou was and what he needed to wield. Through them, devil flame became "the fire a demonic sword might burn with," and faery fyre became "the heat of a fae-forged blade"—framings his origin recognised, accepted, could work with.

Without them, he'd be trying to forge with forces his body couldn't parse. Like sculpting marble with his fingernails.

This was also, Avalon mused—shifting on the couch, drawing one knee up beneath her chin—why she and Vivian had gravitated toward him in the first place.

They were sword elementals.

Not swords in the way Shirou was a sword—not incarnations of the concept in its totality—but beings whose fundamental nature was woven from the same conceptual thread. They were A-rei. Faeries formed within the Inner Sea of the planet. Or rather—and Avalon had spent years untangling this particular knot of ontological complexity—Vivian was *birthed* in the Inner Sea, and Avalon was *forged* within it. The distinction mattered, though she'd be hard-pressed to explain exactly why to anyone who wasn't a fae metaphysicist.

She was technically kin to the other fae weapons forged in the Inner Sea. Rhongomyniad, the holy lance that anchored the texture of the world. Excalibur, the sword of promised victory that defended against threats to the planet. Carnwennan, the dagger of shadows that cut what could not be cut. Instruments of purpose, given form and will and, in their case, independent existence. Not wielded by hands. Not bound to a bearer. Free. Self-directed.

Free, and sharp.

This was why they could wield iron. The very antithesis of most fae—cold iron, the bane of glamour, the metal that unravelled enchantment on contact, that burned fae flesh and disrupted fae magic and served as humanity's oldest ward against the fair folk—was simply part of them. They were born from it, in a sense. Forged from it. Their essence was iron before it was anything else. They were the planet's own blades, and a blade did not fear its own edge.

Lady Vivian—water and sword. The Lady of the Lake. Keeper of blades. The still surface beneath which something sharp always waited. Calm and depthless and patient, the way deep water was patient, and just as dangerous to those who mistook stillness for safety.

Avalon herself—wind and sword. The cut of cold air across an open plain. The whistle of a blade in motion. The breath that carried the strike from hilt to target. Quick and restless and bored, apparently, when left without a task.

When they'd first encountered Shirou—a boy whose entire being resonated with the concept of the sword so powerfully that it was less an affinity and more a definition, more a fundamental law of his existence than a characteristic—the recognition had been immediate. Instinctive.

The way a tuning fork hums when another fork at the same frequency is struck nearby.

The way a river recognises the sea.

The way a blade knows its sheath.

Of course they'd stayed. How could they not? He was *theirs*, in a way that had nothing to do with ownership and everything to do with resonance. With belonging. With the simple, uncomplicated truth that they were made of the same stuff—the same fundamental note, expressed in different octaves.

Avalon refocused. Blinked the philosophical wool-gathering out of her eyes and paid attention.

Shirou had just placed the pendant—a thumbnail-sized oval of compressed, layered materials, held together by structural integrity that was as much conceptual as physical—into the furnace holding faery fyre. His hands withdrew from the flame, bare and unburned. The medium-sword in the furnace glowed white-hot along its fuller, channelling the fyre's energy into a form his circuits could direct.

The devil fire phase was complete. She'd watched him work through it earlier—hours of patient, precise enhancement, amplifying the lust-concept in each virility-draining material until they hummed with a refined, focused hunger she could feel pressing against her awareness like a hand against a window. The succubus saliva. The Baobhan Sith blood. The Mara essence. All of them now burned with want sharp enough to cut. Not crude desire—nothing so simple. This was drain elevated to an art form. Appetite without satiation. Hunger that fed on itself, that grew stronger the more it consumed, that would latch onto Shirou's curse-output and siphon it away before it could build to critical mass.

Now came the fine-tuning.

Shirou's eyes were half-closed. His circuits hummed beneath his skin—she could see them, faintly, tracing lines of blue-white light along his arms and across his collarbones. His breathing was measured. Controlled. The breathing of a man doing something that required absolute focus and would punish any lapse with failure.

Faery fyre licked around the pendant, its flames the green-gold of sunlight through new leaves. Not burning. Revealing. The fire bared everything within the materials—the Hesperides scales, the wisp essence, the Leanan Sídhé hair—showing their conceptual edges, their natural inclinations, the story each one told about itself. And then, guided by Shirou's intent channelled through the medium-sword, it began to rewrite.

Not destruction. Adjustment. The wisp's purpose of "leading travellers astray" dissolved, replaced with "rendering the bearer unmarked upon the awareness of observers." The Hesperides scales' natural "concealment of treasure" shifted to "concealment of presence." Each material retained its fundamental nature—its power—but the direction of that power was being carefully, painstakingly rotated until all components pointed toward the same unified purpose.

Vivian stood at his shoulder. Conceptual forging with faery fyre was delicate work—one degree of intent too far in any direction, and the meaning collapsed. The material became conceptually inert. Dead weight. Months of acquisition rendered worthless by a moment's imprecision.

"Three degrees wider on the Leanan Sídhé binding," Vivian murmured. Her voice barely carried above the furnace's crackle. "You're approaching the perception-shift from a visual angle. It needs to encompass all sensory channels simultaneously."

Shirou's brow creased. His hands adjusted—not physically, but in the way his circuits directed the fyre's output through the medium-sword. A subtle shift in intent.

"Better. Hold that."

He held it. Sweat ran freely now, tracing the line of his jaw before dripping onto the forge's stone floor. The muscles in his forearms stood taut as bowstrings.

They moved together with the ease of two people who had done this many times before. Not this specific project—but *this*. This dance of instruction and execution, of guidance and trust, of *I will tell you what needs to happen* and *I will make it happen*. Vivian led. Shirou followed. Not because he lacked skill—his instincts were extraordinary, his understanding of materials bordering on the preternatural—but because this was her design, and she understood its architecture in a way he couldn't. Not yet. Not without more time studying the theoretical framework she'd built.

Avalon watched them. Watched the firelight paint them both in shifting colours—amber from the centre, wine-dark from the left, green-gold from the right. Watched the way Shirou tilted his head slightly toward Vivian's voice without taking his eyes off the flame. Watched the way Vivian's hand hovered near his shoulder—not touching, not quite, but *there*. Ready. In case he needed steadying.

'*Kuudere*,' Avalon thought again, and almost smiled.

Then she kicked the armrest once more, because she was still bored, and no amount of philosophical musing about her own nature or aesthetic appreciation of her companions' working dynamic was going to change that fundamental fact.

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Two more hours crawled past like wounded animals.

Lady Avalon had exhausted every possible entertainment the forge offered. She'd counted the rivets in the ceiling beams—one hundred and forty-seven, a number she'd tried to forget just so she could recount them, which hadn't worked. She'd braided her silver-white hair, unbraided it, braided it again in a

different pattern, and then undone that too out of spite. She'd conjured miniature illusions of butterflies and made them perform a somewhat accurate re-enactment of a dogfight she'd seen in a World War II film—complete with tiny explosions and one butterfly trailing illusory smoke as it spiralled into the workbench. She'd napped. She'd pretended to nap. She'd watched Shirou and Vivian work over the pendant with an intensity that made paint-drying look like a spectator sport.

"Finished," Vivian announced.

Avalon's head snapped up.

Vivian held up the completed artefact. A teardrop of layered metals and crystallised essence, no larger than a plum, suspended on a chain of woven Leanan Sídhé hair. It pulsed with a soft, opalescent sheen—the visual signature of overlapping conceptual shrouds settling into their final configuration.

Shirou wiped the soot from his forearms with a rag, examining their work through Structural Analysis one final time. The pendant's internal architecture hummed with perfect cohesion. Every material sang in harmony—Hesperides scales refracting perception, wisp essence diffusing attention, the vitality anchors drawing power from his cursed aura to sustain the whole.

"It's stable," he confirmed.

"Obviously, it's stable. I designed it." Vivian set the pendant on its stand with careful grace. "I wouldn't have called it finished otherwise."

"Finally!" Avalon vaulted off the couch, her white dress billowing. "I've been dying in here. Actually dying. My soul left my body twice."

"You don't have a soul in the traditional sense," Vivian corrected mildly.

"Semantics."

Though to an extent, Vivian was right. Fae were not bodies housing souls—they were souls given physical form. Their very presence *was* the soul,

materialised, walking, breathing. There was no separation between vessel and essence the way there was in humans or devils. No duality. A fae's body didn't contain their spirit any more than a flame contained its heat. Destroy one and the other went with it.

Which made Avalon's claim of her soul leaving her body technically impossible, but she refused to let metaphysical accuracy get in the way of a good complaint.

Avalon reached for the pendant. Vivian's hand intercepted hers with the speed of a striking viper.

"Don't touch it until we've tested the subsidiary extensions."

Shirou lifted the pendant from its stand, turning it over in his palm and feeling its weight settle against his skin. With careful focus, he pressed his circuits into the artefact's architecture, tracing the pathways Vivian had designed for exactly this purpose. Two minuscule protrusions emerged from the pendant's base—slim, crystalline slivers no larger than a fingernail, each containing a mirrored fraction of the shroud's conceptual framework.

"The subsidiary extensions," Shirou said, detaching them and offering one to each woman. "These should project the perception field to anyone wearing them within roughly ten metres of the primary pendant."

Avalon plucked hers from his palm and held it to the light. "Cute. Like a baby tooth."

"A baby tooth that took six hours to birth." Vivian accepted hers with considerably more grace. "Now. I've already messaged Runeas."

Shirou blinked. "I was supposed to meet with her this evening—"

"Moved to your next free day. She agreed." Vivian began packing her remaining materials into a leather case embossed with Celtic knotwork. "We need a field test. Controlled environment, people in the vicinity should any... overflow occur."

"Overflow," Shirou repeated flatly.

"The pendant harvests your sexual energy to maintain the shroud. We need to observe what happens when that energy is actively being generated in quantity. Whether the shroud holds completely, partially, or produces residual bleed-through." Vivian snapped the case shut. "Runeas and I arranged a suitable location weeks ago, in anticipation of today."

"Weeks ago." Shirou's voice carried a note of resigned acceptance. "Of course you did."

The forge door burst open. Rin strode in with Ayako Mitsuzuri at her heels—the brunette archer looking around the cluttered workshop with open curiosity.

"Avalon texted. We're going to France?" Rin's eyes gleamed with poorly concealed excitement. Behind her, Sakura appeared with towels already folded over her arm. Taiga bounded in last, still in her morning lingerie with a sarong hastily wrapped around her waist.

"Marseilles," Vivian confirmed. "Veela coven territory. Nude beach within their protected grounds."

Ayako let out a low whistle. "You people don't do things by halves."

Runeas materialised in the centre of the forge without preamble—a transportation circle flaring crimson beneath her feet, her scarlet hair cascading around shoulders draped in a sheer coverup that left nothing to the imagination. The Gremory elder surveyed the assembled group.

"Everyone's here? Good." She extended her hand, palm up. A larger circle expanded beneath their feet, its diameter encompassing the entire group. "Hold your breath if you're not used to dimensional transit. The pressure differential between Japan and southern France can pop eardrums."

The world folded.

Marseilles hit Shirou's senses like a wall of warm honey. Salt air. Mediterranean sun. The distant crash of waves against chalk-white cliffs. They stood on sand the colour of beaten gold, a crescent beach sheltered by rocky outcroppings draped in flowering vines that had no business blooming this time of year. Magic hummed in the air—old magic, territorial and feminine, the ambient signature of wand-wizard wards extending over this stretch of coastline like a protective dome.

The beach was populated but not crowded. Perhaps thirty or forty figures dotted the sand and shallow waters—most possessing that ethereal, luminous quality that marked Veela blood. Hair like spun platinum or molten gold. Skin that seemed to generate its own warm light. Bodies of such perfect symmetry they registered as almost artificial until you caught the laugh lines around their eyes or the scars on their knees.

Everyone here was nude.

Shirou's throat went dry. His curse stirred immediately, a hungry serpent uncoiling in his abdomen.

"Breathe," Vivian murmured beside him. She'd already shed her clothes with clinical efficiency, folding them into a neat pile and placing it inside a conjured valise. Her body was a study in pale elegance—the same face as Morgan Le Fay—at least that was the impression he gleamed from the memories of the sheathe—the same pale waterfall of hair, the same piercing violet eyes, but softer somehow. Less blade, more silk.

Avalon was already naked before the teleportation circle had fully faded, her silver-white hair catching the Mediterranean light like spun moonbeam. She stretched her arms overhead with a satisfied groan, her lithe form silhouetted against the azure sea.

Around them, the others dispersed with practised efficiency. Runeas conjured an enormous beach blanket in deep burgundy and settled onto it with Sakura, the two of them arranging themselves for sunbathing—Sakura's violet hair fanning across the fabric as Runeas produced a bottle of enchanted oil that

shimmered with protective runes. Taiga, her lingerie replaced by nothing at all, had already spotted a group of Veela engaged in a spirited volleyball match and was jogging towards them with a whoop of delight, her breasts bouncing with each stride.

Rin and Ayako had shed their clothes with the comfortable ease of long-time lovers. Rin's compact, toned body carried the confidence of someone who'd practice Chinese martial arts on the regular, whilst Ayako's archer's physique—broader shoulders, powerful thighs—complemented her with striking contrast. The two had locked eyes with Shirou the moment his clothes came off, their gazes dropping appreciatively to his considerable erection straining against the open air.

"Not yet," Vivian intercepted their trajectory with a raised finger. "I need clean observational data first."

Rin huffed but didn't argue. She laced her fingers through Ayako's and tugged the taller girl towards a cluster of beach-goers nearby—a mixed group that included two obvious Veela with hair like white flame and several women who moved with less supernatural grace. Wand witches, Shirou realised, noting the obvious sign of them holding their focus. Shirou snorted at his assessment.

Avalon bumped him on his side her face curious on why he snorted.

"Come." Vivian guided Shirou by the elbow towards the group. Avalon drifted in their wake, all loose-limbed curiosity.

Shirou laid out a large blanket beside the cluster of witches, the fabric settling onto warm sand with a soft whump. A girl with brown, bushy hair looked up from the substantial tome balanced on her sandy knees. Her skin was dotted with sun-kissed freckles, her wild curls tamed into a practical bun that was slowly losing its battle against the sea breeze. Brown eyes assessed them with intelligence before she offered a nod—polite, measured, then returned to her reading.

Beside her, a younger witch with dirty-blonde hair and protuberant silvery eyes waved at them with cheerful abandon. She held what appeared to be a

magazine, though she read it upside down. The headline—*Something that started with T and Q*—was printed in letters that rearranged themselves every few seconds.

"Bonjour!" the blonde called. "Lovely energy you've got. Very golden. Like marmalade, but alive."

Shirou blinked. "Thank... you?"

The girl beamed and returned to her inverted magazine.

Rin and Ayako had already inserted themselves into conversation with three other witches and the two Veela, their animated discussion carried on the breeze in fragments—"Quidditch World Cup," "—absolute travesty, the Seekers are overpowered—" "—flew a Firebolt once, nearly wet myself—"

Quidditch. Shirou had encountered the term before in Runeas's briefings on wand-wizard culture. A sport played on enchanted broomsticks. He'd always found the concept somewhat absurd, but to each their own.

Vivian had applied something akin to a sunburn prevention bounded field to each of them before they'd even fully materialised—a whisper of fae magic settling over skin like cool silk. Now she arranged herself on the blanket with deliberate grace, legs extended, back straight, a book appearing in her hand as though conjured from thin air. Which it probably had been—or rather, it had always been there, and she'd simply allowed it to be noticed.

Shirou's body thrummed. The curse churned beneath his skin with mounting pressure. Surrounded by naked flesh—Veela, witches, the supernaturally beautiful bodies of his own companions—his aura was beginning to bleed outward despite his control. He could see it in the subtle shifts around him. A Veela adjusting her position. One of the witches shifting her weight, crossing her legs. The blonde girl with the upside-down magazine uncrossing and recrossing hers.

"Here," Shirou said quietly to Vivian, settling beside her. "Would this be a good spot?"

Vivian only nodded, her violet eyes scanning the page of her book with apparent absorption—though Shirou knew that behind those eyes, every analytical faculty she possessed was engaged and recording.

Shirou clasped the pendant around his neck. The opalescent teardrop settled against his sternum, immediately beginning to draw from his aura like a siphon placed in an overflowing barrel. The subsidiary extensions went to Vivian and Avalon—each woman pressing the crystalline sliver against her collarbone, where it adhered with a soft pulse of light, then faded to invisibility.

The effect was immediate and peculiar. Shirou felt the pendant activate—felt his sexual energy being drawn into it, converted, redistributed as a conceptual field that whispered *irrelevant, uninteresting, nothing to see* to every observer within range. The world didn't change visually. No shimmer, no distortion. But the weight of external attention simply... evaporated.

Everything continued as usual. No heads turned. No eyes tracked. The witch with the bushy hair continued reading. The blonde continued her inverted magazine. Rin and Ayako remained engrossed in their Quidditch debate. The volleyball game raged on with Taiga's enthusiastic shouts punctuating every point.

No indication that anyone could see them. No indication otherwise.

Avalon grinned—wide and brilliant and hungry.

"I've been looking forward to this all day," she breathed.

She leaned in close, her lips brushing the shell of Shirou's ear. Her breath was warm and carried the faint sweetness of honeysuckle.

"Let me play with you," she whispered, and bit down gently on his earlobe.

A shiver raced down Shirou's spine. Her teeth—delicate, precise—worried the soft flesh between them before releasing with a wet sound. Her tongue traced the curve of his ear whilst her body pressed against his side, bare skin meeting bare skin that felt statically charged.

Avalon's hand—soft yet deceptively strong for a being whose fundamental nature was that of a divine weapon—closed around his shaft. Her fingers wrapped about his considerable girth with open, exploratory wonder, as though she were cataloguing every ridge and pulsing vein through touch alone. The pad of her thumb swept across the flushed crown, gathering the bead of precum that had welled there, and she began to stroke with slow, experimental curiosity.

She varied pressure, speed, and grip, learning him through the subtle reactions of his body. When her palm twisted gently at the apex of each upstroke, Shirou's breath hitched. When she squeezed firmly at the base, his hips jerked forward of their own accord. Precum leaked steadily now, coating her fingers in slick warmth that she smoothed along his length with each languid pull, her hand gliding ever more easily.

"You're so hot," she murmured against the side of his neck, voice low and delighted. "Temperature-wise, I mean. Like holding a living furnace."

Their eyes met—silver-blue against amber-gold. For a heartbeat the world narrowed to that single point of contact. Eleven years of shared existence, of sword calling to sword, of resonance that ran far deeper than affection or even desire, crackled between them. Weapon recognising its housing. Sheath welcoming the blade.

Avalon surged forward and pressed her lips to his.

The first contact was feather-light, almost questioning—a brush of cool silk against warm skin, her lower lip catching delicately against his upper. Then Shirou's hand found the nape of her neck and drew her closer. The kiss deepened at once, turning urgent and consuming.

She tasted of cool water and wild honeysuckle. Her mouth was impossibly soft, yielding one moment and demanding the next. Their tongues met in a slow, exploratory slide that sent sparks racing down Shirou's spine. Avalon made a small, surprised sound—a muffled moan that vibrated against his lips—as though she had not expected the simple act of kissing to feel quite so

overwhelming. Her hand never faltered on his cock, though her strokes grew faster, almost distracted, as the kiss stole her coordination.

Shirou kissed her harder, one hand tangling in the silver-white silk of her hair while the other remained at the small of her back, holding her flush against him. He tilted her head to the perfect angle, opening her mouth wider so their tongues could slide together in a rhythm that unconsciously echoed the motion of her fist on his throbbing length. He felt the sharp graze of her teeth against his lower lip and the bright spike of pleasure-pain that made his cock jump eagerly in her grip.

Avalon shivered at the sensation, her own breath growing ragged. The shared magical resonance between them flared hotter—wind and steel singing against one another—until the air around their bodies seemed to shimmer faintly with restrained power. Her breasts pressed soft and warm against his chest, nipples already tight peaks that dragged across his skin with every small shift of her body. Her hand tightened further, stroking him with renewed purpose, thumb constantly teasing the sensitive underside of his crown as more precum slicked her palm.

Neither wanted to stop. Not yet.

Avalon's free hand found his right nipple. Her fingertips circled the hardened nub with feather-light teasing before pinching—firm enough to draw a sharp gasp from him into her mouth. Their bodies pressed closer, chest to chest, her soft, warm breasts moulding against his ribs as she shifted to face him fully without ever releasing her grip on his throbbing cock.

They broke apart, both breathless.

“That was fun,” Avalon declared, cheeks flushed a delicate pink, lips swollen and glistening. Her silver-blue eyes sparkled with manic delight—the same expression she wore when discovering a delightful new game. “Let's do more.”

She planted open-mouthed kisses along his jaw, then his neck and collarbone—each one wet and deliberate, her tongue savouring the taste of salt and sun-warmed skin. Lower still she travelled, sucking one nipple

between her lips with a low hum of appreciation while her hand continued its steady stroking below. Shirou's cock throbbed against her palm. She lavished the same attention on the other nipple before continuing downward, trailing kisses over the ridged planes of his abdomen and the sharp cut of his hip bones until she knelt between his spread thighs on the warm blanket, his erection jutting proudly before her face.

*'It's even bigger from this angle,'* Avalon thought, a flicker of excitement laced with disbelief passing through her. She had watched—gods, she had watched—Rin and Sakura take him the night before through the fusuma, and Taiga that very morning. She knew the theory. But theory and practice, she was rapidly discovering, were very different countries.

The pendant's subsidiary extension hummed warmly against her collarbone as Avalon leaned forward. Her breath ghosted over his flushed crown. Shirou's cock twitched towards her mouth like a compass finding north.

*'Just like the videos,'* she told herself. *'Open wide. Relax the throat. Easy.'*

Shirou's gaze had lifted from Avalon's silver-white crown, scanning the beach around them. The bushy-haired witch remained absorbed in her book, though she had shifted to lie on her stomach, ankles crossed lazily in the air behind her. The blonde was humming tunelessly, her magazine now held at a forty-five-degree angle. Rin and Ayako gestured animatedly, debating the merits of something called a "Wronski Feint." The Veela continued their volleyball game, and Taiga spiked a ball with devastating force.

No one looked their way. Not a single glance.

Relief flooded through him—followed instantly by a searing wave of desperate arousal as wet heat enveloped his cock.

Shirou gasped.

Avalon's mouth sealed around him—hot and impossibly soft. Her tongue pressed flat against the underside of his shaft as she drew him deeper. Her cheeks hollowed with suction, creating a tight vacuum that made stars burst

behind his eyes. Her head bobbed forward, taking one inch, then two, then retreating to swirl her tongue around his sensitive crown before plunging down again.

She took things slow. Methodical. Each descent brought her lips a fraction further along his thick length, her throat opening incrementally as she acclimated to his girth. Four inches. Five. Six. More. The head of his cock nudged the tight ring of her throat—

Avalon gagged. She pulled back coughing, a thick string of saliva connecting her reddened lips to his glistening shaft.

“The videos made it look easier,” she rasped, wiping her chin with the back of her hand.

Vivian, without lifting her eyes from her book, conjured a glass of ice water from the ambient moisture in the sea air and extended it toward Avalon with one elegant hand. Avalon accepted it, drank deeply, and set the glass in the sand.

“Right,” she muttered, eyeing his cock with renewed determination. “Round two.”

But Shirou had reached his limit. Hours of forge work, the teleportation, the beach thick with naked, beautiful bodies, Avalon’s teasing hand and eager mouth—the coiled tension in his gut had finally snapped.

He surged forward.

Avalon let out a delighted squeak as she found herself on her back, the sun-warmed blanket soft beneath her shoulder blades. Shirou loomed above her, hands braced on either side of her head, his shadow blocking the Mediterranean sun. His heavy, leaking cock pressed insistently against the smooth skin of her inner thigh, throbbing with urgent need.

Around them the beach continued its lazy rhythm: the bushy-haired witch read on her stomach, ankles swinging; the blonde hummed over her upside-down

magazine; Rin and Ayako's animated Quidditch debate drifted on the breeze; Taiga's laughter rang out from the volleyball game. Thanks to the pendant's shroud, not a single gaze turned their way.

Yet the knowledge that they remained unseen only sharpened the heat between them.

She gazed up at him from beneath silver lashes. Her arms rose languidly, draping around the back of his neck, fingers lacing together in the short auburn hair at his nape. The coy tilt of her lips held none of the urgency his body radiated—all slow confidence and provocation.

“Give me your best shot, Sword Boy.”

His hand wrapped around his own girth and guided the swollen head downward. He traced the seam of her sex with agonising slowness, parting slick folds until he notched against her entrance. Avalon was already drenched—had been since she first took him in her hand—her arousal coating his crown in a slick, inviting heat.

Then he pushed.

One fluid stroke sheathed him fully within her.

Avalon's back arched sharply off the blanket. Her mouth fell open in a silent cry, eyes wide, fingers digging into his shoulders with a strength that belied her slender frame. The stretch was immense. Not pain, exactly, but a fullness so complete it erased every other sensation. He filled her utterly, pressing against walls that had never known intrusion, his heat radiating through her core like molten metal poured into a mould.

*‘So this is what it feels like,’* she thought, half-delirious. *‘Being the sheath.’*

The irony was not lost on her. She—the physical manifestation of the greatest protective scabbard ever forged—was being penetrated by the boy whose origin was Sword. The resonance between them sang through every nerve

ending. Her inner walls rippled around him, adjusting, accommodating, welcoming the intrusion with a rightness that bordered on cosmic.

“Move,” she breathed. “Shirou—move.”

He withdrew in a slow, deliberate drag that made her keen, every ridge and vein felt in exquisite detail against her sensitised walls. Then he drove forward again, firm and deep, and Avalon’s head fell back against the blanket as sound tore from her throat.

Shirou’s own groan mingled with hers. She was impossibly tight—a silken vice that gripped him with living heat, fluttering and clenching with every breath she took. The sensation was different from Rin, from Sakura, from Taiga; there was a magnetic pull to it, a draw that seemed to suck him deeper with every thrust, as though her body recognised his on a fundamental level and refused to let go.

He established a rhythm. Measured at first—long, rolling strokes that buried him to the hilt before retreating almost to his tip. Each forward thrust rocked Avalon’s entire body, her breasts bouncing with the impact, silver-white hair fanning across the blanket like spilled mercury. The sounds she made were unfiltered: gasps, moans, and breathless fragments of his name that dissolved into wordless vowels.

“Ah—Shi—nnh—there, there, there—”

He captured her mouth. Their second kiss tasted of desperation—open-mouthed and messy, teeth clicking, tongues tangling whilst his hips snapped forward with increasing force. Avalon moaned into his mouth, swallowing his groan in return, their breath mingling as their bodies found a shared cadence that accelerated beyond conscious control.

Shirou hooked his arm beneath her right knee, lifting her leg to rest in the crook of his elbow. The angle shifted—deeper, more intense—and he turned her slightly onto her side, her left hip pressed flat to the blanket while her right leg was captured high against his chest. His cock slid between her thighs,

wedged deep between her lips, the new position allowing him to grind against her with each thrust rather than simply piston.

“Fuck—” Avalon’s composure shattered entirely. Her hand fisted the blanket beneath them, knuckles white. The stretch at this angle was devastating; he pressed against spots inside her that seemed directly wired to the base of her spine, each thrust building pressure like water behind a dam.

Shirou felt himself approaching the edge. His balls tightened, his rhythm faltered into something more frantic, chasing his own completion—but not yet. Not yet. He wanted more of her. Wanted her from every possible angle, wanted to map every sound she could make.

He pulled free. Avalon whined at the sudden emptiness, a thin thread of her arousal stretching between his glistening cock and her swollen, parted lips before snapping.

“Turn over.”

His hands found her hips before she had fully processed the command, guiding her—firm but not rough—until she was on all fours before him. Knees spread wide on the blanket, back arched, the round swell of her arse presented like an offering to the Mediterranean sun. Sand stuck to her knees and palms. Her silver hair hung in a dishevelled curtain, swaying with each heavy breath.

Shirou gripped her buttocks—one in each hand—kneading the plump flesh with his thumbs before spreading her open. She was swollen, flushed deep pink, glistening with their combined arousal. His cock lined up of its own accord, the engorged head finding her entrance by magnetic instinct, and he sank back inside with a groan that resonated in his chest.

From behind, the view consumed him. The elegant bow of her spine. The dimples above her arse where muscle met bone. The way her body jolted forward with each thrust, then rocked back to meet him, their flesh connecting with a wet, rhythmic percussion that the sea breeze carried away. He could see himself disappearing into her—the obscene stretch of her lips around his

girth, the slick shine of her arousal coating him—and something primal ignited in his gut.

He fucked her harder.

Avalon pressed her face into the blanket to muffle her cries. The angle was relentless—he hit deeper from behind, struck that devastating spot inside her with mechanical precision, and each impact sent shockwaves rolling through her body that made her arms tremble. She could feel him everywhere. In her gut. Behind her navel. Pressing against her very core with each savage thrust.

*'This is—this is incredible—he's so deep—I can feel him in my—'*

Her thoughts fragmented. Dissolved. There was only sensation—only the thick, hot presence of him splitting her open again and again, the obscene squelch of their coupling, the way his fingers dug into her hips hard enough to leave bruises that would fade in seconds thanks to her nature.

Shirou reached forward. His hands found her breasts—heavy and swinging beneath her with each thrust—and cupped them, pulling her upright against his chest. The change in position drove him impossibly deeper, and Avalon cried out, her back pressed flush against his front, his arms wrapped around her, hands full of her breasts, his mouth hot against her ear.

Avalon—now that her hands were free—twisted her upper body to reach him. Her arm snaked backward, fingers finding his jaw and turning his face toward hers. Their mouths collided in a graceless, desperate kiss—all tongue and panting breath and broken moans. Her other hand slid down her own body, over her stomach, between her thighs where she found her clit swollen and throbbing.

Her fingers circled the sensitive nub in frantic counterpoint to his thrusts. The dual stimulation was devastating—inside and out, his cock and her fingers conspiring to demolish whatever remained of her coherence. The orgasm built like a tsunami gathering mass—a distant wall of pressure that grew larger and closer with terrifying speed.

"Shirou—I'm—I'm going to—"

"Together," he growled against her mouth, his rhythm turning erratic, losing its precision as his own climax clawed toward the surface.

Avalon's fingers moved faster. Shirou's hips pistoned harder. Their bodies moved in a frantic, graceless desperation—

She came first. By seconds. Her inner walls clamped down on him with crushing force, every muscle in her body locking rigid as the orgasm tore through her like a blade. She screamed against his lips—a sound more animal than human—her clit pulsing beneath her fingertips, her sex spasming in waves that milked him with relentless pressure.

Shirou followed her over the edge. He buried himself to the root and stilled, his cock jerking violently as he emptied into her in thick, pulsing ropes. Heat flooded her depths—his release seemingly endless, each surge accompanied by a guttural sound dragged from somewhere deep in his chest. His arms tightened around her, crushing her against him as his hips gave small, involuntary thrusts, working through the last tremors.

They collapsed together. Avalon face-first into the blanket, Shirou's weight settling over her back before he rolled to the side, still buried within her, their bodies spooned together in the warm sand. Their breathing came in ragged gasps, lungs burning, skin slicked with sweat, the mingled scent of sex and sea air heavy around them.

Minutes passed. The sound of waves reasserted itself—had never truly left, but had been drowned beneath their private storm.

Shirou's gaze lifted, searching for Vivian over Avalon's shoulder.

Their eyes met. Vivian lay on her side, book held at a comfortable reading distance, violet eyes regarding him over the edge of the page with clinical detachment. If their coupling had affected her at all, nothing in her expression betrayed it.

“The perception shroud is functional,” she announced, her tone that of a researcher noting data. She closed the book—one finger keeping her place—and gestured toward the beach around them. “However, there appears to be some bleed-through in the aura suppression.”

Shirou followed her gesture.

The beach had... shifted. The energy was different—charged, tangible. The witches from the nearby group had migrated closer to one another. The bushy-haired girl still lay on her stomach, but her book had been abandoned beside her, forgotten. Her thighs pressed together tightly, her hips shifting subtly against the sand, breathing visibly elevated. Beside her, the pale blonde witch had set aside her *Quibbler* and lay on her back, one hand resting on her lower abdomen, fingers trailing lower with each passing second—her silvery eyes half-lidded and unfocused, staring at the sky with a dreamy expression.

Further along, Rin and Ayako had abandoned their Quidditch discourse entirely. They faced each other on their blanket, Rin’s hands cupping Ayako’s face as they kissed—deep, hungry, and utterly unconcerned with their audience. The witches around them applauded, whistled; one Veela called encouragement in French. Bodies gravitated toward bodies. Couples formed and tripled. The atmosphere thickened with pheromones, magic, and barely-suppressed desire.

Though—Shirou noted with relief—Sakura and Runeas remained in control on their blanket. Runeas lay reading, seemingly unbothered, whilst Sakura simply lay there under the sun.

“Interesting.” Vivian made a note in a small book she produced from nowhere. “The pendant contains approximately ninety-three percent of your aura at current output. The remaining seven percent produces a general amorous atmosphere within a fifteen-metre radius. Manageable, particularly in this environment, but we’ll need to calibrate the threshold tighter for public use.”

Avalon stirred beneath Shirou, shifting until his still-hard cock slipped free of her with a wet sound. She rolled over, boneless and grinning, sand stuck to her cheek.

“Your turn,” she said to Vivian, her voice thick with satisfied languor.

Vivian’s single raised eyebrow communicated volumes. But she did not refuse. Instead, she marked her page with precise care, closed the book, and turned over on the blanket with practised elegance. She settled onto her front—in a prone position—and presented the generous curve of her rear with the casual indifference of someone offering a chair to a guest.

“Proceed when ready,” she said, already turning a fresh page.

Shirou stared at the view before him. Vivian’s body was marble perfection: the long, elegant sweep of her back, the deep valley of her spine leading down to the generous swell of her buttocks. Her legs were parted just enough to offer the barest glimpse of her sex between smooth ivory thighs.

And she was reading.

Shirou’s competitive instinct stirred. Or perhaps it was the curse, already rebuilding its pressure after his release inside Avalon. Regardless—he moved.

He positioned himself behind her, knees bracketing her thighs. His hands settled on the cool smoothness of her arse—firm, exploratory palms. She did not react. Did not look up from her page.

He spread her gently. To his surprise she was already wet, glistening faintly in the Mediterranean sunlight, her arousal betraying what her composed expression refused to acknowledge. So she had been affected. She had simply chosen not to show it.

Shirou guided himself to her entrance and pressed forward—slow, inexorable—parting her folds around his renewed erection with deliberate patience.

Vivian turned a page.

He sank deeper. Three inches. Four. Her inner walls offered quiet resistance—tighter than Avalon's, her body accepting him in grudging increments rather than open welcome. Every inch of him.

Vivian turned another page.

Shirou's jaw clenched. He withdrew almost to his tip and drove forward in one decisive stroke, burying himself to the hilt.

A single muscle in Vivian's shoulder twitched. Nothing else.

*'Fine,'* Shirou thought. *'Challenge accepted.'*

He began to move. Slow at first—deep, grinding thrusts that pressed his pelvis flush against her arse before retreating with torturous patience. His hands gripped her hips, angling her slightly upward, seeking the precise position that might finally pierce that infuriating composure.

Vivian read. Or appeared to. Her eyes tracked the words with perfect steadiness, the book of poetry from an artist once inspired by a Leanan Sídhé resting open before her.

Shirou escalated. His pace increased—each thrust landing harder, faster, the wet slap of flesh against flesh punctuating the ambient sounds of surf and distant laughter. He leaned forward, covering her body with his own, chest pressed to her back, mouth finding the curve of her ear.

“You're wet,” he murmured.

“Hmm,” she replied without inflection. She turned a page.

He snapped his hips forward with savage force.

The page tore slightly in Vivian's grip. She smoothed it carefully. “That was... unnecessary.”

Shirou withdrew completely. Paused. Then slammed back inside with the full power of his hips—a single, devastating thrust that made the blanket skid an inch across the sand.

“—Nnh.”

There it was again. Small. Almost inaudible. But unmistakable.

Shirou smiled against her neck and did it again. And again. He established a punishing rhythm—long withdrawals followed by brutal forward strokes that bottomed out inside her, his cock striking deep enough to kiss her cervix with each impact. His hands slid beneath her, finding her breasts pressed flat against the blanket, cupping and squeezing them as his body rose and fell against her back.

Vivian’s reading slowed. The intervals between page-turns lengthened. Her breathing—previously silent—developed a faint, audible hitch. Small catches. Minute fractures in her carefully controlled rhythm.

Shirou pulled one hand free and hooked his arm under her hip, lifting her pelvis entirely off the blanket. The new angle was devastating; he drove downward into her now, gravity assisting each thrust, her feet leaving the ground as he held her lower body aloft.

“Ah—”

Louder this time. The book wobbled in her grip.

He fucked her harder. His hips became a blur of relentless motion, each stroke designed to shatter the last wall of composure she had erected around herself. Wet sounds filled the air between them. Her arousal coated his shaft, dripped down her thighs, and pooled on the blanket beneath them.

Vivian’s fingers went white-knuckled around the book. Her lips parted. A flush crept up the back of her neck—pink blooming across pale skin.

“Shirou—” The word escaped her like a confession.

He drove deeper. Faster. Angled upward—searching—until he found the spot that made her entire body jolt as though struck by lightning.

The book fell from Vivian’s hands.

Her face pressed into the blanket. Her fists clenched in the fabric. A moan—long, low, aching—tore from her throat with the surprised quality of someone hearing her own voice for the first time. Her back arched, pressing her arse upward to meet his thrusts, and she was suddenly pushing back, hips rolling in counterpoint, taking him deeper of her own volition, chasing the sensation she had spent ten minutes pretending did not affect her.

Shirou released her hip and pulled her upright—his arm across her chest, her back flush against his front, her head falling back onto his shoulder. In this position he could see her face. The composure was gone. Her lips were parted, panting; violet eyes glazed with pleasure. Her dark hair clung to the sweat on her neck. She looked undone—and staggeringly beautiful for it.

“More,” she whispered. A demand, not a request.

He gave her more. His free hand found the junction of her thighs, fingers spreading her folds to expose her swollen, pulsing clit, and pressed his fingertip against it with devastating precision.

Vivian cried out. Her walls clenched around him like a fist and she came—hard. Her body convulsed in his arms, trembling violently, her sex gripping and releasing in rhythmic waves that stripped the last of Shirou’s control. He slammed home one final time and followed her, spilling deep inside her with a groan that vibrated through both their bodies.

They remained upright for a breathless moment—Shirou buried to the hilt, Vivian shuddering through aftershocks, both slick with sweat and sand and shared release.

Then Vivian reached down, picked up her book, smoothed the bent page with precise fingers, and said in a voice that only slightly trembled:

“Pleasurable. Again.”

They shifted positions.

Vivian lay on her back now, legs spread wide in open invitation, violet eyes watching Shirou with an intensity that had quietly replaced her earlier detachment. Her mask had not fully returned—or perhaps she had simply chosen not to reconstruct it. Her book lay abandoned in the sand, forgotten for the first time.

Shirou knelt between her thighs, his cock—still hard, the curse ensuring his recovery was nearly instantaneous—resting heavy and hot against her mound. He rolled his hips, sliding his length along her slick folds without entering, and Vivian’s jaw tightened with visible impatience.

“Don’t tease.”

“You spent ten minutes ignoring me,” Shirou pointed out, grinding deliberately against her swollen clit.

“I was reading—nnh—”

He pushed inside. Her argument dissolved into a low, measured moan.

From behind him, warm hands settled on his shoulders. Avalon pressed her chest against his back, her hard nipples dragging across his skin as she leaned in to whisper against his ear:

“Room for one more?”

Shirou did not stop his rhythm inside Vivian—long, measured strokes that drew progressively louder sounds from the white-haired woman beneath him. But he turned his head, catching Avalon’s mouth in a brief, fierce kiss.

“Where do you want to be?”

Avalon’s grin was feral. She crawled around them with feline grace and settled over Vivian’s face—knees bracketing the older woman’s ears, her dripping sex hovering just above Vivian’s parted lips.

“You don’t mind?” Avalon asked, looking down.

Vivian's response was immediate and decisive: she gripped Avalon's hips and pulled her down firmly.

Avalon gasped—then moaned—as Vivian's tongue found her still-sensitive folds, lapping at the combined residue of Shirou's earlier release and Avalon's own renewed arousal with purposeful, almost scholarly efficiency. Vivian ate her like a woman reviewing a document—thorough, precise, missing nothing.

“Oh—oh—” Avalon's hands fisted in her own silver hair, her hips grinding down against Vivian's mouth. “That's—you're good at this—how are you good at—”

Shirou watched the display from his position between Vivian's thighs, his cock still buried deep inside her, and felt his arousal spike to an almost painful height. Two women who shared his fundamental nature—sword elementals born from the Inner Sea, forged in the same cosmic fire as Excalibur—were joined with him in a living circuit of flesh and pleasure that resonated on frequencies beyond the merely physical. The air around them seemed to hum with it.

He thrust harder.

Vivian moaned against Avalon's sex, the vibration making the silver-haired woman keen sharply. Avalon's back arched, her breasts bouncing as she rode Vivian's face with increasing abandon. Her hand reached behind her, finding Shirou's chest and pulling him forward until he could kiss her over Vivian's splayed body—a messy, breathless collision of lips and tongue.

Shirou's hands found Vivian's breasts—heavy and full, swaying with each thrust—and squeezed them as his pace built. Below him, Vivian's legs wrapped around his waist, heels digging into his arse, pulling him deeper with each stroke. Her moans were continuous now, muffled by Avalon's sex but unmistakable in their urgency.

The three of them moved together—a tangle of pale limbs and silver and dark hair, sweat-slicked skin sliding against skin, sounds blending into a symphony

of pleasure that the pendant kept safely contained within their private bubble of irrelevance.

Vivian came first again—her walls clamping down on Shirou with crushing force, her back bowing off the blanket, a scream vibrating against Avalon's clit that triggered the silver-haired woman's own release. Avalon's thighs clenched around Vivian's head as she shattered, clear fluid spilling down Vivian's chin and throat.

Shirou withdrew from Vivian's spasming body and shifted behind Avalon, entering her from behind in one smooth stroke. She was impossibly wet from Vivian's mouth, and the friction was reduced to almost nothing—pure, slick, effortless glide that let him set a brutal pace immediately.

“Yes—” Avalon's voice cracked. She remained on all fours above Vivian, who recovered enough to reach up and circle Avalon's clit with expert fingers.

Shirou's hands gripped Avalon's hips—hard enough to leave faint marks that would fade in seconds—and pounded into her with the desperation of a man possessed. The curse demanded. His body demanded. And Avalon demanded—pushing back against every thrust, crying his name in breathless fragments:

“Shi—ah—more—harder—”

He lasted perhaps three minutes before ripping free and returning to Vivian—sliding into her open, waiting body with a groan. Vivian's legs immediately locked around him, her heels pulling him deep as he ground against her.

“Rotate,” Vivian gasped—and it sounded like both a command and a plea.

He fucked Vivian through a shuddering climax that left her boneless and panting. Pulled out. Moved to Avalon, who had collapsed onto her side, hand between her legs, waiting for him with glassy eyes and an open mouth. He lifted her leg, entered her from behind in a spooning position, deep rolling thrusts that had her sobbing in pleasure within seconds.

Avalon came. He swapped again. Vivian once more—this time from behind, her face pressed into the blanket as he gripped her dark hair and drove into her with a ferocity that finally—finally—brought him to the edge.

“I’m—” he managed.

“Inside,” both women said simultaneously.

Shirou buried himself in Vivian and came with a roar. His hips jerked forward in rapid, helpless pulses as he filled her—thick ropes of release that seemed to pour from some inexhaustible well in his core. Vivian’s sex rippled around him, coaxing every last drop, her own orgasm cresting alongside his in a feedback loop of shared sensation.

He pulled out and shot the rest of his load across Avalon’s waiting sex and stomach.

He collapsed sideways. Avalon caught him—or perhaps he caught her. They ended in a heap of tangled limbs and heavy breathing, the blanket beneath them soaked with sweat and sex and sand.

Silence. Save for their collective breathing.

After an indeterminate time, Shirou opened his eyes.

The beach around them had transformed.

The witches’ group had abandoned all pretence of casual sunbathing. The bushy-haired girl and the pale blonde were now entwined on their blanket—the brunette’s face buried between the blonde’s thighs whilst the blonde carded lazy fingers through wild curls, her expression one of blissful, dreamy surrender. Nearby, Rin had Ayako pinned beneath her on the sand, their hips rolling together in a slow, deliberate grind, mouths locked in a kiss that had clearly been going on for some time. Two Veela had abandoned the volleyball game entirely to wrap themselves around one of the witches from the earlier Quidditch debate; all three bodies moved in sinuous, harmonious rhythm.

Further down the beach, couples and groups had formed organically—as though some invisible conductor had raised a baton and an orchestra of flesh had answered. Moans drifted on the warm breeze alongside the crash of waves. Bodies arched and tangled in the golden sand. The Veela—whose nature inclined them toward communal sensuality—had welcomed the charged atmosphere without resistance, drawing their human guests along with effortless grace.

Shirou removed the pendant.

Sakura and Runeas still lounged beneath a conjured umbrella, seemingly unperturbed. Runeas caught Shirou’s eye across the beach and raised her glass of conjured wine in a mocking toast, one crimson brow arched in amusement.

Vivian sat up with fluid grace, sand cascading from her white hair. She retrieved her book, observed the transformed scene around them with professional interest, and nodded once.

“We can adjust the bleed ratio during calibration,” she said, as though she had not been screaming his name thirty seconds earlier. “Perhaps ninety-seven percent containment rather than ninety-three. For non-permissive environments.”

Avalon nuzzled deeper into Shirou’s chest, her eyes already drooping with satisfied languor. “But for permissive ones... ninety-three seems perfect.”

The Mediterranean sun continued its slow arc toward the horizon. Waves lapped gently at the golden sand. Somewhere further along the beach, Taiga’s triumphant shout announced another volleyball point. And on a blanket at the centre of a spontaneous bacchanalia, three people who shared the fundamental nature of forged steel lay together in contented silence—the pendant between them humming softly, drinking deep of the energy it was made to consume.

Then footsteps approached across the sand.

Shirou looked up to see two newcomers looming over them—Veela, their silver-white-blond hair catching the sunlight like polished moonlight. Runeas stepped into view beside them, her presence as commanding as ever.

“There’s an experiment I want to conduct,” she said, “and since we are already here—where your aura seems to have bled through and cascaded so nicely with the Veela’s—we might as well hit two birds with one stone.”

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**End**

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