

Celestial Trigon

Martin dug his knees into the flanks of his dragon, commanding him to fly them above the garden clearing within the enchanted forest. It lay on the grounds of the northern castle, Aquilon, which he used as his temporary headquarters while on this extended mission. The castle housed the small governing body of magistrates and wizards of this normally deserted sector of Evlan. He frequented its extensive library of dusty, old magic references, which delighted the elderly library attendant who seldom had company. However, in this midnight hour the grounds teemed with life. Trolls, sprites, kelpies, phantasms, and demons of every size and shape lined the dirt roads leading to the large glade, the location of the main celebration for this important celestial event -- twin full moons.

It was a rare occasion in Evlan to have the pair of lunar cycles aligned, occurring only once per decade. The moons rising along the horizon were visible only in the northern regions of the country. Many attributed mystical and spiritual significance to the celestial happening since their magical powers were altered or enhanced by this moonlight. Commemorative celebrations were being held across the North. Martin passed many on his flight, where the scintillating mist filled the atmosphere above these parties. This formed from particulate remnants left behind after spells and incantations were cast by magical beings. The particles refracted sharply angled moonbeams into a dazzling array of coruscant hues. This breathtaking effect guided travelers from afar.

However, the party was not Martin's immediate interest. He searched for his love, Heike. Upon returning after a journey of many days, accompanied only by his great emerald dragon, Balteazar, he planned to meet and escort her safely to this grand festivity. She understood and agreed to the arrangement; being the lady of a great wizard meant a life filled with danger. But, he failed to find her at their appointed location, and from his aerial view, she was nowhere to be seen within the forest. Aided by the illumination of the double moons, he scanned far in search of her. He looked for Heike's waist-length, golden hair, which always gleamed in sunlight and moonlight alike, never failing to leave him breathless. Yet, he could not locate her.

However, he did not doubt her presence. The magus amor spell bonding them together indicated her close proximity. Martin would have felt better being able to see her as well. An icy chill of dark magic coursed along his spine and sparked his urgency. He squeezed Balteazar's flanks, pressing him to fly lower for a better view.

Their magus amor tortured him. When the Evlan High Council of Sorcerers selected him to be a wizard, they cast that witchcraft bond onto him and Heike. With his assigned missions, they realized he would need her love and support. It joined him to her with a deeper emotional connection than lovers commonly shared; at times he could feel her soul. When his dragon neared the garden, that spell revealed Heike's terrible fright. He felt her tears, her distress. Rage flooded his mind.

He could not bear to lose her. She had been his lady since they were but struggling musicians in a distant land which persecuted him for his birthright as a wizard. Although no witch, Heike's grandfather had been an honored sorcerer. She stood by Martin while Evlan's most venerated wizard mentored him from a novice, possessing immense natural talent, to become the foremost master wizard he presently was. Preoccupied with these thoughts of Heike, he didn't realize his heel pinched Balteazar's scaly flesh until the dragon snorted back over his shoulder at him.

Enraged that any would be so foolish to intend her harm after others suffered or lost their lives at his hand, Martin ordered his dragon to land. "Appello!" Normally, he did not hazard to land among such a dense population of magical beings.

Balteazar responded to the urgent command and whipped his massive frame around to descend into the central garden clearing. Fire blazed twenty feet from his gaping mouth, scattering those below screaming into the woods. His green scales iridescenced a vivid royal blue in the lunar brilliance. He mirrored his master's anger, a fearsome sight. His eyes glowed red, nostrils flared, and razor sharp scales lifted along his spine to the tip of his powerful tail. Spewing fire, his enormous muscular legs extended down for a quick landing. Foot-long, dagger-sharp claws grabbed the soft loam. The beast roared, his muscles rippled, and his wings extended to their full one hundred foot span in a show of power.

All present now were aware of Martin's arrival and his fury. They cowered among the trees, which themselves shivered and swayed back from the glade. All knew and feared his wrath. He hoped this display scared the offender who held his love enough to release her.

The master jumped off of the dragon's back, and with an abrupt wave quieted its fiery bursts to puffs of smoldering smoke. With his red, spiraling curls and black magician's cloak thrown back from his shoulders, he drew his wand. Custom-crafted, bloodwood, it blazed crimson in the moonlight. Into his other hand he took the silver talisman hanging around his neck, a present from his beloved aunt upon his wizard confirmation as a boy. Concentrating on the talisman's power, he called to those who wore the two bonded amulets, Heike and his best friend, Erik. He detected no response from that of his love, but their magus amor clearly told him she was close and in grave danger. Thankfully, Erik's amulet answered from within the enchanted forest just beyond the garden. He would need the alliance of his partner to save Heike.

Martin entered the woods. Although noisy and mirthful with song and laughter when he observed from above, now the foreboding quiet shivered his spine and every nerve stood on edge, ready to strike. He walked past a tall oak. Its branches quivered in his presence, and its trunk bent away from him as if blown by a sharp gale.

The tree's movement revealed the form of an attractive female sylph. Her statuesque, slender frame draped in a gossamer gown barely concealed her graceful curves. She showed no fear to stand before the powerful wizard.

Martin met the gaze of her large, luminous, dark eyes and felt her magic. He encountered sylphs before and he knew theirs was no match for his own, but she magnified her magic using the twin celestial powers.

Against his will she bravely forced his eyes down, below her finely chiseled face, to trace the curves of her rounded breasts. Her erect nipples tempted him from behind the sheer fabric. She continued to seduce Martin with her magical and feminine wiles, dropping the gauzy bodice down from her bare shoulders, exposing her naked bosom for his view. Her dark spell immobilized him.

“I want to taste your magic, my lord, and for you to taste mine,” she breathed, reaching for him. “Let our powers flow together, our own celebration of this night.”

He failed to reply; his mind fought to resist temptations intended to overtake him. He longed to touch that lovely flesh shimmering in the pale moonbeams filtered through the canopy.

She grasped his hand and pulled it close to her breast. As the back brushed past her hardened nipple she moaned and the intensity of their combined magic sent out a glow visible throughout the forest.

Despite dark desires calling to him from the comely sylph, Martin felt his fingers around his wand in the other hand being pried open. She seemed unusually strong. He fought hard to focus his powers, and jerked his gaze from the sylph. A winged male fairy clasped his wand. Martin cried, “Release!”

In a guttural slur, the ghost-pale creature responded, “Red . . . bloodwood red,” while maintaining his hold.

“It operates only under my command! What do you want with my wand?” Usually these fairies posed no threat. From past experience he recalled red objects lured these timid beings, obviously exacerbated by the unusual moonlight. Again, he commanded, “Release!”

The fairy whimpered, but did not loosen his death grip on the instrument.

The base of the wand still rested within Martin's own fingers. He called on its tip to scorch the attacker's hand. The fairy yelped in pain and withdrew.

The elegant sylph used the moment to take advantage. She moved closer and persisted, letting a waterfall of her straight, pale blond hair spill over Martin's forearm, bared from his rolled cuffs. With that touch her passion once more swept over him, and again he felt a tingle in his groin.

He summoned his powers to bolster his will, avoided her rapturous gaze, and sparked his wand above her. The towering oak crackled under the strain of his spell. Its branches complied, imprisoning her frame within their iron grip.

The sylph writhed and called sweetly to Martin, beseeching him to look into her eyes. “Come to me, my lord. Look into my gaze. Taste of my delights.”

The scuffle brought the forest of onlookers to life. They stared meekly; none seemed intent upon challenging Martin.

He called out to the crowd, "I bring you no harm here tonight. I wish only to locate my lady, Heike, and my friend, Erik, then join your celebration. Resume your gala, but I urge you to not deter my purpose."

As the master walked among them, following the route indicated by Erik's amulet, he paused to acknowledge a few witches and wizards. This relaxed the crowd and the festive atmosphere gradually resumed. Moonbeams from the paired celestial bodies induced much mayhem and hedonism. Wine and witchcraft flowed freely. Music wafted from the clearing and all parts of the surrounding wood.

Martin passed a trio of handsome fauns, having human torsos and lower bodies resembling deer. They played entrancing tunes upon their flutes, which attracted several fair nymphs. The maids danced flirtatiously, with their skirts billowing softly around their charms like flower petals.

Erik's amulet no longer signaled him. This meant his friend now faced some serious trouble, because he faultlessly maintained communication. He hastened his pace and nearly ran into a pair of beautiful, diaphanous dryads pinning a lucky wizard to their tree home. The magician seemed well pleased to have the naked wood nymphs pleasure his aroused body with their magic.

Time was getting away. He quickly turned from the couple to spy Erik's tall, sinewy shape locked in an embrace, passionately kissing a female fairy he knew to be a Holle. He panicked at the sight. These powerful and aggressive women lured men into their lairs to kill them. He placed a ready hand upon his wand inside his cloak. The vixen immediately noticed his presence. Her voluptuous body pressed tightly against his friend's to keep him entranced. She moved only her face toward Martin.

"He's mine now," she hissed wickedly.

"Release him!" Martin planted his feet squarely on the ground, trying to look formidable, even though he feared how much tonight's moonlight would enhance her already strong magic.

“I’m almost finished. I’ll be kind and return him to you before his last breath escapes for your farewells.”

There was only a single moment for Martin to act, while much of the Holle’s power maintained her spell on his friend. She was unable to move her body from Erik and turn around. He swiftly slipped his wand behind her back and traced an electrical jolt along her spine. Her body wavered. Keeping the wand active, he wrapped his free arm around her throat and pulled her clear from Erik. He continued to charge her spine, feeling her life departing, until her gorgeous form fell limp and lifeless to the ground. Martin felt a little remorse for her death, something he must accept as part of his job. Not the first nor the last he would kill.

Again a crowd gathered and included three benevolent Querciola. His heart leapt with the hope of gaining their assistance. Martin knelt beside his weakened partner and briefly placed a palm across his forehead. He read, removed, and repaired damage to mind, body, and spirit. Once alert, Erik started at the sight of the evil temptress lying dead beside him.

“Marty, thanks! She would have killed me.”

With a warm smile the master extended his hand and helped his friend to stand. He whispered, “Do you know where Heike is?”

“No. I last recall drinking a brew in the market, just before I was to join her at your cottage. Must've been poisoned.” Erik's face turned pale as he looked at the surrounding enchanted forest. “We’re in the bewitched woods? Is she in danger?”

Martin nodded, his fear apparent only to his dear childhood friend who easily read him.

Erik shivered.

Then, the Querciola moved closer, lifted their ghostly arms to draw attention, and motioned to follow. The sorcerer knew to trust them. These fairies were friends of lovers and aided him and Heike many times when at risk. They spoke nary a word as their vaporous shapes glided briskly out from under the trees and across the garden clearing.

Within the glade the master searched for his dragon, who he discovered to one side, making space for a grand moonlit ballroom. Hundreds of magical beings swayed and hopped to merry tunes, but kept distant from the massive beast.

The lead Querciole assumed its most powerful, fiery form under the open moon glow and took a strong hold on his arm. It prompted him to speed toward the forest path at the far side of the clearing. There he received a heightened sense of Heike's presence and terror. Placing his full trust in the spirits, he paused only to look over his shoulder at Balteazar. With a single glance from his master, the dragon understood his orders to prepare for an escape.

He and Erik swiftly followed the vaporous trio through shadows from tree to tree, secretly moving alongside a cart path that led to the gardener's storage cottage, a small shed-like structure of clay walls with a thatched roof. They halted just within sight of the building, yet secured from detection by wide trunks. Sensing black magic, Martin knew several dark forces were obviously on guard. The Querciole again took his arm, pointing to a pair of fierce-looking, bearded male dwarfs and another woman who appeared to have the beak of a chicken.

"What sort is that woman?" he whispered.

The leader placed a filmy finger upon Martin's brow to wordlessly transmit the answer. It described the mysterious being as a woods-dwelling, evil fairy, part human and part bird.

He gulped. How would he kill that? Did this lunar event also strengthen dark powers? With luck he might be able to stun her. He cautiously lifted his wand tip into the air to enhance perception. What he found shocked him. Their combined forces were vast, far too great for three beings. He studied them carefully. In short time another snarling dwarf and two women with feathered wings in place of arms strode around the corner. Even three of each did not account for the degree of occult power that lay before him. Either an army of dwarfs or a dark master awaited him and must be endangering his lady. He seethed at the thought, kicking his boot at the trunk. What could he do?

A plan soon occurred to him, but he needed the help of the Querciola. He hoped they were capable. Lacking verbal communication, he gathered them into a circle behind

cover of a giant oak. Erik took hold of his amulet to gain shreds of understanding, since he possessed no magical gifts. Joining hands they mentally discussed the plan. Sharing thoughts, they each gained glimpses into Martin's knowledge of Heike's fright and hastened to begin.

The spirits formed a triad around the sorcerer and touched his shoulders to boost the strength of his witchcraft. He whipped his wand with a daring slash. A purple streak flew at the cottage. All was quiet, the dark forces suspended. They stepped up to the evil guards and found each slumped into a deep sleep.

One whiff of the body odors from the dwarfs made Erik's nose wrinkle in disgust. "I suppose you want me to stay outside to keep watch on them?"

"Indeed I do," the wizard said and slapped his friend on the shoulder. "You've seen worse. They may not be killed. I don't have time to check."

"That's comforting."

The sorcerer then made for the door, accompanied by the spirit leader. Just as he grasped the cool brass of the latch, the griffin face on the knocker grimaced and spat at him.

"There're more of them!" called Erik as he ran for cover in the trees.

Without the triad of the Querciola, five dwarfs trapped Martin against the wooden door. The spirits were unable to fight, only provide aid. The leader did its best to shield him, deflecting many power blows. His two comrades floated close, unable to help.

Reeking bodies of evil filth bombarded the two of them. The wizard cast a bolt from his wand and stunned one.

As the other dwarfs were caught off guard for a moment, a second spirit wafted swiftly in front of Martin. The third poised itself between the cottage and Erik.

Shooting power shots between the two protective bodies, he grazed another dwarf, who dropped to his knees, yelping in pain. The odds improved, victory seemed probable.

Suddenly, the door at his back opened. Before Martin could spin around, something dragged him inside and slammed the door.

He tried to twist and see what controlled him, but it held with an iron grip, his wand arm yanked painfully up his back. Whatever type of being, it oozed power, wretched black power with an odious stench of rotting flesh. The magus amor throbbed in his brain. Heike was here and in tremendous pain.

Its breath was hot in his ear. Then, the dark one laughed a horrid, maniacal chuckle. "So, the great prodigy of the High Council has come to see his lover."

Martin writhed with rage. His heart pounded and adrenaline rushed through his muscles.

"I can tell you're anxious to see her. Well good, let's do that, shall we?" The evil one wrenched his arm higher up his back and pushed him toward a small storage room.

At the doorway he gasped at the horrid sight. His beautiful love lay bound to an old wooden work table, stripped naked. Wide leather straps cut deeply into the soft skin of her bare waist. Her wrists and ankles were smeared with blood from her efforts against the bondage. Her face was flushed and damp with perspiration from struggle, her ankles tethered wide apart.

Seeing Martin, Heike strained hard against the restraints, her cries muffled with the gag in her mouth.

Glancing again across the tortured body of his love, he bent down feeling the urge to wretch, but instead became distracted by the chalk outline of a pentagram drawn on the wooden floor surrounding the torture table. Rapidus! It had to be. Who else possessed this sort of advanced dark power here in the North? The High Council banished the alchemist to this desolate region after he drugged, raped, and murdered dozens of Evlan maidens.

The dark one thrust him to the floor at the edge of the pentagram and released him. The wizard turned around to find no one.

"Looking for me?" The same crazed laughter sounded in front of him, next to Heike.

"Rapidus, you black bastard."

The cat-like yellow eyes of the alchemist gleamed as he stroked a long, pale hand along the inside of Heike's thigh. "We've been having lots of fun, but we can have even

more now that you're here, my young master. I doubt Severin and his high sorcerers taught you the likes of my magic." His eyes glowed brighter and he laughed wildly.

Heike recoiled at his touch, whimpering under the gag.

"You haven't learned your lesson, but tonight you will pay at my hand."

The alchemist only cackled. "Your rage must excite her."

Instinctively, Martin lunged for him and then immediately caught himself at the chalk line. From what he studied, even one of his hairs falling into that circle would terminate his own power. He paused to consider, panting and frustrated while the alchemist grinned ear-to-ear.

Then Martin noticed, in the corner of his eye, the leader of the Querciola floating near the ceiling. Apparently, the spirit was able to hide itself from Rapidus' detection. The wizard's courage soared with a plan and his vengeance raged. Looking directly into that evil yellow stare he pledged, "Be assured tonight you will be no match against my powers. My reprisal will be merciless."

The alchemist's eyes pulsed with wicked luminescence.

Martin looked to the Querciole. He held his breath and hoped the old volumes in the Council's magic library were correct. The spirit nodded, understanding the young master's unspoken plan. Levitating above the pentagram, it surprised Rapidus to find his body lifted up and outside of the pentagram. During this distraction the wizard had drawn an anlace from within his cloak. Holding it high above his head with both hands, he sent the shining blade swiftly downward, severing the alchemist's head with a clean cut. Although the body remained motionless, the blow elicited some gruesome flinch of life from the head. Its eyes and mouth flew wide open, the long dark hair coiled like tentacles. The facial muscles spasmed, causing the head to begin rolling. Martin quickly extended his foot to secure it until all reflexes ceased. According to references, if it reached the pentangle, the surrounding dark powers would receive their leader's strength.

"Now, release Heike, but take care to not touch the floor," he mentally communicated with the leader.

The spirit floated back to the table, and released the leather strapping from her. Looking unsuccessfully for her clothing, Martin removed his cloak.

Suddenly, a rat darted from just next to the severed head to a position under the table and left a trail of bloody footprints. The alchemist's blood was now within the evil circle, feeding the black magic. Even in death the alchemist's dark power rose up. The crazed eyes opened and the mouth let out a chilling, diabolical laugh.

Without the gag, Heike screamed.

Outside, there were yells and crashes, sounds of battle. Just as Martin studied, the serving dark forces were now empowered.

Instantly, he wrapped his cloak around his love's weakened body, quieting her agitation.

"Martin . . . you're here . . . I," she said choking on her words.

"I'm here, my love. Are you alright? Did he violate you?"

"I feel drugged and bruised. It was all so horrible . . . his breath was putrid . . . those yellow eyes glaring . . . he had just exposed his member . . . was drooling upon my breasts . . . he was just about to . . . but, no he didn't . . . you saved me," she broke away, sobbing and clinging to his shoulders.

"You are safe now, my sweet. He has paid with his life, and deserved no better."

"Heike, the spirit will help as it has before. Trust."

"Yes." Although visibly shaking, she acquiesced, knowing she needed its aid.

He motioned the spirit to carry her, since he must keep his wand hand free.

Then, he raced down the stairs to find two of the bird women alert in front of the cottage, held immobile by the Querciola.

Looking beyond into the forest, he breathed a sigh of relief. Erik was standing, although in a bad spot with the third beak-nosed woman clenching his throat and a dwarf pinning his arms behind a tree. A single shot from his wand stunned the woman. Fear sent the dwarf running into the wood, exactly as Martin anticipated. With a sweep of his wand, two large hickory trees bent their branches low and locked the creatures against their massive trunks. The trees groaned but held fast. Having little mercy for evil, the master shot another spark and the limbs slowly strangled their prisoners.

Where were the other seven dwarfs? The stench gave away their close proximity. Possessing their master's darkness, he didn't want to attempt a fight, while protecting his

two friends. The sorcerer wasted no time and summoned his dragon for a swift escape.

“Accedo, draco!”

Erik trudged up, rubbing his neck. “Good timing. I was getting low on air through the windpipe with that beak lady hammering my throat. We best be going, since the other dwarfs aren’t far.”

“I’m on top of that. Our ride should be coming shortly.”

The leader spirit floated next to them, gingerly holding Heike.

Just then, the dwarfs yelped in the distance behind the gardener’s cottage.

“Martin!” Heike cried. “Look!”

More dwarfs than he could count rounded the corner of the building.

Balteazar bolted down the cart path toward them, taking out tree limbs as he flew. A liege of outraged evil beings followed him. His claws dug into the dirt, shaking the ground as he halted next to the cottage. He flamed the oncoming dwarfs, at least two score in number. Those who pursued him down the trail received the same fiery reception.

In a flash, Martin stood upon the tendons of his lowered wing. The spirit handed Heike over to him, and he secured her weakened frame into the seat area with his own body just behind hers. Erik hoisted a bloody leg up and mounted last. With a sparkling wave the master displayed his gratitude to the trio of spirits, already floating high in the air for protection. Balteazar did not wait for an order and lifted straight up with two powerful down strokes from his gigantic wings.

Above the forest canopy, Martin and his friends breathed sighs of relief. He directed his dragon to fly them home. With a hand upon Erik’s upper leg, the wizard mended the gaping wound. He touched Heike’s brow and healed the damages done by the alchemist. Still tired, she nestled against his chest and slept during their journey home. He held her and breathed in the wonderful sweet smell of her hair, thankful that she was able to relax into his arms after the horrible experience.

Upon reaching the tiny village in a mountain valley they all now called home, Balteazar landed in a pasture adjacent to the couple’s dwelling. After being checked

thoroughly for any injury and treated, his master dismissed him to rest in his mountain lair. The magnificent beast bowed to them and slowly flew off.

The other three watched him glide through the sky toward the bright glow of the double moons and then walked into the garden behind the thatched roof cottage where the couple lived.

“Those moons are beautiful,” Erik remarked. “And to think I looked forward to the eve of the twin moons because everyone told me to expect a great party – wine, women, song. That was a bit more than I needed.” Erik ran a hand through his hair.

“Well, you have to admit that Holle you made out with was a looker,” Martin retorted with a chuckle.

“You two had fun with wild women while I was being tortured? Sounds normal.” Heike gave a mock look of disdain and then broke into a giggle.

Erik joined them in laughter. “Yeah, I swear she was going to eat me for dinner after the sex. But, she was hot alright. If I had to die, that might be a nice way. Hey, I’m tired and will be going.”

Erik hugged each before leaving for his own small abode down the lane.

Now alone, the pair embraced for a long time in silence, at last enjoying the romantic magic cast by the twin moons. They kissed deeply.

“Martin, thank you,” Heike murmured as they paused. Drawing him closer, she brushed his ear. “I love you. I know I’m always safe with you.”

He moved his hands to unclasp his cloak covering her bare body. He caressed the fine curves of her hips and cupped her breasts. The garment eased off of her shoulders and fell free onto the ground. His lady stood naked before him, clothed only in the soft light.

He held his breath at the sight, having never seen her appear more beautiful. The moonglow kissed the tip of her nose, the delicate edge of her collar bones, the swell of her breasts, the ample roundness of her ass. But, her love for him within her eyes glowed brightest. “And I could love no other. I am yours, Heike.”

Escorting her a few steps to their garden swing, he steadied it for her to be seated. Rapt by her vision and his own burning desire, he removed all weapons, wands, and clothing, joining her to bathe in the moonbeams.

She watched him intently, her blue eyes glittering with the magic light.

Their love overwhelmed his soul and aroused his groin. He stood in front of her and grasped the seat of the swing to draw her closer. His tongue encircled her raspberry-colored nipples, teasing them into hard buds. Then, he trailed his kisses up her neck, lightly brushed her lips, and then covered her mouth, probing deep inside.

Heike encircled him within her arms and leg.

Grabbing onto the soft flesh of her hips, he held her to him.

She responded, wiggling even closer, inviting him deep into the warm wetness of the softest of her female parts.

He accepted and plunged deep within her, as she moaned in ecstasy. He swung her pelvis back and forth over his throbbing member, a rhythm that crashed magical release upon them.

With their bodies joined, their love fused into a brilliance that matched the heavens. This ethereal blaze flared upward high into the night sky. The bolt of white light burst open, creating a third moon positioned in a perfect equilateral triangle with the two existing lunar bodies. The spectacle of this first celestial trigon inspired awe in all who beheld. But, the couple knew, as did those venerable seers throughout Evlan watching the skies that very moment -- the wizard the world awaited was now conceived.