

Alynnya Hates Mondays Too - #26 – December Stream Story Part 2

By Timothy Magnussen

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“...And furthermore, if you hadn’t gone blundering ahead without at least checking your blind spots, then maybe we would have seen *them* before *they* saw *us*! But nooooo, you just *had* to traipse on through that ravine like you were dancing through a field of daisies, didn’t you! And now look where it’s gotten us! Oh now don’t you give me that look, this is on *you*! When we get out of this, I promise you are getting a *full* write-up and a review before the board of inquiry! You had better start impressing me in a major way if you don’t want me to recommend a demotion back to trainee status!”

At least that’s what I heard myself saying in my mind. The way it actually came out was closer to “Mmph, mrmh-mnn hmmp! Mrrmph!” I’m fairly confident I’d gotten the general meaning across though. Sophie looked appropriately shame-faced. Not quite enough to help my mood, but at least she knew just how high on my shit-list she currently stood!

Well whatever that might do for my mood, it didn’t really help our situation. I could barely feel my arms, after swinging from the pole for who knew how many hours. My neck was sore, my shoulders ached, and the world looked a whole lot stranger upside down. I’d tried to keep my head on straight enough to eavesdrop on the bandits’ conversation, but that wasn’t an especially easy task when you were dangling from a pig-pole like a piece of wet laundry. Sophie had things a little bit easier than me, at least she could look at the world right-side up. I saw fear written all over her face for the entire journey – though whether it was because of our current predicament or because of what I was silently promising to do to her, I really couldn’t say. Of course the jury was still out on which one she *should* have been more worried about...

Well I’d been able to pick up a few bits and snatches of talk on our journey. And it had confirmed what I’d been dreading. Our mission had taken us within a few miles to Port Kadaar, on the southern coast. It’s a lot like any other ports on the coastline, except it’s missing something fairly critical: anything remotely resembling law and order. Port Kadaar is where you go if you want to get your hands on anything illegal, illicit, unusual or just plain weird. Everything was for sale. Nobody requires a trade permit, nobody asks any questions at all. If you’ve got money, you can buy anything. *Anything*.

Yes, in case you were wondering, I was talking about slaves too. Their flesh-markets were the open secret of the whole region. And like I said, nobody asks questions. And that was where we were going right now. So that answered that. Why should I have been surprised? It seemed like this kind of thing happened to me every time I blinked. I guess it must be Thursday again...

“*Mumph!*” Sophia again, desperately trying to catch my attention. “Nmmh-mrphh!”

I imagined what point she might be trying to get across. Maybe she had an itch? She jerked her head towards something, eyes wide. I twisted my neck to try and see. I smelled salt, heard gulls and the crash of waves. Oh, look. Our considerate litter-bearers were carrying us toward the docks. Lovely. My head slowly sank into my boots. I knew what was coming next...