

*The characters Torvald Arend 'Tor' & Victoria Angela (nee Connell) Svensen, James Conrad & Cathryn 'Cathy' (nee Hunter) Svensen, Brett, Dana Lynn (nee Svensen) and Sabrina Angela Kasznik, Roger, Gytha Louise (nee Svensen) Roger Jr. & Heather Louise Delancey, Axel Torvald & Madelyn (nee Barrett) Svensen, Bradley Torvald 'Brad' & Janet Lee (nee Mondragon) Svensen, Trenton, Nancy Jeanne (nee Svensen), Trenton Junior and Chelsea Corbin, Ronald Arend 'Ron' & Brenda Mae (nee Cartwright) Svensen, Lawrence James 'LJ' & Alicia Leanna (nee Svensen) Hood, Valerie Connell, Walter Lee Sr. & Harriet (nee Bishop) Connell, Walter Lee Jr., Michelle Annette 'Misha' (nee Kazjinski), Walter Lee III, Joseph Franklin 'Joe' and Sarah Noel Connell, Robert James & Elizabeth Ann (nee Caine) Sands, Barbara Caine, Edward and Mary (nee Leese) Caine, Richard & Wilhelmine Marie (nee Kurzweil) Delancey, James William & Nancy (nee Roland) Kurzweil, Erich Martin & Ivanova Marie 'Iva Marie' (nee Schmidt) Kurzweil, Jason & Natasha 'Tasba' (nee Porter) Cumberow, Peter the dispatcher, El Casa Del Burrito<sup>®</sup>, Leonard's Restaurant<sup>®</sup>, Hunter Auto Parts<sup>®</sup>, Right Way Groceries<sup>™</sup> and Steven Nanomantube are the property of Kellan Meig'h and may not be published or reproduced in any form without express written permission. Any resemblance to any fur or person, either living or dead is purely coincidental. Fender, Guild, Gretsch, Jackson, Charvel and Squire are the property of Fender Musical Instruments, Inc. Gibson, Les Paul and SG are the property of Gibson Musical instruments. (Gab, this is tedious!)\*Note\* More rambling credits/warnings below! Please read and heed!*

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## “End Game”

By Kellan Meig'h

### Chapter 02 – “The Meeting”

Victoria ended her call from her long-lost friend who was now a relative, still somewhat shocked to have heard from the equine femme. She went through the house to find her hubby in his office, busy touching up a photo of her on his laptop. She thought she must have really been 'In The Zone' during that call because he would have to had laid on the floor at her feet to get that upward-angle shot of her. It was very flattering, though.

“Um, you're not going to print that risque image, are you?” she asked, noting the fact that her bare cleavage was plainly visible at the moment.

Torvald looked up and smiled at her. “No, first I need to crop it a bit, just like this,” he replied, tastefully adjusting the photo. She now looked very decent with just a bit of her chest showing. Satisfied with the finished shot, he sent the image to his ALPS dye-sublimation printer which would give him a commercial quality print. “This one is going right on my desk so I can see you when I'm working,” he admitted.

The tigress started to say something about the picture when the phone began to ring again, breaking her concentration. She smiled as she answered it, knowing who was on the other end. “Hello,” she bid, sitting down in the side chair by Torvald's desk.

“Morning, Mom,” Dana said in an apprehensive tone. “Do you and Dad have any plans this morning?” she asked carefully.

“No, we don't,” the tigress replied, looking over at her hubby who was reading his email while he waited for the photo to print. That email was most likely a joke sent to him by Gytha.

“Mom, we want to come by this morning and talk to Dad about something important.” Dana put forth.

This bothered Victoria, her daughter seeming to be upset for some reason. “Yeah, come on over, Hon. We'll be here.”

Alright, we're going to get ready to leave for your place right now.” the young femme stated.

“Okay, We'll be waiting,” the tigress stated, then said her goodbyes and ended the call.

“What's up?” Torvald asked, noting the concern on his mate's muzzle.

“Dana wants to talk with you about something important but she didn't say exactly what it was,” the tigress admitted to her hubby. That seemed to upset the huge fur.

“Gah, I hope it's nothing dire,” he said softly, shaking his head. With his family, it very well could turn out to be dire.

Victoria decided to change the subject quickly. “Tor, what was in that email that was so funny?” she asked.

“Gytha sent me a picture of some clowns doing something very unsafe,” he offered up. Torvald turned his laptop around to show some furs using a forklift to raise a very large object up onto a ledge inside a building. The first forklift didn't have the necessary reach so they were using a second forklift to raise the first forklift up enough to position their load. If that wasn't insane enough, there were several furs sitting on the back of the upper forklift to help balance the load.

“Oh My, Torvald, tell me that was staged,” she requested, taking a very close look at the image displayed. It did look real enough to her, though.

“No, I would say that's for real,” he offered up. The tigress nodded in agreement, then brought up something for her hubby's approval.

“Tor, let's get something to eat before the kits get here.” she suggested to her mate.

“Yeah, that sounds like a very good idea,” He admitted, following the tigress out to the kitchen.

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Axel looked at the letter in his paws, still not quite believing what he had just read. He looked at the envelope again, just to see that it had indeed come from Scottsdale, Arizona. The letterhead looked very authentic but the body of the letter made no sense.

The letter in his paws was from Fender Musical Instruments<sup>®</sup>, informing him that he was no longer a first-tier dealer for Fender, Guild, Gretsch, Jackson or Charvel branded instruments. It did inform him he could still sell Squire instruments as a second-tier dealer. There was no reason given and this bothered him; Svensen's Music was the fourth-largest non-chain dealer in sales volume for the last year in California. What had happened to change Fender's view of them? He needed to find out quickly.

Madelyn came out of the back room with a pair of Gibson Les Paul Standard guitars, meaning to tune them before putting them on display. After putting them down on a mat sitting on the counter, she started to ask what was up. The look on Axel's muzzle when he looked up at her spoke volumes, needing no verbal communication. Axle could see the questioning look in her eyes so he just gave her the letter, then looked at the wall of acoustic guitars behind her. He didn't want to watch her blow up.

She read through it slowly, then sat the letter down on the counter carefully. She bit her lip, trying to contain her rage but the zebra femme failed miserably, flying off the handle.

“You know it's that goddamned Guitar Shack chain screwing with us, don't you? I doubt that letter is authentic! Go ahead, call that Jack Barrows rep at Fender and I'll bet you any amount of money he dies laughing!” She said very loudly, keeping her voice just under a full bellow. “Guitar shack is trying their best to put all the little furs out of business! I heard they tried something like this with the furs at Towne's Guitars over in Culver City!”

“I heard about that from Darryl Towne himself.” Axel offered up. “Gimme a second here, I have Jack's number on speed dial,” he offered up, punching the speakerphone button, then 6 – 2 – # on the keypad. The phone issued forth a dial tone, dialed the requested number then began ringing. Two rings later, it was answered.

“Jack Barrows, Fender dealer relations, how may I help you?” the fennec fox asked on the other end.

“Hello Jack, this is Axel Svensen, Svensen's Music in Garden Grove, California. We have a problem that we need ...” The fox tod cut him off.

“Did you get a letter that looked like it might have come from us?” he asked carefully.

“Yeah, we did.” Axel replied. “Tell me it's a fake, please?” the equine requested.

“It's a fake. You probably don't know this but the Guitar Shack head honchos were here two weeks ago with a list of names, asking us to put the shops listed on the second tier for volume discounts.” the representative explained. “They took us out to a very nice restaurant and tried their best to wine and dine us into a sweetheart deal. They even explained they could outsell all of the dealers listed combined. It didn't work, I have to tell you. We sent them packing.”

“Why the hell do they need us out of the picture? Does our sales volume really pose a threat to them?” Madelyn asked.

“They want a deeper discount for a high sales volume level,” Jack replied. “They want us to eliminate their competition for them. I can tell you, we won't do that.”

“So, what is Fender doing about this?” the striped femme asked. “We were shocked by this, Jack.”

“We're sending letters to all of our dealers, informing them that their status with us has not changed.” he replied. “Don't worry, Axel, Madelyn. We don't want to lose your business.”

“Thanks, Jack. We were worried there for a minute.” Axel put forth.

“Um, I have to go, the other line is ringing,” Jack stated, bidding goodbye right as the line went dead. Axel punched the button on the phone, hanging up on his end.

“Gah, can you believe that?” he asked, shaking his head. “If we hadn't called, we would have probably dropped the whole Fender lineup. That would have been devastating to our business.” He motioned to the approximately sixty Fender and Squire electric guitars on the wall.

“Well, that's over with, Hon. Let's hope that damned Guitar Shack chain gets sued by Fender for what they pulled.” Madelyn proffered up. That made Axel seem a little less stressed, to know they were still in good standing with Fender. He looked up at his wife and gave thought to something.

“Tell you what; you mind the shop and I'll go get us some apple fritters from that donut shop down the street.” Axel suggested.

“Only if you stop at that little coffee shop next door to the donut shop and get me a large mochaccino.” she retorted. Axel smiled and nodded at her suggestion.

“Anything for my mate. The love of my life. The light that lights up me heart. The stars in ...” Madelyn cut him off.

“Will you quit flapping your jaws and go get us a snack?” she stated, coming behind the counter to begin shooing him towards the door. “Now hurry! I'm hungry now that you brought that up!” Axel smiled and gave her a kiss right before he slipped out the door.

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Their breakfast finished, Mitchell and Lisa were headed to their eminent meeting with the Immortal Couple. He looked down to make sure he wasn't speeding, not being used to driving a vehicle that used an internal combustion engine for motivation.

“It's kind of weird to see so many internal combustion powered vehicles” he commented, adjusting his speed a bit. “These Holden Commodores on our home planet are electric but otherwise, I think you would be hard-pressed to tell them apart.” he pointed out.

“Yeah, it's kind of unsettling when you're on a planet that closely mirrors ours.” Lisa interjected. “At least their Cadillac marque survived their depression,” she added, noting they were following a brand-new Cadillac CTS.

“I'll agree it's un ...” The male tiger stopped talking in mid-sentence and picked up his directions, noting he needed to get on the 241 South freeway. “Gah, I almost missed my turn,” he said under his breath as he took the off-ramp.

“Sorry, I was supposed to be navigating for you,” Lisa said sheepishly. She picked up the directions and retrieved her GPS coordinates. “You need to get off at Portola Parkway, Hon.” she informed her hubby.

“This used to be a toll road six years ago,” Mitchell pointed out.

“I read the current governor abolished all toll roads and in return he raised all vehicle fees by two dollars. That move more than made up for the tolls.” she brought up. “Oh, this is your exit right here.”

They exited the freeway, then headed north on Portola Parkway. At Glenn Ranch road, they turned right. Just a short drive up the street was the entrance to the Svensen's ranch.

“This was part of Whiting Ranch Reserve on our homeworld.” Mitchell offered up. “I rode horses there as a child. I understand this ranch was never acquired by the parks department on this planet so that's why it's still in private hands ... erm, I mean paws.” he corrected.

He drove slowly up the hill to the circle at the top where the Svensen's home sat. Mitch parked their car in a spot that appeared to be a parking space, then shut off the engine. He looked down, shaking his head.

“Um, Mitch, are you feeling well?” his mate asked.

“No, I'm not. I hate this job,” he put forth for the second time today. “We're going to make their lives a living hell and I'm not supposed to feel any remorse.” He reached into the back seat for his briefcase, then opened his door. “Come on, let's go get this over with.”

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Wilhelmine came to, woken up by the muffled sounds of the freeway above her, feeling like she had been through a meat grinder. Moving her arms, legs and tail, she was fairly sure they weren't broken at the moment, possibly just heavily bruised. The femme equine opened her eyes just a bit to see it was getting light outside, the sun had not risen quite high enough in the sky to bring light to her current location.

She tried to open her driver's door only to discover a small tree blocking it. Summoning her cell phone to her open paw, it displayed the fact she had no cell phone service in this portion of the Pacheco Pass. She sat the phone down on the console and replayed the events of last evening in her mind.

She had been headed up to Sonoma, California for an invitational rifle match that was to start this morning when a vehicle, traveling on the wrong side of the divided 152 freeway had confronted her. Her choices were either to hit the vehicle head-on or leave the roadway. Her choice of leaving the roadway took her down a steep, tree studded ravine. It was a rough ride, the vehicle flipping over several times before coming to rest nose down against a boulder. Wilhelmine remembered pushing the airbag out of her face right before she blacked out, unable to stay conscious at the moment. She was glad her little Subaru Forester was such a sturdy little car or she might have been hurt badly by this accident.

Undoing her seatbelt, she closed her eyes and imagined herself sitting outside the vehicle on the slope next to it. That familiar tingling passed over her but she was to be surprised by a very short drop onto the ground below her. She had miscalculated her height sitting in the car when she transported. Wilhelmine summoned her purse, her cell phone and then her rifles out of the back of the vehicle, placing them within easy reach. Standing up, she picked up her things, thought of her home in her mind and transported herself to her backyard patio.

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The house was quiet now that Iva and Erich had left to go shopping at their local Farmer's Market so the huge equine male was enjoying the silence in the house. He was still somewhat bothered that his wife hadn't checked in with him last night once she arrived at the motel up in Sonoma. She might have been so tired after her drive up that she was too sleepy to call him. Sitting at their breakfast table, Richard looked up from his morning meal to see his bride materialize on their patio. He sat his spoon back into his cereal bowl and got up to see about Willi Marie.

“Honey, are you ... Oh My Gawd! Willi, you're injured!!” he blurted out, maneuvering her onto a bench by the back door. “My Gawd, Hon, doesn't that hurt?” he asked, looking at her shoulder.

“Well, my shoulder does ...” she stopped talking when she observed the end of a small branch protruding from her body where it had been driven into her shoulder at some point during the crash. “Richard, is that ... is that all the way through?” she asked carefully. He looked at the injury, nodding that it was indeed clear through her shoulder. There was to Richard's surprise, no fresh blood around the wound but she was covered from head to hoof in old, dried blood.

“You just sit there quietly and I'll call for the paramedics ...” He was cut off by his wife, getting his attention.

“No, this is not right. I have enough blood on me that I should at least be weak, if not dead.” she pointed out. Her clothes and fur were absolutely covered in blood, leading them to think she might have bled enough to have actually bled out. “No, let me call Hrist.” she told him. Willi closed her eyes and just thought of the spotted mare and not surprisingly to her, the huge femme materialized.

“Um, Wilhelmine, did you have another Valkyrie summon me?” Hrist asked, kneeling to look at the blond palomino's injuries. The branch through her shoulder in particular made Hrist grimace from the knowledge of what that must feel like.

“No, I summoned you in my mind, Hrist. Something's really wrong here.” the palomino femme put forth.

“You are right to have summoned me. Quickly, we must go see Eyr.” Richard grabbed their arms right before the two femmes vanished, hitching a ride with them to see about this situation for himself.

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Torvald was running water in the sink, preparing to wash their breakfast dishes, helping out like a good husband should. Victoria was wiping down the huge commercial-style range when a knock came to the front door, followed by the doorbell ringing once.

“That must be the kits,” she suggested, putting the rag on the counter as she went to answer the door. She opened it, stopping when it turned out the furs on her porch weren't her family but were a pair of casually dressed tigers. “Erm, may I ask who you are and what you're here for?” she requested, gripping her staff that was behind the door just in case.

The male tiger smiled at her and replied in a soft voice. “Well, I'm Mitchell Gallegos and this is Lisa, my wife. We're with the Celestial Police.” The duo on the porch showed her their badges.

“May we come in? This is official business.” Lisa asked.

“Yes, please come in,” Victoria replied, stepping aside for them to enter while she leaned her staff back against the wall. “My hubby is in the kitchen, through there,” she directed, walking ahead of them to show the way. “Tor, we have company,” she said loudly, a code phrase that meant for him to be ready for anything.

They entered the kitchen to find the stallion wiping his paws on a towel, giving their visitors great scrutiny. He put the towel down, then offered his paw to Mitchell.

“I'm Torvald Svensen,” he stated, noting the tiger had a very firm pawshake. He tried his best to look casual as to not seem threatening to his guests. What they couldn't see was the Smith & Wesson 1911-pattern .45 Auto tucked into the small of his back.

“I'm Mitch Gallegos, Celestial Police. This is my wife, Lisa Gallegos.” he proffered up. Torvald shook her paw gently then indicated the kitchen table.

“Please have a seat, Mitch, Lisa. Um, I'm guessing this is serious if you're showing up on our doorstep.” Tor suggested. “How can we help you?” he asked.

“Um, we're not here asking for help, Torvald.” Mitch replied. He started to say something several times, then finally worked up the courage to speak his mind. “We're here to put you under house arrest for crimes against the universe.” he finally spat out. Victoria appeared gob-smacked by that information while the stallion furrowed his brow before replying.

“Now hold on a minute, here. We're Warriors for the Gods, Mitchell. We're doing our work for the good of all furkind. We have not committed any crimes as you might like to suggest.” the blond male put forth.

“Gah, I know you thought you weren't committing any crimes, Torvald. Um, how do I put this? You weren't aware of the laws that govern the universe so you were unaware of the ramifications.” Mitchell put forth. “You're a police fur so here's the charges if you would care to read them,” he offered up, giving the stallion a thick folder from his briefcase.

“You bet I would like to read them,” Tor replied, taking the folder from the tiger and opening it. “It might take a bit for me to get through this, though.” Mitchell nodded in agreement.

“Take your time, Torvald. We'll be here for two more days before we return to our base world. Um, I'm supposed to put these tracking bands on the two of you,” he added, removing a pair of shiny silver-colored bracelets from his briefcase. “I really don't want to do this but I have to.” Mitch unlocked them, then gave one to Torvald and the other to Victoria. “Erm, it takes a special key to unlock them,” the tiger stated, dropping the key for the bands in the middle of the table. “My superiors will be tracking the movements of the bands so, well ...” He stopped talking and just looked at Tor, nodding almost imperceptibly. The stallion nodded back, understanding a bit of cop-to-cop professional courtesy.

“So, could you tell us in a nutshell what this is about?” Torvald asked, tapping the file.

“It's actually a bunch of bovine excrement if you ask me, Tor. I would only be concerned with the charges concerning the murders of Ed Harper<sup>1</sup> and Vincent James<sup>2</sup>. Those are the only two I think they might be able to make a case out of.” Mitchell proffered up.

“I probably should point out the fact that those bands will report their on-board telemetry twice a day,” Lisa informed them. “They report at three am and three pm each day. Have them on at those times and no fur's the wiser.” she added. Reaching across the table, she helped Victoria put hers on, then showed her how to unlock it. “I'm not sure I would worry, Victoria. This might look bad on the surface but I'm sure the courts will see the truth of the matter.”

“I hope so,” the immortal tigress replied, obviously upset by this turn of events. She had her band in her paws, gripping it tightly due to her stressed-out condition. “Gah, this seems so messed up.” she commented, trying to stifle a sob. “We were just doing our jobs, trying to stop what amounted to species hate and segregation on that planet.” she added, setting the tracking band down carefully then wiping at her eyes with a napkin. She knew in her heart what was happening on that planet was terribly wrong and needed to be corrected at all costs. How could a court not agree with that? Besides, their 'employers' never said this would happen to them.

“I read a full report on that mission, Victoria. I'm sure the judge and jury will see it as self-defense concerning Vincent James.” the male tiger allowed. “I'm just concerned about Ed Harper's death. He did try to kill you but it wasn't quite right for Torvald to kill him like he did.” That made the stallion speak up.

“I gave him several chances to drop his weapon but he just wasn't going to listen. I didn't want to kill him

and I had every intention of taking him to be healed by Eyr but he wouldn't give up." he pointed out. "I was more concerned with Victoria laying there in our driveway, possibly dying because even though we're immortal, we can still be killed if we're hit with enough supernatural injury. I had no idea if Ed Harper was a dark agent or not." He thought about it for a moment, then added this; "You know, just recently some fur, maybe Surt himself, sent a poor excuse for an agent after Victoria when she went to go take care of some personal business up in Canada. If it hadn't been for the circumstances, my wife might not have survived that attack."

"Yeah, Surt can be a real pain in the arse," Mitch commented as he closed his briefcase. "Here's our cell numbers and the number at the motel we're staying at. You won't be called to be arraigned for two weeks so you'll have time to get prepared. By the way, I'll see if I can get some counsel for you," he added while he fished out a card from his pocket with some numbers on it for them.

"I guess I should say 'Thank You' for that." Tor replied as he took the card from Mitch.

"We need to get going, Torvald, Victoria." the Celestial Investigator put forth, getting back to his feet. Lisa stood up and went around the table to hug Victoria.

"Don't let this get you upset. I'll help Mitch get a good lawyer for you." Lisa said softly. The two guests quietly let themselves out while Tor comforted his wife.

"We'll get through this," the stallion told his mate, hugging her tightly. She nodded, failing at keeping her emotions in check. Victoria finally broke down and cried her eyes out in her hubby's embrace.

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Richard and Hrist picked up Eyr from the floor, surprised to see the femme healer to be unable to touch the palomino equine. They sat the huge femme down in a chair and made sure she didn't fall out of it while she recovered from that nasty shock she received from attempting to touch Willi Marie.

"Um, Eyr, I didn't do that," the blond femme put forth, looking to see if she had injured the healer in any way. Eyr nodded her head, acknowledging that statement.

"No, you did not do that, Wilhelmine. I am sure it was your unborn kits, trying to protect you." she stated in reply. "You must convince them to allow me to heal you before I can try to touch your body again." she added.

"How would I do that?" Willi asked. This was so confusing to her, that her kits could actually prevent Eyr from approaching her. Why hadn't they shocked her husband or Hrist? It made no sense to her. What really confused her was the fact that she felt relatively no pain from her obvious serious shoulder injury.

"Wilhelmine, look inside yourself and find that quiet place. You may connect with your kits there." Eyr suggested. Willi nodded, giving thought to that idea.

Wilhelmine closed her eyes and quieted her mind, searching for that spot inside her that was peaceful. After some careful, focused concentration, she opened her eyes to see she was in a huge, open space, not dark but not bright, either. It was sort of a perpetual twilight with a glossy black floor. She could feel the peace and contentment here, more so than any other place had ever felt to her, even Asgaard.

She began to walk in a direction, not sure she knew why she knew what direction to travel in but it felt



right to her. Willi's hooves clicked on the smooth, featureless flooring, making a slight echoing as she strode towards some unseen point ahead of her. The sounds of her hooves were joined by two more sets of hooves, obviously moving towards her by the increasing sound of them. Momentarily, she came muzzle to muzzle with her kits.

The femme looked to be a young teen, almost as tall as Willi and she really looked to be a younger version of the sorceress. The male, also looking to be in his early teens was probably as tall as his father, sporting her palomino body color and her hubby's black mane and tail.

Looking down at herself, Willi Marie observed she was wearing a femme business skirt-suit over a white blouse. Her daughter wore similar garb while her son wore a conservative gray business suit, white shirt and dark blue tie. Willi was about to comment on the oddness of this but the young femme broke the silence first.

“Mommy, where are we?” she asked, looking at the vast emptiness around them. Willi looked up at her and gave her daughter the only answer she could.

“Brianna, we're in my quiet place. This is where mommy goes to find inner peace.” she replied.

“Momma, why are we here?” her son asked, seeming to be upset by this.

“Richard, I needed to talk with both of you. I'm injured, son and I need for Eyr to help me. Somehow, you two are preventing her from touching me. If she can't touch me, she can't heal me.” the mother-to-be told her unborn kits.

“We're keeping you safe, Momma,” he retorted, stepping forward and hugging her. “We kept you alive when you were dying, Momma.” he put forth. That made Willi sob openly.

“I love you for that, Richard but I still have injuries that need tending, Sweetheart,” she pointed out to her little male after she got her composure back.

“Eyr won't hurt you, will she?” Brianna asked, joining the family hug. “She seems so powerful to us, Mommy. We don't want you to be hurt again. It was very hard for us to keep you alive when you were hurt.” It took several moments for Willi to compose herself again to reply, knowing now how they felt about her.

“No, she will not harm me, Brianna. She's a friend and she's already healed me once before.” the elder Delancey explained. “Please let her heal me, little ones.” she requested.

“We can feel you trust her, Mommy. We'll let her heal you.” Brianna told her. Richard hugged her again, then the little ones stepped back from her and her little male spoke again.

“You must go now, Momma. Daddy is worried about you.” Suddenly Willi found herself looking straight into her hubby's concerned eyes.

“Hon? Are you okay?” he asked, looking to see if she was responding. She smiled, then sobbed again.

“I talked with our little ones, Richard. They're such a nice pair of ...” Willi began to sob uncontrollably, hugging her hubby tightly while she cried. “It was so peaceful ... I didn't want to come back ...” she told him between sobs.

“She will be fine in a minute, Richard,” Eyr told him, kneeling beside Willi's chair. She carefully reached out and touched the sobbing femme, smiling when she didn't receive a shock. “Thank you, little ones. I need to heal your mother now,” she stated, touching Willi's abdomen and feeling the little one's life forces just to ensure they were fine.

“Are our babies okay?” the father asked. Eyr smiled at him and nodded.

“They are fine, Richard. If you would move please, I need to get this wood out of Wilhelmine's shoulder.” the healer replied. “Wilhelmine, this might hurt very badly,” the healer stated, waiting until the injured femme responded to her. Noting Willi was aware of what would happen, Eyr pulled the branch from her shoulder. Willi looked up at them, appearing totally shocked.

“That did not hurt much at all,” she blurted out, looking to see her shoulder healing at a very rapid pace. “Um, why is this happening?” she asked very carefully. This was scaring the young sorceress to no end, to see her shoulder heal up before her eyes.

“I am not sure,” Eyr replied, trying to 'feel' what was going on. “I cannot tell if it is your unborn kits healing you or if it is ...” The femme healer cut herself off before she said any more.

“If it is what, Eyr? What were you going to say?” Richard asked firmly. The healer looked down at the floor, then back at the male equine with a pained look in her eyes.

“I was about to say, Richard, it might be her Valkyrie powers healing her.”

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Brett turned up the driveway to his in-laws' home, having to pull to one side to give some room for the white Holden Commodore coming down the drive to pass him.

“I wonder who those furs are?” he mused as they passed by them, the femme tiger in the passenger seat giving them a polite smile and wave.

“I don't think I know them, Hon,” Dana offered up. “Maybe they were some furs Dad worked with?” she suggested.

“You know, I hope your father is happy with being retired, Sweetheart. My dad went back to work after a year of driving my mom nutty, following her around the house all day.” the male tiger brought up. He eased their Ranger into the guest parking by the front walk and helped to get little Sabrina out of her car seat.

“Mom says they're going to put some railings around the front porch for Sabrina's safety.” Dana pointed out as they went up the three steps to the front door. She stopped to readjust the little one's position in her arms, then looked out at the view of her parents' front yard. “I kinda wish we could find a place like this,” she mused, looking over at her hubby with a smile.

“Well, I like the view too but I'm not sure a gunsmith would be able to afford a place like this.” he replied.

“After Sabrina is in school, maybe second grade, I thought I might go to work,” Dana offered up. “Mom says she'll help me get my real estate license and get me a position with her office.” she added.

“Well, that would be good. You would have flexible hours and we would have an extra income.” he suggested. “Come on. Let's talk with your Dad about Sabrina.”

They went to the front door, ringing the doorbell a few times. After a moment went by, Victoria opened the door, still wiping at the matted fur on her muzzle.

“Mom? What's the matter?” Dana asked, hugging her mother with her free arm.

“I'm sorry, Honey. Our day kind of fell apart on us just a little bit ago.” the tigress offered up.

“Why? What happened?” her daughter asked, still holding on to Victoria tightly. She prayed that it wasn't nothing too serious but that prayer was not to be answered. Her mother confirmed that with her response.

“Um, I don't know how to say this Honey but it's very serious. Your father and I have just been charged with crimes against the universe by the Celestial Courts.”

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1. Ed Harper, a misguided goat met his demise in Chapter 9, pages 2 & 3 of “A Loss Of Rights”

2. Vincent James, the desert cottontail and the leader of 'the Legion' met his end in Chapter 34, page 9 of “A Loss Of Rights”