



Heavyhanded

Gargoyles (Cartoon) · Not Rated · 690 words

by Arukir

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Fandom: Gargoyles (Cartoon) Rating: Not Rated Category: Gen

Warnings: Creator chose not to add warnings

Relationships: Puck | Owen Burnett & David Xanatos

Characters: Puck | Owen Burnett, David Xanatos

Tags: No Dialogue, Introspection, Disability, Loyalty, Master & Servant, Referring to Oberon and Puck, Puck doesn't see Xanatos as a master, Episode: s02e15 The Price (Gargoyles)

Words: 690 Chapters: 1 chapter Status: Complete Published: 2024-08-03

What went through Owen's head when he dipped his hand in that cauldron? Being Puck, he must've known what would happen -- so why did he do it?

Not my best work, honestly, but maybe I'll rewrite it in the future.

Maybe I should switch the fic name to Sacrifice. Thoughts?

Owen watched the cauldron, knowing Xanatos would soon test it on himself, outwardly calm. Inside, he screamed and panicked like only a fey can, howling against what was about to befall his human.

Of course he knew the secrets of the cauldron, how it could make one last 'as long as the mountain stones'. Or, well, Puck knew. That was the problem. He couldn't warn Xanatos without breaking their contract.

He'd bent the rules before, but not with this. The cauldron was one of the magical items of the Third Race, he was barely allowed to tell anyone about it *period*, the contract only added to those restraints.

Puck couldn't interfere, and what could Owen do that wouldn't require knowledge far out of reach for a mere human? It was too heavy to 'accidentally' knock over, too well watched to sabotage secretly, it wasn't like he could just show him-

Well, there was an option, wasn't there? Owen could show Xanatos the danger, without ever breaking his character nor their contract. All it would require was a bit of sacrifice. A sacrifice he'd be unwilling to make for most, but for Xanatos?

He acted swiftly, ignoring the part of him that protested -- a part that remembers flying above the city, laughing between the trees, frolicking at the bottom of the ocean

-- as he approached the cauldron. Without hesitation, the faithful assistant conducts a test, sticking his hand in the glowing liquid.

It burns, it tingles, it *hurts* -- but Owen is too good at suppressing his reactions to let any of that show in his expression or body language. He pulls out the hand, staring at it.

He's never had a *handicap* before. It seemed too dull, but what's dull about a stone hand? He pulls down his sleeve, just barely able to feel something in it, not entirely sure how to feel.

Xanatos' words are cold and dismissive, but Owen knows him too well to think he doesn't care. He looks at Xanatos briefly, but long enough to glimpse the swirl of emotions hidden from everyone else. He can see the faint guilt, the recognition of what happened (his human is so clever sometimes), the anger, the surprise, the gratitude, and the amusement.

Because of course there's amusement. He wouldn't have been able to earn the Puck's interest, much less his loyalty, if he hadn't been the sort of man to find this amusing.

Owen leaves, as professional as ever, mentally planning time to practice all the things he'll have to learn to do one handed. A part of him ignores the practical stuff, more focused on what sort of trouble he could cause with a stone hand? Maybe break something 'by accident'. Nah, that's too boring. Eh, he'll do it anyways, why not?

Employees stare and question Owen about the hand, bugging him while he's trying to do his work, but he does his best to ignore them. It's made easier when Xanatos finds out and issues a vaguely threatening but legal memo. The questions stop after that.

Some of Owen's favorite duties are interrupted temporarily, but he learns how to do them again. Training in the dojo becomes more dangerous, cooking takes a while to re-master, but he gets there.

Xanatos never apologizes, and he never thanks him, but Owen doesn't expect either. He doesn't feel he's owed an apology, despite the guilt in Xanatos' eyes each time he spots the hand, and he feels thanked enough each time his opinion is weighed equally with Xanatos' own.

The Puck has been forced to serve a master most of his life, but the taste of freedom the banishment gave him has proven poisonous to his subservient nature. He will serve no more masters, even if he must stand against Oberon to do it.

Xanatos is no master, but one who earned the loyalty Puck has. The first to do so, actually. So Puck will protect him, Owen will help him, to the end of days. No matter the sacrifice.

— end of "Heavyhanded" —