

Genevieve's Assertion

By C. Jade Wyton

Genevieve knows that, for her relationship to continue and her family to move on from all that has happened, she has to address things she has tried her best to ignore. So she gathers everyone together and sets boundaries she should have set long ago.

Contains mentions of past abuse.

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Six months.

It had been roughly six months since Genevieve had discovered Raymond was alive and smashed that stupid orb Kordulf had put him inside of. She was still annoyed over the entire situation; though her anger had been waning as of late. It was just... exhausting to be angry.

She'd been so angry, for so long, over so many things. And for what? What good had it done, besides drive wedges between herself and those she loved?

It was, frankly, a pain in the arse to be angry all the time, and she was sick of it. She wanted it all over and done with.

So, now that Genny and Fungus had finally woken up from their winter hibernation and both Raymond and Kordulf had been cleared to come out of quarantine from their various ailments, she (and Genny) thought it was time to address it.

In a rather impulsive burst of bravery she'd asked her family for help, gathering the majority of her partners and adult children into her bedroom to support her in an "important assertion" she needed to make.

Those too young, like Blossom and Charity, had been left in the care of Cirrus. Though, Raven had *insisted* that her children be present, or she wouldn't be.

Surprisingly, Raven *hadn't* been the most difficult to convince; despite her constant protestation that she hated her mother, the woman had been making a great effort to be amicable with her.

No. The hardest to convince had been *Willow*. When Willow had stepped into the bedroom and realised Kordulf would also be there, she had almost turned around and walked back out. But Endri and Fungus had managed to convince her to stay, and Kordulf had settled on the other side of the room with Plume and Ratrick, making himself rather small and unobtrusive to the rest of the family. Surprising for such a tall man.

Genevieve, after finally seeing Willow sit as far away from Kordulf as was possible and busy herself speaking with Samara, had turned to Wonda and spoken quietly aside to her most sensible daughter.

'Wonda,' she started, resting a hand on Genny as the phylactery trot to her side and stood crouched beside her.

She felt a tickle in her mind as Genny did a quick head count.

Samara, Endri, Maggie, Raven, Wonda, Singer, Melody, Allie, Willow,

Kordulf, Fungus, Ratrick, Plume, and Xochitli.... Only Raymond, arguably the most controversial, was left. And it made her anxious beyond all belief.

‘Mother?’ Wonda asked, softly. ‘Are you alright?’

‘Mm... yes, I think so,’ Genevieve answered with a sigh that Genny echoed. ‘Wonda, I.... *We’re* confident that the things we’re about to bring up are going to stir emotions. We *need* to get through this, or there is no future for us or the marriage,’ she took Genny’s hand, to emphasis who *we* was. ‘And harsh words won’t help us. So I’m asking you, please, to hold your tongue where you can. And, more-so... please, while I go get the last person who needs to be here, would you ask the others to do the same? They listen to you more than they do me.... Well. Your sisters do.’

Wonda gave her mother a sympathetic look, and then a hug; pulling both of Genevieve’s halves into her arms. ‘Of course, Mother. I’ll speak with them.’

Genevieve and Genny both embraced her tightly back, and then released her and made out the door without another word.

They couldn’t back out of this. Not now that everyone had been gathered like this.

So they made their way through the halls to the humorously-nicknamed *rabies* room where Raymond had been kept during his immunity-boosting treatments.

They found him just as he was coming out of the room and Genevieve called his name.

Raymond paused, his lips drawn tight and his eyes moving to the floor as the pair approached.

‘I was just... about to leave,’ he said, lifting the bag of supplies he had been given. ‘I didn’t forget you said that as soon as I was well enough to leave, that’s what I was to do....’

‘We need to talk,’ she blurted, firmly; cursing herself for not acknowledging what he’d said but not wanting to lose her nerve. ‘My room. *Now*.’

She turned to start back to her family, and heard Raymond put down his bag and hurry after her. Genny chirped at him, urging him to follow quicker, and Genevieve didn’t have to look back to know that he did.

She only paused when she came to her bedroom door, letting the out-of-breath man double over a moment and compose himself. As he did, Genevieve heard Wonda through the door, urging everyone to behave themselves.

‘This is very important to Mother,’ she said. ‘And you all better behave—*Fungus*, if you don’t stop that *right now* I will put you out in the snow to sleep for another week!’

A humoured feeling rose from Genny as Fungus gave a grunt from the other side of the door, and Genevieve bit her lip as it was followed by Kordulf giving a yelp and hitting the floor.

‘Fungus!’ Plume exclaimed.

‘*Right!*’ Wonda huffed, her hoof-steps clapping firmly towards Fungus’ happy grunts... and following them as he began to run around the room. ‘Fungus, take this *seriously!*’

‘We should go in before he tears the room apart, hm?’ she said quietly aside to

Genny. Then, she looked to Raymond and the affection that had just laced her voice vanished into a curt grumble. 'You too. Come on.'

She opened the door, and Fungus bolted from where he had been trying to climb the fireplace to sit between Willow and Endri like he *hadn't* just had been dragging Samara around by her ankle.

Wonda quickly helped Samara up and brushed her down, and at the same time Allie pointed at Raymond and exclaimed:

'The sad man! He's out! No more rabies!'

The air of the room *immediately* stiffened as everyone tensed. The already cold air seemed to chill as the few quiet discussions that had been going on cut short and all eyes turned to stare directly at Raymond.

Genevieve took a long and deep breath in, as did Genny, and then both lich and phylactery motioned to their ex-husband.

'We need to talk about Raymond,' she said.

Raven got that far-away look she had been getting, lately, whenever she called out to Cirrus to help her stay calm, and Genevieve silently accepted the fact that he was clearly going to be witness to this meeting through her daughter.

'Why?' Allie asked. Singer quickly shushed her; though it only caused her to ask again, louder: 'WHY?'

Her ears twitched, clearly listening to something Cirrus was telling her, and she gave a content little noise before settling down again.

'Oh-key!' she declared. 'Sad man gets talked all about. Then Grandma won't be so sad no more! Mhm!'

Raven's face met her hand, and she rubbed at her brow as Maggie pet her on the back.

A minute was given for everyone to compose themselves, and then Genevieve and Genny took each other by the hand and turned to the room to say:

'We want Raymond at our wedding.'

Eyebrows were raised, though nothing was said besides Singer muttering a confused *what the fuck*.

'I want you to see me happy,' she said, decisively, turning to meet Raymond's eye. 'I want you to witness what you took from me. What we *could* have had, if you weren't such a stubborn bastard. I want you to know *exactly* how you wronged me.'

Raymond's brow knit in guilt as Genny gave a confirming chirp that made it clear she was included in Genevieve's *I*.

'I was ready to try,' Genevieve continued, her tone scolding. 'I was open to loving you, despite the circumstances. I was willing to be an obedient, loyal, and loving wife to you. And *you* decided that my efforts weren't good enough. I gave you *everything*, and you spat on it. All you had to do was treat me kindly, and you couldn't even manage that!'

'I'm sorry,' Raymond mumbled.

'You *better* be,' Genevieve huffed; echoed by Genny's snort. Then she caught Kordulf's look and lifted a finger to point at him. 'Don't you even *think* you're any better! I also want to talk about *you*! You *lied* to me! Everything we had together was built on *deception*! You have *no* right to feel *any* kind of way when I talk to him! At least he never *lied* to me!'

Kordulf immediately looked to the floor, blushing. 'Sorry.'

Wonda's horn sparked as she eyed Kordulf, Genevieve saw it, but the annoyance was quickly suppressed as the unicorn shook herself and looked away. She was very clearly trying her best to respect her mother's wishes.

'I set my boundaries,' Genevieve asserted, trying to stop her voice from cracking as Genny nodded along. 'It is *nobody* else's responsibility —or right— to choose how *I* should feel about what has happened to me, or if those who hurt me should be punished or not, or to feel *anything* when someone is!'

Several groanish hums sounded, kept quiet under people's breaths, and Genevieve stomped a foot to quiet them.

'It's *my* choice!' she snapped as tears came to her eyes; though when Genny leant close she put an arm around her other half and corrected: 'We are the only one allowed to decide if the harm done against us is forgivable or not! And I don't want *anyone* acting like it's their own!'

Plume gave an approving nod, as did Ratrick, and Kordulf just looked ashamed as Fungus slunk to his side and slipped under his arm to sulk.

The rest of the room clearly had mixed feelings about this news, and Genevieve heaved a sigh.

'I appreciate that... *most* of you care for me,' she cast Raven a look. 'But I *need* for people to stop speaking on my behalf. Being *offended* on my behalf. To stop telling me how I should feel. To stop *keeping secrets* from me because you think a lie will make me happier!' she gave Genny a squeeze as she chirped. 'If I choose to forgive someone, that's *my* choice!'

A collective sigh, and awkward gazes, and mumbles of approval; both firm and reluctant.

'We're tired,' she said, her voice softening. 'We're so, so tired of holding grudges. We have another chance. We don't want to waste it being spiteful.'

Genevieve took a deep breath, then, and shared a look with Genny. On Genny's nod, she turned to Kordulf and Fungus.

'Kordulf?' she addressed; a tired smile finding her as he gave her a hopeful look. 'We forgive you for lying.'

He sighed with such relief he practically deflated, sinking against Fungus and burying his face into the creature.

'Fungus, you too,' she said. 'I know it's hard for you to communicate, but you didn't even *try* to tell me you were Kordulf's phylactery! You let me think he was *dead*! For *years*!'

Fungus looked a little proud of himself, but then quickly seemed to realise that wasn't the reaction Genevieve was wanting and huffed, putting on a serious grumble as he acknowledged Genevieve's forgiveness.

'Raven,' she turned to her daughter. 'I won't act like what you did to me wasn't deserved. But I feel it needs to be said: You. Singer. Maggie. And even you, Wonda. Knowing you would have killed me hurts. It really, *really* hurts,' she paused, looking miserable, as her daughters and grandson all avoided her gaze. 'But I love you. All of you. And if there was anything to forgive, I would.'

She then turned to Ratrick, who leant against Plume, and her voice hardened.

'The fact *you* knew about it, though, cheeses me off,' she admitted. 'For future reference, Ratrick. When we're all married, I expect you to *tell* me if anyone

wants me dead.'

'Understood,' Ratrick acknowledged with a salute.

Genevieve and Genny looked to Plume, but there was nothing to be said, so they turned to Raymond and took deep breaths as he flinched away.

'Raymond,' the name came out with a venomous note to it. 'I'm willing to forgive you, if you're willing to change. I'm ready to house you. To give you a place to stay and a home to feel safe in, rather than casting you into this world you'll never adjust to— *On the condition*,' her eyes tightened. 'That you never do *anything* to make *any* member of this family feel unsafe again. And I don't mean just those in this room. If you make *any* citizen of Weltaron feel unsafe, you are out. And if you *dare* raise a hand to *anyone*, and I mean *anyone*, ever again—' she stepped close, growling. '—*Your grave in Traxwood will finally have a body to fill it.* Are we clear?'

He swallowed, nodding as he did.

'Good,' she huffed, echoed by Genny, and stepped away. Her voice softened, then, and she let herself look tired again. 'Thank you, all, for being here. I know it wasn't pleasant, but I needed you all to hear it. I— We,' she looked to Genny. 'Couldn't go into the wedding without letting it out. The idea of keeping it in... not saying we wanted Raymond there. Having those feelings fester... we hated it.'

The room was quiet, unsure what to say. And Genevieve sighed.

'Like it or not,' she looked to Raven again. 'We're *some sort* of family. And we're not going to get anywhere if things aren't addressed....'

Several heads bobbed in nods, though nothing was said.

'I'm sick of being angry,' she said. 'I just... I just want to be free of it. I want to be happy. For *once* in my stupid, miserable life, I just want to be *happy*. Can you all let me have that?'

Almost everyone in the room nodded, except for Raven; who instead groaned and threw her head back with a dramatic flourish.

'Yeah, sure, whatever!' she grumbled. 'Can I go, yet?'

'Raven!' Wonda scolded. 'Please be reasonable!'

'I'm *trying*,' Raven huffed. 'But I'm in a room with her, and him, and him, and—' she motioned to Fungus chewing on his own foot. '—*that!* There is only *so much* I can hold back before I pull a Leena!'

'*Raven!*' Wonda gasped. 'Don't *call* it that!'

'*She* called it that!' Raven defended, and Genevieve tried not to chuckle at the childish argument.

'Girls, calm down,' Genevieve stepped between them. 'Raven, you can go. I appreciate that you came at all.... All of you can go, if you wish. I don't think I have much else to say. Just... thank you.'

Slowly, members of her family stood and shuffled out. Until all that was left were her, Genny, and their partners.

There was a long, awkward, quiet moment. Then Genevieve heaved a sigh and began to remove her dress.

'I'm going to bed,' she said, flatly, before flopping face-first into bed on top of her bed with her dress only half-off. '*Goodnight.*'

—END—

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