

# The Lich's Escape

By C. Jade Wyton

*Escaping the burning laboratory, the lich's hold on Fourteen's body is released, and she is furious about it.*

***Contains descriptions of horror, possession, and child endangerment.***

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Sputtering.

Coughing.

Wheezing and choking.

Fourteen dragged herself from the burning building.

Her head was spinning.

Every inch of her was trembling.

And she was choking.

On smoke.

On ash.

And on the thick dust of the lich that her body was desperately trying to expel.

*Coughing.*

*Choking.*

*Wheezing.*

She threw up, her chest and stomach retching and contracting tight as she heaved her mother out through her beak.

For a moment the lich lay, a pile of black and green viscous sick. Then, she twinkled with a glow and the dust began to separate from the sick and the blood; floating into the air and spinning back into the gnomish form of...

*Mother.*

Fourteen was still trembling and panting on the ground as she slowly raised her eyes.

'Bastards!' Mother hissed. 'Those bastards! So many years of research destroyed! All that time— And those resources! All for *nothing!*'

Fourteen wheezed and lowered her gaze.

She was sure her arms would give out and she would collapse.

She could feel the tears forming in her eyes as she tried to even her breathing.

Everything hurt.

It was all *agony*.

She let out another coughing fit, and Mother cut off her furious rambling to look down at her.

'Oh, my daughter...' she sighed, brushing the fur from Fourteen's eyes and wiping the blood from her beak. 'You did so well. I'm sorry it hurt.'

Fourteen slowly pushed herself up to sit, and finally began to catch her breath.

'It's alright,' Mother cooed, cleaning the kenku's face with her sleeve. 'We'll start again. We'll find someone else to help us. And we'll start again.'

'Th-Th-Thirteen?' Fourteen managed. 'Thirteen?'

Mother frowned, obviously furious, before leaning back. 'She's certainly always been a disobedient one.... But I suppose that tonight, so were you.'

Fourteen averted her gaze to the dirt, only for Mother to lift it back up.

'But you're still my daughter,' Mother said. 'And so is she. We will find her, and bring her home. Don't you worry, my dear.... We'll bring your sister home.'

—END—

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