

The Familiar

by JLNicky

Assana sprinkled the dried toadstool powder into the blender. Her sensitive and skilled herbing fingertips carefully plucked the two ripe berries from the Triton plant. After one hundred and twenty-three years of searching for one of three possible precious ingredients, the small black fruit was finally found and recovered from the molding growth of a lightning struck boulder off the coast of Monterey Bay, California. She had paid a large fortune for the minute essence. Laying the round berries onto a cutting board and using a scalpel she gently removed the skin. Consumption of such would be poisonous. Setting the skin off to the side into a Petri dish she returned to the berries. Slicing the first berry in half, she weighed the content on her precision digital scale. The .0005450-ounce measurement was within acceptable recipe limitations. She smiled and scraped the content off the scale dropping it into the blender.

Adding a half-cup of water, a single dried medusa scale, three pine needles, and a single strand of dark hair Assana had recovered and saved off from their shared bed, the ingredients were complete. She leaned back from the blender and felt the heavy purring rumble of a large black cat vibrating against her arm. Releasing a puff of air upward she blew her fringe of blonde strands out of her green eyes. Glancing over her shoulder she watched the cat pacing rubbing against her leg, back and forth. As the cat paused and looked upward Assana locked eyes with the beast. Her eyes darkened at the intense gaze of the bright blue staring back at her.

“Soon Nis. Soon! It’s tonight for sure. Hallows Eve and the ghost moon shining its shadow has formed the perfect power cusp. I can use it to bring you back, my love.” Assana ran her hand over the soft fur of her cat.

The cat arched its back at the touch and pressed harder into the hand. Assana blinked at the increase of volume coming from the cat. It sounded strangely musical. She smiled.

They had both been learning the power patterns. The pair had watched and waited for exactly this night. Following the stars, sun,

and moon paths while calculating the fluctuating magical power flows, Assana felt the stress of the grand finale nearing, her tension rising. She bowed her head in a silent prayer to any Gods listening.

"Please let her be alright!" The butting head of her cat interrupted Assana as Nis struck against her to gain her attention.

"Alright, alright. I am just worried. That evil witch managed to put us in a fix and I haven't been able to figure it out yet. I miss your brilliance, my love." Assana petted the cat and smiled at the head butting.

She glanced at the lowering sun and realized she needed to rest before the ceremony. Running her hand once again over the silken fur of her cat she pushed back the chair she had been sitting in and raised to stretch. Her 5'6 form was tense from more than just the strain of taking precise measurements. She hadn't been with another lover since that horrifying moment took place. Her body often remembered that soft touch as fingers ran over her skin. A frown appeared on her face. She immediately felt the intertwining form of her four-legged friend brushing against her legs. Hopefully tonight would return her life, and her love to her or she would die trying to be reunited in the attempt. Her lips pressed tightly together with determination as she held in that small smile of hope trying to escape. The pounding of her blood increased with the growing anticipation. She dampened her excitement with the intense inner control she had learned over the years and moved toward the bedroom to capture some rest for tonight's event.

An hour later Assana lay spread out across her bed, tossing and turning. The black cat sat tucked into a smaller ball on the empty pillow next to the blonde head. Blue eyes watched the human and noted the twitching hands and frowning features. Assana was dreaming.

The dream always started the same way. The Balistar Witch was standing over them both and chanting in a powerful voice. Her hands glowed with power as she waved them around. Assana stood directly in front of her human lover Nis, shielding her with all the fledgling witch power she possessed. She was so young, only 22 years old.

Her skills were not yet equipped to channel a proper shield for very long.

Nis stood helpless, her taller body blocked only barely by her lover. Her black hair danced with the whipping of the wind and her blue eyes gazed at the elder Balistar Witch with awe. She couldn't look away. She was merely mortal and could not fight the powerful trance inducing gaze compelling her to look.

Assana whimpered in her sleep. She ached for the love she remembered. She could not fight the truth of her heart. Nis had captured it from the beginning. She had all but said the vow's holding off only to inform the coven she was giving up her powers for the true love she had found.

A choice not made lightly, Assana set her mind to pass the test and be with Nis forever after, releasing her witch powers back into the maelstrom to become a normal mortal woman. Aware of the life altering choice Assana was making, Nis had tried and failed to talk her out of it. The witches guide manual had stated very clearly those who wish to leave the fold would be sent to trial and purified. With fear and trepidation the two young women fought to find another way. None appeared. Assana could wait no longer; her heart demanded she be joined with her lover bonding officially with the covens full knowledge. Assana did not want to watch Nis age and die while she remained young and grew in health, as practicing witches always would. She sat down and wrote the coven leaders. They addressed the formal letters of appeal to the eleven witches of the Western America's Coven. On their way to post, they were attacked.

The crazed Balistar Witch arrived, knowing the purpose of the letters before she even asked. Becca Balistar cackled wickedly at Assana as the young witch sifted through the envelopes and pulled out the single note addressed to her. An evil glint formed in her wayfarer eyes. She pointed at the letter and 'poof' a flame engulfed it, causing Assana to toss it away. The ashes it made drifted into the air. The Balistar Witch grew larger as she began to float above them. She reached into her pocket and pulled out dust, which she blew over the two stunned women. She began to accuse Assana of trying to bring down the coven. She condemned them as not worthy. She started

casting and the two women realized they could not move out of the small space of dust. They were trapped.

Assana twisted in her sleep, tossing off the cover. Blue eyes narrowed and watched.

Unknown at the time, Assana was sure it had not helped that the Balistar witch had also been friend's with Nis' mother. Just as she had cast out her own daughter, Nis, for her unnatural love of a woman, so had she once cast out her closest friend as a freak of nature for her special witch gifts. At the discovery of the truth of the true nature of Balistar's witch powers, Nis' mother had cringed in horror. That was something Balistar would never forgive. Nis had simply left the home she grew up in, without a tear in her eye. Becca Balistar, however, had been devastated at the change in their close friendship. Becca grew to hate the cutting remarks of the mortal woman who broke her heart with painful denial. The spiteful revenge Balistar enacted ten years later against the helpless daughter was simply a release for her anger. The ache would always be buried deep within. None of the Balister history was known to Assana until much, much later.

At the moment of attack of the elder witch's confrontation with the two young lovers, Assana recognized and new the danger they faced. She saw the blackened aura surrounding the older witch. Being so young and totally unprepared, her skill still in its infancy she chose to envelope herself and her lover inside a protective shield, in which they stood.

The Balistar witch had laughed and pointed at them. Her wicked cackle the perfect witch laugh. With a evil glare she condemned them as outcasts. Her power broke through the shield and focused on Nis.

Assana cried out her lovers name in her sleep. She reached out to her even while the nightmare continued.

"No! Don't touch her!" Assana begged. But the stream of power surrounded Nis had started the change. Assana watched her worse

nightmare as her dreamscape showed once again Nis converted to a cat form. The Balistar witch had cackled even harder.

“If you want her you have her. She is all yours. Your new familiar! That should please the coven. You’re more powerful now than you ever would have been without her. Enjoy your witchdom!” And she had flown off, leaving Nis the cat and Assana the Witch.

Years passed as Assana became the mighty witch Becca Balister had only ever dreamed of becoming. Assana’s never-ending toil to find a reversible cure for her lover’s curse forced her to study and test witch recipes and herbology and toxicology and many other -ologies. She honed many crafts to the expert level as the years passed. Many other witches envied the dedication and mastering of the young witches talents. Assana seemingly made each skill look so easy to learn. It was never enough to her. Each step was closer to the cure for her Nis. She ignored the fact her powers were growing beyond most others who practiced in the coven.

Assana awoke from the dream as her cat walked over to her and writhed into her curled form. The heat and soft fur stroked over her sweat damp skin. Assana reached out to hold the cat close as she felt a tear well up and fall onto her pillows.

“Soon, my love. Soon.”

Evening hours of Hallows Eve time slowed. The moon rose and the night was at its thickest point of darkness. Assana raised a pewter glass above her head near a small podium. A large book spread open revealed the complex recipe and recitation for the ritual. The 300 candles lit and placed over the tracing of a pentagram on the ground were blazing fully. The five points were designed with gifts to the precocious gods whom Assana felt Nis and she would have been under care from.

A graft of feathers from an eagle sat bundled above one point of the star for Athena Goddess of the hunt. A collection of shined and buffed volcanic rocks above a point paid homage to the Crystal Witch who died saving hundreds from the explosion of the volcano near Pompeii. Silken scarves were displayed for Aphrodite, Goddess of

Love. A set of used colored chalk was placed at a point to honor the loss of a good friend Assana and Nis had met during their struggle to find the cure. The fifth point was of course homage to the Balister witch. A speck of the fairy dust gathered from the scene of the change, ash from the letter and bent grass from the pressure of the molecules surging against Becca's force floating in the air.

Nis sat still as a statue within the center of the polygon formed from the crossing chalk lines. Her blue eyes locked on the petite blond voicing a mantra, drawing the air around them to bend to her will. The candle flames surrounding the cat drifted to the left, then slowly changed and drifted to the right. As the words were sung low toned the flames turned to face the center. Blue eyes locked with green as the witch paused.

"For you my love." Her voice murmured. The cup was set onto the podium with the book and a sharp silver dagger was drawn from the folds of her black robe. Her strong hand grasped the handle and her free hand the blade itself. Her face a study of concentration, Assana slid her hand up the blade slowly leaving bloodstain along its length as her palm was slit open. The injured hand was held above the cup and squeezed. A single twitch of a muscle along her jaw line was the only sign of pain. Blood spilled as a soft puff of white smoke drifted up from the cups contents.

The dagger disappeared as the cup was grasped and held in both hands. The blood mixture in the pewter cup was lifted once more above her head as the chanting began again. The candle flames flickered at every voiced fourth word.

The pewter cup was brought downward held aloft at eye level. Nis released a hiss as she watched the hands holding the mixture slowly release their grasp. The cup began to float.

Nis narrowed blue eyes as the cup floated through the air toward her. The concentrated stare Assana held upon the floating element was unbroken. The chanting had become a repeated verse. The verse was gaining volume. The words blurred with the interrupting noise coming from the burning candles as a surge of air rushed through

and across and between the designs. The strong flutter of wind fighting flame was brutal.

The cup lowered from the air and gently settled before the black cat. Nis took one long look at Assana and then leaned inside the wide brim to drink. The wind instantly picked up and with a fierce dive of swirling air current all of the burning candles were snuffed out. The instant billows of smoke that arose covered the area pentagram entirely. Assana let her voice fade down to a whisper, then stop all together as the cloud cleared away.

Lying in a fetal position was the full human form of the woman of her heart and dreams, Nis reborn. Green eyes watched closely as the figure regained her strength. Long slender fingers twitched, as a hand was lifted into the air and stared at, first the front then the back. The bluest eyes she'd ever encountered stared at the graceful fingers for a long moment. A sudden cough and then another had the dark haired beauty struggling to breathe. Assana wanted to run to her partner and cry into her arms with all the love she held within. But, she needed to finish the spell

Her hands were lifted into the air and the supplicant pose was taken, palms upward. Assana felt those cerulian eyes turn to look at her at the movement. She felt drawn to gaze into their depths. They locked gazes as Assana set the final spell into motion. Her voice husky with strain and longing, she spoke at the world around them.

Berache vindum surcatium solis petalia vie seize.
Berache vindum sercatium solis petalia vie seize din.
Berache vindum sercatium solis petalia vie seize tre fi.
This cast is thrown for all to see.
I spin my spell and web tight my weave.
Souls entwined before thee five.
With the bind between we live and die.
This cast is thrown for all to see.
Berache vindum surcatium solis petalia vie seize.

For a few seconds the wind died across the land and silence reigned. Not a silence of life but of death rising forth. The night held its breath. The people woke in their sleep only to fall back into slumber after

hearing the nothing of disturbance. Nothing was something that shifted and moved as the earth hesitated its axle revolution. Each witch of the world coven became aware of the powerful spell instantly. Simultaneously, from the weakest to the strongest they paused. They waited. Assana released a breath of closure and time continued. Nothing returned to the oblivion of beyond. She felt and absorbed the directed concentration of thousands of witches everywhere. With her inner focus she brushed them away and brought her heart beat back to normal. Lowering her arms she looked across the space between them.

Inside her soul she felt the slightest touch. She knew her task was complete when her lover, now standing, trembling, from within the inner circle, was smiling at her with the love shining in those beautiful blue eyes. Their bodies and minds, once again, finding that perfect alignment to join together, passing intimate ties shared between them. Assana fell down to one knee even as she watched her lover stagger forward toward her. The spell ended the pentagram completed. She felt a darkness rising to claim her.

A hand touched her and curled around her arm to hold her steady. Fingers dove into her hair to brush her brow and head. Assana smiled as she felt the sensation and released the demons of the past. Guilt, fear, anger, pity, understanding swept from her soul to be filled and replaced by love, the love of Nis. She let the layer upon layer of sensual longing and desire thread through her awareness. Her head fell forward onto the broad shoulder and she barely acknowledged when Nis lifted her up, kissed her lips, and began the long walk back to their cottage.

The strength flowed from them both as they survived the spell and reforged the connection between them. Assana slept in her lovers arms for the first time in years and tumbled into joy. The scent, touch, heat and sounds Nis made were simply irreplaceable.

Later, somewhere in the quiet of the night Nis reached over to touch Assana and felt her respond. A half sob of joy, a murmur of gratitude, was silenced between them as lips met. Hands stroked over soft skin reacquainting themselves with each other. Their body temperatures

rose and they pressed together as boldness and need flowed through them.

Growing desire made Assana kiss Nis, her lips demanding and possessive. She rolled on top of the tall, gorgeous body. Her hands sliding up and down over those strong arms and full chest, she filled with a fierce desire, long banked by the nightmare they had lived.

Her hand cupped a full breast; fingers circling the rigid tip. Nis thrust her chest upward seeking more. Gasping lips parted with pleasure as Assana trailed her wet tongue and caressing lips down the length of Nis' neck. Her tongue licking the salted surface, the beautiful taste and texture, she touched her lover with the repeated brushes of the hot wet silk of her tongue.

Nis trembled with heated desire, feeling Assana trail her breasts down her body. The weight, touch, heat, and scent of her lover was intoxicating. The sudden electric touch of that tongue surrounding her nipple and sucking it inward made her tense. She couldn't control her body as she bucked her hips upward.

"Assana, my treasured love. I need you." Nis rasped to the busy woman holding her hostage with her touch. Smaller hands and nails grazed over her skin heightening her pleasure. Teeth grazed over the tip of her nipple and wetness surged through Nis.

Assana smiled at the deep moan of desire from above. She switched to the other breast and delivered the same treatment. Her body undulating against the rock hard thighs she rested on. She was losing control and didn't care. Capturing the hard nipple with her lips she sucked it inward. Nis flinched, arching.

"Assanaaaa..." Her deep voice begged. Strong hands reached down and lifted her upward. They flipped and rolled and found each other as they stared into one another's eyes.

"You will never leave me again." Assana trembled as she spoke to Nis. Assana reached down and let her fingers glide through the hot wetness between Nis legs. She began to stroke her, sharing her love and desire with whispered endearments.

Nis closed her eyes for a moment as she felt her lover's touch below. She was fire and ice and more. She could only ride the touch even as she opened her eyes to fall into the love shining from Assana's eyes. Nis held her gaze looking at forever within the depths of those eyes. The beauty she looked upon was the catalyst for her explosive desire. She felt the tears fall as she enjoyed the release.

Murmured words of love were poured into her heart. Forever was their promise to each other. The Witch found herself lying back and feeling the beginning of a gentle touch as her lover looked down with that soft satisfied smile. Regardless of the broken time between them, Assana felt the true power roar between them in the touch of the familiar.

Happy Halloween <insert wicked cackle here>. JLNicky