

"STRINGS ATTACHED"

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(Final-page illustration done by the wonderful <https://twitter.com/ExponentialMass> !)



My name is Jack Vance. I'm a mathematician--yes, I know, not the most exciting career there is. I always knew I was just a little too weird, a little too results-focused to be "normal." Even while I was acing my classes in high school, I was an outcast, a social reject. And I couldn't get a girlfriend for the life of me.

So I summoned one, instead.

It's not that hard, if you really try. Magic is just applied mathematics. Take a variable from a universe next door, plug it into the right equation, and the bottom falls out of your universe's Mandelbrot set. Then you've got a gorgon, hellhound, or whatever right there in your kitchen. My cousin taught me how to do it--he's been a part of some frat-cult or something for years, up at Sow's Bend University. They do hazing pranks where they summon imps to torment pledges.

Of course, my interests were more... perverse than that.

The central credo of dark magic, as written by Alastair Crowley, is "do as thou wilt." Granted, Crowley was an obnoxious piece of shit, and his fanboys included assholes like L. Ron Hubbard, among others... but he was right about *some* things. One of them was magic.

So with a moth-eaten copy of *The Book of the Law* on my lap, and a slight lisp due to my braces, at sixteen I began chanting the words that would bring my "infernal lover" to this realm at last.

"Gi-may-ah-gufrand, gi-may-ah-gufrand..."

The totemic circle in the middle of my messy, Iron-Maiden-poster-slathered bedroom began to smoke and sizzle. Down in the living room, I heard my mom turn up the TV. She was pretty sure I would grow out of my 'Satanism phase.' The joke was on her--I never grew out of it. Though I did come to... regret certain things.

Like this summoning, for instance. I had no idea what I was playing with. Or more accurately, I had no idea how *long* it would last.

Because a contract with a demon isn't something you get out of. It's a lifelong commitment, a partnership between you and your dark servant, who is bonded eternally to your soul. Essentially, the demon becomes part of you. You'll never get rid of it--not even if you banish it. Not completely.

The circle of salt and chalk hissed, and then exploded with flame, a very theatrical and convincing *whoosh* of harmless brimstone-sparks flying towards the ceiling. Slowly, a glowing blue arm, long and sensual and decked with golden bracelets and strange tattoos, emerged from the floor itself... and clawed against the invisible wall of my circle of runes, long manicured white fingernails striking sparks from the magical barrier. Testing my willpower.

"Nay, demon!" I stood and held the book in front of me, continuing to chant. "*Gi-may-ah-gufrand, gi-may-ah-gufrand...*"

Finally the demoness herself emerged from the pits of Hell, bursting forth in a pose that was oddly reminiscent of an old Playboy pinup. Which made sense--demons feed on our subconscious selves, after all. What they find there is their fuel... their food. The meaty, chewy gristle of our souls.

She was... beautiful. Bizarre, majestic, sensual and alien, all in one. Her skin was a soft, gently glowing blue, like a robin's egg bathed in radiation. Her tattoos were a glowing hot-pink, spiralling in bizarre and exotic patterns all over her curvaceous body. She was... heftier than I had expected, wide-hipped and full-figured. But that made sense--she was a recently created demoness, according to my research. A child of human excess in the Eighties, born of the spiritual trips of dying cocaine addicts and fast food junkies. A queen of modern excess.

At first, I thought she was bald--her scalp, covered in those same tattoos, was hairless. But then her eyes opened, glowing with hellish pink energy, and her entire head burst into flame. I only got a brief glimpse of the plump, inviting hill of her loins and the chubby little cleft there, before a similar veil of heatless flame flickered on... as did a few small flames in her armpits.

She stretched in a deliberately provocative way, thrusting her impressive chest out and wiggling her broad hips. Her excess flesh jiggled, her thighs flexing. She was halfway through the Hell-portal, smirking at me, as if she weren't quite convinced she should come all the way through.

"Mmm, puny mortal... You think to cage me in such a pitiful cell?" She pressed her fingers to her lips, and chortled in a perfect "*ufufufu*" anime-villainess laugh. Because... well, yeah, of course she knew about anime. That shit, as my dad was fond of telling me, came straight from Hell.

"Succubus! Demon! I bind you by the forty chains of Yig, by the name of the Black Goat, she who cavorts in midnight with a thousand consorts..."

The demoness yawned. "Yeah, whatever... Tell me another one. You're not the first mortal to try and summon me today. No one has succeeded... and I turned the *last* warlock into a swarm of screaming soul-fragments." She batted her flaming eyelashes at me. "Wanna see how I did it?"

"Hellspawn! I bind thee--" But I had forgotten her name. Scrambling for my book, I paged through it and raised it in triumph. "*Kakia!* I speak your true name, infernal witch, and I will have thee for a servant--"

"Ugh, *lame*. Always with the servant stuff." Bored, she scratched a simple flaming circle in my invisible, defensive wall of magic... and then like Bugs Bunny, she simply popped it out, reaching through to paw at the chalk and salt on the floor. "Once I get out of here, your soul is *toast*, kid. Do better homework, next time."

Shit, shit shit!! She had carved through my Azathothian symbology like the proverbial (hot, distractingly sexy) knife through butter! Panicked, I flipped through the book, backing away... and managed to knock into my dresser, a Baby Ruth bar from my brother's leftover Halloween candy tumbling off it and into the circle of spells.

"I bet your soul's gonna taste like chicken... Ooh?" She frowned down at the Baby Ruth bar, which had rolled through the magical barrier easily... because, of course, it was non-magical. Just ordinary chocolate. "What is this? Some mortal trick?"

I paused, still hunting for a spell strong enough to contain her. "Uh... No, it's chocolate."

"Oh, neat! I don't get any snacks on the job... other than souls." She unwrapped it and chomped down on the candy, her glowing eyes narrowing with a cat-like moment of lazy indulgence. "Mmmm... Not too bad. The boss never lets me have stuff like this... Got any more of these?"

"Uhhh... Sure."

Not one to let an opportunity slide by, I hurried to my bureau and began pulling out candy by the handful--Butterfingers, Hershey kisses, Jolly Ranchers, and an old stale Hostess cake that had sat in there probably for decades. I tossed them all into the circle, and to my surprise, Kakia pulled her legs up through the circle and sat there demurely, nibbling away at the candy.

"Mmf! Fuck, I love this... what do you call this? Jolly Rancher?" She frowned at it. "Mmm... It sticks to my, **urp**, fangs... How absolutely decadent and unnecessary. You humans are *really* good at destroying what God gave you. These things could rot a whole mouthful of mortal teeth in a few months..."

"Yeah, they're um... Not very good for you." Slowly, I closed the book, watching as she gleefully tore into my candy collection. "So... You're not gonna eat my soul?"

"Oh, I totally will. Once I get through *this* stuff." She belched softly, wiping her mouth with one slender arm. "Of course... If you were to *keep it coming*, we might be able to make some sort of... **urrp**, arrangement..."

Thinking quickly, I drew up a demonic contract--based on legalese I'd seen on TV, combined with the imagery Crowley described in his book. Kakia rolled her eyes at it, saying it was the worst contract she'd ever seen... but she signed it, one flaming fingertip slicing like an arc welder through the paper, inscribing a symbol of binding that sealed us together forever.

That was sixteen years ago.



SOMEWHERE IN SOW'S BEND, SIXTEEN YEARS LATER...

My demonic contract had worked out pretty well. In exchange for a continual supply of mortal food and the occasional human soul, Kasia had provided me with "minor boons."

Such boons included my new job: teaching math at Sow's Bend University. I was working towards tenure, after graduating *summa cum laude* and grabbing a three-year master's degree and a doctorate... and my new house was pretty nice, too. An impressive mini-mansion in the suburbs of the town, brand new, with a pool and countless luxuries, all slowly enabled by the powers of Hell after years and years of tiny, infernal influences on the town council and my local bank. Nothing changes the zoning laws faster than Hellish hypnotism influencing a local bureaucrat.

And of course, being a succubus, my summoned companion was obligated to get freaky with me now and then. Like a friend with benefits, except my "friend" was contractually obliged to devour my soul, on the event of my death. It was a pretty good arrangement... well, except for the soul-devouring. But I could live with that. Life was for the living--I didn't really care what happened to me, after I died. Besides, I was pretty sure I could wrangle an immortality clause out of Kasia somehow.

Of course, there were... drawbacks, to having her around. Little things, like me not being allowed to date human woman. Kasia, who could turn invisible at will and summon Hellish torments in an instant, was the ultimate jealous territorial "tsundere bitch" and while I kind of admired that about her, it *was* sort of irritating.

And then there was the eating.

Kasia had never lost her taste for mortal food. As a demoness of pleasure, apparently Hell had forced her on a strict diet... which she had tossed to the winds, the minute a mortal summoned her. And she'd never looked back.

For sixteen years, she'd been living in my home--first at my parents' house, where junk food continually went missing until I graduated high school and left. My parents had chalked it up to a teenage appetite... although they did remark I never seemed to gain any weight. That's because the snacks were going into Kasia.

After high school, I had my hands full satisfying her hunger. I worked my ass off at internships, in college and on side-gigs, struggling to support the ravenous needs of my succubus... who also insisted on the occasional roll in the hay, not because she found me *attractive*, but because it was "specified in clause B of the contract." Her squeals of orgasmic pleasure when I pressed a vibrator to her cunt and crammed her ass with a dildo, of course, were purely platonic. Part of our "business partnership."

Of course, since I got my master's and started teaching, we hadn't invoked "Clause B" very often. I was away at work a lot, and Kakia... well.

Kakia had let herself go, a little.

"BRAAALLLCH."

I heard the belch all the way from the kitchen, three rooms away from the cavernous, TV-dominated sitting room. Even at this distance I could recognize the timbre of her burp: it was wet, heavy, but slightly hollow, suggesting she wasn't quite full. And sure enough, barely a minute after the belch:

"JAAACK! *More snacks!*"

"Coming, coming." Pulling a huge tray of bite-sized "mini-pizzas" from the oven, I wiped my forehead and took a swig from my nearby mineral-water dispenser. The house was filled with fancy toys, and this was one of them. It also sported a gym and, as I mentioned, a pool... not that Kakia ever bothered to use either of them.

"JAAAAACK!"

"Jeez, hold on, you big lazy sack of hellfire..."

I tilted the mini-pizzas onto a platter, and just for good measure, added an extra-large bag of chips on the side and some onion dip. Kakia was not very discriminating, in her snack tastes.

Finally, my deplorable feast complete, I marched into the sitting room. Kakia was seated on the vast leather couch there, as she had been for... hell, how long was it now? Three years? Four? It didn't matter. The point was, this was Kakia's domain--her miniature kingdom. And she rarely left it... because she was almost too fat to move.

Rolls upon rolls pinned her to the couch, each one that soft radioactive-blue of her once-seductive skin. Her tattoos were stretched and distorted, blurred by the sheer amount of *meat* she'd managed to cram onto her frame over the years. I hadn't been able to weigh her in a long time--she disdained such "mortal" concerns. But she was big--*really* big. Easily three hundred and fifty pounds, maybe four hundred. I had no idea of the exact number... although the spell made my erection rise in my pants, just looking at her. She was naked, of course, as she always was. Clothes were a "useless mortal invention" to her... and honestly, nothing would *fit* her at this point, anyway.

It had happened slowly, at first. A bit of chub here and there. Eventually, I had started complaining about her "going to pot," so Kakia had selectively edited my brain while I slept to make me *attracted* to her ballooning figure. It was a nasty little spell, very clever and hard to remove... so I hadn't bothered. After all, if I still found her attractive several hundred pounds later, was it really such a bad thing?

... Or maybe that was the spell, talking. Either way, I didn't mind what she'd become. Though I admit, I was a bit jaded by how my "flawless Hellspawn waifu" had become an absolute *mess*. It was sexy, sure (stupid spell!) but I was nevertheless annoyed.

Because once she'd started getting fat, Kakia had also become *hellishly* needy.

"Come *onnnn*," she groaned from her sitting position on the couch, waving me in. "Hurry up, mortal! I'm **BHURRRP**, starving over here!"

"Doesn't look like it."

"Aw, shut up."

She snatched the tray away, dug one pudgy fist into the pile of mini-pizzas, and lifted them to her mouth. As she ate, the flame of her hair diminished, guttering and crackling as if it were somehow feeding on the grease and cheese of the snacks, just as she was. Her hair-fire had once been long and flowing, smelling of Hellish brimstone, but now... well, it was more of a pixie cut. And though I couldn't prove it, I was pretty sure it represented her demonic power growing weaker, as she delved further into the pleasures of the mortal world.

"Mmmf... These are URRRP, undercooked. Moron." She lifted a mini-pizza to her hair, and with a soft grunt of exertion, the flame exploded upwards, cooking the snack to a crispier degree of brownness, and causing her to release a muffled burst of Hellfire-imbued flatulence at the same time.

FWURRPPPTF. The crackle of sizzling flames from between her asscheeks, and the resulting smell of burning leather, elicited a sigh from me.

"Come on, Kakia... I just *bought* that couch."

"And I asked for, URAPPP, for a flameproof cover. Not my fault you're such a BRALCH, cheapskate." Gobbling down the mini-pizzas at breakneck speed, nearly choking on them, she tore open the bag of chips and shoved her entire face into it, like a horse at its feed-bag.

"Mmmf, **GROMF**, glch, slrp GLP. They're... **URRRP**, making these chips smaller every year. Filthy human corporations and their greed."

"Yep, it's definitely the *corporations*, not the fact that you plow through them at like... ten bags a day."

"Did I *ask* for your input?" She lifted her face from the bag, her multiple chins covered in chip-chunks, and licked her flabby lips. "When I want something from you, Jack, it's gonna be either cock, or more food. One or the other. Not your *opinions*. Those weren't in the contract."

"Yeah?" I snorted, leaning against the wall. "And what are you gonna do about it? Get up and come over here? Eat my soul?"

She growled, her hair flaring up... but then the ad breaks on TV ceased, and it returned to the YouTube channel she'd been watching, some kind of Diablo II speedrun. "I'll eat it just as soon as I'm done with... **BURLLLCH**, with my shows. Now fuck off."

"Yeah? So you can stuff your fat fucking face some more, with *my* food?"

The tete-a-tete had gotten me even harder than usual. As much as I resented her for basically cutting me off from humanity, I *loved* watching her debase herself like this. A minor queen of Hell, reduced to a junk-food-gobbling washup. She was a disgrace, a sad pathetic mess... and it made my dick harder than diamonds, just looking at her.

Or maybe that was the spell, again. Goddamn it.

She wiped a hanging glob of drool off the corner of her mouth. "Whatever, mortal. You know you like it."

"Yeah, I kind of don't have a choice, since you *hacked my brain* twelve years ago."

"Pfft!" She waved off the concern, letting out another scorching fart. "I did you a favor. At this point I'm like... three succubi, in one. You got a real bargain when you signed my **URRRP**, contract."

I got a fucking mooch, is what I got, I thought to myself. But I didn't antagonize her further. Our relationship was... fraught, yes. But she still had her uses. Speaking of which...

"Hey. I'm pretty pent up. How about you fulfill *that* part of your contract, for a change?"

She groaned as if I'd asked her to chop off a limb. "Uggh, clause B? But I'm *tired*..."

"You're *always* tired. Maybe if you stopped eating for five minutes, you'd have a little more energy."

Leaning over the couch, I pinched at her countless fat-rolls, her bottom-heavy frame jiggling as she turned to swipe at me.

"Filthy human! I am a daughter of Beelzebub, not a *stress ball*! Quit fondling me!"

My hands dug deeper into her wobbling, sweat-slathered flab. "Only if you give me a little Clause B..."

She groaned twice as loud, though this time, I thought I heard a little bit of pleasure in it. A faint buzzing from beneath her belly-apron told me the vibrator I'd given her yesterday was still down there... and it had been buzzing away for twenty-four hours. Magic really does wonders, for extending a sex toy's battery life.

"F-fine." She fished out another mouthful of chips, crammed them into her slobbering lips, and swallowed. "Just be quick, I wanna see how they beat Diablo. What orifice *this* time, you horny little **URRRRP** monkey?"

"Who says we need an orifice? Just give me a few rolls to work with."

She grunted. "Depraved... but at least it means I don't have to move."

I dropped my pants and kicked them away, slipping my boxers down around my ankles. My cock bounced in front of her face, and I saw some of the old fire light her eyes as she licked her lips, staring at it.

"Mmm, m-maybe I could **urRph**, give you a little bit of a suck-job..."

"No you don't. You complained so much, you don't even get to suck on it."

I adjusted my position, hefting one of her mammoth breasts up, and then sliding my cock in beneath it. The sweat-slippery cleft of fat in between her sagging pale-blue, tattooed udder and the fat-roll beneath it was *heavenly*, exactly what I needed.

She moaned softly, and I couldn't tell if it was performative or genuine--I rarely could. "Mm, you're a fucking *pervert*... I'm going to enjoy eating your sinful, sinful soul..."

"Good luck, fatass. I doubt you could even fit it in your stomach, without exploding." I began thrusting, my shaft vanishing into her fat, and she squeezed her own nipples with a lazy, debauched disinterest.

"Mmm, you'd be **URRRAPP**, surprised... souls are pretty low-calorie... *Mmf!*"

Our little "clause B" coupling didn't last long. Pent up from the virility spell she'd slapped me with a while ago, a little "gift" that ensured I could keep up with her in bed, it took me less than three minutes to shoot a load into her swollen, heaving fat-rolls. The spunk gushed out from beneath her tit and she grinned wolfishly, immediately lapping it up with a long, prehensile red tongue.

"Mmm, you haven't jacked off lately, **urrrrp**... have you?"

I leaned against the couch, throes of orgasm fading. "Why would i bother? I have a big, fat, useless fucksleeve right here in my living room..."

"Prick."

"Fat bitch."

She purred softly, returning to her chips as she pulled me onto the couch beside her. My body sank into her as if she were an enormous, warm, slightly-smelly waterbed. "I hate you, Jack."

"I hate you, too. You ruined my life, you know." But I said it without malice.

She giggled, her rolls wobbling. "You keep saying that... but you haven't tried to banish me in ages."

"Only because..." I yawned, the post-ejaculation coma settling in. "Only because... you're too fucking fat... to fit through... the Hell portals anymore."

"Goddamn right. You're never getting rid of me, now." She stroked my hair, and pressed PLAY on the smart TV, licking semen from her cleavage as I fell asleep on top of her. The last thing I heard before drifting off, was the subtle rumble of her insides venting more Hellish flatulence into my couch.

All in all, I had to admit... hers wasn't the *worst* demonic contract I could've taken.

~FIN~

