



It was a phenomenon that was unseen except by those whose bodies unwillingly became a part of its manifestation.

A family of twelve, spanning three generations, lived together in a cramped three-room house within the Slums, near to where the filth river vomited the city’s effluvia and other biological waste out into the largest channel of the sewers. The family was gathered for dinner: something that might once have been a rarity but which now, despite ending up as slave labour, was a daily occurrence for the family. Nevertheless, they remembered the past well enough to feel gratitude for the sustenance they were given.

As they shared their meal in quiet acceptance of their lot in life, some strange energy flowed between them. They could not put into words the desire that made them embrace one another tightly, but, *there* they were, all twelve of their family, locked so closely together that the oldest and youngest of them began to buckle under the pressure, with their bones audibly popping and cracking.

The energy continued to flow through their conjoined bodies, suturing their skin and flesh together with unholy magic, while they each screamed and wailed, trying their utmost to break free of the spell that gripped them.

Perhaps the neighbours heard their pleading cries for help, but it would not have mattered much, for there was little help to be found within the Slums of Helmsgarten. Everyone fended for themselves and there was no such thing as affection or courtesy shown to strangers. A family was a tight-knit unit, whose bond of blood was what united them. The last few years had taught many this lesson, as the brutal rule of the Daemon King squeezed them for every drop of blood they were worth.

Still, at the moment the phenomenon took place, there was no other family in the entire metropolis who were as close as this one. Their flesh bonded into one conglomerated mass, like twelve candles melted together into one puddle of tallow. Veins formed connections and their blood, that bond they held in higher esteem than all others, was mixed into one united stream, which their twelve hearts beat in unison to push through their amalgamated system.

Then a final pulse of unholy energy flowed through them and their cries and screams were stilled, leaving behind a barely-sentient fleshy mass formed from twelve bodies.

*Thump, thump, thump!*

The beat of its hearts rumbled the floor and the mass expanded as its lungs swelled, before exhaling slowly, all twelve pairs moving to the same impulse. The brains and nerves were linked, and the many muscles and tendons followed the same command.

The family had become like a Divine Organ, playing a melody for the arrival of an Angel. And perhaps it was an Angel that grew to life within their united bowels, where an unholy womb was grown from their innards at the behest of this Divine energy.

It was no benevolent God that schemed this phenomenon into existence, for such disregard for mortal lives was surely a trait of maliciousness, however, the Angel that was birthed within the Family Mass would lead to much good in the world.

*THUMP, THUMP, THUMP!!*

The Divine Organ swelled as its hearts beat a powerful rhythm, while the twelve mouths began to let out a tune that drawled the syllables of an old tongue, which shaped the universe into existence in aeons past.

The God had gifted his Angel a name in this tongue and this name was the one which the Organ sang out loud from its mouths.

*THE ARCHITECT!*

The air cooled from the very utterance of this name, and a thin sheen of frost began to form on the outside of the amalgam, while the foundations of the house and neighbouring buildings shook as though in the grips of an earthquake.

The mass began to swell as it drew in air. Without exhaling it drew in more. And more. Until the mass was nearly doubled in size. Then, with a violent *pop*, it burst open to reveal the perfect human, shaped by the hands of a Divine Creator.

On his torso was the brand of his Maker, which only a few in this Mundane Realm would recognise the meaning of, and even fewer would know that the two sigils on the palms of his hands spelled out his title.

*Be reborn as mine Architect, o loyal companion,  
By mine hand was thou gifted a vessel to house thy stolen soul,  
Seek mine Progeny, the Sovereign, and aid in his apotheosis.*

The perfect man unfurled himself from the steaming and blown-open womb that had birthed him into reality. As he slowly stooped under the narrow ceiling, a liquid slush of bile and blood dripped from

his naked body, revealing pale skin and shock-white hair. Two opaque eyes stared out at his surroundings, before inspecting his own body.

“**Where am I?**” he wondered out loud.

Then he recalled the voice that awoke him. He had been given a purpose and though he did not recognise the entity that manifested him, he understood that it was to thank for his revival. After all, his last remembered moments before arriving *here* were of a willing sacrifice he undertook. He had made the choice, despite knowing his soul would be forever lost. But, somehow, he was back amongst the living.

The Architect stepped through the steaming mass of flesh and skin, crunching bones underfoot as he made his way to the door. With a powerful kick, it was sent flying off its hinges and out into the muck-covered street.

When he emerged from the squalid house, he rose to his full height which would dwarf any normal man. He glanced around briefly, recognising his surroundings, though realising that much time had passed since he was last here, as all the landmarks had changed. But the stench of the Slums was the same as ever and the noise of the metropolis, albeit warped, was the same heartbeat he had known.

With long powerful strides, he set off for the Castle in the northern part of Helmsgarten, where he knew the Sovereign could be located.

He was a Divinely-appointed Architect and there was much work to be done.