

Tracey

By idontlikeu12

Submitted: April 29, 2009

Updated: May 3, 2009

The story of a girl who one night stops a boy from being beaten up and suddenly her world is spiralling out of control. Strange powers, talking werewolves and dragons, bad food and romance are all found within these pages.

Provided by Fanart Central.

<http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/idontlikeu12/56209/Tracey>

Chapter 1 - Rare nights are rare for a reason	2
Chapter 2 - AND THE NIGHT GETS...interesting	7
Chapter 3 - The master isn't happy	12
Chapter 4 - Is nowhere sacred?	15
Chapter 5 - Damn, he caught her!	19
Chapter 6 - And she escapes!	21
Chapter 7 - And she's caught again	26
Chapter 8 - They didn't expect her to wear that. Did they?	28

1 - Rare nights are rare for a reason

It was a nice night.

The sky was clear, the moon was bright and the air was warm.

That is why Tracey Monroe was out. One had to seize the moments as they went by, especially ones that didn't show up often—a nice night in Brooklyn was rarer than diamonds.

Despite the warmth of the night, Tracey was wrapped up pretty tight. She wore a blue coloured scarf, with a black leather coat and black boots, her tawny coloured hair billowing slightly in a wind that didn't seem to be there.

She walked quickly, not stopping to breathe like most people would, or sitting down to enjoy the night.

She didn't know why, seeing as this is what she would have liked to do, but she felt a sense of foreboding which prevented her from stopping.

As she passed a dark alley, she saw exactly what had been nagging at her.

On the floor, there was a boy of about ten or eleven. He was being beaten unconscious. And beating him unconscious, were two boys with heavy muscles and a sack.

They then began to stuff him into the bag.

Tracey was torn. She so badly wanted to walk away, after all, how did she know what they were punishing him for? And then she would become involved. Something that she had been trying to avoid, but then she looked at the poor boy, no match for the two hulking people, and what could anyone, especially a young boy like that, have done to warrant such treatment?

In the end, she went with her conscience.

“Hey!” she yelled to them. “Hey you leave that boy alone right now or I am calling the police!” she said as threateningly.

The two muscular boys turned, obviously stunned.

Then someone came out of the shadows.

It was a boy, roughly the same age as the others. He was muscular, but not obscenely buff like the boys with the sack, more lean, leopard like. He had black-y-blue hair and piercing blue eyes. He had an earring in his earlobe and wore a jagged tooth on a leather thong around his neck.

In short, he was the hottest guy Tracey had seen since, well, ever.

Normally Tracey would be inclined to melt into a puddle of maudlin mush at his feet but there was something wrong with him.

His nature seemed to ooze out of every pore, his cold-bloodedness and his lack of compassion.

The boy spoke in a smooth voice, an American accent with a slightly British drawl. "Hey," he said.

Tracey felt compelled to answer him and when she did, it was in a silly breathy voice that she often made fun of people for using.

"Hi," she breathed.

The boy smiled at her revealing a row of even, gleaming white teeth. "Do you know what that boy has done?" he asked softly, nodding towards the bag in which the boy was now contained.

Tracey was startled by the question. She had expected him to pin her against the wall and make her promise not to tell anyone, but she answered him anyways,

"No." then she remembered that she was not here to fall hopelessly in love, or accept any explanations but she was here to rescue a boy. "And I don't care, there is nothing that justifies harming and kidnapping a young boy, half your size!" she snapped.

The boy smiled again, "I'm sure it looks like we are the bad guys, but this thing," he began, nodding to the sack, "is not a little boy. I work at a research facility where they are trying to recreate human life artificially. They created this thing, but he developed thoughts of his own, where he saw himself as the victim. He killed his carer and escaped and we were sent to bring him back. Sadly, he refused to cooperate, so my colleagues had to become a little rough with him. You can go home now."

As he spoke, something began to cloud in Tracey's mind, making everything fuzzy.

Then Tracey found herself saying, "Yes I see. He should be taken back." But in her mind she was screaming "NO! There is no WAY that this is okay!" but, it was like Tracey's mind and mouth were disconnected.

The boy continued, ignoring Tracey's inner struggle, said gently, "Now you are going to go home. You are going to change into your pyjamas and go to bed. You will sleep and when you wake up tomorrow you will remember nothing of what happened. You will not do anything else. You will speak to no one of this. Do you understand?"

At first Tracey was going to say yes.

She was going to give in to it. She was going to go home, go to bed and wake up remembering nothing. But then she remembered how weak the boy had looked as he lay on the ground, and she thought, realized something the boy had said didn't quite ring true.

"Wait, people can already produce artificial life!" she said like it had just dawned on her (which it had), "They use IVF, test-tube babies, you liar!"

The moment she finished her sentence, the boy scowled. Then he narrowed his eyes like he was concentrating.

Then Tracey felt the pain.

It was like her blood was on fire and her organs were being put in a blender.

It was agony.

She wanted to beg for mercy, but it was like the pain had cut off her ability to talk.

Her screaming, however, was intact.

As she writhed on the ground, she could vaguely hear the boy giving instructions to his “colleagues” as they walked towards a car on the other side of the alley.

“Take the boy to the car and put him the trunk. Then we can come back for her and see if she’s more compliant.”

Then one of the boys answered, “If she doesn’t agree, then can we have a quick snack?” he asked.

Then the other boy chimed “Yeah! We're hungry!”

Tracey was confused. What the heck did they mean by that? What did her cooperation have to do with his hunger?

And then, like some sick horror movie, she saw his teeth.

They were as white as his leader’s, but his canines had grown about three times their normal points with wickedly sharp points.

Then as if by magic, the pain disappeared.

But Tracey didn’t care. She was too scared.

Only one thing mattered.

They were vampires and they were going to eat her, and the boy.

But somewhere in her head something said, “[The hell they are! Come on, fool! Save the kid and make a run for it!](#)” Not being one to question divine African-American voices from the back of her head that spoke common sense, Tracey got up and began to free the boy.

The boys, a little way away, were blissfully oblivious.

The leader said grudgingly, “All right, though I told you to grab a bite BEFORE we left.” Then he turned round to find Tracey letting the boy out of the bag.

He stood there with his mouth open. No one had ever managed to shake off his tortures, let alone recover as well.

He thought about what to do and decided that she was just lucky, or it was an accident, but there was no way in hell that he would let her run around if she was impervious to mind torture.

He looked over his shoulder and said softly, "Hey guys, you can have your snack now. Bon appétit!"

The two beefy boys smiled like Christmas had come early, while Tracey, supporting the unconscious ten-year-old, looked like she had just heard that Christmas was cancelled.

She tried to run out of the alley, but quick as a flash, one of the boys was in front of her.

The other came at her from behind.

Tracey was trapped. So she did the only thing she could do.

She jumped, holding on to the boy as tight as she could.

It was amazing. Tracey had never been very good at athletic things like long jump or high jump, she was more a running and throwing kind of girl, so when she leapt six feet into the air, she was slightly surprised, to say the least.

The two lackeys, however were not as happy with Tracey's new found abilities seeing as they smacked into one another like some third rate cartoon.

Tracey, deciding that while she was there she might as well do something cool while she was up there, did a back tuck before landing on one foot.

The moment she hit the ground, lackey number one smacked her into the wall.

The force almost made her go through the wall and it was surprising that she and the boy weren't killed. Lackey number two reached for her so she reached about, terrified until her hands closed around something hard and cool. She yanked it up and realized that it was a metal pipe.

She swung it at the boy's hand but he snatched it and snapped it like a twig. Tracey was panicking.

She seemed to have gotten several degrees hotter and when the boys tried to grab her, they hissed and jumped back because her skin was searing hot.

Tracey put the boy down.

Then Tracey stood, stepped over the boy, and faced the two vampires, they saw that her eyes had not been the warm hazel-green they had been, but were now glowing orange-red.

Then Tracey turned her palms outwards and unleashed a spiral of fire.

© Eno Ambah 2009

2 - AND THE NIGHT GETS...interesting

Tracy sent out flames of about 40000°C.
Hot enough to melt almost any and everything.

One of the goons was roasted immediately and might not have survived had the other goon not pulled him out of the way.

The leader stared with an eyebrow lifted.

“Well that was unexpected,” he said mildly.

It was like those were the magic words, because right after he said it, Tracey turned off the fire and fell to her knees breathing heavily.

The leader walked over to her and put out his hand as if he wanted to help her up.

Tracey put her hands behind her back pointedly. A clear sign of rejection.

It didn't do much good.

The leader rolled his eyes then yanked her hand out, lifted her up and she tried to snatch her hand back.

“Stay away from me! I'll...I'll burn you!” she screamed.

The leader sighed in exasperation.

“Listen, I promise you no harm. And anyways, you seem to have spent your newly discovered powers. You have about a good chance of burning me as starting a forest fire in a mall.” He said.

Although she knew that he was right about her being spent, but there was no WAY in heaven or hell she was going to trust him after he had:

- 1 .Tortured her
2. Messed with her head
3. Told his friends to eat her

Then he shook her hand very formally and said, “My name is River Thompson, these are my associates, Rae McAllister and Clay Lancer.” Nodding to his charred and cheerless friends.

Tracey then pulled her arm as hard as she could the second he let go. As a result, she fell on her butt (and none too gently).

At first she was embarrassed, but then she scrambled to the unconscious boy's side who they had forgotten.

Before she could speak, River said, "Don't worry, you can take the boy. He's not worth this much trouble. You on the other hand are much more interesting."

Then he leaned in and pressed his lips on hers.

He got a slap on the face for his trouble.

"Stay AWAY from me you filthy-mind-infiltrating-vamp!" Tracey screamed

He just laughed as he sauntered to his car with his goons in tow.

But just before he got into his car, he called back to her, "By the way, you might like to know, that kid you just saved? Yeah he's a 'filthy-mind-infiltrating-vamp', too." Then he slid into the car and slammed the door.

Then Tracey looked down at the bruised and battered boy.

Then she said two words.

"Aw, crap."

*

The next day at 2.20AM, Tracey walked back to her house with an unconscious boy slung over her shoulder.

The moment she walked into her house, her foster parents Toni and Rich were on her like flies.

"Where have you been young lady?"

"Do you know how worried we've been?"

"What time do you call this?"

"We almost called the police!"

"What in the name of all the seven seas have you been doing?"

At first Tracey tried to answer the questions, but then she realised that her foster parents were actually enjoying themselves, so she went into the kitchen, put the unconscious boy on the table then opened his mouth.

There was a pair of fangs in there, not as big as the ones in Clay or Rae's mouth, but still as sharp.

Toni and Rich gasped when they saw the fangs but did nothing.

Until Tracey lifted her forearm to his fangs to try and make them pierce her skin.

"What are you doing?" Toni screamed. Tracey turned to her and said quietly, "I am trying to help a boy

who obviously can't help himself.”

As she said those words the look on her face changed. Her face that had been tired now looked determined.

Toni wanted to argue further, but Rich stopped her, saying, “Just give her some room.”

Little did they know he was lying. He wanted Tracey to freak out on her own and never try what the heck she was trying ever again.

Tracey tried to impale her arm on the sharp fangs, but every time she tried, they seemed to retract.

After trying four times, Tracey decided that she would have to try something a bit more drastic.

She walked to a drawer and pulled out a wicked looking serrated knife that would have had Sweeney Todd running for cover.

Before Toni or Rich could say anything, she had cut a line across her forearm, shallow enough not to be serious, but deep enough to run.

She put her bleeding arm to the boy's lips and he began to instinctively lap up the blood.

Behind her, Toni recoiled in disgust.

All of a sudden, his fangs turned back into normal canines and the boy woke up.

He looked around slowly, and then touched a hand to the side of his mouth and when it came away he looked at the blood on his hand.

“Oh no,” he whispered. “I killed somebody.” Tracey was a bit taken aback.

When she had finally revived him she had sort of been hoping that it would go a bit more like:

-Oh thank you kind lady for saving me!

-It was nothing little boy, I was happy to help.

-No, really, I must thank you, you see I am the only son of a kind and rich old man, so I was thinking if you'd like to have half of my \$10,000,000,000,000,000 inheritance, I'd be all too willing to oblige.

-No thank you little boy, a quarter is more than enough. Etc.

Or at least, something to that effect.

What she WASN'T expecting was for a boy to admit to murder.

“I lost control. I must have drunk the person dry! I'm a vampire for life!” he said sadly, the severity

sinking into him deeply.

For Tracey, not so much.

All Tracey could understand was that the boy thought that he had eaten someone, so she hastened to explain.

“Hey kid, if you’re talking about the blood around your mouth that’s from me. If you’re talking about something else then-”

But that was as far as she got.

“Yippee! I’m not a va-mp, I’m not a va-mp!” he sang happily as he bounced round the room.

Then Tracey, who had decided that she deserved some answers just then, grabbed him by the scruff of his neck and smacked his butt into the chair.

“All right kid, why don’t you just park your @\$@ for a while and answer a few questions for me huh?” Tracey asked in a sweet syrupy voice which basically meant that she was annoyed.

The kid, not knowing her, said happily, “I don’t care what you make me do ’cause I’m not a va-mp!”

Just then, Tracey’s patience snapped like an overstretched elastic band.

“Alright, I have HAD enough! I want ANSWERS buddy boy and if I don’t get them, so help me, you will wish that I had let them stuff you into that bag! You tell me everything or there will be hell to pay,” she managed to say in a civil tone, which was pointless because she wasn’t saying anything civil anyways.

The boy was slightly taken aback by Tracey’s ferocity, but he asked bravely, “Okay, what do you want to know?”

Rich who had been standing motionlessly since Tracey had cut herself asked gently as he could, “What’s your name?”

The boy leaned his head to one side and said slowly, “When they changed me, they gave me a name, but I wouldn’t accept it. I don’t remember the name I had when I was full human but I think it was Reid.”

They all nodded.

Then Toni, encouraged by her husband’s success asked, “How old are you?”

Reid answered promptly, “Ten.”

Then Tracey asked “What were you doing in the alley? What did those guys want? How did you become a vampire?”

Reid wrinkled his nose and frowned.

“Well I’m technically not a full vampire yet, see, one day I was playing in the park and then I went into the forest-y bit. Then someone came up behind me and bit me on the arm and I fell asleep. When I woke up I was in this place that looked like a skyscraper because when I went to look out the window, we were really high up, and I had been asleep for a long time.

“Then this man came in and told me I was one of the ***Begaafde Degenen****. I asked him what it was and he said that it meant I was gifted and it was my duty to help them. I told him to take me back home but he said he had erased my parent’s memories of me so now that was my home. I pretended to agree so that he would leave me alone and the moment it was morning, because I thought that vampires couldn’t go out in the day.”

He paused and yawned.

Toni, who had been listening in rapture snapped back to reality.

“Oh you poor boy! You must be bushed!” she gushed sympathetically, forgetting that a few minutes ago, he had been the most revolting monster in existence to her.

“Why don’t I show you to a room where you can spend the night?” she asked.

As she left, Tracey followed.

Rich, however, stayed behind.

“Tracey?” he called.

Tracey turned, mid-step.

“We’ll talk about this later.

Tracey nodded.

Rich smiled and said under his breath, “See you tomorrow.”

*Dutch for gifted ones

3 - The master isn't happy

River was in trouble, he knew it the moment he returned without the boy.

He also thought, that he would be rewarded for bringing information about the girl.

He waited in the lobby, studied his associates and wondered how an operation could have gone so wrong.

It was that girl's fault.

Suddenly, he was called in.

There was a man sitting at a desk. Strong shouldered, grey-haired and blue eyed, he was the stuff perverted women and gay men dream of.

That was River's father.

His name was Stone McKenny.

He was also River's worst enemy. He worked for his father because he wanted to keep an eye on his father and because his father paid well, plus he was being blackmailed.

His father, who knew that River would stab him rather than save him, hired him because he wanted to keep an eye on his son and his son was a very good worker.

His father leaned forward.

"Master won't be pleased. I am really disappointed. I promised master you would be a good apprentice, but you have been nothing of the sort. You won't blood someone, you barely drink and now, you can't even recapture a little boy who can't use his powers yet!" he snarled.

River leaned in as well so that his nose was millimetres from his father's.

"Well, first off I didn't WANT to become a vampire. YOU attacked me when I was asleep. Secondly, I didn't want to be one of you, in case you don't remember, YOU ARE BLACKMAILING ME and lastly, I wouldn't have had to go and recapture the boy if YOU hadn't let him escape in the first place!" River hissed.

Stone looked like he was about to punch his son's lights out.

Then he shrugged.

"I'll let the master teach you respect, that way I won't have to" he said softly.

Then suddenly a soft feathery voice sounded.

“You would use me for your own ends, would you Newton McGregor?” it asked.

Stone turned brick red as he flung himself onto the polished floor, only his master used his human name to rebuke him.

“Master, I beg you, forgive me! I spoke foolishly!”

An old man stepped out of the shadows, a classic evil old guy.

He lifted his withered old lips in what could be called a smile.

“Yes, Newton, yes you did.”

Then quick as a flash, the old man drew a slender gun from his robe and fired once.

Stone shouted in pain as he crashed to the ground. His arm was bleeding and he was writhing in pain.

The old man, smiling benevolently, walked to Stone’s side, and then knelt down, with the gun pointing at Stone’s head.

Then he said cheerfully, “Newton I have heard that you have a head thick as a rock, hence your name, but believe me, this gun could shatter a diamond, had the bearer of the gun been foolish enough to want to, and though I would prefer to keep someone as powerful as you on our side, I will not hesitate to put this gun through your thick skull if you ever imply that I will do your dirty work for you.”

Then the master turned to River, who had jumped up upon hearing the master’s voice.

“Now River,” he said in the same chipper tone, as he turned the pistol on River, “We seem to be missing a guest. You were supposed to bring that guest, any particular reason why you didn’t?”

River was in a very precarious position.

He had to be polite, but get his point across BEFORE the master killed him.

“Master, with all due respect, there is a reason why I didn’t bring the boy back, a very good reason.” Master raised an eyebrow.

“Well unless you have found another *gifted one*, I’ve probably heard it already.” He said drily.

River smiled secretively.

“Well that means I just got lucky, because while on our recovery mission, we found one such person.”

Then River paused.

“Maybe we should discuss this privately. I wouldn’t like certain persons to overhear and try to take this into their own hands to try and win your favour.” River said smoothly, while his father glared at him.

The master, did not care.

He nodded and ushered River away, River caught his father’s eye.

Then River smiled.

4 - Is nowhere sacred?

D

Despite the escapades of the night before, Tracey was still forced to wake up at seven thirty the next morning (which happened to be a Saturday), to go to the swimming pool which her parents owned to clean the pool.

She walked down to the pool, unaware of the fact that she was being followed.

When she got there she saw that there wasn't much to do and therefore, she had plenty of time for a free swim.

She went to change but when she came back, there was something different about the water. It looked inviting and warm.

Tracey stuck out a foot to touch the water.

It was just the right temperature.

It sent shivers of delight up her spine.

Just as she was about to jump in, something else sent shivers up her spine.

She hadn't put on the pool heaters yet and as such, the water should have been freezing cold.

Tracey slowly back away from the water, but it wasn't having any of it.

Quick as a flash, a tendril of water (yes this sounds incredibly stupid) wrapped around her leg and began to drag her into the pool.

She screamed and grabbed the net that she had used to clean the pool and beat at the tendril viciously.

It immediately let go and slunk back into the pool.

Then from the centre of the pool a figure rose. A figure that Tracey had wanted to forget, but was somehow etched into her brain.

"Hello again," River said as he walked over to Tracey.

"It is so nice to see you. You know after last night's little mishap, I might have gotten into a bit of trouble for returning without the boy." He said amiably.

Tracy scrambled back whispering, "Get away from me! If you take one more step I'll...I'll scream! Really loud, and then, and then you'll have to go away or be exposed!"

River laughed.

“You can scream by all means, although you might hurt my ears slightly. There is no one here. There seems to have been an accident that blocked both roads here. Lucky we came before that happened.”

Tracey hissed as the truth sank in. They hadn't avoided the accident, they had caused it.

Tracey made a quick leap for the exit, but was knocked back by a wave that River seemed to summon.

She turned to him in horror and he smiled.

“I'm a water mage, this is a swimming pool. I think you are out of your depth, pun intended, my little fire mage.” He said in an amused tone.

Then he waved his hand and Tracey was surrounded by water.

Tracey was trapped.

So she did the only thing she could do.

She stuck her hands out, closed her eyes and prayed for a miracle.

Luckily for her, God must have been feeling that she deserved a treat for all the great stuff she had been doing.

When she opened her eyes again, she blinked to make sure that she wasn't seeing thing.

The water was swirling around her hand but it didn't seem bad, on the contrary it felt, good and right, like it was MEANT to be there.

River was watching her amusedly, he didn't seem to mind that Tracey had developed new powers, or that her eyes were now fluorescent blue, on the contrary, he seemed rather happy.

“So, you're a water mage too? I suppose I should have guessed. You are turning out to be much more fun than I had expected,” he said a little blandly, for his expression.

Just then the wall exploded.

Tracey screamed.

River laughed.

The two boys from the night before stepped through the hole that they had put in the wall.

“Nice to see you again,” one boy said as he reached for her.

Tracey batted his hands away.

“What do you WANT!” she shrieked.

River raised an eyebrow, but he was not the one who answered her question.

Clay sneered, “You know too much and you’re too dangerous to run around the way you do.”

However, while he had been speaking, the other boy, Rae, had snuck up on her and in a second, his hands were around her neck.

Tracey tried to struggle but she knew it was over from the moment Rae began to squeeze.

Just as she began to lose consciousness, the other wall of the pool blew apart.

The grip on her neck was gone in an instant, but all Tracey could say as she collapsed was,

“For the love of God, stop exploding those walls! Rich is going to kill me!”

Then she looked up and saw Rich, Reid and Toni, standing in the hole they had blown in the wall.

Rich dusted himself and said dryly to Tracey, “I normally would, but in this instance, I promise not to kill you.”

River coughed slightly. “Sorry to interrupt this touching reunion, but who the hell are you and what are you doing here?” He asked politely.

The moment Rich saw River, he blanched. Then his face turned a pale and sickly colour green.

“Y-you!” he whispered in awe. “Zack? Is that you?”

River raised an eyebrow, Tracey, Reid, Clay and Rae’s jaws dropped, but Toni looked like she was seeing River for the first time (which, to all intents and purposes, she was).

Then she asked tentatively, “Are you...Zack?”

River then clenched his rather fine jaw and said “My name is River Thompson. Not Zack.”

Rich and Toni seemed to deflate, but Reid who seemed to be the only one thinking straight, cried, “Come on Tracey! We’ve got to go!”

The moment he said that, everything seemed to snap back to reality.

“Grab her!” River hissed.

Clay was one step ahead of him.

Toni was two steps ahead.

She leapt and gracefully rugby tackled Rae, who fell into Clay, just as she had planned.

Then Tracey decided that it would be the perfect time to beat a hasty retreat, so she yelled to Toni, who had managed to wrestle Rae and Clay to the ground.

In a second, Reid, Tracey, Toni and Rich were in the conveniently parked Volvo and driving away, with Tracey at the wheel.

“Tracey! You shouldn’t be able to drive, you’re only fifteen!” Toni said in a scandalized voice.

“Oh please,” Tracey snorted, I’ve been driving for six months, and when your foster parents are Rich and Toni Brown, you don’t get pulled over.”

Tracey made a hard left.

“So while we’re on the subject of parenting, could you tell me what all that was about back there? You told me Zack was the son you lost!” she panted.

Toni and Rich exchanged looks.

“Tracey, I don’t know-” Rich began.

“RICHARD! I DON’T WANT ANY B-S!” Tracey barked, while making another dangerous swerve.

Toni sighed.

“We told you that Zack was our son and we lost him, that much is true. What we didn’t say was how we lost him...” Toni broke off.

Tracey, who was craning her neck to see if the vampires were following her, content to find no one, she prompted Toni.

“So what happened to Zack? Tell me EVERYTHING.” Tracy demanded.

So Toni began to explain the tragedy of her life to Tracey.

But just before she could tell Tracey the whole story, their car got rammed off the road.

5 - Damn, he caught her!

The moment she had gotten into the car, River knew that chances of catching her were slimmer than an anorexic teenager with a treadmill.

So he dialled in back up.

“Hello? I need a car west off the motorway entrance. Don’t let them get on the motorway or we’ve lost them. You’re looking for a silver Volvo. Number plate? No, I didn’t get it. Well I’m sorry if it’s kind of hard to read a number plate from 50 miles away when the car in question is speeding away. Be careful though, we don’t want her hurt. The master wants her in good condition.” He barked into his phone.

Just before he clicked off he said a little embarrassedly, “And could you send a car to pick us up as well? My car’s out of gas.”

An hour later, River was at his base again, waiting patiently for Tracey’s return.

He was expecting Tracey to come along, completely shackled and submissive after twenty minutes with the master.

What he did not expect was for her to come in on a stretcher, unconscious.

“Jesus Christ!” he cried as she was carried in.

“What the hell did you DO to her?”

“We rammed her off the road as you instructed sir,” said the man who had been carrying Tracey.

“But from where you were, the DRIVER should have received maximum damage, not her!” He protested.

The two men exchanged a look.

Then it hit River. He groaned. “For the love of God! There were two other people in that car that could have driven, yet they let her behind the wheel.” He shook his head then sighed. “I suppose she would have driven into a building or something even if we hadn’t rammed her off the road.”

The two men shrugged. They didn’t care whether she would have driven into a building or off the edge of the world as long as they got paid.

River scratched his chin, thinking of what to do. Then he turned to the two men. “Get her fixed up, the put her in with Brooke. I would do it myself but I’ve got somewhere to be and it’s not here.” Then he turned to walk off.

The men sniggered. “Off for another date with Pam?” one asked cheekily.

River sighed again. "Pam" was his girlfriend's nickname; she was also called Pamela Anderson due to the size of her breasts. Her boobs seemed to be bigger than her head.

River rolled his eyes, and then stopped. "What did you do with the other people in the car?"

The two men looked at each other uncomfortably. "We took the boy, fixed up the car and wiped the two adults. They won't remember being knocked off the road. Then we sent them off." One said, not mentioning that the two adults seemed to be immune.

River nodded. "Good enough. Keep her under high security, that girl is a hazard!" he warned as he strode off.

6 - And she escapes!

Tracey, contrary to what River and the two men had thought, was conscious. A painful kind of consciousness but a consciousness none the less. She was also no-one's fool and as a safety precaution, had pretended to be out, so that she could eavesdrop.

She had almost blown her cover when she had heard River. "A hazard?" she had thought angrily "How dare he!" but she had forced herself to stay still. Her consciousness depended on it.

She heard River's light footsteps slowly fade and when they were completely gone, she felt herself being wheeled away.

She continued to play dumb, but then she felt a warm tingling feeling, and then the pain was gone. Again.

So she waited for a little while, then jumped up and slapped the first man's temples. Then she pressed a single finger to a spot just above the second man's nose.

They crumpled soundlessly.

Tracey ran down the corridor, making sure it was the one River hadn't gone down. There didn't seem to be anybody there, so she opened a door and went in.

There were a bunch of great big luminescent orange creatures with huge floppy ears and ray guns, all trained on her.

The biggest one held up a card that said, "Put your hands up, and don't make any loud noises." but they seemed to say to her, "Please don't scream, because we are very sensitive to sound."

Now let me explain. Tracey was generally a non human loving person and liked all creatures, normal or abnormal, but in this case when the creature is armed with a ray gun and threatening to zap her, she would make an exception.

She opened her mouth and let out a note that would have had an opera singer quivering with jealousy.

The creatures fell back, out cold.

Tracey, pleased with her handiwork, started to back out but at the back of the room a wall slid up so more floppy eared creatures stepped out, wearing bright pink earmuffs.

"Oh shoot," she said, before she burst out laughing.

Tracey knew that she was no fashion expert, but acid pink and fluorescent orange were what most people would call a "fashion no-no."

Tracey wasn't too fazed at first, after all the laws of physics dictate that sound travels better through solids as opposed to air, however, this rule does not apply to soundproofed objects, plus that was only in theory.

So that was why she found herself being chased down five flights of stairs in an attempt to shake-off her evidently colour-blind pursuers, cursing her high school physics teacher as she ran.

After the sixth flight of stairs, she managed to give the orange-creatures the slip by ducking into a conveniently situated room, labelled, "Weaponry."

She waited until the footsteps had died away, then she waited for five more minutes.

When she was sure there was no one who would notice, she turned on the lights and gasped at the sight.

The entire room, save the floor, was covered in guns, swords, daggers, throwing knives and stars, maces, staffs, scythes, bow and arrows, cutlasses, machetes, hand grenades, stun guns, spears and whips.

Tracey grabbed two sets of throwing knives and was about to leave when she saw a pair of twin swords.

They weren't exactly right for her she thought as she pulled them off the wall, but they were better suited to her than the knives.

She moved to put them back, but instead put them in her utility belt, (don't ask why she had one), and ran out the back door.

Tracey kept running until she came to a doorway that said exit. It was a bit suspicious but she was too hungry and too tired to care.

She was almost at the archway when a rather high voice piped up, "Excuse me, but are you an all-powerful elemental mage, who has been rammed off an entrance to a motorway, was kidnapped and brought here while incapacitated, escaped her carers and stolen weapons from the lax-security weapons room?"

Tracey whirled round, trying to hide the swords behind her back, only to find herself face to face, with a little boy about half her age. (For those of you with short memories, she is fifteen.)

"Who, me?" she said insincerely, "Naw!"

The boy seemed slightly doubtful. "Really? Because Mister River told me that the girl was your height, with your coloured hair, your coloured eyes and she looked like she'd been dragged through hell and back through a bush, and you match the description perfectly!"

Tracey muttered about where River could stick his opinion of her appearance.

The boy piped up again, "And oh yeah, Mister River said not to let anyone, especially girls who had your height, your coloured hair and eyes and looked like-" he said till Tracey cut him off.

"Yeah, yeah. Alright, look kid, I'll tell you the truth, I am the powerful mage you were warned about, now step aside or I'll have to gut you like a fish." She admitted.

The boy shook his head gravely, "I'm sorry, but I can't do that, I'm afraid I'll have to detain you while I wait for mister River."

Tracey did the math. She was twice the kid's size and had much longer legs for running.

The boy saw her face and looked at his tiny body.

"I don't suppose I look very intimidating, do I?" he commented absently, but before Tracey could nod in reply, he said simply, "I suppose I'll have to fix that."

Then before Tracey's disbelieving eyes, he began to swell.

His skin stretched as well then when he was about eleven feet high, it hardened so it was like granite, then suddenly a transparent slime flowed from the top of his head and hardened into a cocoon.

Tracey wanted to run towards the exit but she was transfixed in horror.

After a few minutes, the rumbling crunching noise stopped and it was silent for a while.

Tracey began to inch her way towards the entrance when the cocoon burst open and the thing inside let out a roar that put what can only be known as the fear of God in her heart.

What emerged from the split cocoon was nothing short of terrifying. A twelve-foot-tall, (it stretched another foot in the cocoon), thing that looked like it was a badly crafted puppet made entirely out of boulders, except for some twiggy things that seemed to hold it together.

"T-t-troglodyte!" she whispered in horror.

The monster turned to look at her in surprise, though it was hard to tell, because the only discernable feature on his face was his mouth.

"Now how did you know that?" it asked in an educated bass rumble.

"I don't know." She whispered again "I just did." She was surprised to find that she was telling the truth.

"Ah, well." The thing said "I suppose I shall have to keep you here till Mister River comes along. He wouldn't be happy if I let you go."

Tracey, despite her bleak and disagreeable situation, she realized that the trog wouldn't hurt her because deep down underneath the rock, he was a gentle seven year old.

"Listen kid," she said cajolingly, "I really don't want to fight you, but you're between me and my way

out. I'm begging you, let me go!"

The trog shook his head firmly.

Tracy sighed.

Then she pulled out the throwing knives.

The trog burst out laughing. "Ha ha! I'm made of rock! There's no way one of those puny knives will pierce me!"

Tracey looked at the knives.

Then she looked at the towering monster that was convulsed in laughter on the floor. Then she saw the sprinkler.

Now everyone knows that there are two ways to set off a sprinkler. One, is to light a fire under it, second is to hit the nearest fire alarm, which luckily for Tracey, was right behind the trog.

What most people DON'T know seeing as they don't frequently encounter troglodytes is that a trog's weakness is water.

Tracey however, was one of the few people who happened to know this fact though God only knows why she did, so she positioned herself, prayed for a miracle and threw.

It was a perfect bull's-eye.

The water rained down and as soon as it hit the trog's skin, it made a hissing sound and began to steam up.

Tracey watched the trog for a minute as it shrunk back into the weedy little boy, then ran for the exit.

She was almost there. Just one or two more steps and...

There was a dull thump as something buried itself in Tracey's back. She stopped, pulled it out and scrutinized it. It was a dagger.

She expected it to be covered in blood, but it wasn't. It also had some writing across the blade. It said Slumber Knife.

Slowly she turned to see who had thrown it, and there, standing in front of the little boy on the floor, was River.

Tracey tried to run but she felt her legs turning to jelly. She began to feel drowsy, her eyelids got heavier and soon it was all she could do to keep upright.

She turned to face River again and flung the dagger at him with as much force as it could muster, but it

wasn't enough.

The blade clattered to the floor a few inches from where it had begun.

After a long minute, her legs gave out and she hit the ground as well. Her mind seemed to clog up and her vision blurred, until eventually, she didn't see at all.

7 - And she's caught again

River was not happy. In fact, he was plain pissed off. He had faced perils some humans cannot begin to imagine. He had fought monsters that would have given a grown man nightmares, he had even laughed in the face of death, but never, NEVER had he encountered a being as annoying as her.

As he carried her up the stairs he debated whether or not he should attempt to reconcile with his girlfriend, then he decided against it.

He would have dumped her the next day after he had gotten what he had wanted and then found a new girl. As his sister said, "You choose them, use them, abuse them and lose them. Not necessarily in that order" she had added.

He snarled as he almost tripped then doubled his pace. He might not have a girl to have fun with tonight but he still had things to do.

Finally he got to the top floor. Then he walked down the corridor and knocked on the fourth door on the right.

The door slowly opened, and standing in the doorway was an adorable girl who looked about twelve, with rosy cheeks, big blue eyes, brandishing a rusty axe the size of her body. When she saw who it was, she dropped the axe and screamed "River!" before throwing her arms around him in a big bear hug.

River smiled saying, "Hey Brooke," and against his better judgement, hugged her back, forgetting he was still carrying Tracey, who fell on her head with a painful thwack.

River sighed wearily, then threw Tracey over his shoulder and carried her into Brooke's room, then dumped her unceremoniously on the bed, and then he turned to Brooke.

"Look I've got stuff to do, so do me a favour; get her measured, into those old fashioned dresses, you know, the old English ones which made it a trial to walk in. Give her the corset, lace-y bits, the whole shebang. I don't want her able to move more than an inch a minute on her own okay?" he rapped out briskly.

Brooke nodded and River sighed in relief.

But Brooke couldn't resist adding, "That thing you were going to do, does it concern a certain balloon breasted girlfriend of yours?"

River rolled his eyes and began to walk away, but said nothing.

"Or maybe," Brooke continued, thoroughly enjoying herself, "You've got a crush on her and can't bear to do the deed yourself."

River turned, then he raised a single eyebrow that clearly said, "That's not true, shut up now."

Brooke fell silent but gave him a smug look with an insufferable grin that replied, "Well if it's not true, it shouldn't bug you and if it doesn't bug you I can still say it."

Then River raised the other eyebrow as well as the other, saying, "Try me."

Brooke still wore the insufferable smile, but she didn't say anything.

She loved her brother, but despite what he thought about her, she was not dumb enough to provoke him at that moment in time and was sure that he would be in no humour to take it as a joke. She knew from past experience.

8 - They didn't expect her to wear that. Did they?

When Tracey woke up, the first thing she noticed was that she had a bruise on her head. She wondered if it had anything to do with the strange dream she had had of being dropped on her head.

Then she noticed that she was in a huge, soft bed with goose feather pillows and duvets.

Then she noticed she was wearing a silky blue negligee.

She stepped out of the bed and went to the wardrobe and flung it open, then gasped in shock at the sight.

The wardrobe was huge, literally a walk-in wardrobe. That wasn't the problem.

The wardrobe filled till bursting. That wasn't the problem either.

It was the actual clothes.

They looked like they dated back to the nineteenth century, at LEAST, but the real horror was that the material itself was new, like someone intended for her to WEAR them.

She shuddered.

"What kind of sadist would wear that thing?" she thought.

The door creaked open and Tracey dove behind the bed in one slick movement. She waited for River to stride in so she could attack him, but instead, a little girl padded in.

She had tawny hair unerringly like Tracey, which was odd because most people said that her exact colour of hair could not be duplicated. Her eyes were clear blue and she had a healthy complexion.

She looked relatively harmless but the trog she had met had looked just as innocent, if not more.

"Hi, I'm Brooke" the girl said.

Tracey was taken aback. It seemed almost surreal after being kidnapped, threatened, stabbed and pursued, to have someone being polite.

"Hey, my name's Tracey." Tracey said as politely as she could manage.

Brooke came and sat on the side of the bed and asked thoughtfully, "Aren't you going to put on some clothes? You'd better hurry because we've got to see the master soon."

"That's a great idea Brooke why don't you give me the clothes and I will put them on immediately." Tracey said, praying that the clothes in the wardrobe weren't for her, but her luck was running out

because Brooke simply said, "There are clothes for you in the wardrobe."

Tracey shook her head, "I'm sorry but these clothes look like they've come from *Pride and Prejudice*, or *Pirates of the Caribbean*!"

Brooke shrugged, "River said he doesn't want you to be able to move more than an inch a minute. He thinks you'll try and escape."

Tracey muttered something under her breath, that sounded remarkably like, "He should!" then she straightened. "Listen to me Brooke, I like you, but I swear to the Lord in heaven, I will go outside dressed like this!"

Brooke blanched. "You wouldn't!" she whispered.

Tracey gave her a feral grin to let Brooke know that she wasn't kidding.

Brooke looked like she was about to burst into tears. "Please at least wear some underwear!" she begged "River will kill me if he sees you going commando!"

Tracey looked down at herself and realised that she was not wearing the basic garment every pubescent female must wear and blushed.

"Okay," she conceded. "Underpants and a bra, but if I don't get some jeans I will walk outside in this nightdress-thingy with only a bra and panties on and trust me, I do not think your boss will be pleased."

Brooke was torn. She knew the master would not be happy to see her flouncing around half-naked, but she had been specially commanded by River to not let her wear anything but the dresses, well not commanded, but asked. So Brooke decided to call Tracey's bluff.

Ten minutes later, Tracey was running through the various corridors screaming like an idiot dressed in a transparent, silky negligee and a bra and a pair of lacy panties, while Brooke ran behind her waving a pair of skinny jeans and a t-shirt.

"All right! You win! You can wear the jeans!" she yelled as she tore after Tracey.

Tracey gave an exhilarated laugh, thinking about how she hadn't done anything like this since her friend had dared her to streak through the cafeteria. It had been amazing! Until the principal caught her.

That had sucked.

This was just like then apart from the fact that no one was stopping her.

Or at least that's what she thought before she slammed face first into River.

River being pure muscle, withstood the attack pretty well, unlike Tracey, who bounced off his chest, like a ball off a wall.

"Owww..." she groaned from the floor.

River was speechless. For a second. Then he grabbed Tracey by her arms and shook her roughly saying, "What do you think you're doing?!"

"Oh, God I think my nose is broken." Tracey said, gingerly feeling her nose for blood. River sighed in disgust.

Just then, a guy of about twenty walked into the corridor and blushed like a maniac when he saw Tracey and River, then muttering apologies, positively ran in the opposite direction as fast as his legs could carry him. But not before he had thrown something at their feet.

River sighed again as he picked up the foil sachet that said, XXXXXXXXXXL condoms for studs.

"What in God's name are you wearing?" he asked angrily.

"Why are you asking me? You put me in it and you have a much better view of it than I do." She cocked her head, and then added as an afterthought, "Anyways, I thought vampires didn't believe in God. By the way, does that say XXXXXXXXXXL?" Tracey looked at him meaningfully, "Seriously, how big can that get?"

River turned a funny shade of red and might have lost complete control of himself if Brooke hadn't come dashing in.

"Tracey! TRA—Oh." She said as she caught sight of River.

River turned his head to glare at Brooke and if looks could kill, Brooke would be deader than a Sunday roast.

River dangled Tracey towards Brooke a good two feet off the ground.

"Explain." He snapped.

Brooke shuffled her feet, "Well you see, she didn't like the dresses, but you said she couldn't wear anything like jeans, so she kind of—"

"Ran off like a Looney?" Tracey suggested as she tried to wriggle out of River's iron grasp.

River shook his head and made as if to swing her over his shoulder, but then he realized how it would look, so he just held her the way she was.

"Hey, this is killing my shoulders, put me down!" Tracey complained after a while.

River answered flatly, "Then maybe you'll think twice before you decided to run up and down the corridors half naked."

Luckily, River had power walked them back to Brooke's room and flung Tracey on to the ground.

“Hey!” she shouted indignantly, “that hurt! Anyways, what’s the big deal, I am dressed, I’ve just got on less than usual.”

River pulled Tracey up again, then waved his hand in front of her, muttering something, and in a second, Tracey was clothed in one of the dresses from the eighteen hundreds.

Tracey clawed at the dress but it seemed to be glued to her skin.

“Don’t bother trying to get it off. It’s not coming off till I say so.”

Tracey, having given up trying to tear the dress off tried ripping it off with her teeth so she couldn’t speak for a while.

River grabbed Tracey by the arm again and towed her out of the door, saying “Come on you little nudist, we’re going for some exercise.”

Brooke followed in their wake, holding the pair of jeans and t-shirt.

*

After much struggling, shoving and swearing, River more or less threw Tracey out of a door. When she got up to throttle him, she realised that she was on grass, outside, in wide open space with no walls or anything.

Tracey got to her feet then ran as fast as she could, which it must be noted, was quite fast, however, she was also wearing the demon dress from the dark ages so after six steps she fell onto her face.

Tracey got up again and did the same thing, again and again and again.

If Tracey hadn’t been so frantic, she would have realized that River was not following her, in fact he was leaning against the wall watching her.

After her fifth try, Tracey managed to get her balance and began to run without falling down. “I’m free!” she yelled “I’m free! I’m—”

Then she smacked into an invisible wall, then slid down like a bad cartoon running into glass and finally crumpled in a heap on the ground.

She got up and strode back to River, though the effect was pretty much ruined after the first two times that she had fallen.

Tracey glared at River who was trying his hardest not to laugh and Brooke who seemed to have passed out from the pain of laughter, but was still making little twitchy movement in her subconscious.

“You knew,” she whispered murderously.

“Don’t be silly,” River answered, “Of course I knew, I would have told you but I thought you’d like to find out on your own.”

Tracey was frothing at the mouth by now.

Brooke had revived, but found Tracey's face so funny looking, she had passed out again.

Just then two giant beasts appeared more or less out of nowhere, and Tracey eyes widened. One of the things shrunk and turned human but the other stayed wolf.

The one that had turned back into a human was a tall, black haired, blue eyed demon boy, really hot and probably a player.

He smiled at River and slapped a high five, then looked Tracey up and down.

"Nice ensemble," he said looking down on her, then he turned to River and smirked, "You generally go for girl with a bit more chest, what's the matter, have you dropped them for the leggy ones?"

Tracey snarled. Before River could stop her she had reached out with lightning speed and grabbed hold of the boy's crotch.

Then she began to squeeze.

"You will NEVER speak about me like that or so help me, I will make you sing soprano FOR LIFE, understand?" she hissed as she heaped the pressure.

The boy nodded, past speaking.

"I said, do you understand!" Tracey said again, squeezing as hard she could.

"YES I UNDERSTAND!" he bellowed in pain as Tracey gave his balls a final squeeze before allowing him to collapse on to the soft ground.

River stared, his jaw having dropped quite a while ago.

"Close you mouth or you'll catch a fly." Tracey snapped, looking narked.

"Wow." River said in awe.

The other wolf, who had gone up to the boy who was lying on the floor changed back in to a human as well and Tracey was slightly surprised to see that it was a girl.

"Nice one!" she said in a congratulatory tone that seemed very different from her companion's and a thump on Tracey's back that nearly knocked her down.

"Um, thanks?" Tracey said, wondering if it was the right thing to say.

"S'alright, we girls have got to stick together against the guys!" as she said the last few words, she playfully punched River in the arm.

"By the way, I'm Caddy, that's Damien." The girl said as she pointed to the boy on the ground.

Tracey was confused. In every book she had ever read concerning vampires and werewolves she was sure that vampires and wolves were mortal enemies, she had never read about them being friends, throwing playful punches or slapping fives.

“Erm, aren’t you guys supposed to hate each other I mean, you’re a werewolf he’s a vampire!” she asked the wolf girl.

Caddy burst out laughing. “Gosh! You believe that bunk? It’s just a myth! You really need to face reality.”

Tracey made a face. “I’m sorry did the TALKING WEREWOLF GIRL just tell me to face reality or was it my warped imagination.”

Everyone chuckled.

All of a sudden a boy dropped out of the sky and landed lightly on his feet.

Tracey almost passed out.

“Hey, River, how’s it going?” he said, waving. Then he caught sight of Tracey. “What’s the matter River” he said teasingly, “have you given up on girls with big—?”

Then he saw Damien on the ground.

“What happened to him?” the boy from the sky asked, lightly kicking Damien in the side.

“He finished the sentence,” River said dryly, pointing to Tracey, who had the murderous look in her eyes again.

Sky boy said, “Hey, sorry dude, peace!” then he offered his hand.

Tracey took it after a moment of hesitation. She shook his hand.

“I’m Matt, Matt Brown.” He said, shaking her hand energetically.

“I’m Tracey Monroe.” She said as he waggled her around.

Matt smiled at her, “You know, I’ve got a great way to make up for what I almost said...”

Tracey’s guard was instantly up. There was no WAY whatever it was could be a good thing.

“What do you mean?” she asked cautiously.

“Well, I’m guessing you’ve never ridden a dragon before, but trust me you’ll love it!” He said excitedly.

As Tracey realized what he meant, she began to protest, but it was too late. In one fluid movement he had scooped her up and flung her into the sky.

“AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARGH!” Tracey screamed as she hurtled up into the sky, her arms and legs wildly wind-milling as she ascended.

Then Tracey stopped screaming and realized what a lovely view there was.

And then she stopped going up and started going down, so she continued screaming.

Then she stopped screaming again as she saw a beautiful bird fly past and as she was viewing it’s majesty she realized she must be near the ground so she would just be about to hit the ground when suddenly—

THUMP!

Tracey hit something large and rough. Then she started to slide downwards so she grabbed on to a huge protruding triangle that came out of whatever it was that had saved her.

Then she looked beneath herself and saw the huge creature she was riding on.

“Oh my GO-OOOD!” she screamed as the creature went into a nose dive.

Just as she was sure the creature was going to pile drive them both till they were no more, it pulled out of the dive and began a complex series of twists and turns before Tracey realized that she had had enough.

She dragged herself up the spikes until she was at the beast’s head.

Then she took off her shoe and proceeded to beat the thing’s head saying, “Bad dragon-y creature, BAD! Land now!” until the dragon deposited Tracey on the soft ground where she had started. Once she had dismounted, she realized that it actually hadn’t been that bad. In fact it had been fun, so she walked over to the dragon thing that seemed to be a bit tired and said, “That was fun, can we do it again?”

The dragon opened one eye and poked his face right against hers.

“Is that a JOKE?” the dragon said in Matt's voice.

“You hit me all the way down here and expect me to take you back up? Forget it!”

Then the dragon slowly shrunk until he was human shaped.

Tracey didn’t seem at all perturbed by now, in fact her not being worried, worried her more than what she had just seen.

River who had been sitting patiently with Damien and Caddy, waiting for their return walked over to Tracey and Matt.

“Come on, we’ve got to go meet the master now.” River said, tugging on Tracey’s arm as he said it.

She wanted to stay, but she knew she would have to meet the master inevitably so she might as well have done it then.

Tracey waved goodbye to Brooke, Matt, Caddy and Damien as she walked away.

When they had gone far enough, Tracey asked the one question that had been disturbing her ever since she had met River's friends.

"Why are your friends so nice?" she blurted out.

River smiled at her wryly, "I'm assuming what you're actually wondering is why they're my friends seeing as I'm not so nice."

Tracey met his eye fearlessly. "Yes, that is more or less what I meant." She said defiantly.

River rolled his eyes up in mock disbelief. "You know," he said "girls are supposed to deny ever thinking such a thing and say that I'm despicable for saying so."

Tracey snorted in a very unladylike way saying, "You are despicable for many reasons. That is not one of them. Now will you answer my question?"

*

"Now will you answer my question?" Tracey had asked him. Actually, it was more of a demand.

River smiled again, this one a genuine smile. It was such a refreshing change, from the suck-uppy people who wanted nothing more than a higher rank and would not mind grovelling in compliance to feed their ambition, to sharp, no-nonsense replies and blind hatred.

"Hel—lo! Anyone in there?" Tracey said, waving her hand in front of his eyes, checking to see whether he was still alive.

He caught her hands and held them, then said evenly, "Why do you think I'm such a bad person?"

*

"Why do you think I'm such a bad person?" River had asked earnestly, the look on his face completely innocent.

"Tch!" Tracey grunted, but let her hands remain where they were. She couldn't be bothered to take them away, and it felt kind of nice.

"If you can help it, try not to be stupid!" she said cuttingly. "You attack me, mess with my head, tell your friends to eat me, try to kidnap me, fail, have me run off a road, throw a dagger in my back and force me into this medieval monstrosity and then you wonder why I see you as a bad guy? Please." Tracey said nastily.

River sighed, "Come on," he said dejectedly, "We'd better go find the master."

Tracey bit her lip. She wasn't going to feel sorry for him, but he looked so upset, that she couldn't help

adding, "But I might change my mind, who knows, you just might redeem yourself."

River smiled as he led her to a huge set of double doors. He let her walk in first and once she had, he slammed the door shut behind her and locked it.

Tracey turned around at once and began to pound on the door screaming, "River, this is a shoot way to redeem yourself!"

Then she heard a rustling sound behind her, so she turned and saw that she was in an arena with people everywhere watching her.

Tracey stared for a minute, waved, and then returned to pounding on the door.

"River, damn you, open the door!" Tracey yelled.

"He's not going to open the door a lilting voice said from behind her.

Tracey spun round to see four people advancing, one beefy and broad, another lithe and long, the third short and squat, and the last gangly and scrawny.

The second one was talking, "He has had his orders and he obeyed, the way we will obey our orders."

The tall skinny one stepped forward and said hoarsely, "Let's get this over with, I've got things to do." Then he unleashed a blast of blue lightning, headed directly for Tracey.

When the smoke from the lightning had cleared the skinny one came forward to see what was left and found nothing.

Not a pile of ashes, not a mangled burning body, not even an imprint just nothing. He scratched his head and sighed. "Looks like I vaporised her, lets go."

But the others weren't watching him, they were watching a girl in a robe from the 18th century trying to scale the walls above.

Once Tracey realized that they were looking at her she smiled down at them and waved.

Then she climbed as fast as she could. Then she slipped and fell into the beefy one's arms. She waved again.

"Hi there," she said coyly.

Then the beefy one threw her across the arena, so that she landed on the glass with a painful thwack and slid off.

When she hit the ground, she realised that there were weapons all around her. She searched frantically and found what she was looking for.

A set of daggers labelled, Slumber Knife.

Just then, the tall skinny one appeared at her side.

Instinctively, Tracey plunged the dagger into the guy's side. He sank to his knees and crumpled. Then she saw the stocky one approach.

He was asleep before he hit the ground.

Tracey grinned from where she was but all of a sudden, the knives weren't in her hand. The muscular-but-thin guy was holding them in his hand, then they ripped themselves to pieces.

"Little girls should not be playing with knives," he said smoothly as he pushed the scraps of metal that had once been daggers to the floor.

Tracey rootled around and drew out two long-ish swords, and stood. As she did, most of the dress fell away. It turned out that the dress could be torn off but it needed to be roughed up a whole lot before it was.

So Tracey was standing there, in half a dress and her petticoats, holding a sword in each hand. Her hair was tangled and she looked like she hadn't heard of a brush. She was scratched all over, with tell-tale bruises.

She looked terrifying.

The man who had stolen her daggers looked nonplussed, his mouth hanging slightly open.

It was the perfect opportunity to get in close and whack the guy on the head with the flat of one of her swords.

The man swayed a bit as his eyes went out of focus.

Tracey raised her hand, extended her middle finger, and then flicked the guy's nose lightly.

Unfortunately, the man did not crumple to the ground as Tracey had hoped he would. Instead he grabbed her arm so she used her free arm to whack him across the face with the flat of her other sword.

He sank like a rock in a pool of water.

Tracey smiled.

Then a huge rock flew out from nowhere and smacked her in the back. She flew through the air and landed on her front.

As she scrambled to her feet she felt something warm trickle from her head and realised it was blood. Then someone grabbed her by the hair.

She heard the beefy guy say behind her saying, "I could make you bleed a whole lot more, or, I can end it quickly. Your choice."

Tracey turned slowly and faced the muscular man, her head down, but then she lifted her head up and he saw her eyes were glowing blue-y-silver.

“Hey,” he said, slightly nervously, “what’s wrong with you dog?”

Tracey glared at him through her silver eyes.

The guy dropped her hair and started to back off. “Stay away from me you freaky little dog.”

Tracey stood then stopped dead.

Then she began to turn.

Slowly at first but then she started gathering speed, spinning like a manic top. Then all of a sudden, she stopped, pointing at the brawny guy.

Then he began to turn, slowly at first, like Tracey then as he got faster, he started to rise and while you couldn’t exactly see the air that was turning him, but every so often, Tracey would see some silver vapour that would disappear as quickly as it had appeared.

Then he was torn into six parts, head, torso, legs and arms.

As the body parts flopped to the floor, Tracey’s eyes faded to their natural colour.

She looked around her then said one word.

“EW.”

Tracey started to hyperventilate. “Oh my GOSH! I know he was trying to kill me but I didn’t want to kill him!”

“He will be fine,” said a familiar lilting voice.

Tracey dived for the swords just in time as a huge cutlass came crashing down on where she had been a second ago.

The tall guy she had knocked out with her swords was standing, holding the cutlass that had come incredibly close to ending her life.

“You little whore! You deliberately distracted me with your...your LOOSE ways!” he spat, swapping his soft sibilant voice for a harsh guttural whine.

Two red spots appeared on Tracey’s cheeks. “Ugh, just like a man to accuse a woman when the woman of cheating when the woman beats him. Now shut up and fight me.” She snorted.

The man looked like he was about to boil over.

“Why you impudent hussy!” he bellowed.

Tracey smiled.

The man attacked her with a force that could have sliced through diamond, but Tracey blocked it easily.

He began to thrust and parry, while Tracey countered every one of his attacks, which was a little bit surprising since the last time she had held a sword was when she had played an executioner in her school performance of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.

The man realised that he was not affecting her the way he wanted to.

“Enough games,” he snarled.

He started again, and this time, Tracey found that she had to struggle to keep up without killing him.

“Back off, I don’t want to hurt you!” she said through clenched teeth.

The man smiled a smile that deserved to be on a toothpaste advert for villains.

Then Tracey, who decided that she had had enough, went down on one knee, and then placed her sword against his groin.

“I am having a very bad time, and I really need a break, so either you cut me a break, or I slice your little buddy off. Then make you eat it. So what’ll it be?”

The man whispered, “I’ll back off.”

Tracey smiled.

Then she drove the hilt of her sword into the man’s family jewels.

He swayed, and then fell like a great oak.

Then Tracey dropped the swords. She walked over to where the body parts lay and put them together as best as she could.

Then she let the magic heal him.

It was kind of disgusting but incredible. The arms and legs rejoined the torso, as did his head.

The man looked around and then he sat up. He saw Tracey standing over him, looking tired and smiled.

He made as if to jump her but she sank her fist into his face before he had a chance to do whatever he wanted to do.

He was out like a light and after a second, so was Tracey.