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"I found her in the desert, running from the jungle," Hrvoje replied calmly. "She is my daughter now."

The man blinked a few moments, then his eyes widened. "O-oh! She's one of those kinds. I understand, but..." he trailed off, pulling a thin journal from below the counter. "You came to me for help with her," he waved a hand up and down at Rael, and Hrvoje nodded.

"Can you help?" He asked.

Raminas flipped quickly through the journal, eyes intent. "I'm not that familiar with Vieran biology, my old friend. If I try, it could hurt her. She could end up sterile for the rest of her life."

"It's what she wants," Hrvoje replied roughly. "You didn't see her out there, Raminas. She chose death in the desert over staying how she is."

Raminas winced. "Very well. I can try, but I'll need some of her blood and at least a week to modify my potions to take into account the differences between her and a Hyur or Miqu'te." He raised a hand quickly, stalling the immediate question.

"I know that's a long time," he added. "But just because she looks similar doesn't mean she is biologically. Ashlyn would never forgive me if I didn't do this right."

Rael still didn't understand anything that had been said, but the name of the man's wife - not that she knew it was that - drew her attention. She rolled the word in her mind, considering it. Could it be...

"Thank you, old friend!" Hrvoje slapped Raminas' back joyfully. "We will be here for at least a full moon, my Ravan is too rusty to consider traveling with her until we can speak properly." He turned to Rael, crouching down to meet her eyes.

"He help," he told her. "But need blood to do so. Father here, he will not hurt."

Rael nodded immediately, offering an arm. The alchemist took several vials of blood, then vanished into the back of the shop to work on them. Only after he was gone did Rael turn to her father, curiosity in her eyes.

“I heard...it sounded like a name,” she said. “What is Ashlyn?”

“Ashlyn his wife,” Hrvoje replied, watching her curiously.

“It’s a pretty name,” Rael said, letting it roll on her tongue. “Could...I be called that, Father?”

“Of course.” Hrvoje smiled brilliantly at her. He had given her suggestions on their journey through the desert, but none had fit. The blossoming smile on his daughter’s face said everything he needed to

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