

“Night with Brother Night”

“You didn’t permanently ruin Zatanna’s vocal cords, did you Ember?”

“No, Brother Night, I just singed them a little...she’ll probably recover her voice soon. Probably.”

“Excellent. I wouldn’t want her to suffer in silence. This ball gag will prevent her speaking actual spells, but we’ll still hear the delicious sounds of her torment.”

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‘If and when I get out of this,’ Zatanna thought, ‘I’m going to fire that booking agent. Yet another event booked without properly vetting the clients!’

When she had arrived at the address in the business district, she had re-read the text from the agent. It said to go up to the ‘panthouse.’ Zatanna rolled her eyes. ‘What a ditz, she can’t even spell ‘penthouse’ right. Blondes.’

Apparently the corporate client had requested an ‘escape artist’ themed show. Probably a bunch of investment bankers or lawyers looking for the cheap thrill of a lady magician in bondage. Zatanna sighed. The things a superheroine had to do to make a living in real life...

She started to sense something amiss as the elevator got closer to the top floors. Her suspicions were confirmed when the elevator doors opened and she saw Romalathi standing just outside.

Just as he took a step toward her, she froze him with a quick spell. It was the first spell she could think of, and she knew it wouldn’t last long. She needed to come up with something a little more permanent.

She was only one step into the foyer toward him when she saw something from the corner of her eye. Ember’s trap caught her off guard; she had been hiding beside the door while Romalathi distracted Zatanna.

Unfortunately it worked, and Ember was upon her before she could remember and then reverse a water spell. Gripping Zatanna’s face in her hands, Ember gave her an open mouthed kiss.

Zatanna’s eyes flew wide as Ember’s fiery breath caused a searing pain in her mouth and throat. She tried to push away, but Ember had gained leverage and had her pinned. Romalathi stepped forward slowly as he shook off the effects of Zatanna’s spell. He pointed at Zatanna and the vague image of something crumpled up appeared on his mask.

“You’re probably wondering why I didn’t just incinerate you while I could,” Ember said with a wicked grin. “Brother Night still wants to see that escape act. Or ‘attempt to escape’ act.” Ember grabbed hold of Zatanna’s upper arm. “So unless you want Romalathi to turn you into a mangled tin can, let’s not keep Brother Night waiting.”

Ember steered Zatanna forward and into the office space while Romalthi followed behind. Lightning outside illuminated the backlit shape of a man sitting in a chair in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows. The shape alone was enough to confirm that her most powerful adversary was waiting for her.

Zatanna felt a chill despite Ember's warm grip on her arm propelling her forward. Brother Night was not only dangerous; he was vindictive and cruel. To be vulnerable before him when he had vengeance on his mind...Zatanna knew she might not be in imminent peril, but that didn't mean this would be easy.

Brother Night leered at her, gloating over having his beautiful and troublesome nemesis helpless before him. "Zatanna. Lovely to see you again. I'm so glad you went all out on the costume for tonight. After you left us behind to go star in your own series, I was worried I might never have the chance to see you properly tied up wearing that costume."

Zatanna wanted so badly to fire off a snappy comeback; even more, she wanted to recite a special spell that would turn him into a newt. She could feel her throat starting to heal, and knew it wouldn't be long before she'd have her chance.

That was when she noticed the ball gag in Brother Night's hand. She gritted her teeth in frustration, and then winced as Ember began binding her wrists with a rope that seemed to pulse with energy.

"Tie her tightly, Ember. I want to see some quality writhing and wriggling from her."

"Of course, Brother Night. These devious ropes are infused with the souls of criminals she defeated. They will actively work against her efforts to escape."

"Excellent. And you brought plenty of the rope I see."

"Yes, Brother Night. Shall I make a body harness out of the rope, perhaps add a rope to a special spot so the souls can 'work against' her in other ways? After stripping off her costume, of course?"

"Yesssss," Brother Night replied. "I'm quite impressed at what your decadent mind is coming up with tonight."

"Thanks, boss...wait and see what else I have planned..."