

## The Raven Prince – chapter 4 - Awakening

By Martin S. Beckley

Nina did not like the sound of that. 'Mortifera, who are they?' she asked. Corvidae slid the seeker tablet from the recess in the wall and laid it on the heavy oak table. The muscles in her stomach tightened with hatred for all non shape-shifters. She tried ignoring the girl's question, but took pleasure at the hint of panic in Nina's voice. Corvidae looked down at the seeker tablet - a triangular slab of dull grey stone with a smooth indent at each corner. A clear crystal globe sat at its centre. Corvidae's skin prickled and itched with heat as she let the hatred grow. The wait was nearly over; soon she would open a portal and bring the Mortifera through. 'The Mortifera are deadly things!' she spat the words at Nina. 'They hunt at night. If you hear the swishing of their wings, you had better hide before they catch you with their long claws. They were banished beyond this world, but soon I will unleash them to seek out the warlock, Prudens, and all his people.' 'Who is Prudens? What did he do?' asked Nina. Corvidae stared at Nina. 'You ask too many questions. SILENTIUM!' A fizzing bolt of energy slammed into Nina's face and her mouth sealed shut. Corvidae cursed herself for wasting energy on the puny human. She had to find the other displacement stones so she could open the portal. She placed the blue stone in one of the indents on the seeker tablet. Instantly, the crystal globe shone with red light. A strong sent of cherries flooded the chamber and the red light expanded beyond the globe, reaching out and touching everything. Heat stung Olivia's skin as the light forced its way through her. It awoke a latent ability deep within her brain. Disjointed images of strange objects, places and people spiralled before her.

Misshapen voices screeched at her ears until they became one voice continually repeating the same phrase. 'The unkindness will prevail.' Overwhelmed with the onslaught, Olivia passed out.

The red light continued to expand, passing through the walls and then blasted around the world in a shockwave. The crystal globe on the seeker tablet cleared. A few moments later a small area blinked red in the lower part of the globe. Corvidae smiled, 'The second displacement stone has been located.' She spoke to Raymond, 'You must fly south east, keep on that heading and the red stone will reveal its location to you.' Raymond stared at his trapped friends. To conserve energy, Corvidae was not blocking them from his mind. He looked to Edward to tell him what to do. Corvidae lost her patience. 'I do not have time for this. The seeker blast will have alerted Prudens to our actions, you must fly now.' Raymond was too scared to move. Corvidae glanced at Edward, 'IKSKRUTIET,' she chanted. Edward screamed as he felt a thousand pins puncture his skin. Corvidae shrieked at Raymond, 'GO!' Raymond fled into the night.

