

The Raven Prince – chapter 9 – Prudens

By Martin S. Beckley

Corvidae instructed Raymond to check on Edward and Nina. In the great hall, Edward fell under the weight of the guards, and covering in a corner behind her shield, Nina screamed for help.

Olivia sensed Nina's scream; the grey silhouettes and yellow landscape disappeared and Olivia was back in her body in Carcer castle. She used Nina's scream as a reference, slipped out of her body again, and entered the great hall. Amid the fighting guards, she recognised her friends hiding behind the silver glow radiating from their shields. As Olivia sent safe and calming thoughts through the shields, the crystals glared into life. Blue, red, and purple light cascaded from the shields filling the hall with burning light. The guards froze, shimmered and disappeared. Nina heard Olivia's voice in her head, 'Raymond and I have to find Prudens. Can you take your time going back to the chamber?' 'Sure, how long do you need?' 'I don't think Corvidae will wait more than half-an-hour.' 'Ok. Thanks for helping with the guards.' Olivia placed an image of a bald, squat man with a thin line of hair shaped like a dagger on his chin, into Raymond's mind. 'This is Prudens; can you take me to him?' Raymond left Carcer castle and headed north; Olivia floated along side his purple silhouette. Raymond approached a small town, and circled

the central parkland where a crowd had gathered. He recognised Prudens and swooped down, landing at his feet. Olivia accessed Prudens' mind, 'Forgive me for intruding but I have news of Corvidae.' 'Who are you, why have you taken the form of a raven?' 'The raven is my friend, Raymond.

Corvidae changed him when we found her.' Prudens stepped out of his body and met Olivia in the saffron plain, their avatars stood face-to-face in sharp focus. 'Raymond – it means great protector. What news do you have?' he asked. 'Corvidae is about to open the portal and send the Mortifera after you.' 'Tell me, is Raymond a prince?' Prudens asked. 'He was given the title.' 'Then he must stay here. Corvidae will not open the portal without him; she has made him her protector just as the prophecy states.' Olivia had so many questions she wanted to ask. 'Why did you imprison Corvidae?' 'She believed her kind – metamorphs, shape-shifters – to be superior. They abused their abilities in the pursuit of crime. Our only option was to lock them in the form of small birds and incarcerate their leader, Corvidae. Many of our warlocks lost their lives in the process but Corvidae had to be stopped.' Olivia vanished.

Olivia was back in her body. Corvidae laughed at her, 'Thought I didn't know about your little travels did you? Well you cannot go anywhere without this,' she held Olivia's pendant in her hand. 'My people will escort Raymond back here and keep Prudens occupied until the Mortifera arrive. Afterwards, this stone will restore my abilities and nothing will be left to stop me.'

