

“What are you afraid of princess?”

They left me down there so long I finally fell asleep. I was jolted awake by a set of snake fangs driving into my face. I screamed. The pit was dark, my heart thumped out of my chest, and then the snake slithered away to a corner. In the kitchen above the deep pit, I could hear them laughing, I could hear the scratch of kitchen chairs being pushed on chipped linoleum. There was the ordinary smell of eggs and bacon cooking and coffee brewing, but there was nothing ordinary about my life.

If I screamed again, it would only make things worse. They wouldn't help me. They would only leave me in the dark longer. So I did something I'd stopped doing years ago. I began to pray.