

PROMPT #1: Write about a god desperately trying to get their chosen hero to follow the path they set out for them.

Fighting Fate

by **Teagan Lunceford**

I let out an exasperated sigh, watching the clock tick closer to the start of my shift. I was late.

I pinched the bridge of my nose, “Where did you put the car keys.”

“I shall cease hiding your possessions and will return them to their rightful places, if you agree to follow your destiny,” an echoing voice answered.

“Possessions? *Plural?* What else have you— Ugh. I don’t have time for this.” I grabbed my coat.

“You cannot run from your destiny,” the voice intoned.

“Watch me,” I grumbled, and slammed the door behind me.

I ran the short few blocks to the nearest bus stop. Rounding the last corner, I spotted the bus beginning to pull away from the stop.

“Wait!” I yelled, waving an arm.

It was no use, however, and to my despair the bus rolled away from the station and down the road.

“Shit...and the next bus is in...” I checked the clock, “...fuck.”

I slumped down onto the bus stop bench, groaning. This was all the fault of that... creature that showed up in my life last week. I had bought an antique mirror, thinking it could make a lovely gift for my grandmother. When I uncovered the glass, however, I was knocked off my feet by a blast of blinding light and the swirling of shadows. The next thing I knew, I was being haunted by a being calling itself a god and hell-bent on forcing me to follow some sort of “destiny.”

Apparently, when I had uncovered the mirror I had released not only this “god,” but also a “great evil.” The god is certain that I must track down and reseal the “evil” to “fix my mistake” and “save the world.” Yeah, right. As if I’d ever do that. I just want to get through my terrible job, get my paycheck, and relax watching TV all weekend.

The Thing had other ideas. It started to torment me, haunt me like some irritating toddler poltergeist. It would hide my keys, leave doors open, slam the same doors in my face, short-circuit my electronics, and sabotage my schedule. Like today. I groaned again.

“I can make all of this stop if you would agree to fulfill your destiny,” that irritating voice echoed in my ears.

I grit my teeth. Oh yeah, it followed me everywhere too.

Shoving earbuds in my ears, I turned my music up to full-blast. I was stubborn. It couldn’t keep this up forever. I just needed to wait it out.

The next day I had taken steps to ensure I always had my car keys with me, and smirked thinking I had outsmarted the being. However as I opened the fridge, I frowned. A putrid smell spilled out of the fridge and I recoiled at the sight and scent of rot. Everything in the fridge had spoiled. Shutting the door, I took a calming breath.

“I’ll just get something to go,” I mumbled, walking to the front door.

“I can provide you with a feast fit for a god, if you would reseal the evil you released,” the god echoed behind me.

“No,” I grumbled, and opened the door.

An ear-splitting crack made me flinch, and before my eyes the sky opened up and fell down in a torrential downpour. Large hailstones cracked against the pavement. I winced and watched in horror as they shattered my car’s windshield and tore up my yard.

My watch beeped. I was going to be late again if I waited any longer. I stalked back to the kitchen and began rifling through the cabinets.

“Things will only get worse if you continue to fight your fate,” the echo growled.

I pulled out a pizza pan. “Fuck off,” I hissed back.

Holding the pan above me for protection, I ran into the storm.

The next day, the bruises on my body shone a dark purple where I had been pummeled by the hail. I could barely feel them, though. I could barely feel anything at all. I was numb with shock. Before me stood the smoldering remains of my home. Burnt to ash, not a single thing was spared the wrath of the flames. I could faintly hear one of the emergency workers trying to talk to me but none of his words would register. They said a socket had experienced

an electrical surge and the house quickly caught fire. They said it was a freak accident, and the speed with which the house was consumed by the inferno was like nothing they've ever seen. I knew better. I knew why the fire really happened.

“Will you listen to me now?” a cold voice echoed.

“Shut UP!” I screamed, digging my hands into my hair, “Why won't you leave me alone?!”

“I'm sorry, but I have to make sure you are alright before I leave you alone,” the emergency personnel awkwardly said.

“No— sorry, not you- I was...Ugh,” I buried my face in my hands. I shivered, fighting the tears trying to gather at the corners of my eyes.

“Wait here a moment, I'll get you a blanket,” the medic said, seeing my shiver, and running off towards the flashing lights.

“You are my chosen hero. You released the evil. It is your destiny to right this wrong. It is your fate to re-seal this evil. I will never leave you alone. Your path is inevitable. It is pointless to fight it,” the so-called “god” said.

“Fate-this, destiny-that,” I growled, “I think you're full of shit! We make our own path in life, and I choose to not be your pawn. Surely you can find someone else. Someone who doesn't have a life— a family— things they would be leaving behind!”

“So you say if you did not have a family, you would fulfill your destiny?” The voice sounded curious and... eager?

Dread filled my stomach. “No. No, no, no. Don't you dare even touch my family.”

Silence.

“Do you hear me?! Touch them and I will kill you!”

The god did not respond.

Fuck. I pulled out my phone and frantically dialed my parent's home phone. No answer. Panic and nausea rose in my throat.

“Here's a blanket for— Woah!” The medic broke off in surprise as I leapt up at the sound of his voice, snatched the keys visible on his belt from him, and made a break for his van.

“Hey! Wait!” Shouts broke out behind me as I shoved the keys into the ignition and twisted the car into drive. I could worry about the repercussions of auto theft later. I had to get to my family.

I barely registered the blaring of horns and squeal of tires as I barreled down the road. I barely even had the forethought to put the van into park before I tumbled out. I hit the ground

running and scrambled towards my parents' home.

The lights were on and all was eerily silent. My family was never silent. Something was wrong. I tried the front door. Locked. Of course it was.

Backing up, I sized up the window to the living room. That would work. I steeled myself, got a running start, and slammed my body into the window, feeling it shatter under my weight.

A small cry escaped my throat as I hit the ground and felt shards of glass dig into my skin. The slicing pain was nothing as I looked up, however, compared to the shattering of my soul as I met the glassy eyes of my mother. My hands felt wet, and I lifted them to see blood shining on my palms.

“What...did you *DO*?” I choked out.

“There is nothing in the way barring you from your destiny now,” the echo crooned.

I clenched my fists, “This evil... how is it summoned.”

“Yes! Great! You're finally seeing reason!” The being cheered.

The joy in its voice made me sick. A faint glow appeared on the ground in front of me. “It can be called upon by drawing this set of patterns.”

I began quietly tracing the pattern onto the floor with the blood staining my hands as the god continued to ramble on, blind in its own self-importance.

“Of course, you are but a weak mortal. You are not yet in a suitable state of which you could even hope to face it and survive. It will likely take a— wait, what are you doing?”

I finished tracing the pattern and sat back, watching as the shadows in the room grew darker.

“What are you doing?!” The echo screeched, “You fool! You will die if you try and fight it now!”

I ignored the voice and watched as the shadows morphed and stretched into a scowling creature. It towered above, and a spark of recognition glinted in its solid white glowing eyes.

“Well, if it isn't the mortal who released me from my prison? Do I sense my old enemy with you as well?” The creature laughed, “Mortals are foolish, but surely you are not so arrogant to think you will be able to kill me?”

I stood, and looked the creature in the eye. Malice stared back and I swore I could almost feel the fear radiating from the invisible god nearby. I glanced again to the corpses lying on the other end of the room and felt hatred bubble up within me. I looked back at the creature once more, “Are you able to kill a god?” The creature grinned.