

Well, What about the Well?

Sam Huffer

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“Well?” asks the judge.

I sigh and look past him at the wall of the chamber and the glowing band of blue stone embedded in it. I get why it’s used – catching those who lie about their doings in court, their motivations in parliament, whether they think so and so is an ass (maybe not that last one), but gods, is it pissing me off right now. It doesn’t help that his questioning is exactly like how mum always nags and heckles me about every little detail of my social life that’s none of her business – girl friends especially. I swear, if she could shove one of these Verity Chambers in the house, she’d interrogate me like this until she’d extracted every single secret of mine, however stupid it was. I look back at the judge and he raises an eyebrow impatiently, as if he feels he’s entitled to an answer. Just like mum. All he’s missing is the oversized goggles she calls glasses. I clench my teeth and glare back at him. Fine. I’ll just serve his entitled ass the same nonsense I give her.

“Well? What about a well?” I ask. “The things you draw water from, right? Is that relevant?”

The judge blinks. “I beg your pardon?”

“Why? Don’t you understand your own question?”

His eyebrow drops to join its partner in a frown. “Young man, would you please answer the question?”

“The one about the well?”

“What well?” snaps the judge. Good, I’m winding him up. Good thing it’s unprofessional for him to grab me by the hair.

“How should I know? Didn’t you ask about a well?”

“No, I did not.”

“But didn’t you just say, “What well?” ”

The judge glares at me. “I did not say anything about a well!”

The band of stone flashes red for a couple of seconds. Got him. Only technically, but still.

“Then why the red?” I ask, pointing at the enchanted stone with my eyes, since my hands are shackled to the bench I’m seated at.

“Look here, you little brat,” he snarls under his breath, standing with his eyes closed. Looks like we’re almost done here.

“Little? But aren’t I taller than you?”

Checkmate.

“That’s it!” he roars. “Get him out of my sight.”

Good. Judges these days, so unprofessional.