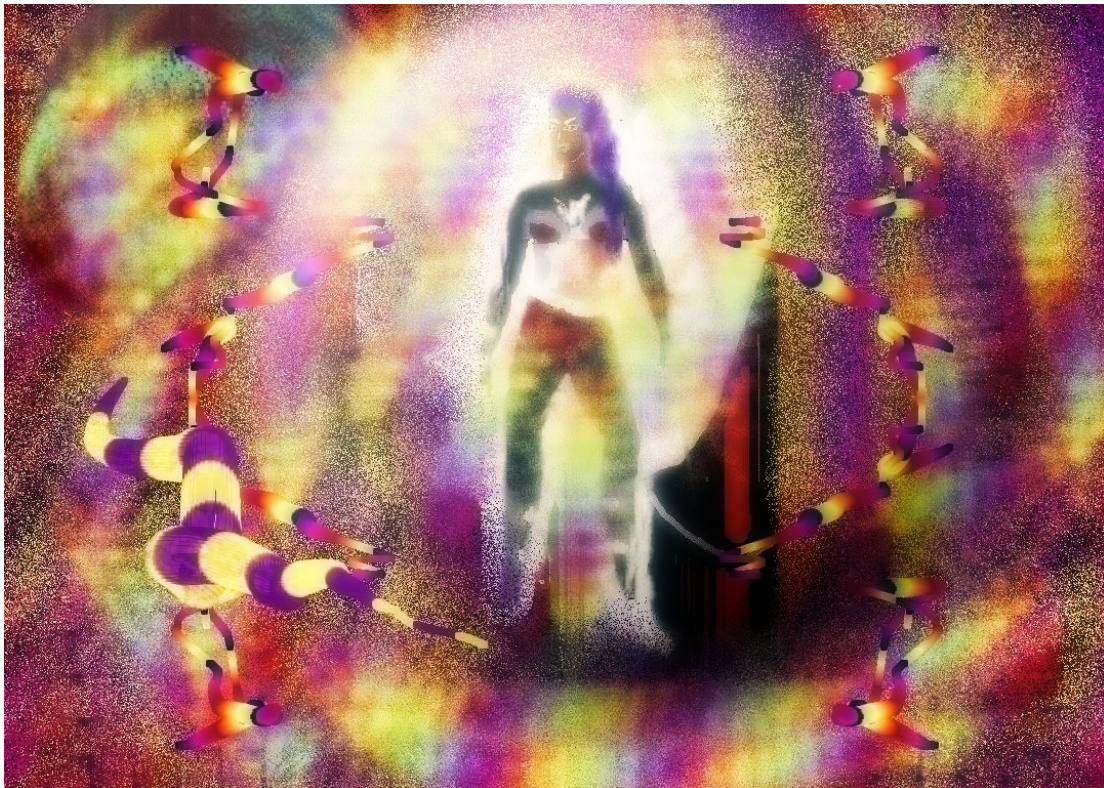


Colour Backdrop: smoky saloon interior, green table lights, a rainbow spot light is focused on the stage; a heavy smell of cannabis and drink is on the air.



*Illustration 18: Nesta was a main attraction at The Eight Legged octopus.*

“I could do nothing but accept my fate again. What use learning to be the friend of The Man and Tintagel the Wise if you are a coward?

I must learn to be brave and don't believe The Man doesn't know FEAR at times.

Does that mean I cannot be a woman space warrior? They do exist as long as they are not captured, then they are made to be woman again!

And I think I am lucky, I have reasonable looks. Those that don't can end up fighting in shows to the death with other women or wild beasts or machines and robots?

I also know Llatchur will have my genes out of me to reproduce slaves that he doesn't need to buy. Quickly reared in vats and what should take twenty years is done in months. *It was the offshoot of stopping women carrying for nine months and going through the hell of labour; men like Llatchur saw the devious profits to make out of such science. People like him always exist.*

Then one day Llatchur heard an imperial fleet was on its way to invade New Saturn 12 and Aelfric Europe was aboard coming for Posidonius and Llatchur had the feeling he was still in a fix.

**He was scared.**

He didn't have much brain apart from muscle.

He wanted rid of me quick.

He had the Red Witch Saloon sell me at auction.

It was degrading for controllers using electronic prodding sticks made us gyrate in cages and strip to show our wares. And those that refused BECAME THE CLOWNS OF THE SHOW FOR THEY JUMPED HIGH WHEN ELECTROCUTED.

And then the owner of the Eight Legged Octopus wanted me and immediately I heard his voice come out of the smoky gloom I knew FEAR.

The voice was menacing and the bidding was ferocious and made me realise I was a lot more attractive than I thought; then why hadn't The Man made any advances? I should have guessed it was because he was afraid I did think he was abusing me.

And The Man was a ruthless killer of those that were guilty for he condemned them.

And the owner of the Eight Legged Octopus bought me and I was escorted to sit next to him.

I didn't want to be here but there are some who force others to do their bidding with the threat of FEAR.

He was large, had a double chin and because he had power didn't care what he looked like or how much he ate.

He was also blue as he was alien.

DIM LIGHTS.

. Through his transparent breathing smock I saw all his skin was layers of rolling flesh that threatened to hide his shorts. He was also changing colour at the excitement of my presence. What I didn't know was the whole auction was rigged to get rid of this man. He owed Latchur money because Latchur was supposed to arrange heart surgery and didn't, he wanted the man terminated, he was a bad debt, The Eight Legged Octopus was collateral and it would soon have a new owner, Latchur.

The alien had a bad heart after all and I was pretty and sitting right next to him; *yes he was changing colour.*

He blew smoke from a coke cigarette into my face, it was dirty smoke and I held my breath.

But he kept doing it and I am not a champion free diver so had to breathe and my head started to buzz as I got high and then his bully boys pinched my nose and forced the horrid stick into my mouth and I got excited. He didn't look so ugly any more the more and when they started to fondle the bronze bells on what pieces of scanty clothing I had I wanted them to play 'Jingle Bells' but they didn't, they never heard of it!

All I know that they kept filling me with coke and when I woke up the next day I was laying on the stage floor of the Eight Legged Octopus and the room was empty.

Where were my clothes?

I was naked.

I knew FEAR of the unknown.

I saw what I presumed was my attire hanging from the back of red plastic chairs.

A pink shoe hung overhead from a neon blue light.

Something told me I hadn't been a good girl.

My left bottom also hurt.

There was a rude tattoo there now.

Where was he who CONDEMNS THE GUILTY?

Then a movement caught my eye as the blue naked body of my new owner caught my eye. "Oh no not him?" I gasped.

He had a fresh coke stick in his lips and when he neared me offered it.

I refused although I knew I was already addictive as it only took one stick and then you where hooked.

He stuck it between my lips, he was my owner and I had to breathe. I was doomed and he knew it, soon I did do anything for a coke stick and I couldn't remember being a naughty girl the night before.

It was degrading I was afraid I might scream "Long live The Man," and stab my chest. Only his memory would help me fight the coke addiction; I did not want to be a junkie, it wasn't of my doing but of evil men who wanted control of my body."

*"And The Man was omnipotent for he was broad enough to absorb Nesta's hurt and that was why he was The Dictator," Tintagel the Wise.*