

## The Firma Sisters and the Flute of Enchantment

by

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I was a cardboard box when my identical twin sister Isis prevented Dad from recycling me.

It took me a while to return to human form. I always prefer to reconstruct my head first. However, it might be more practical to produce usable legs and feet for a quick escape from whatever is waiting for me, like Dad who began scolding me.

“An object! You know better than to change into an object.”

“I wasn’t planning to stay a box forever,” I replied, transforming my shoulder with a painful half-shrug. The ends of the dark red hair and three white locks from my pony tail caught in my box torso. “Just for a few minutes. I simply had to try it.”

My best friend Kelly Horton freed a bottle of orange juice from the fridge, while Isis’ friend Phoenix Rising got a glass. Isis brought me the glass. They all know how tired transformation makes me. But the age-marked hand of Granddad grabbed the glass before she could give me a drink. I hadn’t noticed his coming into the kitchen.

“Make an arm and hand and then you can drink it,” Granddad said. “I’m not going to let your sister or friends wait on you. You don’t deserve it.”

“By Thor’s hammer!” I cried. Norse gods are my current faves. Dad doesn’t allow us to use common swear words, like damn or by God or four-letter words that begin with f. We can only swear by mythological gods and goddesses. As Isis says, our parents are a bit strange. “I’m very, very thirsty.”

“You’ll live,” He said. For a guy I didn’t know until this year, Granddad plays a large role in my life these days, not always to my pleasure.

Willoughby showed up when the only thing cardboard about me was my right foot. He shook his head, his purple eyes showing disapproval. “Very impetuous. Very immature.”

That got my goat. “You haven’t been immature for over ten thousand years. Give me a break. I’m only twelve years old.”

“And if you don’t wise up fast,” He threatened. “You won’t live to make it to thirteen.”