

Death Magic 41

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A Legacy forged by death [2]

“I’m leaving Eira in your care,” He carefully placed the babe within her arms. “Listen up silver guardians, I’m happy I met you – time has come for me to change back to who I truly am. I should have said this before, but, I, Staxius Haggard, I’m the next god of death.” As he spoke, everyone slowly regained conscience, “Fenrir, I want you to protect them, Millicent, take this.” He threw away the dragon crest, the sign of being noble. “I relinquish my claim over the Haggard name, from today forth; I name Viola Haggard as the new head of the family. Please, Millicent, use the power of my crest to reclaim your place as the ruler of Dorchester; fulfill my quest that I may not complete for I haven’t the strength to go on any longer. I’ve given you all that I possess, time has come for me to leave, goodbye.”

“Undrar, in the car, I’ve left my guild-card, there’s like ten-thousand gold stored in there, use it however you wish, I’ve entrusted you with my daughter as well as my family.” He spoke telepathically.

“BUT MASTER,” Adelana spoke out, “No need to stop me, if you’re ever troubled, contact Thunderstain on my behalf, they’ll help.” *Death Element activate,*

“...” She tried speaking but was dumbfounded by the strength being released. “Adelana, I entrust you with my heart, or what is left of it,” The faint glimmer of love and compassion vanished, Staxius Haggard was gone; the cold-blooded killer was brought forth from the deepest part of the abyss. And just like that, he disappeared.

“Mast...” Adelana tried following him but was stopped by Undrar who shed tears. “Adelana, that man isn’t your master; the one you knew as the caring master is gone. This is who he truly is, my spell got broken; I tried making him human but ultimately, the dark-arts is too much for I to

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suppressed any longer – his grown stronger.”

“What do you mean?” She asked confused.

“No matter,” Undrar replied. “Here I thought making him save Eira would make him become a better leader. I guess my endeavor was slightly accomplished. He made good allies and friends, all I can hope for is that he will return safe and sound.”

“No emotions, nothing, I’m back to how I use to be, the silver guardians, Fenrir, Millicent, Undrar and lastly my beloved daughter, Eira, I apologize for breaking our vow. But if my dream is coming to reality then, I have no chance in hell to come out on top here.”

“Your highness, something or rather someone is approaching,” Theodore sensed it; Staxius was on his way.

“What do you mean something is approaching.” Right before her eyes, Alyson disappeared from the wall on which she was being held. Her wounds completely healed by a potion, a strong gust of wind followed shortly after. He arrived, held in arms as if she were a princess, Alyson smiled. Her expression changed when she noticed Staxius’s gaze, blank.

“I hope I made it in time,” He spoke monotonously, *Snap,* She vanished, her presence was gone. “How dare you... WHERE IS MY TOY,” the princess screamed.

“Where are my manners; your so-called toy has been teleported to her sisters who await her return eagerly.”

“Nonsense; no one has the ability to teleport people, it’s simply impossible.”

“Well, I just did,” He smirked. Alyson wasn’t exactly teleported but concealed using a high tier spell taught by Undrar. Hearing him speak, she got the clue and soon left to rejoin the rest.

“Once again, I apologize, proper introductions are in order, my name is Staxius.”

“...STAXIUS,” She yelled. “IMPOSSIBLE.” The moonlight finally revealed his face, “... how are you alive.” Her stance faulted. “I k-killed y-you.”

“I beg to differ, for as you see, I’m very much breathing and living, on another note, was it you who conjured that fireball?”

“What fireball... Oh, yes, that was me, I had to exterminate those pesky commoners.”

“Pesky you say,” His tone changed from friendly to deadly serious. “I’ll have no remorse killing you.”

“Mind your tongue,” Theodore compelled to safeguard his master’s honor charged forward once again. “Pathetic,”

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, from when you were born and till you die, I, the god of death, hold in my hands the strings which binds you to this world, by my authority, I order thy chains to be severed, spell, Tactus Interitus.

With a snap of the fingers, Theodore died mid-strike. His lifeless body filled with momentum hit the wall behind, skull cracked open, he halted. You could see the brain and blood splattered.

Tactus Interitus, incantation after incantation; the princess stood. “Ha-ha,” She laughed.

“I’ve been blessed with immortality, Staxius, you can’t kill me that easily, after all, the countless children whose lives are at my beckoning; serve as my countless lifelines. Each time you snap your finger, one of their souls dies, and let me tell you, killing all of them will prove a fruitless attempt as it will take about two days to fully kill them.”

“Who the hell is this, I sense so much power coming from her. Wait... her magical element isn’t normal, is it... her life chains, they – are so dense it’s bigger than Undrar herself and she’s a demi-god.”

“Well if killing you isn’t an option then,” *Dark Arts activate, mana cancellation,*

Poof, The spell didn't work, her magical protection overpowered him. "Well then, *Poof,* Smoke bombs once more; he changed his fighting style to hand to hand combat as opposed to fighting one on one as mages. *Clap,* The airship reappeared; Theodore piloted it. "Enjoy my little present, you're an idiot." For the first time in his life – Staxius was overpowered as well as outplayed. *Summoning element, activate, Arise, my fierce servant, HYDRA.* In front of him, a massive beast

materialized; bearing six dragon heads, with the tail ending with a snake-head. Each face had different colors, it roared, the ground trembled.

"Farewell, my dear Staxius, mother was wrong about you being the strongest mage in Hidros; that title is officially mine, *With the blessings bestowed onto me by Emes the god of destruction, I, princess Gallienne offer up my right eye as tribute for a curse so strong even a god may cower

before me. I CURSE STAXIUS TO FOREVER LOSE HIS IMMORTALITY." A purple light manifested; the

right eye disappeared – she screamed in agony. Said light engulfed Staxius who soon after fell onto his knees, the blessing of immortality from the death reaper vanished. "You've been outsmarted,

Staxius," She left.

"My heart, it burns, the blessing... it's truly gone." He sighed. A quick glance at the enormous foe standing before him, Staxius laughed. "That dream truly was a premonition. Alright ugly, let's dance."

"This is my last fight, it was written from the start, goodbye everyone."

Death Element ACTIVATE: Unleash Aura x5, Daemonum Gladio, Undrar's blessing, Shadow step.

Spell, Augment mana output x10

It was now time to fight without holding back, dark-arts wasn't going to help in this situation. Using all the spell he learned up to now, with a massive pool of dark, concentrated mana, Staxius decided to put everything on the line. The demonic blade fully manifested, it fed off his aura as well as blood. A huge cloud arose from his body, you could see it from miles afar. With the sun rising again, his party who rested at Krigi noticed, or rather felt it. Their master's mana was draining fast, the blood contract broke. The writing on his chest, burst fiercer than ever, the cloud soon surrounded him once more and created a spiritual conduit as well as armor. He took in every vile and disgusting emotion from around Dorchester; it was like a magnet attracting evil. Even the Hydra's aura was being attracted. The pentagram on his palm began growing like veins, black in color, it crawled till it joined up with his eyes and went throughout his body.

The fight began, swing after swing; he jumped from left to right aiming for its head. However, the beast's protection was more than he could pierce, even at full power, making a dent in that beast's armor was useless. Despite that, he continued to attack relentlessly, the mana pool was being exhausted. The fight had only lasted five minutes. While in mid-air, he sensed something, a nostalgic feeling, a quick glance behind, *BAM,* The instant his guard lowered, the beast conjured a fireball which blasted him almost at supersonic speed into the ground. With a fireball spell of his own, he managed to negate some of the damage and propelled himself further back. The beast roared once more, menacingly.

“WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING HERE,” He screamed seeing the silver guardians and Fenrir getting off the pickup truck.

“WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU, IDIOT,” Adelana shouted, “WE DON’T WANT YOU TO DIE,” Undrar spoke as well.

“IDIOTS, YOU’LL GET IN MY WAY – This beast is too much for you to handle, I’ve given you my legacy, please, this is an order from your master, LEAVE THIS INSTANT.” A tear rolled down his cheeks, using shadow-step, he rushed the beast once more. *Poof, poof, poof,* Three smoke bombs soon surrounded the car, unwillingly his party retreated. “Idiots I swear,” He fought off the beast’s spells directed at the car, slice after slice, mana drained even further. *Snap,* Undrar cast a concealment spell and they vanished.

“Man, even with my evolved death element, I can’t put a scratch on this beast. If this is how much power that princess holds, then we are in a world of pain... I just got an idea, this isn’t like mythology, slicing his head and burning it won’t be how I defeat this.”

Dark arts activate “If Fenrir turned into a human; then this beast is no different.”

As the one whom you’re contracted to, I order thy to reveal this beast’s weakness and how to exploit it. Dark Arts, Sense personality.

[Victim: Zrekuz, age unknown]

[Personality: Unknown]

[Prediction: Unknown]

[Weakness: Heart and Mana supply]

[Best Approach: Unknown]

“It’s heart,” He thought while dodging and fighting subconsciously, the years of fighting beside his father’s side awaken his muscle memory. “My strength is draining, this demonic blade has nearly sucked out all my blood, I feel light-headed; my mana is nearly depleted.” For a small instant, everything went into slow-motion, a red cross appeared on the beast’s underbelly. “SCREW IT,

Unleash Aura x10 His hair turned from brown to white and then to crimson red, the remainder of his blood changed into mana, *Spell, Augment Mana output x15*

“I call this, limit breaker,” he smiled.

Fwoop, Like a rocket, he vanished, behind him, the ground on which he stood broke, sword in

hand – he pierced the beast’s armor at last. All the concentrated mana the sword had consumed as well as blood got released at once, the belly lit as it grew and then, *BAM* An explosion ruptured the beast’s inner organs, blood splattered everywhere.

“Mortal... I thank you for releasing me from this curse, however, as per my master’s order, the one who shall slay me must die as well. You fought bravely, but this is the curse of Medusa, you shall be petrified

in a cage made from crystal." Hearing those last words, Staxius sighed, "That girl, she outsmarted me once again, even if I had defeated her beast, I'd still die. What a battle..." His now broken-down body was sent flying thanks to the explosion. As fate would have it, he landed near his comrades who stared at him.

The curse began to activate, his feet slowly froze, "T-thank you f-for t-traveling with me," Everyone surrounded him, they all smiled as tears shed, Undrar held Eira just above his head. The curse reached his hips, "E-Eira... y-you f-father is p-proud t-to have d-died protecting y-you," The crystal was now crawling up his stomach. Tears began to form around Eira's eyes, "Pa-pa, I wuv y-you," She spoke her first sentence, "Papa loves you too." His eyes lit up with hope and the curse soon imprisoned him, it took effect, not even a demi-god could have broken it. He died with a smile on his face, Staxius Haggard after losing immortality, never got the chance to overthrow Dorchester. He failed at protecting his village, and in the end, the words from the god of death resounded deep within, "Every death reaper bares the curse of misfortune, we can never be truly happy."

"Lord Death, you're wrong, I've lived a fulfilling life, I made friends, allies and a daughter who I cherish deeply, please if you hear me, watch over them..."

[Chapter 42](#)

End of War

The raging sound of swords clashing, magic spells being cast, people fighting and dying slowly got quieter. Sat on his throne made of gold and diamonds; Duke Parcyvell waited. Before him, the inanimate corpse of Gareth laid decapitated. Astrid – the apostle of goddess Tharis, now went by another name. Astrid Parcyvell, his new wife. The last barrier keeping the duke's family from being attacked was a man named Julius – the last surviving mage from Dorchester. That boy who is now grown in a very imposing man has defeated every single mage in Kreston's army. Now he stands as the last guardian, footsteps grew close and the massive door swung open.

"Duke Sten Parcyvell, the war has ended, we've laid siege to your castle. What will it be? Surrender or death, bear in mind, surrendering will also mean death, but more painful." A woman spoke out, behind her stood four others who were identical to one another. The only exception was the hair color, they all wore heavy armor with a dragon crest.

"Julius, stop," Sten spoke out. "You've done more than enough, please, the war is lost. From today forth, I release you from your contract, live a good life, my old friend."

No other words needed to be spoken, for Julius had killed more people than he could ever recall. He truly walked the same path as that cold-blooded murderer, Staxius Haggard.

"We don't have all day, can we have your decision." She spoke out yet again.

"Why are you silver guardians in such a hurry. Adelana Haggard, tis a pleasure to finally meet the mercenaries Kreston hired. Your reputation precedes you, one is lacking though. What happened to the man you once called master? Oh – the princess killed her." He laughed. "That poor soul was your master, what a joke."

"You little..." Hand on her sheathed sword, Alyson was in her lightning strike stance. "Calm down," Annet patted her back.

"Your provocations won't do you any good duke," Another voice spoke out, it wasn't the silver guardians but another woman. She emerged from the entrance – her beauty was on a divine scale.

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"T-this c-can't be... MILICENT." Without any warning, he rose and rushed to her side. "I've missed you so much, my dear wife." In turn she hugged him as well, "I've missed you too my dear husband." Her hand went inside his chest piece, with a quick pull; she snatched his crest. "Fenrir, get this creep off me."

Boof, A punch sent him flying. "Please Millicent, let's start over... I BEG, I WANT TO HEAR YOU SCREAM." He yelled frantically. "Husband, I think that is enough," Astrid spoke out at last. She slowly approached and hugged him from behind. "It's going to be alright, because – the war has ended, and so has your life." *Slash,* A dagger hidden in her sleeve slit the now late Duke Parcyvell's throat.

"But why..." Adelana spoke, confused.

"It's simple, I wanted to get close to this mad man just for this moment – now please, I beg of thee to end my life." She sobbed. "P-please, before that priest from Kreston burns me. If that were to happen, I'm afraid the entire country would die alongside me; my goddess isn't that keen on witch hunts."

"But if we kill you, isn't that going to end this kingdom instead?" Annet spoke.

"No, that would not be an issue for you see I have someone strong enough to bear that burden for me." She smiled as she wept.

"As you wish," Footsteps from Kreston's soldiers got closer by the minute. "Rest in peace, Astrid."

Lightning element: Flash Step, A well-aimed thrust aimed at her heart was delivered by Alyson.

Soon after, the body began to light up – it looked as if it were going to explode. Everyone braced for the inevitable burst of magical energy – however, it stopped half-way through.

"Excuse me, silver guardians," A voice spoke from the entrance. "Didn't I tell you to not slay the fake apostle?" It was the pope, "No matter, Dorchester has been defeated, I shall spread the word of our god to every remaining village. Farewell, and a job well done."

"Just as the pope said, a job well done. I hope this alliance of ours won't go in vain." Another man added, it was Duke Hawkin. "My daughter, I hope this shall suffice for I have slain the one who did you wrong, goodbye silver guardians. As promised, the province of Dorchester is now yours."

Everyone left – the combined army retreated to their province, in trucks.

A sigh of relief from everyone was heard, "The war finally ends." Adelana added.

"We've done it," Laughter soon filled the once dead silent room. "As promised, Millicent, form a blood contract with Percyvell's crest and become the new Duchess of Dorchester."

“But... if I do so, our adventuring party will end...” She was reluctant.

“Don’t worry so much, us, silver guardians aren’t going to leave you just yet. We’ll stay by your side till Dorchester is a place deprived of any malice directed towards the people. Our master would have wanted the same.”

Briing Briiiing, A phone rang, “Adelana speaking.”

“Has the battle ended, Eira is getting a bit overexcited here...”

“Yes, do give us a moment to clean up the bloodstains and bodies.”

“Don’t worry about that, leave it to me.”

“Fine, you can come then,”

Snap, Every single body and blood splattered across the castle disappeared – it was as if a battle didn’t happen.

Undrar and Eira soon entered the throne room in which Millicent now sat.

“Auntie Millicent is truly the duchess of Dorchester.” A girl spoke, white hair grew longer than before. Her ruby-red eyes shone brightly. “Come here you little,” Adelana ambushed and hugged her. “Stop it Auntie Adelana, I’m not a little child anymore.” Eira pouted, “Just because you’ve grown some tits and a medium-ish sized bottom doesn’t make you an adult – I mean look at Fenrir, she’s far hotter than anyone of us.” Adelana continued her onslaught of kisses and hugs.

“Did you say something.” Before Fenrir finished her sentence, everyone rushed to hug Eira – she was their beloved daughter. Everyone took care of her as if she were their child – Undrar was shocked to see how much they all loved her.

“Hey mom, now that the war is over, do you think my dad will ever come back?”

“...” Silence befell the room.

“Eira, we’ve told you that your father died protecting us, he truly was a hero.” Undrar who was now fully grown whispered softly.

“But mother, I still remember his face, he said he loved me.”

“I know you have a photographic memory Eira, but that alone doesn’t mean that he will come back. His body is near Krigi, frozen in place by a curse so strong even I couldn’t break.”

“Come on Eira, don’t be that way, you’re sixteen now. Please, every one of us still miss him dearly, but we must move on. You’ll soon be enrolled at Claireville academy, you best forget about him and

move on.” Alyson spoke harshly.

“Auntie Alyson, you don’t understand, MY FATHER WILL COME BACK.” She ran off.

“EIRA,” Undrar shouted. “Leave her be Viola; she’s still growing up.”

The war between Kreston and Dorchester ended with Kreston as the victor. But to what end? Dorchester is practically ruined, most of the inhabitants have been killed for the sake of food. In total, the war lasted sixteen years – just like Staxius, his daughter was brought up by a demigod who taught her how to fight. Eira’s memory as a small babe remains, she has this gift called photographic memory and remembers everything. The body of the next death reaper still lays to rest near Krigi.

With Millicent as their new ruler, in the coming weeks, Dorchester slowly got back on their feet and changed for the better.

“Awaken, fallen hero,” A voice spoke, breaking his long slumber.

“Who dares disturb my peace,” Staxius spoke, stuck within life and death. A place so secluded and alone, not even a god could get him out of there.

“You’ve slept long enough, Staxius Haggard, I’m Astrid, the apostle of goddess Tharis.”

“And I’m Staxius Haggard, once heir to the death reaper.”

“Wrong, you’re still his heir, if you just open your mind, you’ll see that the god of death has been eagerly awaiting your triumphant return.”

“What’s the point of going back, I’m weak, I’ve lost my immortality, my family and my beloved daughter.”

“Your daughter still yearns for an adventure with her beloved father – now awake, Staxius Haggard, heir to the god of death. By the power bestowed upon me by the goddess Tharis, I exchange my lifeforce to break this vile curse put on the man whom I’ve seen countless times in my premonitions.

The world still needs you Staxius, now WAKE UP.”

BANG, The darkness in which he was imprisoned broke at last. “MY HEIR,” The god of death hugged him.

“Greetings Lord Death, it’s nice to see you once more.” In return, he hugged him even tighter. “You were defeated so badly I couldn’t even imagine.”

“What happens now? I’m in the hall of rebirth, aren’t I?” Which was correct as he woke up on a bed, the same bed he used on the last visit.

“Yes, your soul has been here for sixteen years in earthly time.”

“Damn that’s a long time, how’s everyone?”

“No clue, I’ve just been waiting for you to wake up again. My new assistant was waiting for your return as well – seeing as you stole Undrar from me, I had to get someone else.”

“Lord Death, I’ve brought your evening tea.”

“JESSICA?”

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“STAXIUS?”

“YOU WOKE UP,” Dropping the well-made tea, she jumped onto him.

“You’re alive and well.” He hugged her firmly.

“MY TEA!” The god of death fumed, you could see smoke coming out of his ears.

“This is no time to reminisce, Staxius, I’m sending you back. A girl name Astrid alongside the goddess Tharis worked together for you to have another chance to live. Now, get going, your

adventure hasn’t ended just yet. Also, you didn’t lose your immortality, the death element got so strong your body couldn’t handle it any longer – hence you imploded. You killed yourself, dumbass.”

Snap, He vanished.

“My head, it hurts.” The crystal imprisoning him cracked, “Where the hell am I?” It broke. “I’M ALIVE!” The curse shattered. After sixteen long years – Staxius Haggard reawaken. His eyes opened for the first time, before him, Krigi of old stood, broken down. Using the long vision he had; Staxius

got atop a broken-down building and scouted the area. “Damn, this Dorchester has changed. For the most part, the area in which Krigi is situated hasn’t been touched for years. The capital, on the other hand, looks more sophisticated, there’s a bloody airship flying atop – I can barely make it out.”

“Guess I’ll check if my dad’s laboratory is still here. I mean, this is the second time now, I’ve awakened once more. The death element feels more powerful, even the engraving on my chest has gotten more symbols. Time to get down.” After getting down, he began rummaging throughout the debris. He was on the lookout for anything that could prove useful. The suit he wore had holes and tears all over – the evidence of the last battle remained.

After a good hour of searching for the laboratory, it came into view. However; it was ruined, everything was burnt and broken. The book his dad wrote was long gone, the book which depicted how one could create an artificial magical element.

“DAMN IT, this explains it then. The princess holds the book – she created an artificial element that she used to utterly defeat me. Man, I’m hungry, waking up so many years after is hard. I do wonder how my old party looks now, they are probably old with wrinkled faces.

“I’ll take a quick nap before setting off to somewhere, I need information.”

“VIOLA,” Annet rushed into the throne room. “What is the matter Annet?”

“It’s E-Eira, she took the car and ran away...”

“What do you mean ran away, to where?”

“Apparently she said she was going to visit her dad’s grave.”

“Yeah, what’s the problem in that?”

“Not the grave we built but the one in Krigi, she headed to see his imprisoned body.”

“WHAT?”

“Viola, we are going to head out after her,” Adelana spoke, behind her stood all her sisters.

“No, Eira is my responsibility, you guys are to stay here and help Millicent – alone she may be at risk.”

“Fine, please be back soon.”

Without losing a moment, Undrar got into a car and rushed behind her daughter.

“The ground is rumbling, something or someone is approaching, *Death element activate; Shadow-step.* Hidden behind the cover of a broken-down house, Staxius watched. The car stopped, and a girl stepped out of it. Her aura felt heavy and deadly, she was powerful. Her gaze fell onto his, she noticed his presence and rushed.

“Damn this girl,” *Death Element, Unleash Aura.* The shock from releasing his mana now stronger and denser blasted away the building. “Who stands there?” He asked.

“Isn’t it rude to ask for someone’s name before giving your own,” Her sights fell on the broken crystal. “You broke the crystal?”

“Yes, of course, I did,” Before he could complete his sentence, the girl rushed him down. She drew a sword which shone brighter than the sun himself, *Death element, Conjure weapon,* Coming out of his right hand a blade blocked her first attack.

“Let me explain,” Staxius begged.

“You broke the crystal...” A tear began to flow, “MY FATHER WAS IMPRISONED IN THAT CRYSTAL,”

Dark element activates, Shadow-step, She was using the same technique Staxius once used.

“Your still weak,” In an instant Staxius got behind her and whispered, “Eira is that you?”

“Father...?” She turned around.

[Chapter 43](#)

A Rough Start

“Impossible, that can’t be him.” Undrar finally rejoined with Eira. Having left the car a few meters behind – she sneaked closer. Her mind was filled with doubt, in front of her stood something she thought to have lost a long time ago. Even so, she was skeptical and decided to stay in the shadow and watch from afar.

Face covered with dust, the lips were parched, his clothes looked in a far worst state than the first time he awoke. Within that tense face, a speck of light gleamed through his eyes – before he stood, the one he cherished so much.

“Eira, please tell me that’s you,” after she turned around, Staxius placed his hands on her shoulder and shook. It was his way of testing if that girl truly was real.

“You can’t be him... You’re not Staxius Haggard.” She denied the truth, in her mind, her father was something far greater than what a wreck of a person stood before her.

“My dad was never this pathetic; you’re so weak.” She spoke the truth, her nails sharp and ready to pierce his neck. “You’re not even worthy to be called my opponent.”

After a disappointing sigh, Staxius spoke gravely, “Does thou really think I’m weak?” His face changed – the glimmer it once had vanished. “It’s been sixteen long years; I haven’t stained my hands with blood yet.” Slowly he backed away from her, “Do you really want to die? If you truly are

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Eira Haggard, prove it to me for I haven’t the time nor patience to question your integrity.”

“Please don’t...” The man stared right at Undrar who had concealed herself. His gaze said it all, “You truly are back.” With a massive grin, she crossed her legs and sat; just like the encounter with Fenrir.

“Girl bearing white hair, I’ll ask you one more, do you wish to be slain by the hands of your own father? The one who sadly broke his promise of taking care of you.”

“Enough talking, I’ve had enough of your foolishness.”

“I’m sorry.” His gaze changed from emotionless to outright deadly. The pupil once brown – now burnt with a fiery white flame. The void flame; the long years stuck in a state of life and death had evolved the death element. It was now on par with a demi-god; namely, he was as strong if not stronger than Undrar, the bringer of death.

Each opponent watched, looking for any opening; Eira held the stance which Alyson used. “Lightning Strike stance but using shadow element, how foolish.” Staxius mocked her, dark arts was in effect – he began to toy with her emotions.

“Wrong, this may have been the lightning strike at once but now it’s mine, the shadow stance; I’ll show you why.” She spotted an opening, Staxius let down his guard. Shadow element was active – Eira vanished. Her blade was aimed and ready to pierce his heart. That move was slightly faster than what Alyson had mastered. Eira was proud – she transformed one of her master’s techniques into hers; she did all that for the sake of her father. As she was about to deliver the blow concealed by shadows, Staxius smirked.

“Why didn’t you go through with the attack, I thought you saw an opening?” He mocked her. “Is this the extent of your will to stand beside the man you call father?”

The words he spoke hit hard, she grew impatient; anger overwhelmed her. “Don’t you dare speak of my father,” she rushed and began her attack. Swing after swing, Staxius didn’t use his weapon; he dodged instead. After every attack she made; he would either laugh or ridicule how weak she was.

“Enough is enough, I’ll end this now.” Tired, Eira stood still. She began to recite some incantation which Staxius acknowledged as decay touch. A high tier spell, forgotten throughout the ages. The god of death personally uses the very same spell, and so does Staxius but rarely. After increasing her speed with shadow-step; Eira dashed forward.

“I know you’re desperate but don’t insult me any further; the spells you conjured are nothing but a child’s attempt at being an adult.” Instantly, Staxius unleashed his aura – the power coming out of him was mind-blowing. Eira felt it, a glimpse at the strength of the men she called father. Her feet felt heavy, she could not move; her fear turned into tears.

“W-who are y-you...”

“I’ve told you already, I’m Staxius Haggard; your father.” A smile resurfaced. “And if you’re still skeptical,” For a moment he took a deep breath and shouted, “UNDRAR COME HERE.” It felt joyous; he had missed her. In a blink of an eye; her spell broke and she appeared behind him, both hugged one another tightly. Confused, Eira watched as Undrar and Staxius exchanged kisses and pleasantries.

“Undrar; I’m alive... Can you believe it?”

“Of course I don’t, you were gone for so long.” Her gaze wandered away from him; she was mad.

“Don’t be that way, I know I broke my promise but I’ve come back, haven’t I?”

“...”

“Silent treatment again?”

Out of spite, she looked away defiantly. “Someone has grown over the years,” Staxius pointed at her body; she was back to her real size. That got her attention, “don’t look at me like that, you bloody dragon.” A kiss on her forehead settled everything.

“Mother... do you know this man?”

“I wish I didn’t, but this is your father Eira; the one you’ve been looking for.”

“I don’t believe you, mother, father Staxius was far greater than this guy – matter of fact he looks about my age.”

“Undrar, what tales have you been putting in my daughter’s head? I mean, I’m me...right?”

“Eira, stop being a little brat – this man is truly your father. If you want proof, then let’s head back home, you’ll see.”

Unwillingly; Eira got inside the car – Staxius was stuck in awe admiring how gentle and refined the

vehicle Undrar possessed. “Undrar, this car is amazing – did technology really advance that much?”

“Yes, sixteen years is a long time, you shall see soon enough. Not here in Dorchester, but out in the capital; that place over there is almost like a fantasy.”

“Mother... who is this Undrar person this guy keeps on referring to?”

“Eira, enough, Undrar is my name – only Staxius Haggard has the right to call me that. Also, the name Viola, yes that was also given by him.” She smiled proudly.

The trip back to the castle took less than an hour – of course, when Staxius asked for permission to drive, he went supersonic. The castle came into view; a battle just took place hours ago, Staxius felt and smelt it – the place reeked of blood. “Staxius or should I say, master, everything has changed.

You better buckle up; nothing is as it used to be. Stay right behind me and DON’T GO ANYWHERE.”

It was far too late; Staxius vanished. The driver’s seat was left unmanned – while still moving.

Panicked, Undrar slammed on the break and they arrived at the castle.

The moment before entering the throne room, Undrar told Eira to remain quiet about what transpired. Knowing Staxius, he wanted to surprise everyone.

“Eira, your back.” Adelana rushed to her side, followed close behind, her sisters. Millicent, on the other hand, sat on the throne – she had made herself comfortable. Fenrir stood next to her.

“D-did y-ou see his prison?” Ayleth whispered softly.

“Y-yes.” She replied hesitantly.

Everyone stood in a semi-circle in front of Eira who spaced out from all the questioning.

“I can’t believe, you girls did fulfill my dream, my quest, the one I failed at.” A familiar voice spoke; the room went silent. They all got anxious, that voice – a voice they prayed each day to hear once more.

Snap, The concealment spell broke, Staxius appeared; knelt before Millicent.

“Greetings duchess Millicent, ruler of Dorchester – it’s a pleasure making your acquaintance yet again.”

“Who stands there,” Millicent raised her voice.

“Tis only I, a humble man who happened across this blissful castle. If I may be so bold...” He raised his head. “-your beauty is truly on par with an angel.” He smiled.

Everyone went silent, they stared in awe. Their long last master was somehow standing before them.

“Impossible...”

“MASTER,” Fenrir yelled, just like in the olden days. Unconsciously she transformed into her wolf form and pounced. “Calm down Fenrir,” Staxius was smothered with saliva.

“It’s truly him...” Adelana mumbled. Cries of joy soon reverberated the room; their master was truly alive. Few of the soldiers stationed outside were curious about the ruckus being made inside. Time went on; that night, everyone got drunk – in the end no one was left standing. They all collapsed on the floor; either past out or out of fatigue.

Baffled and disappointed, Eira went outside for some fresh air. “The starry filled sky truly is amazing,” Staxius spoke.

“It truly is, and to that fact – I can’t believe that you’re Staxius Haggard. You know, mother always praised and recounted tails about your adventures with them. The story about how you and auntie Fenrir fought was my favorite.”

“Look, Eira, I’m in fact Staxius Haggard – sadly I get the feeling that you don’t truly see me as your father. I mean, who would believe a guy like me. I look young, probably eighteen years old, but I assure you, I was and still am your father. I won’t force you into accepting me but I’d like to tell you that, I’m proud of you Eira. You truly look like a snow angel now – I wish I could have seen you

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grow. On that note, I’ll take my leave; stuff is going to get hectic tomorrow. You best prepare.”

“W-wait,” Eira grabbed his arm. “If you’re truly my father then prove it...”

“Prove it how?”

“You see, I have a photographic memory, so I remember everything in my childhood, even since I was a babe, so tell me some story or something.”

“Well,” After a brief pause to gather his thought, Staxius spoke again. “You see, I first met you on a beach. A nobleman’s child was about to slay you, but instead, I killed him. At first, I was reluctant about taking you in, honestly, I was afraid. But then, when I looked at you, you smiled at me, it was as if you understood me. So it was then and there that I gave you the name Eira. There is also that time when I was defeated in a forest by the paladin. Undrar scared left you laying on my battered body, the rain was god awful that day. When I awoke, I thought you were sick – the rain had made your body cold. Afraid, I ran with all my might to Frostrest. I met the silver guardians there and...”

“Ok enough, I believe you, stop.” A tear rolled down her cheeks. “Do you have any idea how long I’ve waited... I’m sorry I acted like a little brat earlier. You see, when you called out my name at first, I was sure it was you but as my father always acted; I had to make sure.”

“Look at you scheming at your age,” He patted her head. “You’re one to talk, dad.” She smiled.

“Eira, I’ve broken my promise to you, but it was necessary. I’m sure they’ve told you about how I died. But tonight forth, let me renew my vow to protect you and be by your side.”

“And I promise to be a good daughter, I shall become as strong as you one day. For now, let’s go on adventures together, I want to catch up on lost time.” Her rosy cheeks lit brightly.

“Deal, you and I shall go on a quest together, one day, both father and daughter.”

“Yes, one day,” They pointed at the sky.

He met up again with his old comrades and companions; the daughter he loved was as happy as he was. They reunited at once, by the first look, they were more like brothers and sisters for you see Staxius’s face and body didn’t age over the sixteen years as opposed to his comrades. They were now in their early thirties. Fenrir, on the other hand, was still the same – she was a legendary wolf after all. Millicent looked young, scarily young, a vampire.

Little did Staxius know that this world of his was now walking on a thin thread. A new era was to come; one which would prove to be chaotic – the age of heroes.

[Chapter 44](#)

Decisions

A new dawn rose, the day of his awakening passed. Last night, behind the cover of the night sky; he and his daughter made up. Everything was back to normal – or so what he thought. Even after sixteen years, things and old habits don’t change that easily.

“Who is this so early in the morning,” he sighed. No one was present inside the room; it was only Eira and him who slept. Without realizing it, during the night; Eira sneaked in bed with him. Yes, she had missed her father so much, young as he may be, she had missed him.

“My chest, it’s so bloody heavy.” He woke up fully, “Eira...” He shook her gently trying to wake her up. “Hey Eira,” the same process was repeated five more times until she let out a grunt. “MY NOSE, EIRA WAKE UP NOW.” She had shoved her fingers whom at the end bared long and sharp nails into his nose; it bled.

“Morning father,” she mumbled nonchalantly. “Morning, and it’s good to see your old habits don’t change.” A gentle smile was seen through the blood that flowed profusely; the wound was deeper than he thought. In his dazed state, coming from the hallway that led into the throne room; footsteps got closer.

“Morning master,” the first one to poke her face inside was Fenrir. Following her, the silver guardians in from eldest to youngest. After them, Millicent and finally Undrar.

“Eira, what are you doing so early in bed with the master?” Fenrir said while leaning closer on the now bright red face.

“Knock it off Fenrir; she’s his daughter after all, and lord Staxius is an honorable man.” Sarcastically her gaze now cold switched from Eira to Staxius. “Damn Millicent you’ve grown bolder over the years.” He returned her cold gaze with one that was freezing.

“I hope you guys haven’t come all this way just to greet me. You’re the new leaders of a new province – shouldn’t you be worried about more pressing matters?”

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Cough, cough, Undrar cleared her throat before speaking, ‘Don’t get us wrong, but we’ve missed you. This visit isn’t purely for that reason, we have to decide what to do next, and who better to lead us than our master, brother.’”

“You little...” He scowled, Undrar mockingly winked.

Time went by, everyone had breakfast; most of Staxius’s time was lost in him speaking and taking care of his now fully-grown daughter. Eira hadn’t let go of her father’s arm since morning, she changed or rather, reverted to how she was. The misunderstanding about how Undrar called Staxius brother and her as daughter was explained rather hastily. Eira to that fact didn’t care, her dad was back.

It was now afternoon, the sun shone brightly outside as opposed to the cold air brewing inside the strategical meeting room. Staxius was put on the leader’s seat eagerly by everyone else. They forced him to assume that position; while it legally belonged to Millicent. Thus, a large discussion followed.

Sat around a circular table adorned with maps and secret pieces of information about villages, town, and other places of interest; Staxius began. The silver guardians sat on his left side, while the others on his right. They all went around the table; the number of people fitted the size perfectly; Eira was present as well.

“Let me ask you one question, why have I been put to seat at the leader’s chair?”

“Isn’t it obvious, you were and still are our master.” Adelana quickly replied.

“I don’t understand your obsession, I was gone for sixteen years. I can’t possibly hope to just come back and lead everything; for all I know, you may have gotten a new leader somewhere. Someone more powerful and more intelligent than I.” The memories from the fight with the princess continued to vex him.

“...” Everyone remained silent – he took them by surprise.

“Besides, I’ve lost my status as a noble. Undrar is the head of the house – question regarding that matter should be sent to her.”

“So, you’re just running away?” Undrar slammed the table and rose up.

“WHO DO YOU THINK IS RUNNING AWAY.” A dark mist shot out of him – so thick, momentarily no one could breathe.

“Brother, you’re indeed running away. Like the fight with the paladin, the fight with the hydra and other fights where you were defeated, you always end up releasing all your burdens on someone else and leave.” A tear ran down her cheek. “YOU ALWAYS CHOOSE TO DIE RATHER THAN FACE THE FACT THAT I ADMIRE YOU.”

“...” That display of emotion stumped him, he was left speechless as was everyone else. Saying what needed to be done, Undrar threw the dragon crest back at him. “You’re still the head of the house, idiot.” She smiled.

“You’re the idiot, sister.” He facepalmed, this was beyond ridiculous.

“What do you guys wish from me?”

“Become once again our leader,” Annet spoke out. A unanimous yes was heard through the room. Even Millicent agreed, her thirst for power vanished long ago.

“What’s the current situation about the nobles supporting your ascension to the position of Duchess?” Staxius asked sternly, his eyes changed – back to the fearless and emotionless leader they adored.

“Well... it’s bad, every single one of them was corrupt, they fled to the capital. Now, Dorchester is in bad shape, we haven’t got any villagers nor settlements for the remaining inhabitants to live. More than ninety percent of them were killed during that crusade. And the financial aspect is god awful.” Millicent completed her report.

“Alright, I’ve grasped the situation. I’ll help.”

“Millicent extended her hand, the duchess’s crest shone brightly.”

“No.” He slapped her hand. “I don’t want to take the place of Duke, that is rightfully yours – have you already forgotten the promise I made? Well you might have, I swore to make you ruler of this province and that I shall.”

“But how will you be our leader if your not the duke?” Fenrir asked.

“Who says a duke has to be the leader?” He smirked. “This is perfect, Millicent you will be acting ruler for I know that you’re more than capable. Leave all the politics, financial and boring stuff in my hands, after all, you did say I was your leader, right?”

“B-but w-what about us?” Ayleth whispered. “You silver guardians are to stay right here and help Millicent rule Dorchester.”

“What about you?” Undrar asked.

“It’s a secret.” He pulled out his tongue. “Joking aside, what we need now is allies and people who are willing to help us make Dorchester a good place to live. We need to take our independency, that conniving princess will intervene at some point; we need to make preparation for that first.”

"If that is so, let us accompany you." Adelana insisted.

"Absolutely not, I'm going alone – I shall discover the country of Hidros once more."

"What about me," Eira tugged his battered suit jacket. "You going to leave me again?"

"Aren't you going to Claireville academy soon?"

"Yes... but I don't want to, I rather stay by your side."

"I know, but you still need to become stronger, for my sake."

"Excuse me, master, isn't it better for Eira to train under you? I mean, you're the strongest mage as well as a fighter we know, plus, Eira uses the same style as you." Adelana intervened.

"Brother, take care of your daughter for once in your life, I've already raised her for god knows how long," Undrar added.

"Eira, what do you want, study at Claireville academy or under me?"

"Under you, father," She smiled.

"It is settled then, I and Eira shall leave tomorrow at daybreak. With this, this meeting is adjourned."

Everyone left, they all smiled uncontrollably, "Millicent, come take a walk with me."

Soon after, Staxius and Millicent went outside, the sky was clear for the exception of thin clouds here and there. They walked along the walls of the castle; it was only yesterday that the fight for this castle took place. The bodies were gone, blood as well; but the presence of death loomed like a shadow attached to an object. They stared out to where Krigi used to stand. Most of the countryside was destroyed by spells and gunfire. Dorchester looked even worse than Staxius remembered.

The subtle wind grew strong, "do you have something on your mind?" Milicent broke the ice.

"Yes, are you ok with this? I mean with me being your leader and all, I thought you wanted power but here I come stealing it right beneath you."

"As I've said countless times, I don't desire power any longer, I've got things more precious than that. Staxius, the silver guardians, Eira and Millicent we all stuck together when you died. To be

honest, when your body froze, everyone died. Mentally, they broke, we were left clueless and without a will to go on. Alyson wanted revenge, Annet hid, Adelana could not let go of that crystal. Ayleth and Ancret both insulted you out of frustration. It was then that Undrar and Adelana who managed to wake up decided to take everything in hand. Fenrir ran off – she only returned to us after five months, bathed in blood. So, you see, our lives were turned upside down. But your dying words gave us a new quest, the quest to fulfill your quest. And we did so, for sixteen years, we fought repeatedly, the paladin fought by us upon hearing your name. He died in the process, but thanks to him, we overthrew Dorchester after sixteen long years. Kreston took us in as mercenaries and treated us well, food and shelter and a good place for Eira to study and grow. Despite that, those years were hard on us, we had each other and got through it. We truly became a family, so you see, I don't care about being duchess, that was your quest and yours alone, I just want to be with everyone else."

“Thanks for that Millicent, you’ve cleared my doubts.”

“No problem,” she smiled.

“Can I ask a favor?”

“What is it?”

“I want a hug...” She didn’t reply and went for the hug, she felt warm, a mother figure.

“What happened to you? The Staxius of old never asked for hugs.” She whispered.

“I don’t know really, I... I’m confused myself, but I promise to come back stronger, I need to protect your, no never mind, our family.”

The wind had gotten colder, and after their little chat, both headed inside where everyone awaited. It didn’t show at first, but they were all hungover. Everyone sat in the throne room which became like a living room. In the left corner, you had a library brought in by Ayleth and Annet. In the right corner, you had a small kitchen which worked as a bar for Adelana. Alyson and Eira practiced on their swordsmanship even though that sort of activity was meant for outdoors. Undrar watched television, technology had advanced – as usual, propaganda from the royal family played loop on end, but she figured out a way to tap into the foreign network. Fenrir, on the other hand, ate whatever Adelana cooked. The gold and diamond throne chair was sold, instead a large table with chairs was added. This supposed throne room where nobles of other nations would meet with their ruler changed, it was more familiar and friendly.

Garsley castle was no longer a torture chamber for women, but a haven for anyone who sought shelter. Messengers were sent out, as per Staxius’s orders for any remaining survivor to come to the castle, its charity and a way to build trust among the ruler and her people.

“This place changed for the better in one day, I hope this peace stays forever. I don’t believe it, my personality has changed quite a bit, normally I’d use dark arts to get what I wanted but this time, it happened naturally. Is this charisma? Who knows, my goal now is to make Dorchester the most powerful province in Hidros; princess Gallienne – I’ve come back for my revenge, you better watch out.”

The day went by without any difficulties, everyone bonded; they caught up on lost time. The silver guardians were now permanently stationed at the castle, their duty was now to protect Dorchester and not the Haggard name. Soon, a new adventure would begin.

[Chapter 45](#)

Arda and Freedom

“Princess Gallienne, princess Gallienne.” The screams of someone clearly distraught resounded across the hallway. The princess’s room stood within that very same hall. Adorned with pictures from famous artists, sculptures, and precious jewels from other conquered kingdom’s, this seemingly never-ending hallway carried and vanished into darkness. Meanwhile, the princess’s room was in sight. Knowing full well that the princess would be mad for rudely interrupting her evening nap, the butler knelt – still distraught but calm, he waited.

The door painfully opened, it creaked, which seemed as if it cried out. She stood before him, her hair messy and semi-nude, behind her, he caught a glimpse of the fabled combat butler; Theodore – revered as a hero for he had saved her countless times in their various campaigns. “What is the matter young one,” Her tone, monotonous and static.

“I-I a-apologize for d-disturbing, but her Ma-jes-jesty has asked for your presence.” Eyes fixed on the very ground she stood on, the inexperienced butler-in-training, barely spoke. Various rumors floated around the castle about how cruel the princess could be at times, and obviously; for someone new and fresh, said rumors would only portrait her as the devil. The silence that followed, short as it may be felt like an eternity for the young butler, his heart, beat violently.

“Why were you screaming my name?” She took a long pause to examine the new boy, “Is it so important you should have wakened the entire castle?” Letting a quiet chuckle, the door closed. Seeing the door shut, the boy let out a sigh of relief. Much to his surprise, the door opened once more as he stood up; the princess appeared yet again with new clothes. “Now then boy, explain to me why you had to scream all the way here.” Her voice gained volume; she demanded an answer.

“I-I’m sorry, her majesty asked me to d-do so.”

“Look at me when you speak.”

Reluctantly, he obeyed. “You must know something about this,” She continued pressing forward.

“Your highness,” His fear vanished, a newly formed strength surged from within – no longer was he afraid of this girl. “-her majesty asked me to scream your name, for you see, the kingdom is on the verge of change. Arda has demanded to be a free nation – Kreston and Plaustan are in favor. Their nobles combine far outnumber ours in terms of power and military prowess, war will break out if their demands aren’t met.” As soon as he delivered the message; he dropped to the floor.

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“Princess,” Theodore hugged her from behind and whispered, “-is that boy going to be alright?” Trying as hard as she may, the ticklish feeling coming from her ears made her stutter while replying.

“He was mind-controlled by mother, h-he w-will b-be fine. . .” Reaching from behind her, Theodore closed the door.

A few hours went by, despite saying that it was urgent, as disobedient as always, the princess took her time before answering her mother’s summons. “Greetings dear mother,” she spoke while entering the queen’s private library, the one she used for so many years. Nothing had changed, the queen looked like a goddess, with her snacks resting on the table accompanied by a book she was enjoying.

“Greetings,” her tone gentle you’d think an angel spoke.

“To what do I owe this summons from?” Bitter, the princess reluctantly smiled and acted cordial.

“You were locked in your room for a full week my dear Gallienne, the kingdom is changing – your husband has returned from the audience with emperor Paradus but my dear daughter you were too busy frolicking with Theodore.” She gracefully smirked.

“Is that so, he should have called.” Her gaze shifted to the book her mother was reading.

“I haven’t called you here to reprimand you about satisfying your carnal desires – next time do be more vigilant. If word got out, your already tarnished reputation would gravely suffer. Let me give you a run-down...” She shifted her body posture from resting and relaxed to one more rigid and formal. “-as you’ve heard from the young boy earlier, Arda is seeking independency. Now, the smartest choice would be to give them their freedom, but I see that such a prospect would only serve to hurt your ego. You’re far smarter in the matters concerning politics, henceforth, I only ask you to not wreak havoc. The war between Kreston and Dorchester ended yesterday – a war, which I remind you was instigated by you and your ploy. Poor duke Parcyvell, he was a gentle fellow, no matter, right after the war ended; Arda allied with Kreston and Plaustan have asked for their independence. It seems too convenient, but I’m pretty sure if Arda gets its independency, Kreston, and Plaustan will follow suit. For you see, my dear child, as you’ve probably realized this, those two provinces are using Arda as a scapegoat to see how far they can stretch the wire before it snaps. It’s up to you to decide the next plan of action, will you go to war knowing full well that may antagonize the remaining provinces or give them their freedom – in both cases, we are at a loss and I’m afraid there is no way out.” Concluding her long speech, she took a sip out of the cup on which a golden rose, reflected the warm sunlight.

“Dear mother, you know full well you should discuss this with his majesty the king – why are you telling me this?” Her face had a gloomy air, her eyes felt lifeless.

“My dear daughter, your father may be the king but the entire kingdom knows that you pull the strings – the puppet king they call him, my dear husband, his reputation was tarnished.” She signaled Gallienne to leave, she had spoken what she needed to. Two well-built butlers escorted her highness outside in her dazed state.

“That damned woman, always sticking her nose where it doesn’t belong. Fair enough, I’ll give Arda their independency, dear mother, I’ll do exactly against what you’ve plotted. You may view me as aggressive and harsh but those vile demi-human races, I wish they didn’t exist, attacking them after they declared their independence would facilitate my job farther. The emperor wouldn’t object to the king going to war against rebels now, would he?” She smiled, from that she schemed yet another plot.

“Oh – my dear daughter, I know full well you’re going to let them free, after all, I’ve manipulated you from the very beginning.” She took a bit out of the exquisitely decorated cake and continued her reading.

The day of new beginnings came, Staxius and Eira spent the night preparing their supplies. Staxius formed a blood contract once again with his crest – even though it wasn’t necessary, but he was now a noble representing Dorchester, in fact, he was the only noble out in the council apart from Millicent, the duchess. Much to his surprise, Eira, used the same strategies as him, darts, body enhancement and most of all, their wit. Her intelligence was not on par with her father but she was close behind – a true prodigy. The spell he cast when she was daughter worked wonders, he had fabricated a spell that trained her magical element automatically. This was done sixteen years ago, the spell to this day is still active, no one remembers apart from the man who cast it. It explained why Eira was very powerful with her magic. Her magical element is shadow and one unknown to Undrar herself, it hasn’t awakened yet. Eira, to say it simply, is a perfect copy of her father but less

powerful. For you see, Staxius is considered a god; the god of death or will be in a few years.

On the other hand, Staxius decided to bring a sword even though people now used guns, killing from afar was simpler and more efficient and not to mention, safer. The rifles people used long ago had evolved massively, it slowly replaced all the swords, but magic hadn't lost its importance just yet.

Everyone warned and begged for him to stop using a sword and take a gun instead-but Staxius refused. "It's less elegant, I wish to feel my victim's life drain away when I slice their bodies." He jokingly stated, but everyone knew he was serious.

Awaken from all the chatter coming from the throne room – Staxius stepped out. The inaudible stutter and cries of someone very scared slowly got audible as he approached. Still, in a dazed state, he arrived, standing in the middle of the hallway leading to his bedroom, he waited. "Duchess Millicent, we are envoys from Arda, we have come to seek an alliance with you, please, we wish for you to support in this endeavor of ours." Staxius clearly misheard, they weren't stuttering or crying, it was just their accent. They stood in front of Millicent who sat, ashamed about what the throne room had become. Liquor bottles, uneaten food, swords, books, undergarments, and shoes were common sight. They were spread out as if being trees in a forest, the forest of disorder and chaos.

Seeing what mess of a place the throne was, it was only now he realized how she must have felt, secretly he let out a quiet laugh. Millicent seemed unsure, she didn't know what to say nor do, those people were harassing her, not physically but mentally through kind words and plea.

"Greetings duchess Millicent," Staxius spoke as he entered. Seeing him, Millicent's lost confidence found strength yet again.

"Will you please help us, duchess?" They ignored Staxius.

"Greetings lord Staxius," she ignored them, sweet revenge, they scowled.

"Excuse my boldness, but who are you to rudely interrupt our audience with the ruler of Dorchester," one of the speakers lashed out, clearly infuriated.

"I gravely apologize, for you see, I thought this was only bickering for the fools. If this kind of one-sided assault is called discord, then may the gods help us for this is only but harassment." He smugly added, pointing out that their so-called audience was naught but foul play.

"I apologize for my sister's rudeness sir," the other one spoke, more manly but frail-looking. They both wore hooded cloaks with long sleeves and trousers, it was as if they hid their body for the fear of being found out.

"No apologies needed, now then, my name is Staxius Haggard, advisor as well as born to the province of Dorchester."

"Greetings my lord Staxius, but for security purposes, I cannot give you either of our names, it is Arda's policy to keep everything private."

"They think they can remain hidden from me, let's have some fun." Now standing next to Millicent who grabbed his leg, secretly, under the cover of the large table, he smirked.

As the one whom you're contracted to, I order thee to reveal these cloaked stranger's identity. Dark Arts, Sense personality.

[Victims: Erlareo Enbalar and Ygannea Enbalar]

[Race: Elves]

“Interesting, elves, I’ve heard of them in histories and myths, I guess Arda is really filled with mythical creatures.” He leaned close to Millicent and whispered his thoughts – their name and race, to which she was left baffled. Both strangers were anxious, their hand was hidden from view, their body movement got tenser and agitated, Staxius felt it, dark-arts was in motion.

“Is it true that you hail from Arda?” Staxius asked.

“Yes, that is true so what of it?” The girl answered, rather impudently.

“Calm down sister,” The brother spoke through his gritted teeth.

“Answer me this, why don’t you reveal your identities?” Staxius changed his tone from friendly and curious to suspicious.

“A-as I’ve told you, it’s because Arda has ordered us to.” He stuttered because of the sudden change in tone from Staxius.

“What would you do if I learned your true identities then?” He asked, smugly.

“We’d have to kill you but that ain’t gonna happen, mister,” the girl replied.

Silently, Staxius tapped Millicent’s legs, it was his way of saying, ‘get ready, it’s about to get real.’

“Is that so.”

“Yes, but as my sister rudely said, it’s not possible for anyone outside of Arda to know our identity.”

He proudly stated

“Well, that’s a shame, because I thought Erlareo Enbalar and Ygannea Enbalar were good names...”

A small silence followed, they could not believe it, they heard their name for the first time. “-not to mention that you guys are elves, thus explaining your apparel.” He concluded his speech.

“Who are you... SISTER NO!”

castle to survive for at least a month – then it hit.

“Adelana,” he panted. “What’s the matter?” He ran all the way.

“How popular has the guild’s bank gotten?” He asked while gasping for air.

“The bank is flourishing, practically everyone – the royal family included, uses it.”

“Excellent, and where exactly is the noble’s who fled our country now, or rather, have you touched any of their stuff?”

“Not really, Sten’s room is still unexplored, it reeks of bodies and death.”

“That’ll do,” he went off to see the duke’s room. “If the bank works the same way as I predicted a long time ago, then I should be able to access anyone’s personal vault and get the money that way; sadly, I need the blood or anything related to my victim.” The door opened, immediately, the smell rushed out like an imprisoned beast – caged for years. The place had been rebuilt; everything was changed, it was dimly lit. The decomposing bodies of various girls were scattered around; any normal human would have either passed out or puked. It didn’t bother him though, or rather, he felt pity.

“All these damsels, probably from a noble family, lost to never be found again.” He stopped, “probably from noble families.” It hit, the answer he had been seeking laid at his feet, blood – blood from noble households. “OF COURSE, thank you, sadistic duke. You’ve made this so much easier. Here I was thinking to go stalk every noble and steal their blood.” Soon after a good hour of carefully examining the bloodied corpses – he collected the blood of eight girls who seemed to be of noble birth.

Now inside the alchemy room, just above Sten’s room inside the central tower, Staxius got ready. “I have blood. Basically, people must enter a blood contract with their money or valuables, then it’s sent into a different dimension or a vault as I call it. From there on, it’s given a specific number, and that number can also be accessed with the user’s blood. It doesn’t matter where you perform the ritual, the money or valuables can be transferred, well, I hope. Otherwise, how would they be able to transfer the gold coins throughout the banks in the kingdom, Dorchester doesn’t have one. A separate dimension must stay in place, the contents can be transferred by a simple transportation spell – lost magic. It’s all too simple, this is where the guild cards come in, it reads the user’s mind constantly, and no one can fraud therein, except, me.” Using dark arts, Staxius learned the name of the victims, together with their blood – he tricked the guild card into thinking that he was that person. It was the same as the time he falsified his adventuring rank. Much to his surprise, it worked. The guild card recognized him as that person, together with their blood – he transferred the victim’s entire wealth to Staxius. Obviously, he didn’t do it all at once, it would have seemed suspicious. Instead, he slowly added the funds under the premise of trading – gifts and other means. The day went by quickly, Eira was mad, and so was everyone else. Today was the supposed day, they left to adventure but new stuff came up.

Everyone looked high and low to find Staxius, but he was missing. After six hours of hard work, he came back with the biggest smile on his face. Seeing the elves siblings – his entire persona changed, he went back to deadly serious.

“Stop scaring them, brother.” Undrar broke the ice, everyone was enjoying dinner.

“Mind your tongue sister, I haven’t come to speak to you.” He was still mad from earlier. When he holds a grudge, he holds it tight. Undrar, in turn, rolled her eyes and scowled.

“Millicent...” Adelana spoke out before he could reach out and speak, “lord Staxius, please step out, we are having dinner.” She demanded him to leave.

“I apologize, I guess my services aren’t required at this moment,” the gaze changed from neutral to ‘you’ve done it now.’

“Would you just stop talking,” Adelana continued her insults. He quietly left, “some people have forgotten their place.” He threw a bag of gold onto the floor, “that should settle what I owe. Eira, you welcomed to join me, but I guess you’ll stay with mother.”

“Shut up, I’m not coming with you,” Eira slammed the table, “-you’re not worthy to have me by your side.”

“I see how it is,” Dark arts had sensed everything, everyone was against him, they hated his presence. “People do change after sixteen years,” He left, not ever turning back.

Millicent pinched Adelana’s arms, “what’s wrong with you.”

“No what’s wrong with him, that arrogant brat.” She scowled.

“WHAT’S WRONG WITH YOU BOTH,” Undrar spoke out, “-EVEN YOU EIRA, DON’T YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU’VE DONE?” she yelled. After a deep breath, “He left without looking back, it’s his way of saying, (I’m done, now suffer.) “Eira, you just lost your chance to go with him. And both of you elves better head to Arda as soon as possible, Staxius is out for revenge.

[Chapter 47](#)

A Misunderstanding

The day ended in confusion. Mainly Adelana and Eira were overwhelmed by a feeling of regret. They had forgotten that Staxius had only just awoken from a sixteen-year-old nap. The sweet words from the elf siblings had altered their opinion about their master. It became apparent to them that Staxius wasn’t your typical hero. The mental image and the person they had crafted over the years wasn’t anything like the original. Their ideal Staxius was someone generous, caring, and merciful. Time was ruthless, their whole persona changed; they waited, held a small grain of hope that he would return.

That wish was answered, Staxius was very much alive. Nevertheless, their short mindedness had pushed their long-awaited hero away. That goes to say, Staxius was never a hero; at heart, he doesn’t care for anyone. The world he sees and lives in is different from the others. Though that was the case at first, he slowly opened his heart with people who he cherished as companions. Having Eira at his side gave him a will to change into that fantasy hero, the one who strives for the betterment of humankind. Sadly, try as he may, the events which transpired yesterday took a toll onto his psyche.

“Once again, I’m left alone, just like my father, Sophie, and Julius. Time has come for me to now part ways with the silver guardians, Eira and my dragon Undrar. Fenrir is still bound to my soul, hence I don’t think I’m completely alone in this journey I’ve set out on. My priority was changed, at first, I wanted to become a sorcerer. Turns out, I was the heir to the god of death – that dream of mine was complete or no? I still can’t find the answer. I wanted to clear my father’s name, but so much time has gone by that no one remembers who Tempest Haggard was. I had another quest, to overthrow Dorchester, I failed at that and most importantly, I failed as a father and a companion. I should have known from the start that I’m not meant to be friendly and caring to other people, it’s against my nature – after all, I’m a ruthless murderer. Adelana and Eira should have known better, Eira I can forgive for not knowing who I truly am. But Adelana? Give me a break, it’s not possible – I entrusted her with my heart... to be honest, what does that even mean? Did I entrust her with my fading emotions? The scene from yesterday is playing on repeat, I can’t forget, was I in the wrong? Did I screw up? Is it all my fault? Who knows? Emotions, we are back where we started; Undrar, I’m sorry, but I’m leaving everything in your hands – dearest sister.” Sat in the car Undrar used, Staxius drove off, his destination... unknown. Judging by the direction he took; he was headed to Dundee.

“It’s not your fault brother.” A voice, as soft as cloud spoke.

“Undrar, what are you doing inside my head?” Shocked and confused, he slammed on the breaks, the car stopped midway from Savaview bridge and Garsley castle.

“Sorry not sorry, I thought you gave me permission to stay inside your mind?” She smugly replied.

“Here I thought you found it vexing to keep up with my thoughts.” A truck carrying vegetables came from Savaview bridge – it was headed to the castle. The dirt path on which it road was torturous. As it got closer, a massive mist of dirt and rocks followed. It went by, Staxius was dumbfounded to what just transpired.

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“Brother, I hope you’re enjoying my car.” She added sarcastically.

“Obviously, this is so much better and lighter, I feel like a noble.”

“You’re a noble.” Undrar reminded him for he had forgotten that part, in his mind, he’s only a bloodthirsty mage.

“To what do I owe this visit? Are you here to reprimand me for wanting to kill those elves? If so, please leave, I don’t wish to speak about it.”

“Brother...” She sighed inside his head, “-you’re hopeless.”

“How dare you sigh in my HEAD?”

“Enough, Staxius, listen, nothing was your fault. People change, but you remained the same, that conviction, that unfaltering resolve to kill anyone who stands in your way. I’ll remind you that, there isn’t a doubt in my mind that you’re the worst person alive – you’re far more merciless than the ruler of hell himself. In no way are you a hero, don’t bother changing how you think, do what you must – after all, people are your toy aren’t they? Despite that, you somehow managed to gather allies and proven your worth time and time again. To change a world or someone, one must not only be compassionate, but ruthless as well. You haven’t realized this, but, you care for people, even faintly, you care for people who are deserving of care. You judge people, not by appearance, nor by the way they act, but by the way they think. You act like the god of judgment; most of the time, if not, all the time, you judge a person’s character and evaluate them to the last possible detail – accurately. That aspect in you is what truly makes me proud to have left the hall of rebirth. Now then, check the compartment next to the steering wheel, my the livraison for our rations has come.”

“What was that all about? That speech was supposed to make me feel better, at least you tried sis.” He laughed; he’d been a fool, being a hero wasn’t him. He helps people, yes, but in no way does that erase all the vile things he’s done. A speck of white on a black canvas might stand out but it doesn’t hide the fact that the canvas is indeed black.

Right after the internal conversation with Undrar ended. A strange humming came from the compartment she spoke about. It was a phone, black in color, much more slick and refined than the radio he fabricated so long ago.

"..." He took the call, the only thing heard was static white noise, no one had the courage to speak out.

"H-hello?" A familiar voice spoke.

"Adelana?" He asked.

"Y-yes..." Her voice felt hesitant as if she was pushed against her will to speak.

"Hey listen, if you don't want to speak then do me a favor and end the call already, I don't want to waste my time on people who don't deserve it." He harshly stated.

"Well excuse me for not being important." Her bravado came back.

"Aren't you a bit too overconfident? What's the matter, speak." He demanded; patience was running out.

"I apologize for being rude master, I might have spoken out of line – for you see, for the longest time I had to act as leader of the little group you created. It may or may not have gotten through my head, so I'm sorry."

"Enough Adelana, I don't want to hear any apologies. You did what you had to and it's understandable, I hold no grudge – earlier my thoughts were mixed but I've found myself yet again, it's meant to be this way." A rumbling came through after he spoke to Adelana, it was Eira, she, in turn, began speaking.

"Hey dad..."

"Are you going to apologize too? If I hear the word sorry once more, I'll end this call and never come back, you hear me?"

"...Fine, I want to say that earlier I might have acted out of charac..." Staxius ended the call, just hearing them trying to get into his good graces and apologize turned his stomach. "How low can you people fall, pathetic, even you Eira, I once was proud, but not anymore." Mana injected once again, the car continued its voyage, direction, the bridge.

"What happened?" Adelana asked. Everyone waited patiently in the throne room. Undrar and Milicent were outside collecting this week's supplies. "..." Eira was left shocked – he ended the call in the middle of her sentence. It was like shutting the door while speaking to someone. "He ended the call didn't he?" Alyson spoke from where the bookshelves stood. She sat with Ayleth who was deeply immersed in some romance novel.

"You should have expected as much." Annet in turn spoke, she sat with Fenrir lying on her lap.

Annet caressed her wolf ears as they rested on the sofa brought it by traders; a token for a prosperous relationship.

“What do you mean, stop acting like you know everything.” Adelana lashed out, speaking on behalf of Eira who remained still.

“Both of you are stupid,” Ancret spoke, she drank heavily from the bar.

“Care to elaborate?” Infuriated, Adelana spoke through her gritted teeth.

“Staxius Haggard isn’t the man you girls think he is,” Alyson spoke.

“From the first time we met him, he told us by words as well as actions that he isn’t a hero,” Annet added.

“And he doesn’t care about people nor emotions.” Ancret continued.

“H-he’ll k-kill anyone w-who s-stand in his w-way.” Even Ayleth joined in.

“Long story short, you’re trying to blame him for only wanting to protect us. That must have hurt him, don’t you remember he died saving our skin?” Alyson concluded the speech. Both Adelana and Eira were baffled, they couldn’t believe it, everyone except them understood Staxius fundamentally.

“He isn’t a hero, but an anti-hero, he doesn’t care for people who don’t deserve it, he cares for people who do – that is the harsh reality, injustice, inequality, whatever you call it. The man who once proclaimed to be the heir to the god of death is a far better judge of character than you people can ever imagine.” Undrar stepped into the room, the negotiations went smoothly.

“And that’s a fact. Don’t worry about it, we are in good hands.” Millicent followed close behind, her hands filled with bottles of alcohol. “Staxius told us to leave everything in his hand, the politics, financial and other state-related stuff. Dorchester will change for the better, you girls best not stand in his way for you see, Staxius Haggard; has awakened, a beast whose been caged in for an eternity.”

Savaview bridge came into view, it had remained unchanged. Like the olden days, it was the only place where you could get into Oxshield. “Morning sir, please exit the vehicle and pay the toll.” A guard spoke, his duty was to collect tolls from anyone entering; he was employed by the royal family. “If it isn’t my long-lost friend.” Staxius stepped out, the guard was the same one he met so many years ago. “Excuse me but do I know you?” He asked cautiously.

“It’s me, don’t you remember...” he leaned in and whispered, “-the slave trader.”

“I’m afraid sir, I don’t remember.” He denied whatever Staxius said. “Well, will this change your mind?” He reached down into his pocket and took out a watch – still beautiful and valuable.

“It’s you,” he cheered. “It’s been a long time indeed, how’s the business going?”

“Had to shut it down sadly, for you see, I’ve become a Boron in that castle over there.” He pointed over the hill, castle Garsley stood menacingly. “And here’s the proof,” he quickly flashed the dragon crest. “Excuse my lack of manners, lord.” He retreated into a more formal stance and bowed partially.

“Don’t threat my friend, we are acquainted, so am I free to go?”

“Of course sire, please proceed.” The bridge’s gate opened, and Staxius entered Oxshield. Immediately, the changes which weren’t apparent from Dorchester spoke volumes. First, the dirt path it once had was replaced by a black material, he had heard about it thanks to Undrar who gave a brief summary. This was the fabled road, sturdy and pleasant to look at, not to mention, the car glided across it like water falling on a piece of glass.

The outer edge of the district apart from the roads remained the same for the most part. Trees, meadows, and lovely scenery passed by when he took the road heading to Dundee. To his right, a massive ravine separated both districts. On his left, the land stretched onto forever, the plains were untouched, still green, and beautiful. Farther, the capital, hidden behind nature stood. Staxius caught a glimpse of one of the many towers. Next to the capital, namely; Rosespire – Claireville academy stood.

The journey which normally took five to seven hours to complete by horse carriage was done in only four. Dundee was in sight; the town was bigger – and more popular. The roads went around the town instead of through – probably to avoid unnecessary uprising from the people who lived there. Surprisingly, Staxius didn’t show any inclination to stop by the town – the true destination was the forest. The place where Thunderstain was garrisoned so long ago. He went around rapidly – hardly any vehicles were on the road.

As his memory could recall, the forest must have overgrown everything – he probably would have to abandon the car and continue on foot. To his surprise, the road continued, it went on and on until he could spot nothing, the forest which he was looking for was nowhere to be found. Confused, he slowed his pace and examined the place carefully. The garrison was gone as well.

A white building was spotted, the light raging down from the sun made it quite a hassle to see. From afar it looked small and not impressive. Interest piqued, the car turned and headed for the suspicious building. Slowly, the details became more concrete. The white building was caged in by massive walls and atop said walls, iron in spring went around the perimeter. Three guards remained stationed at the gate, a sign read, “Thunderstain’s HQ.” He found what he was looking for, he continued slowly and approached the facility. He didn’t spot it at first, but the gate was protected by turrets, weaponry did indeed advance a lot.

“You in the car, stop or we’ll open fire – this area is closed off to the public. You best turn around and leave.” One of the men yelled, his face was stuck in place with an angry expression.

“Now, now, please, let us have a calm and civil discussion.” Staxius stepped out.

“Sir, we are warning you again, if you come any closer – we’ll have to open fire.” Another one spoke – he looked pale.

“As you wish, I shall stop right here. You, may you answer one of my queries?” He pointed to the third guard – he looked more fragile and easier to get information out of.

“...” Confused, he stared aimlessly around to see what the others would say.

“Don’t threat,” Staxius used a welcoming tone. The unsuspecting guard faced him with an innocent look and nodded. “Great, is Rose Edelina still your leader?”

All three of them were taken by surprise, their leader's name was supposed to be confidential – not even all the staff members knew she existed. The first guard was one of the gifted – he was acknowledged by her personally. His body changed, the aura surrounding him changed; Staxius hit right on the mark. Out of reflex, the guard pointed his gun.

[Chapter 48](#)

An Old Ally

Eager to pull the trigger, the first guard whose face was stuck in an angry expression felt nauseated. It got so bad he knelt. His massive body curled up; it gave the impression of a bolder, the uniform he wore was black and grey. "Thomas," the second guard shouted, he was too hesitant to pull out his gun. Meanwhile, the third one frantically looked for the radio – in his mind, the base was under attack.

"I've said this before, please, let's discuss this in a civil manner," Staxius spoke once more. He purposefully let his dark aura poisoned the trigger-happy man.

"F-fine, w-who are you?" Seeing Thomas get back onto his feet, the second guard gathered up his courage and pointed his gun instead.

"Again, don't make me repeat myself," patience was running out. The right cheek began to twitch.

Beep, A strange sound took them by surprise – everyone stared at the third guard. "G-guys, I f-found the alarm..." The whole facility went into lock-down, red lights, the turrets looked high and low to find the culprit. In less than five seconds, an entire platoon ran out of the main building, they carried rifles. The turrets, on the other hand, some hidden in the wall; peeked out. They all aimed at the unsuspecting Staxius.

At that moment, he held a grin; the situation felt like a Deja-vue. "ROSE," He yelled, out of the corner of his eyes he spotted a device resembling an eyeball staring down at him. "-do you wish for me to kill your men once more?" He stared directly at the supposed hidden watchful eye. Hearing him scream, everyone else got on edge – the order to shoot hadn't come down from the higherups yet. They readily waited, finger inches away from the trigger. The entire platoon wore armored uniforms in the color of black – only the insignia of golden color contrast against that backdrop. A thunder mark with dragon features, it was the same old insignia – a proof that she didn't betray their long-made alliance. The seconds felt like hours, everyone waited – up in the control room, Rose got the news.

"Ma'am, someone has trespassed into our territory." Sat in a dark room, Rose Edelina worked. She was busy gathering and filtering all the information that was given to her daily, her agency had grown popular over the years. The war helped massively. "Why do you keep calling me ma'am, aren't we married." She scowled.

"I'm sorry, but it's all so strange to me, this sort of familiarity." The voice replied with a certain nervousness in its tone.

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"What's the matter?" She was focused on her work, almost obsessive.

"As I said, someone has or is trying to trespass into our compound without permission nor notice."

“Has the order to shoot been given out?”

“Well, no.”

“Why not?” Her tone gained volume, “it’s our policy to kill anyone who dares defy us.” In a seemingly flawless motion, she swung around and stared Isac. “Is there something you want to add?” her gaze felt lifeless, she looked dead inside.

“Well, that man just said something that may pique your interest...” Deep breath in, he quoted, “Do you wish for me to kill your man once more?”

She made a tsk sound and got back to her work. “Just kill the man, obviously, an arrogant little brat, let’s see him face our army.” Reluctantly, Isac stepped out and gave the green light to open fire.

“I guess there’s no other way,” the guards received the order, a barrage of gunfire was opened. It was like rain but faster and deadlier. “She never learns.” Once more, without incantation, he used shadow-step and vanished. He hid behind the beautiful car Undrar lent him. As time went by, the car was assaulted in his stead, the bonnet was ruined.

“Sister is going to be mad.” He shuddered at the thought of seeing that dragon mad. Everything began to slow down, “what is happening, my anger, my frustrations, my emotions, they...they are vanishing.” Something began to change from within, his strong will to leave behind all his emotions finally broke Undrar’s spell. The artificial element that made him not feel anything broke – the seal cracked. The death element, on the other hand, didn’t rely on anything, just the mage’s strength, mana capacity, and wisdom. All the talk about anger fueling his growth was but a lie. “This feeling, or rather, this emptiness, I’m back... everything is black and white – no hue nor color. I feel, nothing.”

His face changed, the expression he once held of happiness, contempt, anger, and sadness all froze – the lips and eyes relaxed, everything went blank. The eyes turned emotionless; he was back. “Poor little car, your sacrifice hasn’t been in vain, time to kill.”

Deep within those emotionless eyes, a small hint of the fire remained, the void flame wasn’t extinguished yet. *Daemonum Gladio,* the demonic sword got conjured. “It’s been a while, old friend.” He spoke, still hidden behind the car. As if saying “long time no see,” the blade lit with a red flame. Instantly, everything changed – Staxius jumped out and lunged himself at the platoon, he regained his freedom; the freedom to slaughter. One by one, everyone fell, head sliced clean off their host’s bodies. He had no remorse, no regret, no mercy; this is the way things should have been from the start. Dodging left and right, zig-zagging between opponents, his agility and speed proved too hard for the turrets to keep up with. The dust-filled ground soon got damped by the blood of its guardians. “WHO IS THAT MAN,” people yelled, some screamed, some ran, and some shot their own comrades. In the end, everyone was killed. Staxius’s sprint ended, he slid across space in-between the bodies he dismembered and faced the entrance. Crouched, with his left hand on the scabbard, he swung the bloodied sword at the ground and sheathed it. The sword’s red blade turned black.

The wind blew harder than ever, the building seemed to scream out in agony. Staxius stared the watchful eye once more, face bloodied, he let out a small smirk. “Humans are weak creatures, the smell of iron, the smell of death, the smell of pain and misery, how have I forgotten you. Emotions are a

burden, this is what true strength looks like, cower before me for I, Staxius Haggard, son of Tempest Haggard, has awakened.”

“Rose Edelina, does thou wish to keep I waiting?” He spoke.

“MA’AM,” Isac dashed into her room. “What is it this time?”

“I-it’s h-him.” She spun around to see Isac sweating profusely. “Him who?”

“T-the m-man, a-a d-demon.” His eyes turned hallow, he witnessed the slaughter of Thunderstain’s guard platoon. “Isac, SPEAK GOD DAMN IT.” He went silent.

“Who in the world is attacking us in this day and age, what is this, some kind of joke?” A nauseating feeling enveloped the whole room, “w-what is happening?” Rose looked around desperately but she could only see black. Out of instinct, she reached under her table and turned on the light.

“Yo,” Staxius spoke monotonously while leaning slightly to his right and putting out the peace sign.

Her gaze changed from shocked to disappointed. “Who are you and how did you end up here?” She asked infuriated.

“Tis only I, Staxius Haggard.”

“What do you mean Staxius Haggard, that man died long ago.”

“Maybe this will help my cause,” he held out the dragon crest and guild card.

“These are authentic but for all I know, they may be fake... do you have any proof?” Slowly she reached for her gun. “Proof,” using his index finger and thumb to hold his chin, he thought.

“Put your hands up,” She demanded. Ignoring her gun, he continued mumbling stuff to himself.

“Don’t you feel anything? I’ve got a gun aimed at your forehead – do you wish to die?”

“Don’t underestimate me, that gun is but a toy, you’d be far better at throwing rocks.” He smugly added.

“One more word and I’ll kill you I swear,” her voice got serious.

“I’d like to see you try,” he got closer, grabbed the gun, and pointed it at his own heart. “Now then, you’ve got a point-blank shot, why not shoot?” His gaze felt cold and empty, his head unknowingly leaned to his right. “What’s the matter? Your hands are trembling.” He spoke slowly.

“W-who are y-you?” Even with the gun in her hand, she felt threatened. “I’m Staxius Haggard, your ally, don’t you remember, we kissed and drank each other’s blood that one time you thought I was going to defile you?” He let out a quiet chuckle and changed his emotions to friendly and harmless. “Rose, oh dear Rose, you’ve grown, you’ve aged, how I wish I’d have been present to see you blossom.” He added cheerfully. The room was now brightly lit, the air felt light and fresh as opposed to when he first appeared.

“You still haven’t answered my question about how you got in here?”

“I mean, I knew you’d be in the tunnel from the very start, after all – we did form a pact here.”

“You say that, but I still don’t believe you.” Her skepticism was over the top.

“How rude, isn’t my face and crest enough to prove my credibility?”

“What kind of fool do you take me for? I’m an information broker – such minute evidence won’t do anything to prove who you are. Besides, the Staxius I knew is already dead.”

“You want hard evidence, how about a bet? You seem awfully confident in my death.”

“What kind of bet?”

“If I’m able to prove my word, you are obliged to do anyone thing I order you to.”

“And if I win?”

“I’ll do whatever, simple and easy?”

“Basically, you have to prove that your Staxius Haggard and I just have to sit around.”

“Yep, that’s it, no strings attached.”

“I’ll entertain you, let’s shake hands.”

In Rose’s mind, she was sure Staxius had died, or rather, she didn’t want to think he was still alive. For you see, she and Thunderstain personally attended his funeral, everyone grieved, but she more than anyone else – there’s nothing more, nothing less, he just left without saying anything. Deep inside, she was more angry than sad. Now, imagine someone just showing up out of nowhere and saying they are that very person; of course, you’d be a skeptic. With that in mind, she accepted the bet, she was going to ask for the imposter to kill himself if she won.

“Now then, my dearest Rose, please stand back.” Unwillingly she obeyed.

“Fenrir, god-slayer, and devourer of the sun, heed my call, for I, your master has summoned thee.”

“What are you doing, Fenrir is soul bound to Staxius Haggard alone...” A white and blue light

manifested, a portal opened, coming out of it, Fenrir, in her human form. “Master, did you call?” she immediately hugged him. “Thanks for coming, Fenrir, I only wanted to see you in all your splendor.”

He lovingly patted her head from which wolf ears sprouted forth. Happy, she wiggled her furry tail back and forth. “Hey there Rose,” Fenrir spoke nonchalantly.

“B-but how...” Rose was lost in thought, it wasn’t possible. “Oh, Rose, I forgot to tell you that master was revived by goddess Tharis. Apparently, the wife of Sten Parcyvell was really an apostle. The thing is too complicated, but this man is truly Staxius Haggard.”

“Thanks for vouching for me Fenrir, you’re the best.” He smiled.

“Master, you’ve kind of changed, but I don’t mind it; so, can I go back now?”

“Yes, you may, and thanks for everything.” The same white and blue glow blinded everyone and

she disappeared.

“Guess I’ve won the bet.”

“Go to hell, do you know how much I’ve wished for you to come back?” Her tone changed, the lifeless gaze she once had slowly revived. “Wait, before we do the welcome party, I have something really important to tell you.”

“Go on... I’m not suspicious or anything.” She spoke sarcastically.

“I might have slaughtered your entire platoon on the way here.” He scratched his head innocently.

“WHAT DO YOU MEAN SLAUGHTERED?” The whole room echoed.

“R-Rose...” Isac got back to his prior self, his consciousness came back. Sadly, the first thing he saw was the man who just killed so many people. Shocked, he jumped back and took out his gun. “It’s him, he killed our men.” He aimed, but he shivered from top to bottom.

“Doesn’t this bring you back?” Staxius casually added.

“Darling, stop, that man is our ally.” She helped him lower his hand.

“What do you mean, ally?” he spun around and asked, “-an ally doesn’t just slaughter whoever stands in his way.”

“You got your answer, didn’t you?” Isac’s expression changed, “A-are you S-Staxius H-Haggard?”

“The one and only,” Staxius got closer and whispered without Rose realizing what was going on.

“-so, you managed to make her your wife, did you take her virtue yet? Or shall I do it for you.” He jokingly fell back. Isac’s face turned bright red, obviously, that thought hadn’t crossed his mind.

“Rose, have you and him gotten married?”

“Y-yes, is it strange?”

“No... where are your kids? Don’t they want to meet uncle Staxius?”

“Put a sock in it, Isac is just too shy to do anything unvirtuous to me, but that’s why I love him.”

“Oh – love, how cruel must you be to not have given me the chance to bathe in your ecstasy.”

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“Cut it out, what brings you here?”

“I’ve come to demand a favor...” his friendly aura changed to serious, “-before we settle that, our little bet was won by yours truly.” He smirked.

“Oh god no...”

[Chapter 49](#)

Impatience

All the turmoil and confusion brought about by Staxius's unexpected arrival finally lifted. Rose and her husband took a good look at the man they once called friend, nothing changed – he looked exactly as he was in their memories.

“Staxius...” Rose mumbled, the idea of him having won the bet loomed over her conscience but the fact that he was covered in blood overtook that frail weakness.

“Yes, do you have something to ask?” Staxius replied as nonchalantly as ever.

“Why are you covered in blood.” Her gaze turned sharp – she forgot Staxius had slain her men.

“Ma’am,” Isaac whispered through his gritted teeth as he tucked on her already skimpy shirt. In turn, she turned and faced him with the scary gift any women had – the death stare, mothers often abuse that ability. That one look shook him to his very core, instantly, he backed away slowly as he changed his gaze to Staxius.

“Why are you giving him the death stare...” Seeing what happened, Staxius intervened. “-he was warning you about me, for I’m the one responsible for the slaughter of your men. Matter of fact, let’s head outside.” Unwillingly, the three of them headed out.

The sun brightly shone, the ground was damped with corpses lying everywhere. The wind’s assault only got faster – it was its way of saying, (I’m angry.) As a result, the white building ended up being its prey for it screamed as it made a whistling sound while the wind constantly assaulted its massive structure.

Coming right behind Staxius, Rose laid eyes on what had become of her precious men. Her face turned from stern to disgusted for a good reason, not only blood and corpse were visible but the unlucky ones who were sliced vertically had their internal organ all rushing out. The once dusty courtyard turned into Staxius’s welcoming slaughter.

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Two quick taps on his shoulders, Staxius turned around to see a smiling face – a face with murderous intent overflowing. With her eyes squinted, she asked politely, “did you do all this just to call me?” Her tone was gentle and calm.

“This isn’t the reaction I was expecting, but please, Rose, you’re making me rather uncomfortable. I know I’ve slaughtered your men but still, I did send out a warning. You were the ones who opened fire on me. My sister’s precious car has been wrecked thanks to your foolishness. Why don’t you go back and work some more? You have a massively popular informant business to run.” He casually spoke as if all the blame laid fully on her for not heeding his warnings.

“I can’t get mad at you. I thought of Thunderstain as being the strongest, sadly, that isn’t the least bit true.” Her face turned gloomy – she really bit the bait Staxius handed out. The attempt at making her take the guilt for his bloodlust worked, manipulation is still his forte.

“Don’t sweat it,” he patted her back seeing as she stood next to him. The reunion was more than poetic, this and the first time they met ended in the same way – death.

“Now then, Rose, you have a bet to uphold.” Hearing him mention the one thing she dreaded, her frown turned into a more neutral stance as her face seemed to get tense.

“Alright...” Deep breath in, “-I want you to forget that this incident ever happened, I’ll forget that Viola’s car also got destroyed in the process.”

“How about that, you haven’t changed have you.” A sigh of relief followed.

Temperature outside got colder; the sun was ready to retire for the day. The moon, on the other hand, was already out and about. It’s rare to see both the sun and moon to be out at the same time; a sign of bad omen, for it goes against popular belief. The sun and his trusty friend; the moon, shall never meet for if that day came to pass – the world would surely get devoured in their wake.

Nighttime soon followed; Staxius and Rose were at the very top floor. A room used for strategical meetings for when war or another catastrophe got unbearable. Said room was spacious and held very little furniture – only the basics were found such as a large semi-circular table facing a giant map of Hidros. On one side of said map, you had information and current affairs as well as other state-related matters, on the other you had the current objective. And the map itself, it would lit up on places of interest while someone gave a report or proposed a plan of action. Sitting square in the middle of that table; Rose. She looked more scary than usual, the light’s behind her didn’t help at all. It only gave the impression of an angel watching down over whoever was speaking – her face unrecognizable with said lights behind them. Her identity was a secret Thunderstain could never let anyone hear about.

On that night, however, the semicircular table and map weren’t in use, instead, both Rose and Staxius sat comfortably on a bright red leather couch around a glass table. Their discussions which lasted a whole four hours reached its end.

“Now that should be more than enough for you.”

“Thanks, Rose, you’ve got me back on track with how Hidros works – I don’t feel out of place anymore.”

“No problem, now what is the reason you came here? Surely it wasn’t for a reminder.”

“Correct, I haven’t come here for a leisurely chat. As you fully aware, Dorchester is under Millicent’s rule now.”

“Let me stop you there Staxius, I know what you’re going to ask, and the answer is simply no. I

can’t become a noble for Dorchester alone. You see, the princess has crucial information about me and my men, If I ally myself with another province other than hers, everyone will be killed. Also, you asked about my kid, right? Well, that poor boy was taken away recently to become a combat butler to serve the royal family. I sadly had to agree – the only way I can keep my family safe is by being unbiased and impartial – that princess has me around her finger.” Midway her tone changed to woeful.

“You know your craft way too much.” Rose let out a quiet chuckle seeing Staxius pout after saying that.

“There, a Rose should always bloom and never wither. That goes for you as well, a smile suits that face best.”

“Staxius, why don’t you stay the night?”

“I’ll graciously accept the invitation.” Soon after, Rose left – Staxius was to sleep on the same couch as punishment for killing her men.

"I guess I should be frustrated? I mean, my whole purpose for coming ended up being for naught. Dorchester can't be left how it is, two nobles aren't enough. If I can't find allies, I at least need to gather some crest to make the silver guardians the nobles. That way, we'll fill the council's table but that doesn't hide the fact that we are weak. I mean, I can and probably will have to defend Dorchester on my own. Allies... wait, whatever happened to Julius?" A hint of inspiration whelmed from within – Julius Garnet. Sleeping here turned out to be a blessing in disguise, most of the information he needed was present.

A quick search through the main monitor and file cabinets; Julius Garnet's name popped up. The reputation he had earned wasn't that pleasing to look at. Most nobles refer to him as a manipulator, a heartless person, and a bloodthirsty mage. His most notable work that is also the one that got him to the nickname of Reaper is the murder of another mage. An S-ranked female who... the report ended, or was erased by someone.

"Julius... you've become just like me, but the report goes on to say that after Dorchester was overthrown you were exiled by her highness. What is happening? Why would she do something like that, Autumn Garnet's location is unknown? This is confusing, to say the least, Julius killed an S-rank mage and was ousted? What kind of report is this? I guess it's for the best, a dead man should stay dead, after witnessing how difficult it is to make someone believe your identity – it is faster to just forget said past and start anew. Dwelling in the past and my failures will not serve any purpose. Time to turn a new leaf." The hopeless struggle against the monster called sleep ended in defeat.

"Staxius...Staxius...STAXIUS." A faint voice, after each time it uttered the name, got louder and louder until his sleep broke. "STAXIUS, WAKE UP." With his eyes still not adjusted to the sunlit room, he squinted and asked unwillingly, "W-who is t-this?"

"Wake up already, it's me, Rose, we are in deep trouble – I mean YOU ARE IN BIG TROUBLE." After a few seconds, he fully woke. "Why am I in trouble again?"

"I-it came from Dorchester, we got reports saying that Kreston and Arda are planning to attack castle Garsley as a sign of rebellion against Hidros."

"Rebellion, why do something so unnecessary?"

"STOP BEING CAVALIER, don't you understand? Dorchester is going to be used as a warning directed to Hidros."

"I mean, I figured as much, those elves truly were..."

"Stop speaking to yourself and go, we've got a car ready for you at the entrance, and here..." she firmly placed a radio in his hands. "-use this to contact me, the princess is tracing all my calls and conversations – she ordered me not to provide any information to neither Arda nor Kreston."

"Stop speaking and take a breath, I shall leave this instant if that is what you desire."

"Go!"

Sat around, with his hand firmly grasping the phone and staring outside; where the troupes are filling trucks with supplies and weapons – duke Hawkin spoke loudly.

“Greetings queen Shanna Islegust.”

“Greetings duke Hawkin,” a gentle and friendly voice spoke, Shanna Islegust sat on a golden throne. Knelt in front of her, two elves, a brother and a sister, the brother was severely hurt while the sister sobbed for she told everyone that her virtue was stolen.

“May I ask why you’ve requested us to attack the unimportant province of Dorchester?” The Duke asked calmly, it wasn’t the first time he held a conversation with the queen whose face remains a mystery.

“My dear Duke, the province of Dorchester has assaulted and defiled my envoys...” her friendly tone changed to one more piercing and angrier “-they are to be exterminated and shown that ARDA isn’t a kingdom to be taken lightly. For all I know they might be allied with the royal family. As you know, the only way to get into their territory is through that woeful province.”

“I understand your majesty but what are we supposed to do?”

“You, my trustful allies are to invade and destroy what little settlements and resources they have. I, on the other hand, shall march into their noble district.”

“As you wish your majesty, I shall invade their province in two days’ time. Preparations are in order. And if I may be so bold, when are you going to march forth?”

“My dear duke, have you forgotten that I Shanna Islegust, am a fairy, one whose wisdom far exceeds everyone combined in this world? We from Arda are tired from all the abuse, the Order has given us permission to do whatever for we are a free nation in their eyes.”

“Everything is taking a turn for the worse, that slight hesitation – that slight miscommunication has resulted in an uproar, damn it. If only I followed my instinct and killed those pesky spies – nothing like this would have ever happened.” With his feet slammed onto the pedal, Staxius drove across at neck-breaking speed. Dorchester just got out of a problem and ended into another. His war-torn province is on the verge of total chaos – there isn’t much left to save. In a futile struggle for independence, Dorchester is being used once more like a sacrificial lamb. My question is where does Plaustan stand in all this? Are they just going to watch Arda fight for their freedom and let Kreston take the blunt force of the royal army? No matter, I need to get there as fast as I can.”

[Chapter 50](#)

Piers Riverty

Amidst the expansive and diverse garden, Gallienne sat, quietly while gazing into the distance. The weak petals having aged beyond their desired lifetime with the push provided by the wind, help said petals to break off from their place of origin and float aimlessly around. The gentle breeze carried with it the petals that looked like butterflies. They went around the princess who sat courteously as she gazed further out at Brisnet Height and its always snowy tip. Almost ashamed by the physical contact; the breeze circled around her and dispersed into nothingness.

Princess Gallienne sat, her beauty was befitting for a royalty. Despite her personality and conniving nature and sadistic tendencies – in the eyes of her trusty bodyguard, Theodore, those imperfections made her look even more beautiful. After gently sipping the last drop of tea, she let out a sigh; whether out of spite or relief, none knew. In a seemingly motionless manner, she placed the cup onto the table and knocked quietly onto the glass surface.

Instantly with mist trailing; Theodore appeared with his head bowed.

“How may I serve you?” He asked politely in a gentle tone.

“Please go fetch my husband,” she shrugged and took his diligence towards her nonchalantly. Due to his standing and social status, even with all the passionate nights they shared; Gallienne didn’t care less for him. However, that wasn’t the case for the diligent butler – he would stare at her from the shadows, always admiring her beauty, her sly nature, and ill will. His eyes, normally devoid of any emotion would always brightly lit up when she sat down, quietly in the garden; away from all her conspiracies. It was only then that he would have the chance to hang back in the shadows and watched her snowy white hair casually sway alongside the wind. They seemed to dance and play with each other; it was bliss.

“As you wish, highness.” From where he came, he disappeared. Nothing changed, his presence wasn’t required to make the world go around. Theodore was only a pawn in the princesses’ chess game, a game with the entire kingdom at stake.

Piers Clyfford, the brother-in-law of Sophie Mirabelle as well as Gallienne’s husband, wandered aimlessly around the courtyard outback. He had come back from a very serious audience with the Emperor. In the past; he was reprimanded for stealing his to-be wife’s virtue before marriage. Normally, that would have slid by seeing as they were to be wed. Sadly, conceiving a child before the engagement was more than enough for the

king; who at that time was still powerful and mighty to reign down punishment. As a result, said child was thrown to sea and despite their marriage, Piers lost his claim to his family and goes by Piers Riverty. This sent outrage amidst the nobles’ but Gallienne played her cards just right and made few allies as well as enemies in the process. Thanks to that, Piers’s animosity, due to his very prideful nature, grew. He hated the royal family more than he could ever put into words nor actions.

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Sadly, the king had solely forbidden him to cause any trouble for the kingdom as well to the name Riverty. Hence, the revenge he desired could never come to pass for if he did anything to so much as slightly tarnish the royal family’s reputation – the entire Clyfford family, as well as their allies and friends, would be stripped from their status as nobles and put to the sword for everyone to see.

The love for one’s family and fortune can turn one into a true martyr for the sake of their survival. Tis is the nature of living things, survival comes first, then revenge and other frivolous motives. As he went around the rectangular courtyard in which a massive fountain with the sculpture of a forgotten goddess’s figure was graciously carved out with the utmost care and affection. You could say the craftsman responsible was under a trance; inspiration. It felt as if he had made love with said object, from start the finish, the passion didn’t diminish. The intricate statue was placed in the middle of a pond on which flowers and other decorations could be found floating aimlessly. There was harmony within

that discord of randomly placed objects. Like a mermaid stranded on a lonely deserted island, small as it may, the statue and the pond gave out the same aura, close yet far apart. The mermaid could go out to sea and find whatever she sought but those objects, the discord amidst them – played the role of the thunderous weather which ails the island perpetually, hence, preventing her escape.

“My lord Piers,” Theodore reappeared. He stood silent and waited for a response.

“If it isn’t her highness’s private plaything.” He unwillingly stopped and faced the bowing Theodore.

“What lowers a being such as yourself; a hero, the princess’s savior to seek me? Has her highness finally made up her mind to have me killed?”

Ignoring the provocations, Theodore delivered his message and vanished. “Once more, I shall be sent out to the wolves to act as bait, my guess is that my wife...” His fist tightened, “-wants me to go and meet with someone who very well might end my life.”

“Greetings Highness.” Piers answered her summons. Without so much as lifting a finger, she continued her examination of snowy peaks. “Oh, you’ve come.” She didn’t care.

“How may I...” Before he could end, she furiously spoke out. “Don’t speak unless I’ve given you permission.” Obligated to obey, he bit his lips and stared at the stone path leading to where she sat. The wind had stopped blowing, the tension was palpable.

“I shall get right to the point. Sources have informed me that Arda and Kreston are preparing to attack Dorchester. They wish to provoke me, sadly, that won’t be enough. I want you to go meet with the Duchess of Dorchester and tell her that if she should ever lose her grasp over castle

Garsley, then, I, princess Gallienne shall personally come and aid them in their distress. I’ve sent envoys to Arda to negotiate. And don’t forget to tell her that, in no way does that make me her ally;

I don’t care for the weak – her castle is the only thing protecting this capital from invaders. Now leave, I shan’t tolerate failures.”

Grudgingly; he left with a sealed scroll. “Arda, if you wish to seek independence, then prepare to suffer the repercussions. Lowly Demi’s, how did they come into being is a mystery even the Order can’t answer. At least with a basic concealment spell or mutilation of their ears and tails; we can get cheap if not free labor.”

Out on the roads nearing Savaview bridge; Staxius went all out. The car was fully infused with his dense mana – as a result, the engine went into overdrive. This wasn’t advisable as told by the manufactures for if it went beyond its limit – the engine would die out to the point of no return. As he came into turning distance, thundering roar swore from the capital and headed straight for Dorchester; an airship. Such speed, such velocity, that airship was simply magnificent, Staxius was left baffled at how the technology really advanced.

A small bump in the road nearly tipped over his car, this broke him out of his admiration for such a work of art. Minutes turned into hours, Piers landed. Outside the castle, the raging sound of the airship hovering; shook the entire ground. Adelana and Undrar were outside caring for the people who rejoined the camp only a few hours prior. Most of the Silver guardians were outside; either serving food, tending

to the wounded or playing with the kids. The yard inside slowly became smaller as the number of people rallying under Staxius's effort to make Millicent a just and caring noble, increased.

Piers jumped off. He now stood in front of the entrance of castle Garsley. It truly was terrifying up close, the central tower in which dwelled Sten's room and torture chambers as well as the study stood out. The four other towers at the extremities of the castle walls weren't that tall in comparison though they were tall on their own. The front gate led into the courtyard, where the temporary camp was set up. Said yard went around the main building in which the bedrooms', the throne room and other rather repelling chamber's laid to rest. As far as today was concerned; only the throne room was to be used. As soon as he landed, Adelana courteously greeted the stranger.

"Greetings sire, how may I be of service?"

"Greetings my fair lady, I have an important message to deliver. It's addressed to the duchess personally, sadly, I can't divulge any more about this matter."

"Very well, please follow me." Everyone around raised their guard, especially the silver guardians. The peasant's, not that much, but everyone keenly stared down the expensively dressed gentleman.

His perfect boy persona had been altered since the days at the academy. He now wore rectangular glasses which fitted his rather oval face nicely. The brown eyes and tanned skin paired with short light brown hair gave him a charm unlike any other. They soon entered the main building, directly in front of them laid the dining hall, rather blunt but that was the first thing people saw. To the right, the corridor went into a circular fashion around the four main rooms. The dining hall was located on the bottom while the throne room was directly in front, just after the circular tower. Ignoring the rather unconventional way of arrangement and architecture in general, Adelana took the circular hall and went around the other rooms. After each room, a door would separate them, a door which was never used for it was only opened if disaster struck. In total four inner halls separated the main rooms into an x-shape. Dead square in the middle; the main tower.

"Here we are," they reached the throne room. Sat inside, Millicent casually had a conversation with Eira who asked about how politics worked. As usual, the place was a mess, Piers didn't seem to care, for he instantly bowed his head and introduced himself.

"Greetings duchess Millicent, ruler of Dorchester. I am Piers Riverty, husband to her royal highness. I've come to deliver a message to your hands only." Those last words subtly gave Eira and Adelana the order to leave, to which, they soon left.

"Greetings lord Piers," she straightened her posture into one more befitting a ruler and waited for Piers.

"As I've said before, I come bearing a message," slowly, he walked while maintaining his chest high and stomach in. After handing over the scroll, he bowed his head and retreated to his original stance.

After reading the rather short and undignified message, Millicent held her forehead with her right index finger and thumb. She sighed at regular intervals, her whole posture lost its confidence and pride.

"Duchess, may I please know what your response shall be?" He asked with a skeptic tone. Millicent nearly gave in and told him that she wasn't going to decide for the province, Staxius was the one who

would deal with this. Before she could speak, her own mouth shut subconsciously. “Lord Piers, can I please reflect on this matter and get back to you in an hour or so?”

“I’m sorry, I’d rather have your decision this instant – but if it’s time that you want, then I shall wait.” Elegantly, he headed outside and sat in the dining room – which had turned into a makeshift tavern. Commoners, traders, merchants, all had fun. Seeing an elegantly dressed man enter, the atmosphere died for a bit then got back to where it was. People sang, drank, and ate good food at the expense of Staxius’s good graces. Piers dropped his noble act and began to chat and drink with the people. Soon enough, he became one of them, they drank, sang, and had fun – for the first time since Piers got married, he had fun.

As soon as he left, the room was swarmed by the others. Everyone began to question her thoroughly. She ended up giving the scroll and went to have something to drink.

“Keep it in their girls, I’m coming.” The car crossed Savaview bridge, the airship which previously hovered had left for quite a while now. The scene that soon followed, would soon change how Staxius acted.