

The Alpha King's Claim

Chapter 129 The Guardian Ascension

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Serena

By morning, Queen Adna and I stood at the entrance of the portal between Ehnrelil and Phanteon,

waiting for the rest of the High Elders to arrive.

The twins were already with us, acting as both our guards and witnesses of the guardian ascension of their mother.

High Elders Asherah, Jhenniha, Hrista, and three more were already present. Though there were approximately twelve elders in Ehnrelil who were supposed to witness the event too, because of the great war and Geraden's eventual fall, only six were left; all loyal and supportive of me and Queen Adna's double rule.

We needed one more elder, and this one had already informed beforehand he will be attending. Queen Adna called him High Elder Hadon, and upon careful digging of my memories, I remembered this fae to be one of King Alduin's closest council members. The other elders mostly called him a royal adviser—like Elijah to Aero—because the king respected his inputs during his reign.

I had seen this man on only a few occasions while I was training to become my mother's successor. He was a quiet man for most of the time when he visits Rexhus Tower, but when he does speak, the other elders training me listen. Before I betrayed Ehnrelil and placed the fae army in eternal sleep, this man was rumored to undergo Adhuriva—a meditative journey of enlightenment among faes. Usually this journey last for years depending on the capabilities of the fae. It seemed he had recently finished his since he was back in Ehnrelil.

The big question now was if he supported my leadership, and I was going to find that out minutes from now.

The portal we chose was shaped like traditional double doors, except that it had a mirror-effect with no reflection. It can be used by the inhabitants of Ehnrelil and Phanteon, but on this occasion, we planned to use it to reach the main bridge, Vantena, where the guardians of the realms stay. This was the main entry point of all creatures who wished to cross realms; like a server to its computers or Grand Central Station to its trains.

Since Lady Hanhenna was yet to be installed as official guardian of Ehnrelil, the Master

Guardian, Celestial God Nicolette—King Lucien’s Queen of Zaxonia—does the tweaking of the portal. Or at least this was what Aunt Adna and Aero told me.

Despite my status as High Priestess in the past, I had never been to Vantena and meet this woman who was rumored to live on Earth like I did. Just knowing about our almost-similar circumstances made me excited to meet her. I had some kind of feeling that we were going to be good friends.

“No one, not even the leaders, were allowed entry inside Vantena unless on occasions like this. It was to maintain equality and to protect the pillars of the realms,” Aunt Adna explained while the twins and I listened.

Adamar and Adaen broke into a pleased smile, likely happy to get this kind of privilege. I smiled at them too and would have asked further about Lady Hanhennas’s guardianship status, but then the man we waited for finally arrived.

The other High Elders bent their heads in acknowledgement of his presence. This was odd for me

since, as far as I know, all elders were of equal statuses. Or, probably, they must have held this fae with high regard because of his closeness to King Alduin and since he finished his enlightenment journey.

In a silky red robe with embroidered ferns and swastika-like symbols, High Elder Hadon stepped up the circle and neared us. On closer inspection, he looked young for an eight-hundred-and-twelve-year-old entity, but I wasn't surprised with this since fae beauty was close to eternal.

Typical fae silver hair, bushy brows and beard, piercing gray eyes, and pointy ears, the pointiest of all elders—that's what he looked like. I could only hope his ego wasn't the same postenlightenment. He dropped a swift bow toward Aunt Adna and I expected he would do the same to me too, but then he just dismissed me, giving me a fleeting glance from my face to my belly and nothing more. I certainly felt like an insignificant pest in his eyes as a result, but that didn't bother me. I could do the same to him too when I really want to. Plus, I never craved his attention since the time I was still in training.

"Queen Adna, apologies for my tardiness, I was occupied with another...important matter," High Elder Hadon stated, his eyes focused on my aunt alone.

The latter dipped her head once and flashed a practiced smile. "No worries, Hadon. We still have time before the ceremony starts." She shifted toward me, spread her hand and said, "If I may, let

me introduce you to your new queen, Queen Serena of both Ehnrelil and Phanteon.”

“Your Majesty,” he bit.

The man’s bow was so short, so quick that I almost thought it was nonexistent, and my guess was he did it on purpose. I didn’t show my displeasure though. I just gave him the same treatment.

“High Elder Hadon.”

That awkward exchange made me realize one thing: that I wasn’t gaining his favor anytime soon.

“Queen Adna, I suggest we travel now, time is ticking after all,” he had the guts to say.

“Of course,” my aunt replied, seemingly clueless of what was going on between me and the elder.

She held her hand for me to take and I, after heaving a calming breath, flashed a smile and received it. I couldn’t allow him to ruin my mood any longer.

We both stepped together inside the portal. The High Elders followed us and then Adamar and Adaen.

“Woah, this place is amazing!” Adaen’s voice was the first sound I heard after the quick travel.

We had the same reaction, but I chose to keep those words in my chest. Since I was with the High Elders, I might as well conduct myself the queenly way possible: that is—like Queen Adna who reserved her observations to herself.

“Bro, close your mouth, you are drooling,” Adamar chastised and again, damn it, I kept myself from giggling.

Feasting my eyes on the magnificence of the place instead, I turned to my aunt and tugged her hand.

“I never expected the guardians’ headquarters would look like this,” I said.

She cupped my face and nodded, her crown of flower buds, twigs, and vines appearing like crystals against the radiating columns.

There were more or less fifty of these stanchions in the massive hallway we were in. They were lined up like those on Earth, in Athena’s temple on Parthenon to be exact. However, this here had a grander scale—all illuminating and reflecting our faces.

The hallway toward the culdesac-like open theater wasn’t anything I had seen before. It was floored in a transparent way as if we were floating in space instead of standing on solid ground.

The same went with the ceiling—if I was even correct to call it that. Past the columns, water features were present, and these were in the form of statues of the emblems of each realm.

“Well, they are guardians after all. No one realm represents them,” was her reply.

We marched to the theater with Queen Adna and High Elder Hadon leading. I opted to walk behind them, but I wasn't alone. I had the twins with me, as always ever supportive and ever understanding.

"Are you excited for your mother, guys?" I asked, turning to Adamar first and then to Adaen.

They wore their battle armors with additional silver capes to show that they were not only fae knights but also royal magistrates of the High Court.

"Are you kidding, Serena! Of course, we are!" Adaen exclaimed, lowering his voice this time but still with enough excited tone.

Adamar, on the other hand, just bobbed his head in approval.

My chest warmed up with this. I was excited too not only because their mother deserved it but also because I get to finally see how a guardian ascension gets performed.

Once we arrived in the theater, I found the overall set-up to be rather appealing. There were once again illuminating columns on every corner, and next to them were podiums with the different realm emblems painted on the front. Standing behind these platforms were the guardians themselves. Out of ten of them, I only knew three: Farryl, Kerus, and yeah, the dead Nevannir.

Naturally, the podium for Ehnrelil was vacated as Lady Hanhenna will stand there soon.

At the center of the theater was a pyramid-like platform with stairs. A woman stood atop it with a gown made of diaphanous material. Her hair was a beautiful rust color. She was smiling down at us and when our eyes connected, I sensed no threat in her, just warm welcome.

I immediately knew her to be the Master Guardian, Nicolette.

“Queen Serena, come,” she invited while gesturing for me with her hands.

Queen Adna urged me forward too with a pat on my back. I looked at her in confusion.

“You will undergo the ritual with Lady Hanhenna and the Master Guardian, so you should stand there,” she informed.

I would have appreciated if she told me beforehand about this, but I’m cool with an impromptu ritual too.

“Copy that, auntie,” I told her and proceeded to climb up the steps, my layered gown of pinkish green flowed as I did so.

Master Guardian Nicolette smiled at me when I reached the spacious top. I smiled back.

“Welcome to our domain,” she said while stretching a hand for me. I took it and squeezed lightly.

“Thank you for this warm welcome, Master Guardian.”

“Please,” she quickly shook her head, “just call me Nicolette. I’m not used to this whole master guardian thing.”

Her chuckle was soft and genuine. I couldn’t help but follow her because we just had the same aversion to appellations.

“Call me Serena too.”

She dipped her chin once to show her approval and then, with her eyes, gestured for me to stand at her right.

Just as I did, Lady Hanhenna climbed up the steps too. We waved hands at each other when she arrived, standing at Nicolette’s left.

“Guardians, Queen Adna, Queen Serena, notable High Elders of the fae court, and fae knights, welcome,” Nicolette started, her head moving to every spectator around us. “We are all gathered here today for a joyous occasion. We are going to bless a new guardian who will be Ehnrelil’s new aid.”

She shifted to her left and said, “Lady Hanhenna, come forward.”

The one addressed did so.

“Queen Serena, come forward,” she turned to me next.

Nodding, I took three steps forward before stopping in line with Lady Hanhenna.

Nicolette made a few swings and flips with her hand and a fount appeared from the floor in between the three of us with already crystal clear water inside.

“By the powers invested in me by the Universe and the pillars, I now begin the ritual of ascension,” she said.

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