


Chapter 1579

Though Ryan had told Cecil he was going on a journey, he didn't stay long at Eldernere Keep. After just seven days, he left and made his way to the Pathfinders Guild.

He had initially planned to return to the capital to seek out Claire, but soon reconsidered. Instead of troubling her, he thought it best to directly ask Winona to teach him the art of disguise.

It was not difficult to learn, but to do it well—to the point where no one could tell—was another matter. Such skill could not be acquired in just a few months.

The simpler form of disguise involved merely altering one's features with makeup and slight adjustments to the face. This was fine for ordinary situations, but could easily be seen through in more challenging circumstances, like on a rainy day for instance. 

Therefore, Ryan knew he couldn't settle for such a basic method.

The more advanced form of disguise involved creating a mask as a false face. However, these masks had their own set of problems. They were thick, uncomfortable, and wearing them for too long could damage the skin. To make matters worse, the masks required special ointments to stay attached, or they could tear the wearer's skin when removed.

At Skywing Spire, they used such masks, but only for short periods. Their spies were skilled fighters, and their mastery of the Lightfoot Skill made them nimble. They wore the masks during operations but didn't need the ointments. Even if the mask showed signs of wear, a black cloth covered their faces and made it hard to tell it was a disguise. But for everyday disguises, the simpler form was usually used.

"If you want a disguise that can stay on your face for a long time without damaging your skin and won't easily fall off, then you'll need a mermaid-skin mask," Winona explained when she heard Ryan's request.

"A mermaid-skin mask?" Ryan repeated, puzzled.

He knew of a fabric called mermaid silk, light as a spiderweb and resistant to water. However, it was a rare and expensive material.

Winona nodded. "A mermaid-skin mask is the finest form of disguise. It's breathable, fits snugly to the face, doesn't fall off easily, and works well even in rain. It feels and looks just like real skin, whether you look at it or touch it. 1

"However, creating such a mask requires weaving mermaid tears into silk, then carefully crafting it into a base. It sounds simple, but the process involves hundreds of steps and is very intricate."

"Once the mask is made, how long will it last?" Ryan quickly asked.

"It lasts a lifetime. It won't wear out or deteriorate for a long time."

"Please teach me how to make one," Ryan requested, bowing his head. 1

Winona smiled. "You wish to learn, and I am more than happy to teach you. But know this: some skills we spies possess are not easily shared without good reason. If you wish to learn, you must become my apprentice, to ensure the secrets of our craft do not fall into the wrong hands."

Ryan dropped to one knee without hesitation. "That won't be a problem, Sage Winona."

Winona shook her head and chuckled. "You're eager, but there's more to

being my apprentice than simply learning this one craft. It means you must learn everything I know and, eventually, take over Skywing Spire. That's not a decision you can make alone. You'll need to consult with your aunt."

Ryan hesitated.

Though he knew little of Skywing Spire, he was aware of its importance. Apart from helping Rafael and Carissa when required, the guild had branches across the nation, even in distant lands like Sandoria and Orivenia. The branch in the capital, known as Cloudwing Spire, was currently being run by Violet and Claire.

Skywing Spire was a loyal and trusted aide to Rafael and Carissa, and it also carried out the work of spies. Should war ever break out, the guild's role would become all the more vital.


Ryan's mind raced. He feared he didn't have the ability to take on the weight of such a responsibility. Yet, there was a spark in him—something that made his heart race with excitement. 1

Before he was granted his title, he had been the king's companion. Out of old affection, Cecil still called him by his name. Now that Ryan had received his title as the Duke of Northwatch, it was expected that he would follow in his grandfather's footsteps and become a general who defended the realm.

Carissa had once asked him what kind of man he wished to become, and he had nearly blurted out that he longed to be like his grandfather and father. But he understood the situation clearly now. His uncle was the regent, while his aunt commanded the Mystic Army. Even if they hadn't actively sought followers, they had garnered a strong group of supporters over the years.

As the Duke of Northwatch, Ryan's position was already prestigious. If he entered the military or the government and made a name for himself, the heat of that fame could attract the wrong kind of attention and lead to great danger.

So, when Carissa had asked him what he wanted, he said he only hoped to live a free and peaceful life.

But as the grandson of a grand general, raised under the guidance of Trevor and Rafael, how could Ryan truly be content with such a quiet life? It was nothing more than a reluctant decision made after weighing the circumstances. 

If he were to join Skywing Spire, it would ease the burden on his uncle and aunt—and perhaps, at last, give him a chance to fulfill the ambitions he kept hidden in his heart.



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