

Asharin looked out of the window of the inn and smiled, it was a fine morning. The weather was perfect, the sun bright with a light breeze, and for a moment he played with the idea of leaving the inn in the hands of Sharyssa before heading out for a walk into the forest.

„Stop spacing out, Asha, or we will not finish with the morning tasks before a customer arrives. Your wife wouldn't be happy about that, would she?" Sharyssa asked as she poked him on the shoulder. She was still little more than a teen, a young adult at best by human standards, young for a shal'dorei, or any other race of elves for that matter. It didn't help that she was his first cousin once removed too, so Asha just shrugged with a smile and returned his tasks.

„Don't fret, I could manage the inn alone if needed, and did so on occasions." The druid replied, patting her head gently after he was done. „Shella did too, even before I knew her."

„Still, would it-" The front door crashed open, interrupting whatever she wanted to say and a group of five people entered. Four of them wore the garb of the city guards of Silvermoon, one possibly an officer of sort, though Asharin wasn't sure. It was the last member of the party who truly puzzled him: the male elf wore elegant cloak and robes with no apparent weapon, but his gut feeling said the man wasn't to be messed with freely.

Asha frowned. „How can we help you?" He asked, unsure for what reason this bunch of blood elves showed up just now.

„We came for you, you filth. You've polluted the air of our great city long enough, it's time for you to be gone." The sin'dorei wearing the robes sneered, he thought it was a grace that he even spoke with him in person. „A kaldorei like you, I've been wondering how you've been allowed in to begin with and what took so long to finally kick you out. Now get lost."

„What?! That's impossible, he didn't do anything!" Sharyssa shouted indignantly, but Asha stepped forward with a hand outstretched before her. It took effort, but the nightborne closed her mouth at his glance, she knew herself well enough that saying more could only make the situation worse.

„Know your place, girl. Your kind is welcome here, but you should never forget to treat your betters with respect." The man replied arrogantly before focusing on the night elf again. „Are you deaf? I told you to get out of our city, now!"

Asharin glanced at the guards, so far they showed no sign to interrupt anything, but not all of them could keep his or her face emotionless. „Then give me a reason. I came here openly, and as expected, I was kept under close watch, yet there were no issues of that I know of, save for a few drunken patrons who went too far, but those are inevitable and were taken care of according to the regulations." He even suprised himself on how calm his voice soudned.

„You dare to talk back to a magister of my standing?! Insolence!" The blood elf hissed in displeasure, a small reddish glow appearing in his hands as he spoke. „We have the order, and that's the end of it! Now out with you if you don't want this inn to be burned to the ground... or anything to happen to your wife, do you?" The mage taunted with a cruel smile, but his expression changed drastically as Asha took a step in his direction, lightning flashing in his eyes.

„Now YOU pay attention-“ The druid growled, but before he could say any more, two of the guards stepped between them.

„Magister Avandus, you go too far.“ The female guard removed her helmet and faced the mage with a cold stare. „We indeed received the order that he has to go, but there was nothing in it about making him go this very moment without a chance to make any preparations or packing. Nor, as I recall, was using threats or blackmailing with property or family members permitted.“ Her voice was steady, but her words made Avandus grit his teeth in fury.

Without waiting for a retort, the other guard standing between them –the one Asha thought was an officer- put a hand on the mage’s shoulder. „Magister Avandus, I have to ask you to leave this room now, for your personal feelings clearly interfere with the task we received officially.“ Avandus gave a last, hateful stare at Asha before he hurried out of the inn, the two silent guards close on his heels.

It seems Asha’s guess was right, the big sin’dorei in front of him was definitely of higher rank. „Thank you.“

„No matter.“ The elf shook his head, his green eyes meeting Asha’s amber ones calmly. „On the other hand, we were indeed tasked with the duty to notify you about your departure from Silvermoon City. It is not up for debate, signed by the Lord Regent himself.“ He took a moment to wonder about that, and so did the druid.

Asharin never met the leader of the sin’dorei before, though the Regent Lord must have known of his existence in some form, as without his permission it was unlikely he could have stayed in the city all along.

„The most important detail is that you have to leave before sunset at latest, otherwise force will be used and neither of us want that.“

„I’m not so sure about that.“ Asha commented wryly. „That bastard didn’t seem to agree with you.“

The officer chuckled as well. „Don’t worry about him, these rules bound him as much as anyone else, magister or not. Guard Starblaze will tell you the rest, and will be tasked to see you out personally since she already took your side during the argument.“ He smiled at the woman who looked down at the ground, before facing the kaldorei once more. „She will report to me after you leave. Now, I would usually wish a good day, but...” The elf frowned. „Use your time well. It’s nothing personal, but with both of our interests in mind, I hope we don’t meet again anytime soon.“ With that he also walked out, leaving an uncomfortable silence behind.

„But why, why did this had to happen?!“ Sharyssa cried out, startling both Asha and the woman. She was so silent during the whole ordeal he forgot she was still here. He should have asked her to go back to her room, say that he would handle this. Well, too late for that now.

„It was never truly outside of my expectations, but as the years passed without trouble... I admit I wasn’t prepared for it.“ Asha replied with a sigh, patting the nightborne on the shoulder. „Alright, time for packing.“

„B-but Anshella won't return in the next two days! She won't take this well..." Sharyssa murmured in reply, she definitely didn't want to be the one Shella focused her anger on the moment she heard what happened.

„I apologize again. We didn't mean to inconvenience any of you... but can't do much against orders coming from the higherups." The guard said with a sigh. „If it was my decision alone, you'd never have to worry about this happening. It would be a poor way of repaying you since you saved my life."

„Wait, what?" Asha raised an eyebrow in surprise, looking at her with wide eyes. After a few seconds, recognition flashed. „I remember... you were on the Broken Shore as well, right?"

„Yes. my name is Aviendra Starblaze, I stayed briefly at the Legionfall outpost. I know it's not much, but I will promise you one thing: no harm will come to this place nor to your family. I believe the Captain will give out the order the moment I report to him, but even if he doesn't, there are more than enough of us who don't dislike you to keep an eye out. I promise on my honor." Aviendra said with sincerity, almost as if taking an oath.

„Thank you, that put my mind at ease." The druid replied with a nod. That bastard of a mage might try something, but with Aviendra's help he wouldn't have it easy. Still, he'd better warn Shella to be careful as well. „Have a seat, I'm going up to gather what I need. I think it will be done within an hour." After receiving a nod from the guard, Asharin walked up the stairs with Sharyssa right behind him.

„Do you really have to go? Is there nothing we can do?" Sharyssa asked in desperation. While he was her cousin, she always felt that Asha was a reliable older brother, always there to pull her out of the mess. He saved her, her mother and her sister in Suramar, prevented others from picking on her while she adjusted to the life in Silvermoon after she decided to come, and even offered her a place to stay and work to do when she was not studying magic. And now he was forced to go away.

„There's nothing. Hey, don't feel so sad, it's not like we won't see each other again. Just not in Silvermoon for the foreseeable future. For now, you have to be strong. I don't know whether Shella will be outraged at first or not, but it will be a hard blow for her... as it is to me. Please, support her as much as you can until I can find a way around this mess." Asha explained in forced calm, holding her shoulders all along. „As for the inn, you could close it for those two days until Anshella arrives. We don't have any customers staying overnight at the moment, and it's not an issue financially either."

He let her go, waiting for her reply. A firm nod, as expected. She's a good girl. Asharin pulled a backpack and a few pouches from the wardrobe and handed over to Sharyssa, asking her to pack the items he named or described into them as he started working on the letter to his wife.

My dear Anshella

You know I was worried for a long time in the past about staying in Silvermoon, that one day they will force me out or try something worse. Yet for all these years, nothing happened.

Until now.

If you're reading this letter I'm about to leave in Sharyssa's hands, it means I have already left Silvermoon City. They left me with no other choice.

At least not even all of the guards, who delivered the order, agreed with it either. Also, your safety, along with Sharyssa's and the inn, is guaranteed, I've made sure of that. Still, be careful, especially around the one called magister Avandus, if he ever shows up.

*They made the decision for me, but that doesn't make being forced to leave you hurt any less. I'm going to miss you, queen of my heart.
Still, stay strong. I will find a way around this mess and we will be together again.
This, I promise.*

Until that happens, address your letters to my grandfather Eoloran's home, in Dalaran. That's the most likely place where I will show up regularly and will reply from there.

Until we meet again, my queen, my love.

Yours forever,

Asharin

The night elf sighed as he sealed the letter with his ring. Praise Elune that at least he didn't have to worry about his daughters, Kiela and Elyena. They had already left, ready to live their own lives and only returned to Silvermoon if called. Still, he will need to contact them too eventually about where to send their letters, but that could wait until he was already out of the city.

„Asha, what about this box?“ Sharyssa asked suddenly, showing the druid a small, ornately carved wooden box. It took a moment for him to recognize it, Eoloran gifted it him, containing a means for quick escape to safety. He also remembered his grandfather's warning, he shouldn't open it unless the need arose to use the item inside.

„I'll just put it in the pocket of my robe, thank you.“ Asharin glanced around to see if he forgot anything else, but everything necessary was packed now. „Here's the letter, please try to make sure Anshella reads it through after hearing about what happened. I'm counting on you.“

Sharyssa just nodded, tears gathering in the corners of her eye.

Aviendra was already standing as the pair returned to the common room in silence. Sharyssa hugged Asha once more before he stepped out of the inn, then she kept looking at the shrinking figures as they got further and further for a long time, even after they weren't visible anymore.

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„This is as far as I can escort you. Again, I'm sorry that things came to this, but don't worry about your family. Avandus won't be able to touch them.“ Aviendra said after she

accompanied Asha until the bridge. „I hope the next time we meet will be under more pleasant circumstances.” She held out her hand and after a second, Asharin took it. The druid adjusted his backpack and walked over to the other side. Soon he was out of her sight.

Asha made his way deeper into the forest, only stopping once he was sure he was far away from the roads. He pulled the wooden box out. He didn't really need a quick escape, but but somewhere safe where he could think on his next steps. Shaking his head, he opened the case and gasped. It held a hearthstone, to Dalaran.

„Heh, it seems the old man can still surprise me... but if anyone could get their hands on an artifact like this, that's him. I guess I will find out that story soon.” A small smile showed on Asharin's face. He used the hearthstone and disappeared from the woods.