

Chance Encounter: Prologue

Jolted awake by a loud pounding on his front door, Julian groaned as he swung his legs over the edge of the bed and stood up; the wine skin that had been at his side falling to the floor. Lacing up the black linen britches he was wearing he glanced out the open window in his bed chamber to see that the sky was still pitch black. "Who the hell is bothering me at this hour? It had better be bloody important" he grumbled to himself, grabbing a white linen shirt he exited the chamber while sliding it over his head.

Julian's abode was a magnificent two level house that would rival the size of most noble lords, with his bed chamber on the top level. There was a time when he couldn't walk two feet without getting mobbed by his kids but they had since all grown left and had started families of their own. After that it had been just him and his loving wife, even with only the two of them the house was still very cozy and warm. Sadly she passed away five years ago, a prospect that still haunted his dreams to this day; now the place just felt empty and cold.

Julian started to descend the stairs to the main floor, feeling his temper flare as the incessant pounding on the door continued; the fact that he had drank too much wine before passing out on his bed didn't help matters either. He flung the door open with a fierce hurry startling the young steward which caused the youth to fall back flat on his ass. He recognized the thin face of the boy, but could never remember the whelp's name. "What the hell are you bothering me for at this hour boy?" He hissed his voice slightly slurred and thick with content.

"I'm terribly sorry milord but Master Slayne insisted that he speak with you immediately" the steward managed to squeak out, clearly nervous.

"What does he want?"

"I don't know milord he didn't tell me. He just told me I'm not to return without you" the boy recoiled on his own accord, as if expecting to get a good smack.

Have I really become that soured? To the point where just my presence makes this boy uneasy? Putting a kind hand on the boy's shoulder he smiled kindly once the boy had managed to regain his courage enough to look at him. "I'm sorry lad I didn't mean to get so short with you. I haven't felt like myself in a very long time, but that's no excuse for taking it out on you. Give me a moment to get my boots and I'll be returning with you to your master."

The steward had gotten a smile on his face with that and waited contently as Julian gathered his footwear. In truth the fact is that if that old sage was sending for him at this hour Julian didn't doubt the urgency of his summons. Slayne was as wise and knowledgeable as he was old, when he spoke even the proudest of kings kept quiet and listened. He pulled on a pair of simple boots made of boiled leather and shut the door behind him as he stepped out into the cool night air, heading to Slayne's tower with the accompaniment of the young steward.

They passed the local tavern on the way, there was a dim light emitting from the windows and smoke bellowing from the chimney; it must have been closer to morning that Julian had thought if Bella was getting the kitchen fired up in order to prepare breakfast for the guests that had stayed the night. Bella was a kind hearted yet stocky human woman with long red salty hair, with boobs as stocky as her

body. She always had rooms upstairs in the tavern for travelers and made the best stew Julian had ever had, he'd have to make sure to stop by later.

A few more minutes later they had finally arrived at Slayne's tower, it was a massive piece of stonework as wide as it was tall with it almost reaching the clouds; vines winding their way up the sides. With the only entrance being a large door made of thick iron wood with magnificent etching of a wizard doing battle with a dragon. The large door opened surprisingly silently which caused Julian to look at the steward "You've over oiled the door hinges again, you know Slayne likes it to creak when it opens as it alerts him to when people come and go." The boy frowned and cursed himself, clear that he had forgotten that fact. "It's ok I won't say anything don't worry, you just best find a way to get this door creaking again. Now I'm assuming Slayne is where he usually is, with his books?"

"Yes milord he's been there almost all night, probably slept in there too" the boy replied quickly. Julian looked up the flight of spiral stairs that went from the bas to the very top and groaned "great, why that old man had to put his book room at the very top I'll never understand" and with that he started his ascent. Upon getting not even half way up the tower he decided he had enough, he started to chant and move his hands; casting a spell of levitation on himself and climbed to the top of the tower unbidden by the stairs.

Julian found the door to the Slayne's personal library being held wide open by the over flow of books, tomes and scrolls. The interior of the room was lit solely by hundreds upon thousands of candles, new candles had simply been placed on top of the old; old dried wax trailed down the stands to pool on the floor at their bases. In the middle of the room was an elderly man as tall as himself looking over a giant old tome that was probably more ancient than he was, it was placed on a stand placed in such a way that the reader was facing the door. He had shoulder length hair and a long thick beard that went down to his belly each as white as fresh fallen snow; he wore simple robes of brown linen with a rope as his belt which held a large hourglass at his side. One of his hands was wrapped around a gnarled old staff made of iron wood and had a hooked top.

The elderly man looked up and gave a warm smile as he saw him. Using his staff like a cane to support himself as he walked over and placed a hand on Julian's shoulder "you look like shit Julian, you still aren't sleeping well I take it" he said with warm tone. "It's great to see you too Slayne" Julian responded with a chuckle "what was it you wanted to see me about?"

"As straight to the point as ever I see. Very well, there has been something that has come to my attention that demands immediate action" the old sage's voice changing to a serious tone as he spoke "a creature of great rarity has emerged, I sense they are lost and scared. There will be others after them, others that wish them harm; I need you to find and protect them, bring them back here to Hyrule."

"Anything else you can tell me old friend?" Julian asked, hoping to get more information. "The only thing else I can say is that you'll know it when you see it" the sage responded with a smile. "That's still pretty damn vague Slayne."

The old sage simply smiled at him "come now Julian with all the races and things you've encountered, me saying that this creature is rare should be all that you need. I have faith that you'll

succeed.” Julian couldn’t help but agree with a silent nod, when the old man was right he was right. “All right Slayne, I’ll take your task. I’ll leave in the morning after I get cleaned up and gathered my gear.”

With that Julian turned and started to take his leave only to be halted by Slayne’s words. “I know you still miss her friend but please don’t let the grief continue to consume you, I don’t think she’d want you to drown yourself in wine and sorrow. It’s been five years, you need to try and move on.” Julian stood silently with his fists clenched in tight balls, he knew Slayne was right but that didn’t make him miss her any less; looking over his shoulder he softly thanked the sage for his advice and left.

Upon leaving the tower Julian headed the opposite way he came, making his way to the cemetery. It was well kept place and in the middle of it was a magnificent monument sculpted in the likeness of a beautiful female that had some feline features complete with ears, tail and paw like hands and feet. Engraved into a mithril plate that was embedded in the base of the statue was:

Zelda Delphiki
Mother and Healer
Gone too soon and missed by all

He knelt down in front of the monument and placed a hand on the inscription “Well I’m off my love, Slayne is sending me out on some urgent errand. Some rare creature needs saving I guess....I wish you were coming with me, I’ve gotten rusty and will more than like need a good healer” he said with a slight chuckle in his voice, a tear running down his cheek. “Well I must be off Zelda; I’ll make sure I bring more of those flowers you like so much next visit.” With that He rose to his feet and started back towards his home, the morning sun starting to rise.

Once home Julian went back upstairs, turning the opposite direction of his bed chamber. He opened a door that revealed his weapon room where he kept all his gear. He picked up a set of dual swords of bastard length, the cross-guards forged of black iron splitting into dual blades pointing up the blade with obsidian gems inlaid. The grips were wrapped tightly with black dragon hide and the pommels being simple caps of the same black iron as the cross-guards. Out of each pommel was a chain four links long crafted from rare void ore, which is darker than the abyss and drinks light. The scabbards were made of black dragon hide similar to the grip wrapping. “These’ll do nicely.” Julian sent to the task of gathering the rest of his gear and dressing for his adventure.

Julian stepped out of his house back outside, the morning sun now fully rose into the sky. He stood quietly as he looked towards the stables beside his home where his horse waited, then turned his head towards the direction of the tavern. Deciding it would be a good idea to get some food in his stomach before his trip he wandered in the direction of the tavern to get some of Bella’s delicious stew.

~Fin~