

Last thing Cyhrain remembered was being wrapped up by tentacles and sucked into the weird book Spots was reading. Now they were lying face-up, staring at a sickly green sky. They sniffed the air, and made a face. It smelled like something old and moldy.

The Forsworn sat up and looked around. Spots, their Khajiit friend, was curled up a small distance away, asleep. Cyhrain sighed. They would protect the Khajiit until she woke up. It wasn't the first time it happened, and the two have developed a routine: Cyhrain would charge into battle and draw the attention, and Spots would hide somewhere and shoot arrows, or sleep hidden if an episode found her in the middle of a battle and wake up when it was all over. Might as well explore the surroundings.

Cyhrain stood up, and looked around. The two Dragonborn were transported to a platform suspended above a sea of dark oily water. Everything had a green tinge from the sky. There was a walkway leading up to another platform, and beyond that was a slowly undulating structure that seemed to be made entirely of...books? Cyhrain approached the walkway and looked up, only to make eye contact with...something. A greasy-looking dark green mass of smoke, eyes, and tentacles, that shifted constantly, and gave the human a headache just from looking at it.

And then it spoke. Its voice was lazy, and its speech pattern infuriating, slowing down and speeding up at random intervals. It sounded greasy, if a sound could have that quality. Cyhrain tensed, positioning themselves between the entity, and the still sleeping Khajiit.

"What are you?" They demanded.

"I am Hermeaus Mora, prince of Fate and Knowledge, Lord of Secrets. This is Apocrypha, where all knowledge is hoarded. Perhaps you will prove clever enough to uncover the secrets hidden here. If so, welcome. Perhaps you are a fool or a coward-"

"This a challenge?" Cyhrain cut Mora off with a growl, not caring that they were talking to a Daedric Prince in his own domain, - "I might be a fool, but Forsworn raise no quitters."

With that, Cyhrain crouched and growled, their bones and muscle rearranging the body into its taller and lankier werewolf form. The many eyes watched them with a tiny bit of curiosity, but mostly boredom. Cyhrain leaned down and carefully slung Spots over one shoulder, and sprinted down the walkway, barreling straight through the mass of eyes. Maybe not the best idea. While Mora's avatar was intangible, it still left a disgusting oily feeling on Cyhrain's skin and fur. They heard things emerge from the water, followed by loud "THWACK"-s as tentacles hit the walkway, narrowly missing the werewolf.

They ran up many sets of stairs, and across narrow bridges, and through impossible tunnels built entirely of books, that stretched, bent, and contracted against all common sense. Spots was still fast asleep, despite being picked up and set down numerous times when Cyhrain needed to fight off one of the monsters that lived here.

Finally, they made their way to what looked like a dead end. A lurker lay dead behind them, and another pedestal with a book was there. And just at that moment, Spots stirred and yawned, opened her eyes and then shot up, tail fluffing up, and grasped for her bow. Cyhrain bounded over to her.

"You...are...safe," - words were even more difficult in beast form.

"What is this place?"

"Apocrypha... Book."

Cyhrain made a gesture with a clawed hand, at the surroundings. Spots got up, and cautiously approached the book on the pedestal.

"This one thinks we need to read this book. This one had dealings with Hermaeus Mora before, and he loves his books. If opening a book got us here, maybe reading this one will get us out."

"You read..." Cyhrain growled, then looked down. "I...don't know how."

Spots nodded, and approached the book, Cyhrain trailing close. They leaned over the Khajiit's shoulder, to see what would happen.

There was darkness and a feeling of being pulled, and then Cyhrain found themselves back in their human form, standing next to the Khajiit, who was holding the Black Book.