

Iggy and Tehrezi hunched over a table within the Idyllia, studying an assortment of glowing trinkets and tokens. Their food and drinks sat half forgotten to the side as they argued over the course of action.

"Well, the Runecarver didn't seem to accept those," Said Iggy, a worgen with orange fur and brighter orange mane braided in the front, and clad in the bone and metal armor of Maldraxxus. "Do you think something is wrong with those?"

"Dunno," Her friend, a blindfolded Night Elf with chewed up ears, a bright pink bob of hair, shaggy eyebrows, and small pointed horns, shrugged, "Could've gotten corrupted. Or maybe they're just not his to begin with."

Iggy stared at the items for a bit, then took a long drag of her drink, and then an idea hit her.

"If I squint, all the memories that we picked up have this glow. Try using your demon sight on them?"

"They're not demonic though."

"You said you could see boggarts disguised as fae in that theater in Ardenweald, and they're not demons!"

"Eh, fair enough."

Tehrezi undid her blindfold, revealing sickly neon green eyes, and peered at the items. To her demonic sight, they had a bright blue glow, that reminded her of Ardenweald of all things. Compared to that, Runecarver's memories had a faint grey glow, although she hadn't tried looking at them through the demon eyes. She suspected they'd still be grey, just brighter.

"Well?" Iggy leaned forward.

"They're blue. Runecarver's memories are grey. I think those belonged to someone else."

"Huh," The worgen gnawed on one of the bones remaining from her meal in thought.

The two friends sat in silence for a while. Tehrezi picked up her drink again. The Brokers really came through with mortal accommodations in Oribos.

"What are we gonna do with these?"

"Find the person they belonged to? Wasn't there a memory viewing place in Bastion?"

Tehrezi groaned at the mention of the place.

"Gee, the stuck up bright place with their loud-ass bells. Awesome."

Iggy sighed.

"Yep. I don't like the bells too, but I think we should check it out anyway. Let's go. The sooner we get there, the sooner we can leave."

And so it was decided. The two carefully placed the memory tokens into a bag, paid for the food - thankfully the place now accepted Azeroth money - and left for the upper level. The flight to Bastion, as well as the ride to the Locus, was smooth and uneventful.

The two fought through a few Forsworn automatons on the way to the cave, but once inside, no one bothered them.

Iggy and Tehrezi settled next to the soul mirror, and placed the memories in front of it. A ray of light scanned over the tokens, and selected one for viewing, seemingly at random. The two women looked at each other, and then shrugged.

"Maybe it's the earliest one," Iggy guessed as the ray of light lifted the token and pulled out strands of dark blue energy specked with small stars.

A vision unfurled before the two friends, and they both were absorbed in it. They watched from someone's eyes, the memory owner, they guessed. They were in Ardenweald, the throne room of the Winter Queen, approaching her as she stood on the balcony. There was a feeling of eagerness present, as if the memory owner wanted to share some good news. However, the feeling sunk as the Queen turned around, regarding the memory owner with a disappointed look.

"Your handling of wildseeds was atrocious. It will take the keepers so long to soothe their nightmares! What am I to do with you? Every task given, you have found ways to make it exponentially worse with your ideas."

The memory owner's gaze fell onto the floor, and a feeling of shame and guilt overtook them.

"I just wanted to tell them a story," They said, their gaze still downcast. Their voice was melodic and genderless. "Guess it was too scary..."

"I am beginning to think your creation was a mistake," the Winter Queen muttered, turning away.

An overwhelming feeling of rejection stabbed through the both of them, and even Tehrezi, whose emotions were dulled somewhat by becoming part demon, felt it leave a hollow void in her chest. The memory ended then. The two women sat, recovering from it for a few moments, before the hollow feeling was overcome with anger.

"Man, that was harsh, " Tehrezi commented.

"Yeah, who the hell says that to their...kid? If the Winter Queen created them, do they count as a kid?" Iggy scratched her head.

"I don't know. Something tells me I can't really walk up to her and ask," the Demon Hunter said. "Let's keep watching. Maybe there are other clues."

Iggy nodded, "And maybe happier memories."

The next memory that the Locus chose was, indeed, a happy one.

It showed a group of tall humans that Iggy recognized as Vrykul, dressed in furs and bone, seated in a half circle in front of them. There was a portal behind them. The Vrykul watched intently as a graceful clawed hand, midnight blue and glowing a lighter blue at the tips of the fingers, came into view, and started drawing shimmering runes in the air.

The memory shifted to a bigger group of vrykul, the ones from the beginning among them, repeating the runes, drawing magic circles with them. Some of them had wooden masks with branching antlers on. There was a feeling of pride and found purpose in the one teaching them. The memory ended there.

"Wait. I've seen masks like that. On the Drust. And on the Fae they control."

"Guess whoever taught the drust this magic didn't expect it to turn on Ardenweald. Or maybe they got mad at the queen and did it on purpose. I know I would have." Tehrezi gave Iggy a toothy grin.

"I think they just wanted to be needed. To have some kinda purpose."

While they were discussing the memory, the Locus started playing the next one.

It showed a First Ones altar, similar to the ones both Iggy and Tehrezi have seen in their covenant sanctums. A forge of souls. Next to it, opposite to the memory owner, stood a tall man with pointed features. His skin was pale blue, and he had powerful shoulders. The two mortals gasped as they recognised the one they've come to know as the Jailer. This past version of him looked much kinder and less worn out, and lacked the scars and runes, but it still was him. He was smiling gently at the owner of the memories.

"You are sure of this?" He asked.

"Yes!" Came the happy reply.

Both reached out to the forge, channeling anima into it, dark blue mingling with iridescent grey, culminating in a flash of light.

"We are as one," Zovaal uttered.

"We are as one," The owner of the memory replied.

The memory ended as the soulbinds embraced, and the owner of the memory closed their eyes.

Tehrezi, who has been silently mouthing "what the fuck" since Zovaal appeared in the vision, exploded.

"What the fuck this was the fucking Jailer and he had a soulbind what the fuck."

"Why not?" Iggy shrugged, "seems like he wasn't always bad."

"Another person we can't ask," Tehrezi remarked, having calmed down.

This was the last truly happy memory of the bunch, as the next one was fraught with despair. It showed Drust pouring out of a portal, wielding the same magic from the memory before, as well as twisted versions of the masks that they had once made in veneration of their teacher. The memory owner fought against their former pupils, but was overwhelmed, and the Queen herself seized them and put an end to the invasion.

"Yeah, I don't know what I expected," Tehrezi huffed. "This damn god tier summer child gave mortals power and expected them to not want more."

"That's rough. They were so happy teaching those Vrykul in the earlier memory," Iggy said, her ears drooping.

The locus started playing the next memory, as unkind to the nameless person in it as the last one.

It was a vision of the arbiter's chamber. The memory owner looked around frantically, their gaze stopping at Zovaal, bleeding and bruised, chained up next to them. There was a gaping hole in his chest, dark blood leaking out. They looked down, and saw a similar wound in their own chest, circled in metal like Zovaal's, and as stained with blood.

There's an overwhelming feeling of despair as they hear the sentence: both of them would be condemned to the Maw.

"No one... belongs in the Maw," Zovaal rasped, raising his head.

"I didn't know they'd use the magic I taught them against the Shadowlands!" The nameless memory shouted.

Both of their pleas went unheard.

There was one last token left, but the vision it held was a short one, showing clouds rapidly passing by, darkening as the holder of the memory plummets down towards the Maw.

The Locus powered down, leaving the two friends in half darkness. They quietly reached for the memory tokens, and collected them in a bag, and made their way back to the surface. They were quiet for a while, each processing the information in her own way.

"So we look for this entity in the Maw, that we don't know what they look like. Aside from their hands, I guess," Iggy said.

"I guess? Should we even return the memories though? What if they try to get revenge or something? We already have enough bullshit to deal with."

"We return memories to the Runecarver and we don't know what his deal is."

Tehrezi didn't really have anything to say to that.

"Guess that would be a problem for us in the future," She eventually shrugged.

"A problem for us now is to return these memories. I guess we could just leave them somewhere in the Maw and hope this person finds them," Iggy sighed. "Look I'm kinda out of ideas here. Let's just head down there."

"Fuck around and find out?"

"Yep."

It turned out that the memory tokens seemed to draw out their owner. Almost as soon as the two friends stepped away from the waystone, an extremely tall and skinny entity bounded towards them. Despite being probably as tall as the Eternal ones, the entity moved silently towards them.

They stared down at the two mortals with one pitch black eye. The other one was lost among burned bark-like scars that claimed half of their face. The antlers on that side were blunt and broken, as opposed to pointed branches on the undamaged side. A mane of shadowy midnight blue hair sprung up in a half halo from behind the branches.

They didn't show hostility, but their sheer height and ominous aura made Iggy's fur bristle, and made Rezi reach for her warglaives. Still, despite the fear, Iggy reached into her bag and presented the memories.

"Are these yours?"

The entity crouched down, and reached a talon out towards the worgen. The memories glowed brighter at the proximity. The entity said something, but it was garbled and distorted. The entity shook their head and bared their teeth in annoyance, and then nodded.

"Um, you can have them back?"

The entity tilted their head, and gently touched each of the memories with a tip of their talon, causing them to be absorbed. A shudder ran through them, and they covered their mouth with a hand, before composing themselves somewhat. They nodded their head in thanks before turning around and walking off in the direction of Torgast.

Iggy and Tehrezi stood in stunned silence for a while, before turning around and making their way back to the waystone.

"Well. That was that. Let's hope this doesn't awaken anything," Iggy muttered.