

Chimerical

Episode 2: Balmora Twist

As the sun begins to set, they approach the main entrance to Balmora. The walls are sufficiently imposing, as is the unique architecture used by the Great Houses; the city's Hlaalu inspired structures are quite fetching to their foreign eyes. They wander throughout the town, looking for a place to stay for the night. They stop and ask a fisherman who stands at the edge of a bridge, casting his line. He points them towards The Randy Netch Inn. As they walk towards the inn, they see a familiar face. Redoran guards seem to be arresting the same Khajiit from the boat and the road. Nish can't help but stop and eavesdrop, standing near some crates as the guards accost him.

"Return what you have stolen and pay the fine, or be imprisoned, you damned cat!" The guard demands.

"This one will return what he has taken, but cannot pay the fine. You can still let him go, yes?" The Khajiit replies.

"Sorry. It's off to prison for you... You may even be sold as a slave. That might earn *a few* drakes..." Another guard snickers, taunting him.

Nish suddenly grows upset by their dialog.

“Too bad this one had too much to drink, or he may not have been so easily caught.” The Khajiit grins.

A guard brings forth a set of shackles as Nish steps in.

“I’m sorry to bother you, but what is he being accused of?” Nish interrupts.

“He was caught in the act of stealing from a home, and it wasn’t even someone wealthy.” The guard answers.

“A momentary lapse of judgement, caused by the drink. It could happen to anyone, yes?” The Khajiit adds.

“I see... And you cannot pay your fine?” Nish asks.

The Khajiit shakes his head. Nish nods, takes up his own coin purse, and asks the guards to tell him the amount of the fine. They oblige, and Nish promptly pays the proper number of drakes.

“Are you sure you want to do this?” A guard asks, holding the drakes.

“You can put the shackles away now. Off you go!” Nish replies, waving them away. “So... Where are you staying?” He turns to the Khajiit.

He silently shrugs in response. Nish motions for him to follow the pair and turns to continue the walk to the inn.

“Jer sajob thjiziit ahziss ariit...” The Khajiit grumbles.

Nish stops and looks over his shoulder at him.

“Ahziss rasin jer vijah renrij. Dan hadal-ziir!” Nish barks.

Fjorn can't help but laugh aloud as he sees the sudden shocked expression spread across the Khajiit's face.

“He does that, sometimes.” Fjorn begins. “What where you drinking anyway, that made you do something so stupid?” He asks as he walks past the Khajiit.

“Balmora Blue.” He answers.

“This one recalls that Balmora Blue has Moon Sugar in it.” Nish comments.

“Everything in moderation, yes?” The Khajiit laughs.

“Yes, because that has worked so well for you thus far. What's your name, anyway?” Nish asks.

“Ahziss va Jo'dehki.” He replies.

“Ahziss va Ra'Kanishu.” Nish remarks.

“And I’m Fjorn.”

“A pleasure, Ra’Kanishu. Fjorn.”

“I just call him ‘Nish’.” Fjorn chirps.

“Then what does this one call you?” Jo’dehki looks at Fjorn.

“You may call him ‘fodder’.” Nish jests.

They enter The Randy Netch Inn; they take a moment to look around.

“So, a Nord, Imperial and a Khajiit walk into a tavern...” Nish grins.

Jo’dehki chuckles, though Fjorn seems only mildly amused. They collectively approach the innkeeper, and Nish promptly requests two rooms.

“Two? Are you sure you don’t need just one?” The innkeeper asks.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Fjorn glares.

“I’m just saying... What consenting adults do is none of my business, but why pay for an unused room just to save face?” He replies.

“None of us are female...” Nish begins.

“And?” The innkeeper raises an eyebrow.

“Two rooms...” Nish growls, glaring at him.

“Alright, alright. I meant no offense.” The innkeeper apologizes.

The innkeeper shows them to two adjoining rooms before returning to the front counter.

“This is yours. Sleep off that Balmora Blue, and keep away from the sugar in the future.” Nish points to a door.

“This one doesn’t-”

“Ahziss sajoh nezal dorr jer.” Nish interrupts. “Do Khajiit ranjithali kha'jay var an varazeri may'a. Sajoh varazeri may'a.”

“Ahziss vuzmi no. Kaaka vaba may'a wo jaji?” Jo'dehki replies.

“Khajiit vara yasir! Vaba yasir anoh thjiz!” Nish chides.

“Could you yell at him in a language I understand? I'd like to enjoy the show.” Fjorn remarks.

Jo'dehki seems annoyed, yet ashamed. He enters the room and closes the door behind him. Nish enters the remaining room, claiming one of the two small beds for himself. Fjorn excuses himself to return to the counter, assuring Nish that he isn't going to be drinking, but is merely

hoping to buy a simple meal. He leaves Nish alone in the room. Nish takes off his pack, belt, and weapons, setting them neatly beside the head of the bed. He looks to a small oil lamp that burns atop the nightstand. He begins to smother the flame, but sees the empty bed and sets the lamp aside, the flame intact. He rolls over and succumbs to exhaustion.

He awakens the next morning to a dark room. He summons a brilliant ball of light that hovers around his head, illuminating the entire room. He sees a sleeping Fjorn sprawled over the bed across from him. He summons a small flame into his right palm, using it to light the spout of the oil lamp on the nightstand, just in time for his magical ball of light to wear off. He rouses Fjorn from his sleep, waking the groggy and hungover Nord. The pair quickly gather their gear and leave the inn in the early morning hours, marching for the north gate.

“Are you sure you don’t want to stay here and maybe find some work? We’re not going to see much gold simply walking around Vvardenfell for the fun of it.” Fjorn begins.

“I don’t have a very good feeling about this town. Maybe the next one.” Nish replies.

They reach the north gate and head down the road, only for a voice to catch their attention.

“Dras'kay.” Jo'dehki calls out.

“Okay, enough with the Khajiit-speak.” Fjorn says.

“And hello to you too, Jo'dehki.” Nish grins.

“This one wanted to tell you that... He is sorry for his behavior. This one owes you a great debt, and not just in coin. You have saved this one from certain death, and then imprisonment... Thank you.” Jo'dehki humbly begins.

“It's alright. Ahziss raj'kono zatay Khajiit.” Nish remarks.

“Hey...” Fjorn taps Nish's shoulder.

“Sorry. Old habits...”

“This one cannot help but ask... Why do you treat an admitted thief so generously?” Jo'dehki asks.

“I'm far more fond of the Khajiit than the other races, including my own.” Nish handwaves his question.

“So, it was merely this one's birth?” Jo'dehki presses.

“You have potential; I'd hate to see you waste it. Does that answer your question?”

“In a way.” Jo'dehki nods. “So, what is your business in Vvardenfell?”

“We don't really have any.” Fjorn admits.

“We're just wandering around for our own amusement; seeking adventures wherever they may be.” Nish adds.

“Do you need any help?” Jo'dehki poses.

The two men turn back to each other, and after a silent debate, the Nord and Imperial turn back, simultaneously nodding in agreement. Jo'dehki seems quite pleased, grinning wide at their acceptance. He rushes up to the two, following them as they begin to head north.

"So, if we seek adventure, why not travel to Vivec City? Much adventure can be found there." Jo'dehki poses.

Fjorn and Nish look to each other, then back to Jo'dehki.

"There are many merchants and tradesman there, among the guild halls and taverns." Jo'dehki continues.

"Taverns? That sounds like fun." Fjorn admits.

"We may find much work there, and of course, many open pockets." Jo'dehki grins.

"That's not the kind of work we do." Fjorn remarks.

"Speak for yourself." Nish murmurs.

"We go there, then? Yes?" Jo'dehki asks.

"Sure! Why not." Nish shrugs.

"Alright." Fjorn grins.

He quickly leads the two men back into Balmora, where they head for the southwest corner of the city.

“So, ‘Nish’... Your name is Khajiit. This one wonders why that is.” Jo’dehki begins.

“It’s a long story.” Nish sighs.

“It cannot be shortened?” Jo’dehki presses.

Nish chuckles.

“It can. He just won’t do it.” Fjorn chimes in.

“That is correct. I rather enjoy long stories, and we aren’t close enough for me to share it... Yet.” Nish adds.

“How disappointing.” Jo’dehki mutters.

They reach a tower and climb the staircase, paying a silt strider a few drakes to take the trio to Vivec City. As they ride the silt strider, Jo’dehki continues to pry into the Imperial’s personal background, and his name. He does not get very far. Ra’Kanishu isn’t forthcoming, though he is never rude, or even remotely unkind in his deflections. Jo’dehki seems to grow impatient, but never loses his temper, eventually ceasing his questions. After sitting in silence for a few moments, he leans closer to Fjorn.

“Is Ra’Kanishu always so private?” He asks Fjorn.

“Only with everyone but himself.” Fjorn quips.

“This one is serious.” Jo’dehki remarks.

“So am I. It took me three days just to get his name. He never told me where he was from for the first few months of our travels together.” Fjorn begins.

“So you know, then?” Jo’dehki becomes interested.

“Of course I do, but I swore not to reveal anything to anyone that he wasn’t willing to first say to them himself. Oaths matter to us Nords.” Fjorn replies.

“How boringly decent of you.” Jo’dehki grumbles.

“I’m standing right here...” Nish comments.