

A river marked the separation between the northern Kingdom of Laaria and the Sylfan Cradle. At some point the Chalal river plunged into a deep, lush, ravine. These lands were inhospitable, and thus, left aside by both countries, officially.

Oscar had to go down this ravine. No roads to lead him, no one to guide him. For the first time in years, he found a clue about the place he was searching for. The known world housed many shrines and sanctuaries for Yre's devotee, but there was only one Verdant temple of Yre. It was a secret place, known only by those living in it. Oscar happened to meet the only priestess who left the temple. She saved him, healed his wounds, and gave him the location of her home.

Trees were bending under the terrible wind. Shadows stretched as the sun reached the horizon. Oscar forced the pace. At last, the ravine appeared to him. He followed the priestess' instructions and found the narrow track along the wall. The traveler proceeded slowly, until he set foot in the woods at the bottom of the ravine. Oscar then reached the river, followed the current and noticed the bridge the priestess mentioned. He feared an ambush, now that he was progressing in Sylfan territory. Elves were not welcoming, and not seeing them around wasn't a sign of their absence. While Oscar was dealing with his thoughts, he discerned a warm light above the foliage. A window.

Finally, his hand touched the large wooden door of the cloister. Of course, it was closed. Silence reined. Oscar knocked several time. Nothing happened for several minutes, until he heard steps on the pavement. Slow and delicate steps. The doors stayed locked though. Finally a feminine voice resounded :

— We were not expecting any visitors. Especially not at this hour. How goes there ?

— My name is Oscar, I'm... It is late, I agree, though, I'm not here to visit the temple. I was sent here, years ago.

— I doubt it.

After a short silence, the woman added :

— What did you expect to find here ?

— Honestly, I have no idea. I should have come a long time ago, as my mother wished for. Fate decided otherwise.

Another silence. Heavy and frustrating. Then :

— This is a sacred place. Do not try to break in, or we would have to defend ourselves by all means.

— I know one of you ! Oscar shouted. I met Magda not too long ago ! She guided me here.

The lock turned in a metallic sound. The hinges creaked. A tall beautiful elf stood in the doorway. She was wearing a black dress and a rapier on her hip. She stared at the traveler with deep severe eyes. Examining him from head to toe, she squinted her eyes, sighed and open the door a little more, enough to make it look like an invitation.

She guided him through halls and stairs, in silence, until they reached a small door. It was some kind of storage room. She invited Oscar to enter.

— You will meet the matriarch tomorrow. In the meantime, rest. Don't try anything foolish, human. You would regret it.

— I'm not here to cause harm, you have my word.

— Your weapons, please.

— I guess I can't convince you to do otherwise.

— No, indeed.

Oscar complied, reluctant about parting from his trusty sword. He then gave her his dagger and nodded, implying that was all he got.

— You will get them back after your meeting. Now, sleep.

She addressed him a last cold glance before putting down a candle. She closed the door and walked away. Oscar dropped his pack and his old coat. His shoulders were sore, his legs barely supported him anymore. He grabbed some bedsheets, threw them on the hay mattress and sank into sleep like a stone.

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Before dawn, someone knocked. Oscar heard voices in the hallway. He wanted to reach for his sword, cursed, and finally decided to open the door. He was greeted by a priestess, a young elf. She handed him a bucket with warm water, clean clothes and a bar of soap. He nodded before realizing she was not walking away. The priestess then moved her hands, trying to make him understand something. She insisted, embarrassed.

— You want something ? Oscar asked.

She shook her head, a blush on her cheeks. She invited Oscar to sit and then did her gestures again, slowly, pointing at the soap, at herself, and way too much other things. Oscar finally chuckled, putting the bucket down in front of him.

— You are here to wash me.

She confirmed his words.

— Don't you think I'm old enough to do it myself ?

The priestess smiled and added a few movements. All of a sudden her fingers began to glow with a golden aura. The traveler stay silent, contemplating the girl's hands dancing before him.

— Of course, he replied. You are a healer.

The priestess clapped with enthusiasm.

She was appeasing. It was not due to her magic. Her presence and grace were uncommon. She brushed his strong arms and wide shoulders, massaged his neck with her glowing hands, diffusing peace inside his body. Several times, she glanced at him, but avoided his look. She then climbed on the bed to wash his back.

— You can not talk at all ? Oscar asked.

The girl shook her head again.

— Do you have to move all the time or can you make at least some noise ?

She shrugged, disappearing again behind him. He felt her fingers tracing his

scars, running on his muscles. She then rubbed his flanks, leaning against him. Her breath felt warm on his damp skin.

She stood in front of him, and even then, she was smaller than him. He leaned back against the headboard, allowing her to apply her healing touch on his chest. She was nervously looking at him, her hands exploring every shape of his body. The floral smell of the soap filled the room. Her hands danced up toward his face, pressing on his jaw, caressing his nose. Oscar was about to fall back into sleep when he felt her lips against his.

She took support on his shoulder, bending toward him to kiss him again. He kissed her back. The priestess was trembling, though when he put a hand on her cheek, she quickly pushed his arm back down. She was too nervous to let him do anything. She pressed her body against him again. She grabbed the damp cloth and rubbed his abs. Her hand slid under his pants.

Oscar stayed still, filling his lungs with the elf's perfume. Or was it the soap's? He felt the tip of her fingers against his penis. She hesitated before closing her hand around the shaft. Blood was rushing in his veins. He resisted the urge to grab her, to kiss her, to rip her dress off. The mute girl rubbed the cloth around his cock, in short up and down movements. She reached lower for his balls, as his now hard rod was pressing against the bare skin of her arm. Oscar could feel the priestess' heartbeats while she lay on him. She kissed his chest, breathing faster and faster, working her way to his belly. She removed her hand to let go of the cloth. With some silent movements, she invited him to sit while she knelt in front of him.

The girl pulled his pants down, a concerned look on her face. Oscar noticed it. She was afraid, definitely too focused on her clumsy moves. He smiled. His dick dropped on his thigh as the priestess freed it from the trousers. She licked her fingers and came closer to his groin. This time, her hand grasped at his cock. She was staring at its throbbing veins while stroking him on all his length, her other hand fondling his testes. She was trying things, enjoying every inch of the man's rod. Her thumb swirled at the base of his crown every time her hand was stroking up. A drop of precum rolled out. The priestess slowed her movements, adjusting her position ever so slightly. She bent forward, letting her mouth come close to his tip. She looked up at Oscar, down at his cock, up again. She was beyond blushing, but her gaze betrayed her lustful thoughts. She curled down. Her breath engulfing the man's dick. A sound popped when she opened her lips to let her tongue collect the droplet. She finally emitted a slight moan, a scratchy sound, unpleasant in other situations, but it made Oscar grin. She moaned again as her head bobbed back, a sticky strand forming between her tongue and the traveler's dick. He had to admit that the girl was all too cute in her clumsiness. He moaned too. It was enough to pull the priestess back to reality. She looked up at Oscar and felt panic filling her body. She gulped the precum on her tongue, almost choking as she stood back. She looked around her, moved her hands as a sign of apology and ran out of the room.

Oscar stayed on his back, hands behind his head, unsure about what just happened. Dawn was near. Birds started chirping. He did not know how much time passed until the door opened again.

— So, that's the intruder ? said a small but confident voice. Well, you thought you could have him for you alone, right sis ?

The man, straightened his head, just to see the mute girl again. Two of them. There were standing two elven priestesses, looking exactly the same, one mute, the other, pretty vocal.

— I am Lala, and here's Opal. She can't speak, but you already knew that.

— You are...

— Twins, yes. It is fairly obvious.

Oscar reached for his pants, intending to pull them up. Before he could though, Lala jumped in front of him, bending forward, a hand on his knee. Her nose touched his.

— If I may... You might want to pull the off completely.

Before waiting for any answer from the man, she let some spit drip down from her mouth, on his resting cock. She pushed him gently, so he could lay back. As she did, she climbed on him and sat on his belly. Despite her confidence, she was blushing as much as her sister. Her breathing was too quick and jerky. She just had a different way to hide embarrassment and anticipation.

— Opal is too shy to let you watch her while she... well, try... things with your...

— I get it.

— She told me what happened, and I decided to help her, by preventing you to even see her.

— Really ?

— Yes.

— I think you are here because you were jealous.

— W-what ?

— And you were also too shy to come alone...

Lala gasped, looked back at her sister, still waiting at the door. Two crimson elven priestesses, hoping to vanish from this moment. Then Oscar ran a firm hand on Lala's waist, making her jumped out of surprise. His strong touch reached her ribcage, and her small breasts, then her neck, where his fingers tightened. She moaned reaching for his wrist with her hands. She looked at him as he sat, narrowing the space between their faces.

— Go along with your plan, elf.

She open her mouth, unable to move. Lala then felt her sister's touch on her shoulder. She was manifesting her desire to continue where she left things a few moments ago.

— Right, Lala stammered.

She then exhaled deeply, shook her short curly hair and nodded at her sister. Her play was back on again. Time to perform.

— Just lean back, and look at me. She just want to feel your warm, girthy cock on her tongue. Would you allow that ?

Oscar nodded, laying again, sliding his hands under the priestess' dress. Lala

chuckled under his touch, walking on her knees, bit by bit, toward his face. Oscar felt Opal hands on his groin, on his balls. She didn't waste time before stroking him, impatient for him to be rock hard again.

Lala pushed away the sleeves of her elegant dress, revealing the soft mounds of her tits. She pressed them between her arms, waiting for the man's reaction. He muffled a moan as the mute girl ran her tongue on his balls.

— Hey ! shouted Lala. I know she's fondling your love stick, but I'm here too. Can you at least notice m... Aaah !

Oscar squeezed her breasts, making them disappear in his hands. He pulled her down and kissed her, letting his tongue fill her mouth. Unable to refrain herself, she plunged her own muscle against his in a warm, wet embrace. Her hips began to move, rubbing her pussy against his chest.

Opal was able to do wonders, now out of sight, away from shame. She spat in her hands before grasping on his testes. Her tongue circled around his crown, thick saliva drooling on his glans. She took his tip in her mouth, narrowing her cheeks as she sucked on it. Oscar pinched Lala's nipples, twisted them, just enough to make her react and bite his lip to make him stop.

The mute girl was enjoying every bob of her head, letting a few of her odd sounds out between her wet slurp. She turned her head, wrapping her tongue around Oscar's thick shaft and pushing his glans against the back of her cheek. His dick throbbed when she let more of it down her gullet. She choked, coughed several times while releasing the meaty shaft from her mouth. Lala straightened, avidly rubbing herself on the man's chest in squishy noises. She turned toward Opal.

— Are you alright, sis ? she panted.

The mute priestess showed her most beautiful smile, bubbly drool dangling from her chin. She asked Lala to turn back around, so she can continue stuffing her mouth with Oscar's dick.

A few minutes passed, and Opal was now trying to let the thick rod slide into her throat. Steams of spit were coving his groin. The priestess stopped using her hands, counting only on her bobbing to open her tight gullet. Her jaw was aching, but the taste, the smell and the feeling of being filled were way too good to stop. Pushing her head down, the man's tip slid past her glottis, taking them both by surprise. A small amount of cum came sticking to her throat walls. She instinctively squeezed the base of his dick. She wanted him to cum, not yet though. She had to take his length all in before letting him release his load on her tongue. She wanted the taste before gulping it down. Oscar, on his side, contracted all his muscles. Opal was about to make him cum. Just hearing her wet noises and gurgles was enough to make him edge. He grabbed Lala and pulled her swollen mound on his mouth. She muffled a scream when his tongue licked her bud. Sat on his face, she arched back, her hand on his abs. She moved her hips back and forth, following Oscar's delicious tongue.

The traveler lapped on Lala's folds, sliding his tongue inside her velvety hole. His nose pressed into the red flesh of her pussy. Before she could move her hips back,

he sucked on her clit. She almost lost her hold and had to grab his hair. She was panting and moaning fast, her toes curled in. Oscar's grip on her rump helped her pressing her labias more against his mouth. She was so close. That tension was feeling ten times better than all her solitary pleasures in the sisters dorms.

After several tiring attempts, Opal took some rest. She stroked the man's throbbing dick while sucking on his balls. She let his dick rest against her forehead. Her face was covered in spit and precum, long stringy ropes dropping from her lips, staining her white dress. Lust engulfed her whole mind, all her senses. She wanted something more.

Lala's legs barely supported her anymore, she felt orgasm nearing. Then, Opal pulled on her shoulder. She left a sigh out, that was in fact an unrestrained moan.

— What is it ?

Opal managed to make herself very clear. She bit her lip, her sticky hands relentlessly going up and down on Oscar's shaft.

— Opal, her sister said. That is such a good idea !

Lala's used the only strength she had left to turn around, presenting her palpitating, nicely spread crotch to Oscar. She crawled towards his cock, licking every stream of mess she came across.

— Opal wants to share your dick with me. I know you are about to cum, but hold your load a bit more so I can suck on it too.

Oscar, for only answer, slapped her ass and ran his tongue all the way from her clit to her anus. Lala almost passed out, pleasure intoxicating her brain. Oscar then indulged into licking and sucking every inch of soft flesh and holes he had in front of him.

Lala felt her senses going numb. All she could see was the begging gaze of her sister, sucking on the man's balls and offering her his turgid cock to taste. She complied, letting her lips slide on the mess already sticking on the shaft. She lapped the drool, sucked clean Oscar's glans before plunging it down her mouth. She pressed it against her pallet, the curve following perfectly her throat. One delicate bob of her head, and the shaft slid straight into it, no gag, no coughs. Her nose touched Opal's face, the later showing a jealous look. Tears ran on Lala's face as the man's shaft throbbed down her gullet. Opal reached her tongue out, licking saliva from her sister's mouth. They moaned together, overwhelmed by bliss and pleasure. The very air smelled of cum and sweat. So much for a cleaning session. Lala's freed her throat from the thick rod about to explode.

— I will... Ah... help you make him cum hard, sis.

Lala pushed Oscar's cock towards Opal. The mute girl stopped sucking his balls, showered the shaft with sloppy kisses until reaching the top. Lala then put a hand on her sister's head, guiding her for the best deepthroat for all of them.

— Just make sure to back off when he cums, alright ? I want to taste it as much as y...

She could not finish talking before feeling Oscar's finger penetrating her anus at the same time he sucked her over-sensitive bud. An electric wave ran through

her, her vision blurred for a second. She let her orgasm out the best she can while trying to hold her scream in. Her nails traced lines on Oscar's leg. She looked at Opal sucking the man's dick hard. They nodded at each other and Lala's pushed her sister's head down the fat cock. She did it almost perfectly, gaging a bit, drool coming out of her nostrils. as tears flooded her cheeks. Oscar tightened his grip on the priestess' small, shaking hips.

— Fuck, I'm about to cum, girls.

Opal coughed, letting but the tip in. The first stream of semen made her jump, but the scent numbed her mind. Ropes of thick, warm, musky cum filled her mouth. She closed her eyes, lightly bobbing her head, hollowing her cheeks around his shaft to extract every drop. Lala fell down on Oscar, unable to remain on her legs and arms. She stroked his cock and squeezed his balls, trying to catch her breath.

The mute sister let the cock plopped out of her filled mouth, letting it slap Lala's cheek. She played with the cum, making it run around her tongue, at the tip of her lips, making bubbles. Lala started to lick Oscar's dick clean, waiting for her sister to share her well earned nectar. Opal let out another scratchy moan accompanied by a gurgle of warm semen. She bend over her sister, taking her face in her hands. A long stream of cum dropped down her lips, covering Lala's face.

Sun rose up above the abrupt heights of the ravine. The girls lapped cum off their faces, and sucked clean Oscar's cock and balls. They then proceeded to clean up the traveler and themselves with the bucket of now cold water. Before leaving in there cum stained white dresses, Opal kissed Oscar languidly. Lala laughed and added :

— Welcome, stranger, in the temple of Yre, Goddess of love, light and healing. I truly hope to see you around.

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The tall elven woman finally came back. In sunlight, she was even more beautiful.

— If you are ready, please follow me.

— I am.

— Matriarch Judith will see you outside. She is in charge of this temple and of the relations with the Cradle. All of us here follow her teaching. Be respectful.

Priestesses and servants were everywhere. Oscar noticed their gazes, their smiles. He looked for Opal, or Lala, but they weren't around.

— There are only women, he noticed.

— That is true. They nurture a unique bond with the Goddess. Please, keep your... passion, for yourself, young man. I am sure your imagination is already filled with inappropriate ideas.

— Are you curious ?

— Stop it.

Despite her attitude, she smiled, in a way the man could not see it though.

Putting on a strict face again, she stopped.

— You will get your weapons after this meeting.

— I understand, thank you my Lady.

— Judith is here, she concluded by pointing a small table in the garden.

Colorful flowers were enjoying the warmth of the sun. Swift butterflies landed on their petals before continuing their playful visit. Winter was near, but here, only a few dead leaves from the old tree at the center of the courtyard indicated it. Everything was bathed in supernatural youth and beauty. Flower beds lined the paths of white pavement. Other surprising plants climbed wicker structures and on the cloister pillars. Under the eaves was a round table. An old woman sat there, observing the priestesses. She turned towards the traveler when he approached.

— Take a sit, Oscar. I am Judith, dean of this peaceful place. You already met Alhuia, one of the two Watchers. Tell me, I believe you met my grand-daughter, is that correct ?

— Magda.

The woman nodded, happy and curious.

— I crossed her path in a village of the Princely Alliance. Dehest just pierced through their defenses. I assisted the soldiers with a handful of voluntary men, in an attempt to push back the Silent Ones. We were defeated. I was wounded, knocked unconscious. When I woke up, she was here, healing the survivors. She offered her help to the overwhelmed medics. Her fingers were glittering, made of light. She put me back up.

— Good, sighed Judith. That is very good, my little one.

— She was traveling to Anorea. She wanted to offer her help where the battle was the more devastating.

— By the Goddess, whispered Alhuia, standing behind the dean.

— That is why she left, added the crone. That is the world she wanted to discover.

— She told me about this place, continued Oscar. When I told her I was looking for a hidden temple of Yre, she explained to me the road to follow.

— Magda have her own believes about the purpose this place should serve. She would have us open the gates to everyone in need. Anyway, knowing she is safe makes me happy.

— I have a question, he continued.

— Please, go ahead.

— Why training healers if they remain here, alone, behind doors closed to anyone else ?

Alhuia stared at him with intense eyes. She seemed troubled, not offended. Thoughtful. Judith sighed, dejected.

— A very relevant question, young man. There were more of us in the past, we were more powerful. Temples like this one were common. The calamity we name Dehest claimed so many priestesses lives. The fall of the Free Lands, seventy-five years ago, cast a dark shroud over humans and elves alike. Volunteers grew scarce. Sanctuaries closed their doors. This was not a good solution, but it was the only one we had to protect the last few women rich of Yre's knowledge. Darkness from Dehest are weakening our spells, they destabilize the Immaterial. White



magic depends on the stability and quietness of the Invisible Realms.

— I am sorry. You lost so much.

— It is so. Times are changing. Nothing is over though. We help the Sylfans, here in the Cradle, when pirate raids cause too much damage. Even if Dehest does not swallow the whole world within a few years, the last saint places will still be shut down. People are hopeless, they lost faith. Our proteges will be on their own. Magda felt it. She could not resign to inaction. As I speak to you though, I am thinking about the role I want to play too. Do you have any idea about the path you want to follow, friend ?

— I fought the Silent Ones many times, despite my youth. It cost me a lot. We lost battles, we won some others. I grew to know our enemy. I do not know my path, though I am certain of one thing : Dehest can not be defeated by us alone.

Oscar noticed that Alhuia fixed him since the beginning of the conversation. He knew she was hiding something. All elves had this aura of mystery, though this particular one was unique. Then she spoke :

— Magda was not the one asking you to come here. Was she did was only showing you the way.

— That is true.

— Who sent you ?

Judith laughed, surprising the other two. She stood up, grabbed her rosary and put a hand on the watcher's arm.

— If you ask me, Oscar, you came to see her, not me. Alhuia, I am leaving you with our guest. Listen to what he has to say.

— Matriarch, what...

— I have business to do... in the kitchens, she laughed again. Don't you smell that ? Tarts are not going to eat themselves.

The elf in black dress froze, her hands on the dean's chair. She observed Oscar in silence, a shy smile on her lips. She seemed appeased.

— Walk with me, she said. Tell me everything.

— Height years ago, the East Principality fell under Dehest's might. My mother was a healer there, in Malm. Not a priestess though, a simple woman, caring for her people.

— You fought the Gray elves height years ago ?

— That was the first time, yes.

— You were but a child.

Oscar stayed silent for a bit. They crossed a group of servant holding baskets of alchemical ingredient freshly gathered.

— Dehest's legions took Malm. Just before I was separated from her, my mother asked me one thing : to find the temple she visited in her youth.

— She never told you about it before that moment, did she ?

— No. I left the city with a dear friend of our family. We searched together for years. Then, we have been separated. The shrines I found were not the right ones.

— You abandoned.

— I did.

Alhuia glanced at the man walking beside her. He was at his prime, a human

male, strong and attractive. She knew his lineage was one of mixed blood. He shared that elvish presence. Feeling her gaze, he looked at her. The woman's heart skipped a beat when she saw the torment hiding in his dark eyes. She knew that look, the one she witnessed so long ago. A feeling seized her, igniting her lost spark. With effort, she remained calm and kept walking.

— Then, you met Magda.

— Three years had past. With her knowledge I was able to resume my search. I was able to fulfill my mother's last wish.

— Their you are.

Alhuia guided him out of the temple. They took a road leading in the woods. The elf appeared sad and confused. Oscar preferred to stay quiet. They stopped in front of an ancient structure, covered by moss and ivy. It looked like the entrance to a mausoleum. Magic was surrounding the place, Oscar was feeling it. The woman remained calm. She entered first, inviting the young man to follow her. They went down the stairs and reached the only room. A statue stood at the center, on a black marble base. A hole in the ceiling let light shine through. It represented a man in a suit of armor, draped in a long cloak. He was kneeling, bent forward over a chest he held against his cuirass. Alhuia stepped forward and touched the stone warrior's head.

— It's a memorial, she said with a teary voice.

— Who is he ?

— A forgotten man. Others came before you. They didn't know their path either. This place did not helped them, as they were called elsewhere.

— Who came ?

The elf pointed at the base. Crouching closer, Oscar discovered the dozens of carvings. He read : names, most of them erased by time. They were unfamiliar to him. Almost all.

— You recognize a name, is it not ?

— Cinaed, my grand-father. Gladys, my mother ! Is she here ?

— Sadly, no. She was younger than you when she came here and carved her name. I never saw her again. It is your turn, Oscar.

She offered him a mallet and a steel chisel. So many questions rose in Oscar's mind. Though, he began to write his name, certain that his mother wanted him to be here for that reason. He traced each letter one by one, his hands shaking a bit. A shiver ran through the statue. The warrior was coming alive. He turned towards Oscar, offering him the chest. As soon as he put his hands on it, the stone warrior crumbled. In the box was an ornate key. Alhuia was crying.

— My child. Your quest is barely starting.

The following hours went fast. Alhuia gave his weapons back to Oscar and asked him to wait for her in the courtyard. She then met the matriarch.

— Mother, I have to leave.

— Do what you have to, you have my blessing.

— I wanted to tell you more about me, but you seem to know a lot more than I thought.

— I had to understand a few things about you over the years. I am happy to know you.

— Thank you, Matriarch. I love you from all my heart, she concluded, tears running on her cheeks.

— Go now, this temple will always remain a safe place for you both.

Alhuia came with two horses. She traded her dress for black pants, with a white shirt tucked into a corset, also black. She had her hair tied in a bun and her rapier on her hip.

— We must reach Mistcastle in the northern region of Laaria.

— I know the place.

— Quickly. I will explain what you are ready to hear on the road.