

Zesshi awoke to the sound of a book's pages slowly being turned. To her surprise she wasn't in pain, after all the last thing she remembered was almost dying from the little girl's attack. Still fearing that she would be in the middle of the Sorcerer Kingdoms dungeon or territory, she kept her eyes shut as she tried to guess exactly how many issues she was about to have from sound alone. No sense in doing something when completely unprepared after all. Almost seeming to mock her efforts of not giving away information...or the fact she was awake, after a few seconds a deep voice seemed to rumble from in front of her.

“Good evening my dearest Antilene, and to answer your first question, yes you're alive and being detained...”

Eyes still shut and with an internal sigh, Zesshi immediately assumed she was to be someone's breeding stock, what other fate awaits a woman in someone else's control in this world? Worse still they'd likely be weaker than her, after all what rights does a prisoner have? Being detained meant she was already out of the Elf country, and while she could and should try to escape at some point, it wasn't a good sign. The only places that could hold her against her will would be places she couldn't really afford to be and she would find it hard to be able to do anything for Slane or the cardinals.

“To answer your second question, you're the last person alive who would be willing and able to claim being from the now erased Slane theocracy.”

Eyes shooting open to a ramshackle wooden room with a stone fireplace, a man in glistening silver armor, blue jeweled chest plate with a red cape that mimicked those descriptions of Momon with an open book in his lap, and noticing she was in simple commoner clothes laying in a bed, her surprise made any thoughts of trying to get more time to plan and think a lesser concern at the moment.

Erased... How could her country be gone? Even if it took her a few weeks to somehow be healed from almost dying, shouldn't someone have done something to get her involved. She is...was... one of the strongest in the world, and even someone as tenacious as the 11th seat could have teleported her to allies that could have lead to some sort of survivors. The silver man had looked back at his book, and it was all she could do to decide if she should ask her next question or wait for him to again give an answer that leads to more questions.

“Are you allied with or strong enough to go against those like that girl when they gave me despair instead of dreams? Why hasn't someone or some group that's so strong make themselves known so long ago? Why couldn't you find me sooner?” The questions out of her mouth almost seemed strange to herself, she remembered the moments of cruelty she felt as the little girl broke her wish, but evidently the fragments of her old dreams still existed somewhere within her. Since the silver armored man didn't seem to be the same as the reports she got about the stupid platinum lizard, why not just become a tool since she couldn't be the strongest anymore?

“Ah, about that...” As the man...it had to be a man, what demi human would have armor having a divine light, started to regally gesture with his arms as his spoke with authority. “I believe that expectation was that you'd be part of a collection of unique and special individuals similar to what was once the black scripture. Trying to combat those with power would lead to even more talent and countries to be reduced to rubble. So the goal may be to move beyond mere alliances, all under the umbrella of being a force the can coexist along side the Sorcerer's kingdom.”

Looking around the bland and simple room, Zesshi wasn't sure if this was just a rebellion trying to pretty itself up as a neutral state, or a bunch of power hungry types trying to fill the power void that must exist if...since... Slane no longer was the driving force of humanity within the world. Surely since she was being detained, it would be easier for both sides if she became a willing participant as opposed to a reluctant pawn...or at least play along long enough to gauge their strengths and get her equipment back. With a languid stretch and a teasing smile she asked the only question she needed an answer to now.

“Where to now Mr. Holy knight?”

On the road some miles away

“Are you really strong enough to be escorting me alone, I mean I at least expected the girl who beat me to be here to keep an eye on me...” came out as a whine or maybe a grumble. I mean, I have spent the better part of years crushing the egos and hopes of most of the humans who are... were... the strongest humans around. I mean I was willing to follow along for a bit, but I want to know if the knight himself is the strong one or if he's just a pawn to some greater person or group. I'm still wrestling with the fact that I'm supposed to be a prisoner right now, but still walking around in some sad commoner clothes that most poorer countries leave on most of their population, fine for blending in, but clearly not what someone on my caliber should be wearing to relax, let alone if they wanted me to fight wherever I'm going.

Even 1st seat's younger sister Clementine learned that sometimes you need to break a nose to get some attention, but considering my silence is normally just boredom, I'm not sure Mr. Holy knight here is really so good that I should be boring him. He could at least tell me how everyone in Slane died, Even if I tried to eliminate a weak country it would take quite a bit of time, never mind to erase it. Was it crazy magic, did that girl or the sorcerer king start an age of new magic that could destroy more than battlefields? I've never really needed my magic before...Hmm worth thinking about at least.

“Do I need to be strong, after all sometimes you must ask yourself 'Is my goal still just to find someone stronger, or do I accept all I really wanted was to deny my past pain and find a way to protect the people I cared about?’” I stopped walking and my body involuntarily froze at what he just said. First off, How the hell did he know that? Second off, HOW THE HELL DID HE KNOW THAT? Third, deep breath, he just asked a question, not in the middle of a life and death fight...yet. It's one thing to question and talk to myself, especially when I'm alone at the top, but for someone else...a stranger... to bring it up to me, I can't tell if he's courting death, or has some sort of talent that just gives him the perfect thing to say just to make me...emotional. Next he's gonna bring up my damn ears.

The silver armored man stopped and I could feel his attention and sight focused on me. Of course with a backdrop of a glowing sunset, a dirt road and a few corpses just out of sight to ruin the perfection, or is it to add to it. Doesn't help he stood like a storybook hero ready to proclaim a lifelong quest used to impress the rabble or get a lover to... never mind...

“I want to prove to my father that I can still love and respect him for who he truly is, not just how the world sees him... I can't change his past or his pain, so I have to try to find that balance and create something that only this world can help me make, a group proving that a utopia is still possible, and that people...people can still create something to alter *the world* from a place of weakness.

“So off course you get to salvage the dregs of multiple countries of rubble, and your daddy issues... your daddy issues lead you to try to shape the world along side an undead with inhuman demi humans and a bunch of dragons. What an amazing plan, should I ask to be the new queen of the rubble of Slane, at least then I can be royalty when I'm stuck killing enough people to make a new undead army for someone else.”

This bastard, doesn't he realize what it actually means to be weak? I spent years breaking the egos of the strong, giving a reminder of why power shouldn't be leading people unable to handle power to try to be in charge of things. I mean I don't actually care about those who aren't strong, but that doesn't mean you just let anyone run around trying to change things. After all being weak means you must submit to the strong, otherwise you're always at risk of having to accept someone else's version of your place if they're strong enough to force it. All it takes is one overpowered demon god to control or kill millions, and banding the weak together forces them to do it.

Flashback

As a smack comes across my face I'm stuck staring at the 5 bodies of what was once my party and the one purple balloon that once was human, their killer. The wooden tavern he was drinking in is now a shell of a building. Everything black and burnt, nothing else alive around us, the smell of char is almost enough to lull me back to sleep. All of their gear shredded and with the pool of blood around them means they're.... My mom... I mean Faine's voice finally pierced my daze and was coldly seeping into my bones, she saved me, but chose not to save them. She's staring at me, and has her arm cocked back ready to swing again if I stay out of it. I see a spark and some smoldering furniture in the corner. I try to refocus, only a single sense at a time seems to be working. I don't want to remember this. Can I go home?

“Don't trust resurrection magic, even when there are people who can use it, there is no guarantee the people who come back are the same who left. Also you need to realize, even though that god kin was strong, if he never felt threatened by the 5 of you together, he wouldn't have had to kill to keep them out of the fight. Even as strong as I am, I can only have protected maybe 2 of you at best, and so I saved you alone rather than risk half protecting you and one of those dead weight. Remember that you must always be fully prepared on any battlefield, cities are still a battlefield if you're going to do something unsafe, sneak attacks are common, and being caught without armor is a quick way to die.”

Teaching me...now, the smell of blood and the sound of the splash as an unknown limb that seems to have exploded, now overpower the smell of burnt. It was supposed to just be a routine arrest. He was supposed to come along quietly, we were supposed to be enough force. We cornered him, and asked him to come with us, and then fire... so much fire. Why would fire be blue, black and orange? Now... now I have to... do... something . I have to learn, I thought I was ready, and as I stare at Faine's mouth frowning, I see her eyes glaring as 6 men in pristine clean white robes slowly turning gray are weaving into the building, seems like she knows them.

As I look into the smiling face of an old man, he takes my hand gently and now we're walking, Faine walking beside us as it seems she's arguing behind some spell with the some of the other men. My half black clothes from the soot seem to be such a lovely way to color the pure white I was wearing.

In an undisclosed location at an undisclosed time

“Come on Mar, don't you think you or Theo would like to see me wearing manacles and really looking like your prisoner?” The scoff from the now teenage looking boy and his pretty frown still makes every woman in miles salivate. Even now hundreds of years later, the 'joke' that I'm the personal slave and prisoner of Mare and Pandora is enough to make most of the useless world cringe and me give a grin that Renner calls the 'Don't get near what's mine' type of smile. Even when he wears dresses and people can't tell that he's actually male, he still has more men and women in his fan-club than his sister, who last I checked is still salivating over Momon.

“Is this really what you want to be doing when tomorrow we're expected to finish collecting the last of the *World items*, to mettle with the power's of gods in a final few experiments before the almost dull job of actually ruling?” Theo's voice thrummed through me in ways that both elated and angered me. It doesn't help that his arms are inhumanly long and wrapped around my midsection. Of course the dagger I keep on my thigh is currently being juggled by him. If I didn't know better I'd say he wanted to be doing *something* tonight.

The almost resigned sigh from Mar as a black oval void appears in the air next to us makes my grin almost feel inhuman. For all the bad parts, sometimes the perks of being the token face of resistance and general false flag operation really make me wonder how long it will take to convince either Theo or Mar to actually admit that I'm gonna be an awesome queen. After all spending years in Ashurbanipal (I'm still sad I couldn't convince Theo to do more than kiss me there) learning the wisdom of the supreme ones does make the Holy Trio the best group to lead most of the world. It still baffles me that many never woke up to the fact that an undead has committed less massacres than I have personally.

As we walk through the oval into an opulent bedroom, I can't help but manically laugh as I realize that I've finally found something I never thought I deserved...*peace*.

Excepts from the diary of the Queen of life and death

Between the Dolor desert and the Argland council state, all that remained was the Sorcerer's Kingdom with their allies the Baharuth empire, dwarf and dragon kingdoms, and the Roble remnants. Even as I teased Theo “What kind of name is Theodora?” by calling him my holy knight, it didn't stop him from finishing being crowned as the new king of the great Minotaur nation with me and Mar standing behind his throne. Of course things were tense with me and Mar for a few months. Once I got past the strong enough to leave me crippled on the floor, her shyness, and her normally wearing a skirt, now we get along fine so long as I don't interrupt her reading. Besides I could treat her better than my mom ever did me and she is a good sparring partner once I started using divine magic to self buff...even if she keeps denying that she's Landfall.

I found out that Theo seems to have many of the powers of the six great gods, the irony that I would both find someone strong enough and someone so kind similar to Aunt Nazaire again only after having my wish trampled seems to be a cosmic joke of some kind. He can also keep up with me physically and seems to be a good leader considering even Mar is willing to listen to him. It certainly makes me feel young again to be able to discover that I've not only let me skills rust, but there are so many strong

people I still haven't found yet. Maybe I shouldn't have trusted the first seat and tried to fight the vampire from so long ago, so many missed opportunities, and for what... some overpowered gear from hundreds of years ago whose stories I've already become bored with. It seems like he's also long lived as we agreed on a contract for the next 50 years "as a starting point to build trust". It's only after being beaten again and again that I started to realize just how foolish it was not to immediately tell the Cardinals to simply try to stay out of the way of all these new gods and god kin. That bloody emperor must've been smarter than most people thought.

Despite Theo repeatedly telling me to stop trying to get him to fight me, the whirlwind of changes over the past 2 years make my years of standing guard for a place that people are afraid to even utter the name feels more and more like life before was the calm before the storm instead of me doing my duty. What kind of simplistic minded people really think uttering a name would be so taboo that the Sorcerer's kingdom would start massacring people just for saying it. They have the remains of Re-Estize to really drive home that in some ways all we can ever achieve is to tell our next generations not to anger the undead god. Yeah, I found out quickly that he's supposed to be even stronger than the Mar and Theo together, which probably means it's a good thing I was never put against him. To think I even asked if undead could have children before finding out. Theo said there isn't magic for that yet. Sometimes I don't understand his humor. It's not like a new batch of players will magically show up and try to face him like they did Surshana, but even if they did, I doubt I want to get involved, I mean if I'm the weakest in this party, why would I want to go back trying to be the troll among goblins?

I've been trying to get Theo to acknowledge me just because it would be nice to have a new goal. I spent years bored and waiting to finally be able to have moments of excitement by finding someone who was stronger, and there is the frustration of it not being everything I ever wanted. If my last goal only lasted so long from anger, pain and sorrow, then I have to find something new to motivate my next goal. If my personal jailers are going to be my new *companions*, then I may as well use their wisdom to become just as good as them, even if their understanding of combat seems so basic compared to their actual abilities. Those abilities though, enough to make even me pause after all it seems my "over reliance on my gear" helped me to stagnate when it came to training, as Theo managed to beat me wearing only a set of commoner's clothes while I was wearing a full set of armor with a replacement sword. It didn't help that afterwards he made me some runny eggs...

I'm actually managing to get 2 sides easily on the stupid cube, it's a stupid cube if Theo can solve it and then mix it up again just to tell me I should "have something to do" while we walk the roads between leaders and eastern countries. Seems like Theo was nice enough to pilfer the remains of Slane, which I've only visited the outskirts once just to be sure I have no need to ever make the claim I was from there again. Even if Theo only saved me for my strength, and isn't that joke not funny with Mar here being a younger and stronger version of me, is it really so bad to want him to trust and rely on me. While Mar and I are becoming good friends by her letting me be the fun one and her the quiet one, it doesn't stop me and Theo from trying to see who can be more over the top. What does he want before he thinks about having a queen?

What a horrible woman, that... prime minister of the Sorcerer's kingdom. She dared to imply that after the meeting between Theo, Momon and the Sorcerer King that Theo didn't deserve to be there. Like his strength wasn't enough and that we should bend the knee as servants instead of shaking hands as equals... Lets pretend we're not the only other major empire existing that controls 1/3 of the continent. It's literally just them and their vassals, us and our vassals, and nothing but uninhabited land left unless we finish some of those ocean traversing ships or start using some wild magic and god items in some mutually assured destruction. Still at least Theo feels more comfortable with me now, he almost never

spends time in his armor anymore, and even better he decided to invite me on a special date later tonight to “share some secrets”.

Fuck, you ever hear the phrase “Its not the goblin that stabs you, but the hobgoblin who set the whole thing up”? I can't even write down what I'm thinking because this damn diary was a gift from *him*. Not to mention he decided that today he'd dump most of his secrets on me, and I never did bother getting my damn scythe back. I mean I didn't need it, so many of his items had such unique stories, should've been my first clue. Still maybe I should apologize for trying to ram a dagger into his eye...

Fine, 5 years of being “The White Enforcer of death and the Black healer of life” and making such a small empire slowly expand worldwide as the driving force of technology and culture has been a fine goal. I don't think a day has gone by where I'm not stuck teleporting between places and finding moments to sneak away from my duties to corner... I mean mount an attack...against him, and sooner or later those potions will mean I'm going to join *the royal family* in a way that makes me finally not be at risk of disappearing into the bowels of Nazarick, not that anyone but those who've been there remembers that name. Of course the damn Barajan's called it Wunderland (who the hell comes up with these hard to say names... oh yeah... Gr...).

I'm writing in this again...after years of dealing with the new world order. Surprisingly Theo and I still...talk...train...play... Damn him... at least once a week, even if I only look like I'm in my 30s and he can change his shape. It doesn't help that after we cleared the air that I'm still only middle of the pack when it comes to strength. At least my kids are at least as strong as their father, and considering how long that was my goal, I'm glad it's met, even if I still want to sometimes tell Mr. King to burn down the empire and we should travel the world again, a girl can dream can't she?