

"Normal speech"

'Thought'

(Silent magic)

[Normal magic]

{Change of location, time or POV}

Hi everyone! I am back! While I was flying for 13 hours I had a lot of time to think and I decided that I would rework a little my plans. To explain it in simple terms, I decided chapter 90 would be the last chapter of the previous arc, leaving the cliffhanger the final act.

The next few chapters will be an interlude arc I have pondered for the longest time if I could skip or make it a separate side-story. But, alas, I decided to make it part of the main story since we will get some character development that will come into play later on. So yeah, get ready for some nice character moments and a good dose of Seven Own's Goal.

This is the first ever interlude arc, and is also the first time we are going back in the timeline. This arc takes place during the war between Re Estize and the Roble Holy Kingdom.

Without further ado, enjoy the chapter!

Chapter 91: Song of the Sky-Riders and the Black Rose (part 1)

Rayne drank from his cup, he was thirteen and an adventurer, no one would deny him some alcohol. Even though his mother was apprehensive about him ending up as some drunkard in an inn like

the other adventurers. She had Arche promise she would look after him and scold him in case he went overboard... which was quite embarrassing to begin with, and ironic seeing how Arche was the reason he had started enjoying wine after all.

After their excursions in the dwarven kingdom and not so great first approach to alcohol through dwarven beer, he would have completely written alcohol off as something not for him. It was Arche who convinced him to give it a chance back in the empire. As a noble she had lessons on etiquette and wine since a tender age and gave him a brief couple of lessons before taking him to the Royal Winery where the Emperor himself, and the rest of high nobility, commissioned their bottles from.

To say his opinion had been greatly changed would have been an understatement, he was completely flabbergasted by the symphony of tastes and flavor a simple drink could have and, having listened to their enthusiastic guide, his world had been opened to the most precise and refined art of distilling wine.

From the delicate soothing taste of white wine most adapt with fresh finely cut fish, to the harsh and heavy red wine most adapt to accompany roasted juicy meat. And all there was in between, including his personal favorite, the Wild Thorn, a rosé wine that could both accompany flavored fish and light-thin deer meat and offer two completely different experiences. The six bottles he returned home with were a testament to his newly acquired taste, much to the worry of his mother and amusement of his father.

Speaking of which, he pushed away the half-filled cup with a small grimace. Not that the wine was bad in itself, but he could not stomach heavier red wines, which was quite the contrast to

Arche who heavily favored them and had no problem sipping her own cup.

“Shouldn’t you be the one to moderate me? And yet that is your second cup I see.”

He smirked at the slightly older girl who pierced him with a glare as she placed her cup back on the table with a tad too much strength.

“I wouldn’t act like such a smartass, I remind you that I have your mother’s permission to cane your bottom if you misbehave.”

The girl answered with a mischievous and amused smirk. In all response he acted like he had been subdued by her words allowing her to bask in her own satisfaction while taking another sip of her drink, which granted him the perfect timing for his rebuttal.

“Kinky.”

He delivered the word with all the sensuality he could muster making the blonde noble widen her eyes as she sputtered and choked on her drink, rendering her into a coughing mess much to his amusement.

He felt rather good about his success and so sipped again from his cup even though the drink was not to his liking, but he knew the theatrics of the gesture would make the line hit even harder for the noble girl who was still recovering from the wine going down the wrong pipe.

“Y-you... absolute... asshole!”

She managed to insult him through her coughs.

“Such foul language coming from such a noble mouth... what would Madame Furt ever say if she heard of this?”

Even the middle finger he received from the other side of the table was not enough to dampen his smugness. Normally the murderous glare he received would have made anyone flinch, and in all honesty, he would have been part of that anyone too, if it wasn't for the fact he knew she would forgive him later that night by demanding him to kiss her till they could both breathe no more.

If anyone asked him how he ended up bagging such a cutesy noble such as Arche as his first ever... whatever they were, he would have no answer to give. To him it was as baffling as it could get. He was nothing special, just a boy like many others, not particularly handsome, no matter what his mother would say, and just average on pretty much anything else, his only remarkable trait was his aptitude for magic. But if that was all it took, then she would have been smitten with their master long ago.

And yet, somehow, she chose him to be the one to take her first kiss, and to experiment on. Not that he would complain since he very much enjoyed those bodily explorations during those cold nights. They never went too far, a bit of touching never killed or deflowered anyone after all... he would enjoy it till it lasted and he was ready to end it as soon as she asked him to... though, he hoped he would be lucky enough to have her blushing his way just a little longer...

A hand slammed on their shared table much to Rayne's annoyance who turned, ready to smite with a [Lightning] whoever had the balls to be so rude. Though, all his annoyance disappeared when he noticed Leinas' hard stare on them both. He could hardly get a read on the woman and was unsure if they had pissed her off in some way or that just was her default expression.

“Prepare yourselves, we are leaving tomorrow morning... Lady Lakyus is not to be bothered.”

Brief and concise as always, something he came to accept from the older woman after years of knowing her. He grimaced nonetheless at her words, their big sister figure turned boss was eager to meet her teacher after so long... only to find out he pretty much disappeared in thin air once she arrived to the capital of the Draconic Kingdom.

They had been welcomed with open arms by the Dragon Queen herself, but knowing Lakyus as he did, that really meant little to her.

“So, it was no use? Talk about a waste of time...”

Arche mumbled under her breath.

“Well, Vulmitar will be happy to leave this hot weather at least, I heard him lament that his scales would start to melt off if he stayed here any longer.”

Rayne added while shoving the rest of his dinner down his throat before standing up.

“Good, let’s go pack up my lady, next stop is the Frostfang mountain range.”

He grabbed Arche by the shoulder and dragged her away much to this last one’s protest.

“Let me go, you brute! I haven’t finished my dinner yet!”

The girl struggled in his grasp trying to reach for her half-empty cup.

“You had enough for the evening.”

He said ignoring the struggling noble as he moved his mouth next to her ear.

“I will rub your feet the way you like after we are done.”

His insides glowed in satisfaction as the girl immediately stilled at his whispered words before ceasing her struggle completely and immediately turned to follow him without further protests.

“You better!”

She huffed with a tinge of crimson on her cheeks, something he would have liked to attribute as an effect of his flirting rather than the wine she left behind.

When he first asked Hilma for help, he was embarrassed and hesitant, turns out it had been one of the best decisions of his life as, after learning from a very skilled and respectable older lady, he was able to bribe or pacify Arche with just the promise of a massage from him.

You could say he had magical hands now, no pun intended.

“Move it! Those backpacks are not going to fill themselves!”

He almost smirked at the eagerness of his fellow apprentice, though he doubted packing was the thing currently on her mind.

{Riyuro’s P.O.V.}

The former Quagoa king had never been one for following others, he never had enough respect for someone else to lower himself to act subservient. Except for Nyaru, that is.

Though, he had found himself challenged as of late. He certainly was not a dog wagging his tail at his master, but Lakyus, that golden-haired ball of enthusiasm, made it very hard for him to deny her as of late.

He doubted there existed anyone as compassionate as her in this rotten world, let alone someone who kept that compassion and gained the power to do something significant about the problems of the world.

And so, it was strange to see that usual confidence of her get snuff out, seeing how persistent she had been on his case, even after he gave her multiple reasons to just leave him to die, he very much doubted the girl before him could ever look as gloomy as she looked right now.

Apparently, meeting this Brain Unglaus meant a lot to her. And, honestly, he had been curious too for the longest time, ever since she first mentioned the mentor capable of a speed and precision that could outclass any other.

The rumors circulating around here certainly seemed to give credence to the words of the girl he had come to call boss. According to the guards this Brain Unglaus was singlehandedly responsible for the death of three of the five Beastmen Grand Kings, demi-humans that could have given him a run for his money in terms of sheer power.

He would have very much liked sparring against a foe capable of bringing down these figures to test his edge and newly learned skills.

For all he was exiled and title-less, he did not find such meager things as good excuses to stop bettering himself. In fact, now that the responsibility of his race has been lifted from his shoulders, and given his new profession as an adventurer, training has become something even more mandatory than before.

For all he considered himself the strongest member of their group, not counting the Frost Dragon, he had much to learn from both his boss and the stone-faced knight. He had relied on his natural strength and instincts for the longest time, foolishly negating the importance of managing to dose one's strength and acting with extreme precision, not that he ever had the need for it before.

In this last year he had come to understand that those two things were a major factor in his defeat when he fought Lakys back in the outskirts of Feo Jera. For all the young human had been inferior to him in all regards, she still had managed to get the upper hand by using her great control to dance around him, not that she would have won without her lightning blade, but that was beside the point of the matter.

"Hey boss, I think we should go back to the inn, we have a long trip planned tomorrow."

Well, that was not true, and they both knew it. The trip would certainly be long, but seeing how Vulmitar would carry most of them and the rest would use a Floating Board to follow, it would hardly be physically demanding. Though, any excuse was good to get the girl out of her current state of mind.

"You want to spar?"

He returned the small smirk that blossomed on the girl's face. Lakys would always be Lakys.

"C'mon, let's go to the training grounds, we still have a couple hours of light."

He said grabbing the girl's shoulder and pushing her forward.

"You mean a couple hours before you start kicking my ass."

The demi-human could only explode into laughter at the self-inflicted, but not untrue, jab. Humans were truly not made for the darkness, but that was no problem for the boss since she had him to make up for that deficiency of hers. Let the blades in the night to him, he will not allow a single one through... or die trying.

{The Next Day}

{Arche's P.O.V.}

The noble heir felt her eyelids falling from her sleepiness. She shouldn't have fooled around so much last night... knowing that they would have to wake up early today. Though, much to her satisfaction, she could see Rayne was not in a better shape judging by the spoon of porridge he had been eyeing with a lost gaze for a minute, as if it held the answers to the mysteries of the universe.

She smirked feeling a strange sensation of pride at the knowledge of what exactly kept him awake.

The term liquid courage was one that never meant much to her and often confused her in the past. That was, until last night when she all but stripped her upper body demanding a back massage from the grass-green eyed boy who blushed to the root of his hair at the display. She felt like dying of embarrassment at the sole thought, she had no idea alcohol could inhibit her sense of decency to such a point... she swore to herself that she would never again consume more than a cup.

She was about to tease the boy out of his sleep induced trance when a dart of black and pink made its way toward them, stopping uncomfortably close to her fellow apprentice.

Arche blinked a second, her sleepy blue eyes taking a few seconds to realize what had just happened, enough time for the new arrival to snuggle close... too close... to the brown-haired boy.

“My, my, what do we have here? Aren’t you just the cutest little thing?”

The now revealed pink haired woman wrapped an arm around the sleepy and surprised boy’s shoulders and pushed his head right into her... vulgarly endowed assets.

Arche’s drowsiness completely disappeared as her teeth clenched and her right eye twitched at the sight. Her annoyance growing even further seeing how Rayne was seemingly awestruck at the whorish display of a woman who could almost be his mother.

“Kukuku... I didn’t think such a cute boy would be in a place frequented by adventurers...”

She whispered in a tone Arche did not like at all.

“Ah... I am a magic caster...”

That was all the boy managed to say dumbly before the pink-haired woman silenced him by placing one finger on his lips.

“Shhh... cute boys like you, should not talk with their mouth full.”

Arche’s jaw dropped at the display... what the hell was happening?!

She felt an ache in her chest as the woman managed to all but drag the boy in her lap, gently enveloping him with her arms and pushing her chest against the back of his head.

“Though, what you said was interesting... a caster? You are quite young to be an adventurer, though... we could use a caster on the team right now...”

The pink haired woman continued as she gently stroked the frozen Rayne’s shoulders.

“What do you say... do you want to be part of big sis Lilynette’s team? I promise we will have a lot of fun...”

Arche heard enough! Who did this old hag thought she was?! Now that the shock wore off, she found the ache in her chest being accompanied by a far more intrusive emotion. Rage.

“Get your hands off of him... old hag.”

It was unbecoming, and against anything she had been taught, but right now she could not care less about any of it. Those purple eyes, full of perverse eagerness, shifted for the first time from the brown-haired boy to Arche, as if the woman had just noticed her presence.

“Oh, and who is this little girl? Do you know her dear?”

A vein began to vigorously pulse on Arche’s forehead as the woman dismissed her with a mocking tone before returning to the focus of her affections.

Without thinking about the consequences of her actions she immediately whipped out her catalyst which she stored on her back and aimed it in the whore’s face.

“I am saying this just once more... Let! Him! Go!”

She was ready to cast a Fireball right in this slut of a priestess’ face, damn the consequences! She just needed a reason!

“Stop! Time out!”

A new voice made its way in between the soon to be battlefield as a silver-haired woman entered the picture slamming on of her hands on the table and using the other to deflect Arche's catalyst.

"I am Scama Elbero, leader of Four Armaments, a Mithril adventurer team from Re-Estize... I apologize for my comrade's... actions."

The silver haired woman introduced herself and apologized while glaring at her pink haired degenerate of a comrade.

"Lily, let him go."

The silver haired woman order, dead serious even if her comrade did not seem to be eager to follow her leader's command.

"But Scamy... look at him! Isn't he the most precious little thing you ever saw? I love those green puppy eyes..."

Arche heard enough of the whore's protests as a magic circle appeared in front of her staff alarming both the adult adventurers.

"Fireb-"

She could not finish her spell as Rayne interrupted her by managing to free himself from the woman's grip and jumping on the table fast enough to wrangle the staff from Arche's hands.

"A-are you crazy! Casting a 3rd tier spell here!"

He asked in panic eliciting a small blush of frustration and a scowl from the blonde caster.

"Oh? So now you can get out of her grasp if it is to stop me? Maybe you should return from whence you came!"

She rebutted in indignation at the boy's actions.

“C’mon, don’t be like that... I was... uhm, shocked... yeah, I did not know what to do!”

The answer smelt like a poorly fabricated lie which did not help his case in her eyes.

“My deepest apologies... this is all my comrade’s fault... as the leader I am ready to take full responsibility.”

Their exchange was interrupted by the silver haired woman who was now bowing her head in their direction while using her hand to force the pink haired whore to do the same.

Arche took a deep breath to calm herself, this was not the moment to make a scene or create problems, since they would leave in just a few hours.

“Keep that bitch on a tight leash, will you?”

Well, that was not what she was meaning to say, even though the words escaped her before she could stop them. And judging by Rayne’s gaping mouth, they sounded as harsh and unrefined as she feared.

“This is all your fault, I would add, your commoner’s foul language is contagious.”

She tried to deflect her vulgar outburst, pushing the fault back on the brown-haired boy, who was too stunned to protest. She might have felt bad about it if it wasn’t for the fact she was still greatly pissed off at what just happened.

“Is there anything I can do to help smooth this over? I know we are still in the wrong, but I would hate to have to clear this up with the guild if you made an official complaint... which you have all rights to do.”

The silver haired woman apologized again like a beaten dog. And while making a complaint with the guild sounded good in theory, Arche knew that they would at worst get a slap on the wrist and it would all be a huge waste of time, something they could not afford at the moment.

“You said you are from Re-Estize, are you here to aid the Draconic Kingdom?”

She asked as she put back her staff over her back.

“Yes, as a Mithril team specialized in extermination missions we are here to aid against the demi-humans’ invasion.”

The woman admitted confirming Arche’s thoughts. Which meant that their actions would be even more overlooked as they were probably an important part of the kingdom’s defence.

“Just get out of my sight, our leader will be here soon and we got no time to waste.”

The blonde just waved away the two women. Now that she calmed down she could think more clearly and realize her previous attack would have been foolish and would have caused no small amount of problems. It was better for each of them to just forget this ever happened.

“Thank you miss, before I take my leave, allow me a question, seeing how you are a powerful caster at such a young age, and you mentioned a leader, are you perhaps an adventurer as well? I don’t mean to pry of course! I just hope to know so that I might apologize to your leader as well for the inconvenience, and hopefully resolve any issues if we are ever paired together on a quest!”

The woman asked, seemingly relieved they had come to an understanding. And for all Arche was still irritated by the two, she could not deny the sense and good ethics displayed.

“Indeed, me and my... friend are 3rd tier casters belonging to the adventurer team Seven Own Goal, but we are only passing by, so the chance of us teaming up is extremely slim.”

Arche’s attentive eye immediately noticed the change in the silver haired woman’s demeanor as she uttered her team’s name, her relaxed posture disappeared as her muscles tensed, and her smile was no longer genuine, but looked like something forced on her face.

“I see, then offer your apologies to your leader for me.”

She said before turning around and dragging a very much unwilling pink-haired priestess back to wherever they came, much to this last one’s protests who barely managed to blow Rayne a kiss before she received a punch on the back of her head by her leader.

“Ah, they don’t seem to like Lakyus very much.”

Rayne commented as he finally sat back down on a chair, right next to Arche this time around.

“Humph! Do you have nothing to say for yourself? Letting that whore do whatever she wanted... you must have quite enjoyed that seeing how quick you were to protect her.”

Arche knew her words were unfair to the boy, but she really couldn’t care right now, after all, her irritation did not disappear all of a sudden just because the two women left her sight.

“I-I didn’t know what to do... I didn’t mean to-“

She interrupted him by placing her finger over his lips, making him blush to the root of his hair. Even though it was something she discovered thanks to that whore, it didn't mean she couldn't use it to her advantage.

“Just know that next time you let another whore touch you like that... I am going to burn your bedsheets.”

She threatened, sounding dead serious.

“But we sleep toge-“

The boy's rebuttal was muffled by a pained cry as Arche pinched his lips together as tight as she could.

He may have learned some manners, but he clearly still had to learn when speaking up did more harm than good... even if his point was logical.

{Vulmitar's P.O.V.}

The frost dragon huffed. Frustration had come to be a rare thing since his father died and Vulmitar no longer had to live under his rule, but still, that didn't mean every problem of his was gone. No, in fact, now that he was free to do as he wished with his life he found himself with far more reasons to be frustrated, and yet, it was not the same burning hatred that he had come to know over the century he was alive, no, it was something visceral, deeper than anger, a need to not let down those around him.

In all his life he did not believe it could be possible to care about someone other than oneself as much, to the point you feared their judgment. He would have hardly defended any of his siblings, even less his father, even his mother would have been just a third or forth thought in his mind. That was the way of the dragon as he was instructed, and it felt just right.

But ever since he started traveling with his current team, something else emerged... a bond he never experienced with any other being in this world. Without even noticing he found himself looking out for them, being cheerful when they were cheerful, and be saddened when something make them sad.

He still remembered the first time he had stood in the way of an ogre that managed to flank Arche and how he took the swing of his mace right on his leg to protect the smaller human caster. That was the first time his body moved out of instinct to protect someone else despite exposing itself to the danger.

His father would have scoffed and mocked his weakness, or how he should have acted only if he was the leader of the group. but who cared? His father was dead and gone, and when death came for him, he had no one who stood in between them out of love for him.

He was the strongest in his team, there was little doubt about that, going by the logic he had been raised by, that should give him the right to lead. And yet, he found himself discovering how much that made no sense. Lakyus might have been the third or fourth strongest among them, but she was an able administrator, and a leader capable of always making her comrades feel included in every choice, someone he could approach without fear of being dismissed regardless of his power. Vulmitar doubted he could be any of those things, and his power certainly did not grant him any advantage on that part.

Maybe it was exactly for that reason that the human race had managed to advance so much regardless of their weakness. They had long ago understood that power and leadership did not equate in any measure.

And only a great leader could bring so many different individuals together. The gruff and strangely wise Quagoa, Riyuro, the passionate lizardman explorer, Zaryusu, the silent and dependable human knight, Leinas, his two fellow magical partners, and those he came to see like a brother and sister more than his actual siblings, Rayne and Arche.

Speaking of this last duo, he returned to the source of his earlier frustration, the tome he had been studying ever since those two came back from the Baharuth Empire.

He would be lying if he said he didn't feel envious when the two showed how they managed to breach into the 3rd tier of magic. And yet, that jealousy only spurred him forward in his own quest for power, he imagined his father would have raged from the afterlife knowing that someone he considered weak managed to match him in magical prowess, but unfortunately, even after months he found himself stuck.

He had not accepted any help from the two human caster out of prideful stubbornness, but maybe it was time to swallow his pride and actually let them give him some advice. After all, they were all students of the art of magic who lived to better themselves and they never had him feel inferior whenever they discussed magic before, even though they had access to more updated knowledge compared to the 300 years old books in the dwarven capital's library.

“Hey Vulmitar!”

He turned his face from his book when he heard the familiar cheerful voice of his leader calling for him.

Seeing how the whole team was approaching him in the courtyard where he was resting, it probably meant it was time to leave this place.

He could not lie, the prospect actually relieved him, there was something strange in this place, something he could not describe with words... a sort of aura that made his draconic instincts tingle in suspense, as if something was supposed to happen. And the fulcrum of this sensation was the half-breed queen herself.

He had met her only once, and yet something felt extremely wrong from the start, as if he was watching something distorted that should have taken another form... the closest thing he could think of was reading a book where some pages were backward and some were misplaced. And if that was not enough, he also felt something aching inside his soul, as if a piece of him was calling for something he had missed in his entire life and never realized.

He initially had been interested in questioning the queen about her heritage, but after that extremely weird first meeting he had tried to avoid her ever since. He did not like that sensation at all, he just didn't want to feel incomplete or wrong ever again.

“Are we departing?”

He inquired, trying to push those thoughts to the back of his mind.

“Yep, straight north!”

His leader confirmed cheerfully, even though Vulmitar could sense the tenseness behind her tone, she had probably not managed to meet the one she had sought. If it was anyone else, he would have dismissed the fact, but seeing how she was one of his comrades, someone well known for always being the positive one

in their group, he could do nothing but worry. But maybe, that was not the moment to inquire about it.

His head turned toward the other two shorter humans, his thoughts returning to his previous dilemma on 3rd tier magic, though his words died in his throats as he saw the two walking quite apart and avoiding each other's gaze, a most peculiar and unusual thing as the two had always seemed attached to the hip ever since he met them.

Well, this apparently was no moment to speak at all, he would have to rethink his approach this evening when they would stop to set up camp... he wondered what kind of wildlife he could hunt around here. A warthog or two sounded nice right now, even more if he could get Lakyus to give him some of those spices she used when she roasted her own meat.

He felt his tongue licking the inside of his mouth as his mind voyaged toward memories of seasoned meat as any other worry was pushed to the side for the moment.

“Hey! Don’t drool over the book!”

He blinked as the voice of Arche reached his ears, making him snap out of his gluttonous fantasy and return to reality as he immediately stirred his muzzle aside to avoid ruining the book he was studying which was instantly recovered by the blonde caster who sent a glare his way that, dragon or not, made him question every choice that brought him to this point.

Vulmitar lowered his head in shame. Like a younger sibling cowering in front of their disappointed older sister.

“C’mon give him some slack, he didn’t have breakfast.”

Rayne tried to come to his defense only to garner another glare aimed at him for his efforts.

“Shut it, I have not forgotten about you yet.”

That seemed enough to make the boy cower worse than the dragon.

Truly, older sisters were scary.

{Frostfang Mountain Range}

{??? P.O.V.}

The figure advanced through the knee-deep snow, their heavy hood shielding their face from the falling snow.

The weather prospecting a harsh beginning to this winter. The tribe would have to double their efforts if they wanted to gather enough food and materials before the first storms hit.

They abruptly stopped with their foot midair as the familiar tingle in the back of their mind returned. They lowered their foot to its previous position and crouched, slowly digging into the snow before them till they uncovered the frozen corpse of a demi-human under the snow, its sharp teeth exposed and still very capable of cutting even though their owner was dead.

“What in the world could have pushed them so far? This are not demi-humans from the mountains, and considering they are alone... it is possible this one was lost and driven up here in desperation, or chased.”

The figure mumbled to himself before a shadow obscured the sun for a moment as the wind shifted and a familiar sound of large fluttering wings interrupted the dead silence of the mountainside.

The cloaked figure stood up, their gaze fixed toward the sky as a large shadow descended toward the ground, landing with incredible gentleness on the snow despite its enormous size and speed.

Serpentine silver eyes met fearless violet ones as the large beast lowered its muzzle toward the cloaked figure, hot air and sparks fluttering out of its mouth filled with sharps bloody teeth.

The figure did not seem at all bothered by the display of the silver scaled beast as two gloved hands gently reached for its muzzle scratching its jaw, a gesture that elicited a sort-of purr from the winged creature.

“Hey girl, how many times do I have to tell you? No hunting at night, even less right now that winter is coming... good grief, you are all dirty... what do I have to do with you?”

The voice sounded exasperated, making the beast whine like a the scolded child it very much was.

“Kali, I told you not to leave this early.”

The gruff voice coming from behind the cloaked figure made their body go rigid as they turned to face a very familiar man.

“Ah... father, this is not what it looks like... Zephyra was out the whole night and I was worried...”

Even though they gave their explanation the hard gaze in their father’s eyes did not fade in the slightest.

“Then you should have taken a few guards with you, and not sneak out as you please... you are seventeen, you should know the dangers of the mountain by now.”

Kali almost rolled their eyes at their father's words, this was not something they wished to go over again.

"I know the dangers father, but we are barely twenty minutes from camp, it's not like this is unexplored territory."

Their protest prompted the bearded man to sigh.

"You are as eager as your mother and as rebellious as me, what will I ever do with you, daughter?"

The older man lost his harshness as he patted his daughter on the shoulder.

"Careful father, that sounded like an invitation to take off that cloak of yours from your back."

Kali smirked at her father who promptly smirked back at her.

"We are both twenty years too young for you to hope to achieve that... now run along and don't make your mother worry too much... I also heard you promised your brother something..."

Kali almost jumped in place at those words, her hood falling back revealing ebony black short hair and a pale complexion.

"Shit! I forgot I promised Lu I would teach him how to make a trap!"

She panicked as she immediately darted toward her wyvern who let her climb up her neck without protest like countless times before.

"Rise Zephy!"

She called for her mount who answered in kind with a small roar as she swiftly left the ground with a single flap of her wings.

A.N.

First of all, let me apologize for this delay, between me being away for 15 days and the fact I had to replan this entire arc since, as I explained before, it was initially meant to be cut content or a side-story, this chapter ended up coming out incredibly late.

Well, that said, I really hope you all enjoyed this first introductory chapter. This is still an interlude arc, so do not expect it to last many chapters, but I feel like we need to give SoG a bit more development. After all Lakyus is an important part of the main story and will have important roles in the arcs to come, so cooking now will very much pay off later on.

That said, I am taking complete liberty with the Wyvernriders tribe, after all we never came to see any of them or their culture in canon, so consider this a major experiment on my part on writing (80%) my own thing.

Small note on Lilynette, if anyone though I was harsh in calling her certain names (even though it was an Arche P.O.V.) I would ask you to think about it for a second, she is basically a male version of Cerebrate, and I think I said enough.

Well, as always, I await your feedback through a comment / review.

Till next time! Stay safe!