

**(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)**

**A/N: The fight continues!**

**EDIT: After receiving what I considered valid critique, I have decided to do something exceedingly rare where I'm concerned and rewrite the fight between Thomas, Seevi, and Synestra so Thomas doesn't look come across as quite so much of a chump.**

**-x-X-x-**

Seevi was right, her older sister really was no joke. Thomas could understand why she'd always said that Synestra 'never lost'. Qyvern was dead and it wasn't even some great sacrifice. He hadn't taken a blow meant for Thomas or Seevi or made some sort of play that at least made his death pyrrhic for the First Princess.

No... he'd just died and that was that. It was a sudden death for a man who had likely harbored thoughts of revenge against the woman who killed him. A man who wanted nothing more than to be the one to secure justice for his King's demise personally.

In comparison, the news that Graelo was Synestra's father... wasn't all that surprising to Thomas. It wasn't something he'd ever thought of beforehand, but now that its out in the open, it's the kind of thing where he just internally shrugs and thinks to himself 'yeah that makes sense'.

The same cannot be said for Seevi and it very nearly costs the Dark Elf a limb when Synestra capitalizes on Seevi's shock and horror to lunge forward with her blades flashing. Thomas barely manages to get in the way in time, blocking the attack as he pushes himself to his absolute limits and beyond.

"Seevi! Focus!"

Making a noise in the back of her throat, Sevvu picks her jaw up off of the ground and gets back in the fight. Its just the two of them now... and that doesn't feel like nearly enough based on how strong Synestra is. But of course, she's back to toying with them at this point... and perhaps that's why Sevvu eventually speaks up. Or maybe she just can't hold her tongue anymore.

"H-How is that possible? Mother never..."

Synestra lets out a malicious bark of laughter at that.

"What? Never did a thing herself that she couldn't have others do for her? No, you're right. For the vast majority of mother's many daughters, including yourself, sorcery and life-crafting was enough for her. She wouldn't want to mar her beauty, after all. But at the same time... we both know how mother loved to experiment."

Sevvu gasps, even as they all come together in another clash that leaves Thomas certain they're in over their heads. While the two sisters continue their conversation, his mind races to find a way to win this, because for all his training, for all his prowess, for all his strength... Thomas wonders whether it will really be enough.

"She... with Graelo?"

"Who else? He was her best warrior beyond a shadow of a doubt. If there was any male in the entirety of our lands worthy of her, it was him. Together, they made me. Yet another of our mother's experiments, to see if there was anything better about a natural born over... one of you."

Sounded pretty twisted to Thomas. Of course, it was a lot more personal for Sevvu. Very personal, as a matter of due course.

"But if... you turned out like this, why didn't she continue?"

Synestra lets out another bark of laughter, this one actually holding some humor.

“Simple. It was too much effort in her eyes. It didn’t matter how successful I was. It didn’t matter how I rose above the rest of you with ease. I am better than all of you... and I always will be because mother was too lazy to do it again. She didn’t like how it felt being pregnant, you see... not the weight, not the length of time, none of it.”

That... did sound like Sevvi’s mother, even if Thomas had only ever had one conversation with her. And it explained Synestra’s obsession with Graelo as well. Why the First Princess had used up her favor with their mother to secure him... and why she was so incensed now, so eager to kill every human in order to punish Sevvi for his death.

Sevvi seems to feel the same way, because she falters again, hesitating.

“I... I’m sorry, sister. Truly. I didn’t know...”

Synestra’s face twists up into a rictus of hatred and she snarls as she lunges forward. She keeps trying to remove Sevvi’s hands, Thomas notices, even as he moves in to block her attacks on the other elf yet again. She killed Qyvern in a single moment with a blade across the throat and a gash deep enough that the Spymaster bled out within moments of hitting the ground.

But Sevvi... Sevvi, she’s trying to maim. It’s like she said, she intends to take her sister back with her... and torture her for a hundred years.

“You think I want your apologies?! You think I care if you’re sorry?! That’s not good enough, Sevinarya! None of it is! You can’t give me back Graelo! Nobody can!”

Thomas finally speaks up, breaking his silence.

“You’re right. Nobody can.”

Synestra’s red eyes snap to him, narrowing into slits. Thomas stares right back at her, his gaze level.

“What’s this, Otherworlder? Going to commiserate with me now? Going to pity me as I kill you like the dog you are? Do you think I care what you think?”

But Thomas shakes his head, his eyes never leaving Synestra.

“I don’t pity you, Synestra. I don’t commiserate with you either.”

Sevvi makes a noise at his side while Synestra looks a little caught off guard, even in the depths of her fury. Thomas, meanwhile, continues on, his voice remaining even and calm.

“I pity Graelo for being stuck with a bitch like your mother for his Queen. And I pity him for being stuck with a bitch like you as his daughter.”

Synestra’s eyes widen, her anger reaching new heights as she roars and lunges forward.

“Excuse me?! I did everything to secure him! I took him from my mother! I brought him by my side! I-!”

Admittedly, it’s a lot harder to look cool when he’s desperately deflecting blows meant to take off his head. And yet, he’s managing it all the same... his Gift responding to the threat and making him faster bit by bit, inch by inch. As this happens, he forces the words out, cutting her off mid-rant as he dodges her swords before catching them on the haft of his weapon and forcing them back.

“You got him killed!”

“Excuse me?!”

“You heard me! He would never have been in this Kingdom if not for your orders! And for what? Why was Graelo here? Because you were ‘having fun’. Because it amused you to cut our lands in half and back the ambitions of House Godman!”

Gritting his teeth, Thomas pushes Synestra back with all his might... and he feels something give a little in the tug of war type situation between them, pushing Synestra back half a step in the process. A flash of surprise appears on her face, making it clear that the First Princess never expected him to be able to match her, even for a second. Glaring at her, he snarls out the rest of his accusation.

“He died because of you, Synestra. Because you decided to be a fucking cunt and play games with human lives. And for what? All of this... amounting to nothing! His death... is on your head!”

His words have more of an impact on Synestra than she's expecting, he can tell. He actually seems to have shaken her as she blinks rapidly. Indeed, what Thomas had said seems to have had more of an effect than any single blow he's come close to landing in the course of this entire fight.

“No... no, no, NO! You're wrong! You're WRONG!”

It dawns on him then, as Synestra comes at him with a renewed fury and a frenzy of blows that Thomas somehow manages to keep up with... that the Dark Elf Queen had really fucked up all of her daughters. Maybe a part of it could be laid at the feet of their entire culture but given Klynirra was the ultimate power in their Kingdom, the buck stopped with her.

It had taken losing every friend she had for Sevvu to realize how fucked up her relationships with both her family and her people were. From there, she'd managed to come back and find a way to become a better person, in Thomas' opinion.

Now, Synestra is having a similar revelation. Whether she'd simply never made the connection... or more likely, refused to let herself even think about it, it's clear that Thomas has uncovered a gaping wound in the First Princess' psyche.

“NO! NO! NO!”

She batters at his defenses with all her strength now, forcing Thomas back inch by inch. And yet, even now she can't quite break his defense. Admittedly, it's all he can do to protect his handful of vulnerable spots, the Magic Steel Armor doing the work of keeping him alive even as he does his best to ward her off.

They're stalemating.

Her rage has turned her into a berserker and she seems intent on taking out every bit of her self-loathing and self-hatred on him. Her father died because she was playing games... but she's not playing games anymore.

Meanwhile, while Thomas has wasted an ungodly amount of time over the last few months training an army instead of focusing on himself at the expense of everything else... he's still got the Gift of Relentless Potential backing him up. And whenever he's found himself in a fight against an impossible blow, he's usually managed to push through and come out on top.

It's a testament to Synestra Vairath's sheer strength and force of will that this time around, he finds himself straining to overcome her. His defenses are holding, but her offense is nigh on overwhelming. It's the classic case of an unstoppable force meeting an immovable object, or at least as close as it can get. She can't quite break him down, but he has to focus everything he has on protecting himself... he can't get a single counterattack past her berserker fury.

"I'LL KILL YOU! I'LL KILL EVERY LAST STINKING HUM-urk!"

Of course, for all that she'd become overwhelmingly strong, she's also made a simple mistake. She's given up her own previously impenetrable defense in favor of putting every last ounce of herself into killing Thomas for telling the truth. And in doing so... she's clearly forgotten that they're not alone here.

Sevvi's blade slides out of the front of Synestra's chest, the Dark Elf having impaled her sister through the heart from behind. Staring down at the blood-soaked dagger in disbelief, Synestra's own swords fall from suddenly nerveless fingers as she starts to collapse.

Instantly, Sevvī grabs her sister before she can fully fall, instead going to the ground with her. The result is Synestra in Sevvī's arms, staring up at her as Sevvī cradles her in her lap.

"I... I'm sorry, sister. I truly am. But Thomas is r-right... our mother made us into monsters... and you were the greatest monster of all. Graelo... didn't deserve to die as he did. But neither did the humans deserve to suffer for your amusement."

In her final moments of life, Synestra lets out a wet laugh, blood drooling from the side of her mouth. As the light dims in her eyes, she half-smirks, half-sneers up at Sevvī.

"You think... this is over, Sevinarya? Heh... good luck."

And then she's gone. Thomas' legs give out on him then, collapsing to his knees at Sevvī's side. As the adrenaline leaves him, it becomes almost impossible to catch his breath but he eventually manages it. Sweat drips from his brow. Sweat... but not blood. They'd done it. They'd won.

Both he and Sevvī are quiet for a long moment... but ultimately, Synestra was right in a way. It wasn't over yet. There was still work to do.

Before Thomas can say as much and they can get to their feet however, the flap to the command tent opens up and a Dark Elf steps inside... only to stumble to a halt as she sees them there and takes in the entire scene. Before she can fully process, Sevvī is already speaking in a tired yet commanding tone.

"Hold. The First Princess is dead. As Fourth Princess, I am taking command of this army. Assemble everyone, immediately."

There's a pause before the Dark Elf finds her voice.

"F-Fourth Princess. You..."

Sevvī isn't having it though.

“Yes. I killed my sister. She’s dead. It’s over. I am the highest ranking member of the Royal House of Vairath left in these lands! Now do as I say and assemble the army!”

Finally, the Dark Elf bows and departs without another word. Thomas watches her go, wondering if they’re about to die at the hands of hundreds of avenging elves. He can only hope it stops there if they do and everyone goes home... but he knows better than to get *too* hopeful.

Regardless, for now they just have to act like they’ve actually won. And of course, show as little weakness as humanly (and elvenly) possible. With that said, Thomas forces himself back to his feet and takes Synestra from Seevi, laying the dead elf out on the map table she’d been pouring over when they first arrived.

Then, he helps Seevi to her feet and leads her as they both walk on increasingly steady legs out of the tent. Dark Elves are already gathering before them as word quickly spreads, and Thomas tenses up as numerous red eyes fall upon him and Seevi the instant they step outside.

But... they don’t look angry. If anything, they look blank-faced... as if they’re all waiting for something.

That ‘something’ arrives a moment later in the form of who can only be the First Princess’ commanders. They wear slightly fancier armor than the other Dark Elf soldiers, and they march in lockstep. There are three of them in total and once again Thomas tenses up, expecting a fight.

... He almost wishes it could be a fight. Because instead of drawing blades on them and killing them where they stand, the commander in the middle reaches back and draws forth an incredibly familiar sphere.

Thomas resists the urge to groan as he beholds the sight of one of the Dark Elf Communication Orbs once more. Can’t show any weakness, after all. And yet...

he knows what this means. So does Sevv, given how she tries to preempt what's coming.

“Put that thing away, right now! As Fourth Princess, I demand it!”

Standing stock still, the commanders make no move to obey. The one holding the orb steps forward.

“Apologies Fourth Princess, but our orders supersede your authority. In the event that you were to prevail over the First Princess... we have been commanded to ensure that you speak with the Queen immediately after.”

... Synestra had known somehow, hadn't she? That was where that last bit of mirth had come from. She'd known that this would happen if she fell... and that they would be stuck having a conversation with the Queen no matter what.

Thomas and Sevv exchange a glance, knowing full well that this means nothing good for their chances of resolving all of this peacefully. But... they're not dead yet. There's still a chance. Still, as they both turn back to the seemingly innocuous Communication Orb with dread, Thomas finds he almost wishes they *were* dead... this wasn't going to be a fun conversation in the slightest.

**-x-X-x-**

**A/N: The horror v.v**

**Please let me know what you think either on Patreon or Discord! Your feedback, suggestions, and ideas for this story are keeping the inspiration flowing in a big way!**