

7

Eriadren

With my legs crossed, I sat as close to a thin strip of gray as I dared. Across from me, Arivor copied my pose, eagerly leaning forward as I told my tale, albeit with one significant omission.

As if picking up on what I'd left out, Arivor asked, "What happened to Sarai? Didn't she stay on the roof with you when- when-?"

When Daevetch forced your domination of my friend's mind?

"I don't know," I lied. "I was a little focused on Corsivis. Maybe she joined my mother in her quest to find help."

"In the end, that's probably for the best," Arivor mused. "Who knows what I might have done to her if she'd been there when I woke up?"

Gods, the pain of that... I couldn't look at my friend, keeping my eyes pinned on my hands, folded in my lap, instead.

When Arivor cleared his throat, it drew my gaze back up.

"Just so you know, I- I felt Corsivis die, Eri. When Daevetch forced me into his body, I could feel him being torn apart, and fragments of him vanished with every moment that my mind lived alongside his," he said. "I saw his life. I know what he was. My great-great grandson. How could Daevetch-?"

For a moment, he was silent, strangled by what the primal force had done to him.

"You know, he felt a strange attraction to you," he eventually continued. "I suppose that he knew, deep down, what you were and what he was destined for, and yet, he still befriended you. You draw people to you like a morsel would to a starving man."

I smiled, hoping it didn't look as brittle as it felt.

"I'm sorry about killing you the way I did," I said. "I meant what I said about delaying your death for a time but-"

"Your splinter forced your hand, I know," Arivor said. "Don't apologize for something you had no control over."

And I bowed my head, unable to meet his eyes.

White had slipped halfway up my chest, which meant time was running out. We needed to hurry.

“We were lucky this time,” I said. “Daevetch chose a poor host for you. If it had been anyone but Corsivis, I wouldn’t have heard of your return for weeks. Given that, we should come up a better way for me to find you than blindly hoping I catch rumors of your return. Could we set up a rendezvous point?”

With a wry grin, Arivor said, “Eri, your splinter made you kill me, despite your wishes otherwise. What makes you think that mine would let me willingly travel to my death?”

That only made me groan.

“What are we going to do, Arivor?” I said. “We’ve only been at this two times, and already, my hope’s dying.”

“Don’t say that,” Arivor snapped. “You’re the cleverest man I know, Eriadren. If anyone can outmaneuver Ele and Daevetch, it’s you. I have faith in you.”

Gods, why...?

But I couldn’t indulge in that, not when a black sheet had slid over Arivor’s chin, and I knew mine was on a similar track. We had seconds.

“Thank you,” I whispered.

Smiling, Arivor winked.

“Be seeing you,” he said.

And as white closed over my head, I said, “Here we go again.”

Revision #1

Created 5 September 2024 20:11:37 by FatalisticFable

Updated 29 August 2025 18:29:44 by FatalisticFable