Nightgloom, a time in the selunite faith where the moon is hidden from view in the sky and casts no light unto the surface below. It is during this time that a young shifter is found at the doorstep of garreg mach monastery by a rather young looking eladrin. During the same night the head monks and their son gives blessings to the birth of an air genasi into the temple. This night also brought along with-it song and dance as this was the day of shieldmeet, the entire clergy chanted as the priest fell into a trance. Just outside the walls the sound of battle could be heard raging as the shards descended to do battle with the minions of shar, a truly auspicious night. Come dawn she who had given birth had vanished, taken by the goddess for her years of service and promoted to the highest position possible within the faith, that of the shards.

Years later the son of the monks who now goes by the name of Luceran threw himself into his studies gaining appreciation from the elders and heralded a prodigy of his time. In stark contrast, the shifter boy, Altavar was regarded with suspicion, not only did he not study the sacred texts all students were required to, the boy seemed all too eager to step into the training ring, single-mindedly itching for battle. Not every of the those who observed him were put off, however. Niobe, she who found the boy on the doorstep all those years ago seemed rather interested in his antics and deemed to take him under her wing. Off in the temple in front of the statue of selune is where one would typically find Qamar-Riah, his mother having become a shard he converses with the deity often, tho it is a one-sided conversation, yet he believes his mother can hear him all the same.

As time passed the relationship between these 4 individuals grew. Altavar spent innumerable hours on the training field pushing his body to peak condition and all in the monastery knew of his battle prowess, however this came with the drawback of his failing studies and during battle he was ruthless, showing no mercy to those he battled which left him with very few willing to spar with him. Luceran having firmly reached top of the class and next in line to inherit the monastery offered his guidance to Altavar for the studies in exchange for running drills and teaching him more efficient ways to hand close quarters situations. Niobe would often be in attendance for the sparring sessions as she had been instructing all the children but gave special attention to Altavar over the last few years and was proud to see the progress he made. Whenever either of them would misstep and not catch it she would be the first to step in and show them the right way of handling certain maneuvers and particularly she was keen to quiet the energies escaping from Altavar every now and then. Clearly a magic user none understood where her knowledge of battle came from but all the same none questioned it for it helped the children. Qamar-Riah would also sit in on these sessions tho he felt far more at home during the study sessions, instructing them both on how best not to neglect their spiritual needs tho these words often fell upon deaf ears. The main person who would listen to his words was a young human girl by the name of Vera Kotz who came to the monastery when the orphanage she belonged to was annexed by the monastery when it was quite close to closing due to lack of funds.

Despite having taken the orphanage under its wings, the monastery was woefully underprepared to feed those who would not adhere to its doctrines while also providing shelter so while the kids were not on the streets, they often only had a single meal to their name within the day. Worse still one of the children, Vera, is repeatedly dragged in to the monastery by the guards on duty, caught lifting purses and attempting raids on storehouses, a troublemaker by all accounts but due to the influence of the monastery in the area she was never severely punished for her deeds, only admonished and forced into tougher training days which often saw her the punching bag of Altavar who had lost his main sparring partner in Luceran as he prepared for his coming-of-age pilgrimage. On these days she would retreat to the temple where Qamar-Riah would offer her a prayer in the name of selune for over the years they had grown quite close after he witnessed her sneaking out while on one of his weekly night stalks. He learned of the lack of care for the orphaned kids and being one himself could not bring himself to admonish her for her deeds, so he instead led her in ritualistic prayer to commune with the Moonmaiden who he believed understood her plight and was accepting of the actions she took to better the lives of those around her even if it so often ended in hardship for herself. Mere days after one of these “training” sessions a student approached Altavar lobbing accusations of his uncaring of those around him, teasing of how he is nothing but a beast in the clothing of man, egging that he did not belong and should leave. Altavar having been here longer than the student and having never fought him before did his best to take this in stride and challenged the student to a fight to which he did not accept. It was now Altavar’s turn to hurl insults calling the boy a coward who could only use words and not his fist, why speak up if you do not have the mettle to back up the words that fly out. Put on the spot the boy foolishly accepted the challenge and by now most of the students had gathered round the ensuing chaos.

You would be hard pressed to call the preceding conflict a battle, it was a one-sided massacre. Unaware of what situation he put himself in the student kept talking all the way up until the match started and by this point Altavar was well and truly pissed off. In a mere instant after the sound of the gong the distance had been closed, a single strike sending the mouthy child to the ground and hammerfists were now raining down upon the fragile shell that was pretending to be the boy’s body. It took the combined might of Luceran, Qamar-Riah, and Niobe to finally wrench Altavar off the boy who now lay motionless a bloody mess on the floor the fate of his life-state left up to the gods. Those in attendance looked on in horror with some eyes glancing over to Vera whispering how any of these days that could have been her. It did not take long for Altavar to get banished after such a violent act for brutality of that scale for such a minor offence was not welcome especially by one who openly ignored the wisdom of the elders. This incident saw Niobe take her leave as well as she refused to leave the side of her pupil and would join him on whatever path life took him. Not but a month later Luceran would also take his leave as he headed out on his coming-of-age pilgrimage with the blessings of his parents, the elders, and Qamar-Riah behind him.

7 years have passed since then, the monastery has become a sullen yet tranquil place, the head monks slowly descending into grief over the fact that their son had not returned, his fate remaining ambiguous. Some whispered of his demise, but none would do so openly for the topic had been deemed taboo. Everyone knew it was the most likely reason he never returned, for what other reason could there be? With the main troublemaker gone, business in the monastery continued as usual and everyone seemed a bit happier to go out to the training field. Where at first it would be mostly deserted save the one person who never left it, now it was always populated with a multitude of trainees eager to hone their techniques for whatever trials life threw their way. All was not well with the students, however, for one had just made a grave mistake that would have repercussions that none had prepared for. Vera, in a panic, returns during the night, she moved hurriedly catching the glimpse of Qamar-Riah who inquired about her current speed. She explained the events leading to her current predicament, how she went out on one of her usual escapades, how this time it was a trap and in fearing for her life she took the one of a powerful man. Immediately after this explanation and with a silent nod from Qamar-Riah she ventures out into the moonless night, quickly melding into the darkness.

By dawn of the next day a couple of familiar faces had appeared in front of the monastery. Yes, it was those of the banished kin-slayer and the teacher who had gone with him. None but one was willing to hear why they had returned after all these years. Qamar-Riah was eager to hear of the tales brought back by Altavar after these seven years, especially after the last person he was closest to had left just the night before, the loneliness wouldn’t be given a chance to set in. Before any significant progress can be made, however, the sound of war drums is heard outside the monastery. The voice of a vistani claiming to hail from lands near an unknown place called Barovia leading a pack of mercenary Shadar-kai could be heard exclaiming revenge for some merchant or other, a name none present was aware of. In truth the man murdered the night before happened to be the brother of this vistani and the shadar-kai mercenaries under the direction of their goddess Shar used this as the perfect excuse to take down a selune worshipping site. The battle lasted into the night and unfortunately for the monks at the monastery tonight of all nights would mark the day of the Mystery of the Night, celebrated each year on Shieldmeet. This meant no reinforcements would be coming as by now they would all be deep into their trances. As dawn drew closer the final body of this conflict would fall, that of Qamar-Riah who was surrounded and impaled on all sides. Within his final moments his eyes glazed around to see Niobe dragging an angered Altavar away before his eyes fell upon the vistani now in a fit of hysterical laughter while he watched the monastery get dragged into the shadowfell. The world around went Qamar-Riah went dark and his lifeless body crumpled to the ground in a pool of his own blood.