1815 Stranded

The sky above the Moonriver Plain was grey and unfriendly. Drops of cold water were dribbling from above, and the winds were blowing above the barren wasteland, howling as they dove into the canyons.

Rain sat in front of the crackling fire for a few minutes, staring somberly into the distance. Her body was bruised, but there were no serious wounds. Her mind was clear.

It was just that the situation was a bit bleak.

Rain sighed heavily, then inspected her surroundings. Well... there wasn't much to inspect. The stony wasteland was nearly featureless. There were a few twisted, dead trees a dozen or so meters away.

Beyond that, far away, stood a weathered ruin... the canyon was on the other side, a stone throw away.

Next, she inspected herself and grimaced. Rain was wearing her usual leather pants, henley, wool vest, and jacket. She was not going to suffer from the cold because her body was protected by her worn-out military bodysuit, but her warm coat was still in her pack... which was back with the survey team, full of survival equipment.

The last time she had seen her sword, it was impaling the abominable hand to the ground. Her bow and quiver were now somewhere at the bottom of the canyon. The only weapons she had left were the hunting knife in the sheath attached to the small of her back, and a dagger hidden in her boot.

It wasn't much.

However, what concerned Rain the most was not the lack of weapons, but the lack of simple tools. There was no food or water, either...

Luckily, there was a young lady from a noble clan. Tamar had to have a few useful Memories in her soul arsenal.

Rain rubbed her face, then rose and walked over to the unconscious girl. After inspecting her carefully, she scowled and cursed quietly through gritted teeth.

"Damnation..."

Tamar... wasn't in a good shape. She was not at death's door, but her body was terribly battered. Her face was bruised, and judging by a slight grimace that contorted it with each breath, so were her ribs. One of her arms was badly injured if not for the vambrace of her enchanted armor, it would have been mangled even worse.

Worst of all, both of her legs seemed to be broken. She must have been slammed against the wall of the canyon or had been caught between rocks, being tossed around by the current. Well... it was already a miracle that they had managed to survive, In fact, Rain should have been worse off than Tamar, whose Awakened physique was much more robust.

Her teacher must have made rescuing her a priority.

Rain sighed deeply.

She wasn't particularly fond of the haughty Legacy, but there was also no animosity between them. So, seeing her in such a sorry state made Rain feel despondent.

Tamar had chosen to catch the falling laborer instead of saving herself, after all. If she had been more selfish, she might have avoided getting hurt altogether.

"Stupid woman..."

Rain stared at the unconscious girl for a while, then rose and walked away.

She returned a couple of minutes later, carrying a few sturdy branches.

Awakened were much stronger than mundane people, and could recover from many terrible wounds. The healed much faster. Tamar seemed to have already saturated her core, as well - at that despite only Awakening a couple of months ago.

'One of the perks of being a Legacy, I guess.'

She must have received a treasure trove of soul shards immediately after becoming an Awakened. Legacy clans were known to provide their young with a lot of support... granted, not quite to that degree, Clan Sorrow must have liked pampering young Tamar.

...Or rather, they probably were in a hurry to make her as strong as possible before the start of the war.

The thought made Rain feel cold.

In any case, Rain wasn't too concerned about the younger girl - she would make a full recovery before too long.

However, this was the Dream Realm. They were lost and far away from other humans. Their situation was rather precarious.

Taking off her jacket, Rain hesitated for a few moments and unsheathed her knife. She cut her henley and then tore off its sleeves with a regretful expression. Finally, she sat down on the ground and started to cut the sleeves into thin strips of fabric, meaning to make them into cords.

It was better to set Tamar's bones before she regained consciousness.

Once the cords were ready, Rain returned the knife into its sheath and approached the Legacy girl. Her greaves and cuisses were in the way, so Rain had to unstrap them.

Memory armor was rarely donned and stripped, since Awakened could simply summon and dismiss it. However, that did not mean that it couldn't be taken off normally, Granted, Rain wasn't very familiar with how all these plates of metal were fastened to a human body and each other. So, she fumbled a little.

She was in the process of trying to remove a greave when something about her surroundings subtly changed. Looking up, she was a little startled to see that Tamar had opened her eyes and was staring at her dazedly.

"...What are you doing?"

The Legacy girl's voice sounded hoarse.

Rain looked down.

'Ah.’

From the side, it surely seemed like she was trying to loot the half-dead young lady for a pair of boots. Like a complete scoundrel.

Rain smiled sheepishly and then said in a friendly tone:

"Don't scream."

Tamar looked at her in confusion. Then, her eyes widened, and she let out a stifled groan.

The pain had finally caught up with her.

"Argh... aaah... damn it!"

The young Legacy slumped on the ground and gritted her teeth, reeling from pain.

Rain, meanwhile, let go of the greave and shook her head in dejection.

All that work, completely in vain.

She waved to attract Tamar's attention.

"Hey, Lady Tamar. Dismiss your armor."

Tamar looked at her silently for a few moments.

"...Why?”

Rain inhaled quietly, then tried her best to imitate the tone her mom had used to make her younger self take medicine:

"Your legs are broken. I need to set the bones... well, unless you want them to heal wrong."

The young Legacy gritted her teeth, then raised her torso and looked down. A few moments later, she fell back on the ground, her face turning pale.

There was a long stretch of silence, and then, her plate armor collapsed into a whirlwind of sparks, leaving only the cloth underlayer behind. Tamar was left wearing only a simple white shirt and breeches, shivering slightly in the cold.

Rain hesitated a little before picking up her jacket and covering the younger girl with it. Then, she looked at her pale face from above.

"It's going to hurt a lot. Do you want to bite down on something?"

Tamar slowly shook her head.

"Just to do it."

'Well, suit yourself.’

Rain returned to her feet, picked up on them gently, placed her hand on her calves, and said gingerly.

"Listen. I'm going to count to three, One..."

Without saying anything else, she pulled.

In the next moment, Tamar clenched her fists and let out a string of curses. Or at least she must have thought that they were curses in fact, this proper young lady had no idea how to properly curse. It was a bit adorable.

"You... you said you would count to three!"

Rain shrugged nonchalantly.

"I lied.”