1816 Simple Porter

Tamar handled the pain surprisingly well. Rain herself was no stranger to pain, but she had never been hurt that badly. She wasn't sure if she could have maintained composure in a similar situation - at least without a dire need to stay composed.

Humans were wired to abhor pain, so there was nothing wrong with showing a bit of weakness.

But after that first string of curses, the young Legacy stayed silent and simply glared at Rain intensely. It was as if she was inviting her to try her worst.

'Weirdo.’

Luckily, Rain was quite good at treating injuries. All children learned the basic treatment procedures in school, and she had been additionally schooled on how to deal with most injuries in the wilderness by her teacher. So, Tamar did not have to suffer unnecessarily.

After the bones were set, Rain told her to summon back her boots, and then went about making splints from the branches and cords she had prepared.

While she busied herself with it, Tamar finally spoke:

"You... Rani..."

Rain glanced at her briefly, then looked back down.

'Huh. She remembers my name.’

"What?"

The Legacy girl inhaled slowly.

"Where are we?"

'Good question.'

Rain hesitated for a few moments, coming up with a believable lie. Sadly, the fact that they were alive was quite unbelievable.

But then again, the existence of her teacher was even harder to believe. So, any explanation she could come up with would sound more plausible than the truth.

Eventually, she said:

"I'm not sure, either. Somewhere downstream from where we fought the Tyrant. It looks like the river carried us pretty far... when I came about, I was laying on the edge of the canyon, with no trace of the others in sight. You were about a hundred meters downriver. That's all I know."

Tamar remained silent for a while.

"How did we survive?"

'A petty shadow rescued us from the current, then left us to fend for ourselves in the wilderness... because I hurt his feelings...'

She smiled faintly,

"No idea. I assumed it was because of some powerful life-saving Memory you have.”

The young Legacy ralsed an eyebrow.

"There's no such thing."

Rain sighed.

"That's too bad."

Finally finished, she looked at Tamar and shrugged.

"Well, we're both alive. Now, we just need to make our way back to the main camp, and then we will even be able to keep staying alive. Isn't that wonderful?"

The young Legacy looked at her somberly, not saying anything.

Rain smiled faintly.

"What? Why are you looking at me like that?"

Tamar glanced at splints on her legs, then faced her with a grim expression.

"We don't even know where we are. The wilderness is teeming with Nightmare Creatures. And I can't fight. How are we going to get to camp with me like that?"

Rain wasn't very concerned.

"What's the problem? Summon that Echo of yours, and let's ride it all the way back."

The young lady did not answer.

Her silence… was a little unnerving.

Rain frowned.

"Is there a problem?”

Tamar simply stared at her grimly for a bit, then said evenly:

"I can't summon my Echo."

Her words sent a chill running down Rain's spine. The giant wolf had been perfectly fine when they fell into the canyon... had it not? The two of them could easily survive the perilous journey with its help.

However, without the Echo, the situation would indeed be chillingly grim. Being lost in the wilderness of the Dream Realm with no tools and no weapons, with the sole Awakened warrior among the two of them suffering from heavy injuries... making it to the main camp in one piece seemed like a very distant possibility, to say the least.

Rain looked at Tamar, her frown deepening.

"Why? Was it destroyed?"

The young Legacy slowly shook her head.

"No, it's not destroyed."

Rain lingered for a moment, then rubbed her face tiredly.

"Then what's the problem?"

Tamar remained silent for a few seconds.

"The survey team is lacking a melee fighter now. Ray can do a lot of damage from stealth, but he is not well-suited for direct combat. Without that Echo, the team will suffer heavy casualties... if they can even make it back to the main camp. They won't have a way to cross the canyons, either. The mission will fail."

Rain stared at her incredulously.

After a while, she said:

"So... it's not that you can't summon the Echo. You won't summon the Echo. Because you would rather die than put the team - and your mission at risk."

Tamar nodded.

"That's right."

A strange smile appeared on Rain's lips.

"That is very noble of you, Lady Tamar. It's commendable that you have decided to die for your duty. But what about me? Isn't it a bit strange that you have also decided that I will die to uphold your duty? Doesn't seem very fair.”

The young Legacy frowned.

"Have you no loyalty? Those people are your comrades, and our mission is important for the future of the Song Domain. We... we must be ready to sacrifice for the greater good."

Rain laughed.

"Loyalty? I am sorry, Lady Tamar... I am a hired laborer, I get paid a pitiful amount of coins to carry rocks and do tedious chores. Am I supposed to die for the right to carry rocks or for the privilege to do chores? I've been only doing that to put food on my plate. The only thing I'm loyal to is my stomach."

Tamar glared at her with indignation, then took a deep breath and grew quiet.

Sprawling on the ground in exhaustion and clearly suffering from pain, she remained silent for a few moments, then sighed.

"...You're right. You are not a Legacy, or even a soldier. So, I can't expect you to understand. Still... I won't compromise the entire survey team for the sake of one member. I won't leave them without the protection of the Echo."

Rain sighed inwardly.

'Stubborn fool..’

Tamar, meanwhile, looked at her with a grave expression.

"But I also can't expect you to share my burden. So... leave me. Your legs are perfectly fine. You stand a chance of making it back alive without me. I've seen your skill - you are not defenseless. So, I'll... I'll give you a few of my Memories. You won't be able to use the enchantments, but they will still be helpful. If you are careful enough and lucky enough, you'll survive."

Rain studied her pale, determined face silently.

After a while, she asked in a neutral tone:

"So, that's your plan? To send me off and stay here, immobilized, to die on your own?"

Tamar raised her chin arrogantly.

"Who says I'll die? I'll crawl and find a good place to hide. In a week or two, the survey team will reach the main camp. Then... someone will come to find me. I just need to last for a while.”

Her tone was confident, but her words did not sound very convincing.

Rain did not say anything for a while, then massaged her temples with a grimace.

Eventually, she said:

"Fine. Don't summon your damned Echo. Instead, summon a rope. Or a cloak... something like that."

Tamar frowned in confusion.

"A... a rope? What for?"

Rain stood up and raised her hands above her head, stretching her body. She could feel strength returning to her limbs.

"Because I am going to drag you to the main camp Instead of that Echo. If I have to. You did save my life back in the canyon, after all. I might be a simple porter, but I'm not an ingrate... my mom taught me better."

She had decided to stay with Tamar

After all, there should not be a lot of difference between carrying rocks and carrying a slim Legacy girl...

They were going to make it back together, or not at all.