1828 Lost and Found

Rain made her way back to where Tamar was leaning on the spear, put the sword down, and sprawled tiredly in the mud.

Now that the Tyrant was dead, the rush of power she had felt because of the Awakening receded.

Her body might have been tempered and reforged, but it was still depleted and weary. Her mind, too. . . she was dead tired.

Some distance away, the abomination's corpse was laying on the ground like a small hill of flesh. The creature was dead, but its minions weren't — the monstrous hands were still moving, searching for the killer in blind fury. Luckily, they remained attached to the Tyrant's corpse, so their reach was limited. Until the corpse decomposed and fell apart, nothing would reach Rain and Tamar.

The movements of the terrible hands were a little panicked.

Looking at the sky, Rain let out a long sigh.

The storm was slowly dissipating. The wind had already grown weaker, and the rain was not as heavy anymore. The lightning did not strike as often. The roaring thunderclaps were not as loud, as if growing distant.

She could even see gaps in the veil of dark storm clouds.

Unexpectedly, rays of pale sunlight were pouring from through the gaps.

Which meant that it was the seventh day of their journey.

Rain stared at the rays of sunshine with displeasure.

‘How annoying.’

She had hoped that it was still the sixth night, just to avoid the Nightmare Spell's favorite number.

Rain had a mild aversion to the number seven, purely out of obstinance.

Tamar finally let go of her spear and fell back on her stretcher. The younger girl looked at her for a long time, her eyes full of questions.

But in the end, her exhaustion won, and she simply closed them.

Not long after, both Rain and Tamar were asleep, laying next to each other in the mud.

This was the first time in a long while they slept peacefully.

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By the time Rain woke up, the sky had cleared.

Strangely enough, she didn't feel groggy or exhausted. Her body did not ache all over, either.

Instead, it was brimming with energy and vitality.

The low hum of the Weeping Goddess enveloped the world like a lullaby.

She stared at the clear sky for a few moments in confusion.

‘Oh. Right. I'm an Awakened now.’

Sitting up, Rain glanced in the direction of the dead Tyrant. The forest of arms was still moving, but none of them had escaped the corpse, yet.

That was a relief.

Looking away, she raised her own hands and studied them.

Her skin had become smooth like silk. Her nails were like jade.

Turning her hands, she stared at her palms intently.

Her calluses were gone.

‘Huh.’

Rain blinked a couple of times.

Her hands looked soft and delicate, as if she had never done any hard labor at all.

It was a bit stupid, but she couldn't help letting a small smile creep up on her face.

‘Wait a minute. . . ’

Rain pulled off her dirty, tattered shirt and unclasped the military bodysuit. Peeling it off to reveal her fair torso, she opened her eyes wide.

The mark left by the blow that the Huntsman had dealt her was gone. A few other scars she had collected in the last few years were nowhere to be seen, either. Her skin was supple and unblemished, nearly flawless.

‘Wow. Ah! ’

While Rain was delighting in the sight of her ladylike body, a hoarse voice resounded from behind her:

"... What are you doing? "

She flinched and hurriedly pulled the bodysuit close, embarrassed at being caught doing something so unserious.

Turning around, she saw Tamar looking at her with a complicated expression.

‘Right.’

Rain smiled sheepishly.

"N—nothing. I was just. . . good morning, Tamar. “

The young Legacy remained silent for a while, maintaining her usual stern frown. She glanced at the sky, which was already being painted golden and scarlet by the setting sun, but did not comment on how wrong Rain's greeting was.

Eventually, she opened her mouth and asked hesitantly:

"Have you been. . . an Awakened all along, Rani? ”

Now that the deed had been done, Rain honestly wasn't sure how to deal with the situation. There had been no choice but to act when the Tyrant was about to catch them. . . but how was she supposed to explain its death to the young Legacy?

She wasn't even done processing what had happened herself.

Rain met Tamar's gaze and shook her head slowly.

"I think you know that I wasn't. If I was, I wouldn't have put myself through all that torment. “

There was hesitation in the younger girl's eyes.

She knew that Rain could not have been an

Awakened. . . and yet, there was no other logical explanation. Reality and reason were clashing in her mind, leaving her in a state of loss and confusion.

After a while, she said stiffly:

"Unless you have some kind of powerful Flaw that limits when and how you can express your power. . . that is possible. . . "

Rain wavered for a while, then sighed.

"No. I have no such Flaw. I wasn't hiding my Rank from anyone. ”

Tamar gritted her teeth.

“Then how were you able to wield my sword? How were you able to slay the Tyrant? It doesn't make any sense. It's impossible for a mundane person to do! "

Rain scratched the back of her head, remained silent for a few moments, and then shrugged.

"You are right. A mundane person would not have been able to wield your sword. . . well, maybe some huge guy. . . "

Tamar took a deep breath.

"Then how? "

Rain looked at her and smiled easily.

"Isn't it obvious? When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth. So. . . I wasn't Awakened before, but ] am now. “

She raised an arm and flexed her muscles.

"It really feels amazing, by the way! "

The young Legacy stared at her with a stunned expression.

"No. . . you couldn't have conquered the First Nightmare, there was no time. . . you couldn't have even challenged it within the Queen's Domain. . . "

Rain nodded.

"You are right. I did not conquer the First Nightmare. ”

Tamar took a deep breath.

“How could you Awaken, then?"

Now was probably the last chance for Rain to keep her mouth shut.

But really. . . did she have to?

She had a vague hope that Tamar would not betray her. More than that, she did not think that keeping her achievement secret was the right thing to do.

Since Rain had found a way to Awaken without becoming a carrier of the Nightmare Spell, others would be able to follow her example, as well — perhaps not many, but some.

Which meant that fewer children would have to die while challenging the Nightmare. Like her older brother had.

Many would still choose to accept the Spell, without a doubt, due to all the boons it offered.

But at least they would have a choice.

Conversely. . .

If she kept her accomplishment hidden, then in the future, the deaths of every unwilling Sleeper would indirectly be her fault.

Rain wasn't sure how or when she wanted to share her knowledge , but she knew that it had to be shared.

So, she gathered her courage and said:

"How did the ancient people of the Dream Realm Awakened? You should know that there was no Nightmare Spell back then. “

Tamar's eyes widened slowly. She reeled back, mumbling softly:

"Before. . . before the Nightmare Spell. . . impossible. . . the knowledge has been lost. . . "

Rain smiled.

"Yes, the knowledge has been lost. But now, it has been found. I found it. " ‘With a lot of help from my teacher. . . “