**Empty Eyes**

The mercenary looked away from the dead man, unable to hold the gaze of those empty eyes. The dead man had been many things, a holey man, a healor, a warrior.

The mercenary took a step back. The temple was grand, almost gaudy. The god that this place was dedicated to was not that of the dead man on the stone slab in the center of the room. With any luck, though, the god of this place would have the power for a miracle.

An old priest moved across the floor, his robes of treaded silver, and gold weighed upon his frail shoulders. He was nothing like the dead man. The dead man had been practical, open, caring little for wealth, or luxury. His armor bore the dents of countless close calls. It had been inevitable that the dead man’s luck would run out eventually.

The old priest beckoned. The mercenary hung back as the old man explained to the others that they would need to give an offering as part of the ritual. The mage gave a secret. The thief offered gold and valuables. When the old man asked for a third sacrifice. Nobody stepped forward.

The mercenary looked down at the body, at the long slash across it's throat. The mercenary pulled down the cloth that he wore across his face. He ran a finger across the long scar that traced its way across his own throat.

The dead man had been strange, nieve, annoying. The mercenary had never pretended to like him. He did, however, remember what he owed the man. He remembered the feeling of his life’s blood slicking his throat. He remembered the cold certainty that he was dying. He also remembered the warmth of the healers magic.

The mercenary had never pretended to like the dead man. He gritted his teeth and stepped forward. He looked down at the body, “holey man, healor, warrior… friend.” The mercenary's words were low and quite and true.

He stepped back. The light of magic filled the temple. It roiled and sworreled, then, with a flash, all was still. A moment later the healers eyes flicked open. The stillness broken, his breath returned. As it did, a streak of his hair bleached to white.

The mercenary let out a long breath, “I'm glad you're back,” he said. “You still owe me my pay for the week.”