The sound of crashing rocks and distant mumbling tore Faros from his sleep.

*Who can this be?* Faros asked himself *no one comes here, not even at midday, so in the middle of the night?*

Mira who was sleeping just next to Faros hadn’t noticed yet and was fast asleep. Faros got out from their makeshift bed, went to the ten’s wall and pressed his ear against it.

“Where is it? I can’t see anything in this darkness?” someone said in a man’s voice.

“Be quiet already {name}, it’s that sorry excuse of a tent at the bottom of this hill.” A different voice replied, also a man’s.

“Argh crap, we’ll have to go around and come from the riverside.” The first man said

“What’s all this commotion?” a third man said, but with a deeper voice full of authority.

“Sorry captain, it looks like we’ll have to take a detour to get down there.”

“Alright, let's get a move on.” The alleged captain said.

*Who are they?! What do they want with us? It can be good news…we have to get away from here.*

“Mira…Mira...MIRA!” he said right too her ear, trying to not be too loud.

“What, it’s the middle of the night.” She said in a sleepy voice.

“Wake up, get ready to leave”

“What? Way?”

“I heard people nearby, they are coming here, there’s no time for more explaining so get ready to leave.”

“What?! What could they want with us? We haven’t done anything wrong”

“We’ll have to find out later, but for now just put on your sandals and get ready to get out of here.”

*What do we take with us? There is no time to pack anything…*

With no much time to think Faros decided to take only the wallet. He run to it’s hiding place, while trying to find a balance between speed and quiet.

In the meanwhile, Mira already got her shoes on and started packing food into a small bag.

“Mira, don’t, we don’t have the time for this. We have to go now” he said to her after noticing what she was doing.

“Alright, now, you follow me ok? And try to not make any noise”

Together you went through the tent’s exit.

“Faros look!” Mira said in a scared voice. Faros also noticed it right away, a few shining spots of red light were in the not too far distance, moving in their direction.

“Mira, listen, let's run to {village name} and try to hide in the market until the morning and figure out what to do then, OK?”

“OK” she replied quietly

Faros just started walking when he stopped and look back at Mira, he saw a terrified little girl

“Hey, it’s going to be ok, trust your big brother.” He said with a reassuring voice, or at least he tried…

She replied with a small smile and a shake of her head in agreement and Faros smiled back at her.

Together, they managed to go a few hundred meters without any problem, but then all of a sudden a burst of light filled the dark desert.

They looked back towards their tent, but all they saw were blazing red flames, eating their home, slowly turning it into ash.

“NO!!” Mira screamed but Faros was quick and put his hand on her mouth.

“Mira! They could have heard you!”

“Brother” she said, tears running down her cheeks.

“our home…”, the way she looked at him when she spoke, it caused him physical pain to see his little sister like that.

It took him a while to find his words, but finally, he said “It…it’s going to be alright. We can start a new life again, just like last time when mom died, do you remember? You were only four when she passed away.”

She nodded. “we can move to {place name} or even {place name}, you can choose where ever you what. Does that sound good?”

“Yes” Mira said, Faros noticed she stopped crying.

He smiled at her, “Great, but for now, we have to keep moving”. Instead of saying anything, she just held his hand and together they started walking again.

Faros looked backwards frequently to check how far the men were from them. He grinned when he saw they went in a completely different direction.

“Mira, look.” He pointed at the little dots of light that were the men’s torches. “See, they have no clue where we are”.

“yes” she replied, “we are lucky that we know this area so good…”

After another half hour of walking, they saw {village name} at last.

“It took us longer than I expected. The sun is already beginning to shine and the market will open soon.”

“So, what do we do now then?” Mira asked.

“I…” *I don’t know*. *What do we even supposed to do now? It isn’t safe for us in {village name}, they probably have people looking for us here as well…*

“Faros?” she asked

“We have to get out of here” Faros finally said, “The Nile, let’s get to its other side. Maybe we’ll be safe there.”

They turned back and walked out of the village and started to go towards the river. They managed to go only a few hundred meters when they heard someone shouting at them.

“Hey you two, stop right there” Faros recognized the voice, it was one of the men from last night. He stood just outside the village and his group was next to him.

Faros and Mira started running to the river. *If we can make it into the water maybe they won’t follow us…* “Mira, jump straight to the water and swim to the next side!”. She didn’t respond, maybe she didn’t have any air to spear for speaking.

Faros and Mira run as fast as they could when Faros hit a rock on the floor and fell to the ground.

“Faros!” Mira said. She stopped running and turned back to her brother.

“What are you doing Mira?! RUN” the man were closing in on them and the river was just ahead.

She didn’t listen and run to help him get up.

“Argh my ankle, I think I twisted it. You will have to go on without me.”

“No way! I am not going to…” they were too late.

The men caught up on them, there were about twenty men.

It was the first time Faros and Mira actually saw them up close. All of them were dressed in short brown leather pants, some wore white cotton shirt and some wore no shirt at all, but all of them held a long spear with a deadly edge.

“We got you now, you little pricks. You thought you got us last night uh? Did you really think we won’t find you?” Said the guard who spotted them a few minutes ago.

The men surrounded them, creating a circle of blades threatening to attack anyone who dared to move.

One of the guards stepped forward, he was probably the captain. He was a tall man with dark brown skin, clean-shaven face and a posture of a wall. Also, he was the only one who wielded a sword instead of a spear.

"my name is captain {captain name}. I and my team were sent on behalf of the palace to take you in." captain {captain name} explained.

"What?! Why? What do you want from me?" Faros asked, "I didn't do anything wrong!"

"safe all of that for your court hearing…" the captain said.

*A court hearing? Buy why? What could they have on me? Is it the robbing? No, it can't be…I always make sure no one sees me and no one ever did!*

{captain name} looked at one of the guards and then pointed with his head towards Faros, "Take him to the palace and inform chief Golar".

"Right away captain" the man responded and approached Faros with his spear held high.

He got behind Faros, who still lied on the floor and pocked him in the shoulder with his spear and yelled "move it". Faros granted in pain and stood up.

"What do you think you are doing? Where are you taking him?" Mira asked helplessly

"Quiet kid!" the guard snapped at her and struck her in the chest with the back end of his spear.

"Mira!" Faros cried, he then looked at the guard "What the hell do you think you are doing?!" Faros lashed out. He pushed the guard who had his back against him, made a fist in his right arm and was about to strike him in the head. When he himself felt a brutal strike to the back of his head, it was captain {captain name} who hit him with the back of his sword.

In an instant, the light in his eyes went off and sparkling dots appeared in his mind.

He just managed to hear Mira calling out his name, without knowing how he got there, he found himself on the dusty ground, slowly losing consciousness.