

To be perfectly honest with myself... I don't really like formal meetings where it's just members of my species discussing trivial things. I prefer the meetings where we can discuss important things, like finding a way to save my people from destruction caused by the planet we live on.

And that was the thing that was confusing me for a while. We have anomalies ravaging our lands, mutants and other hostile spawn caused by those... Not to even mention in detail in how many ways our planet wants to kill us.

Considering those threats, we should all team up and find a way to solve that, right? I think so. However, many wealthy koz'venn prefer to spend money doing some unnecessary things that only deepens the divide in my species.

I realized long ago that even with my title, I can't change the thinking of all of my species. Some may follow my example I established by becoming the loremaster and by things I experienced and saved in my book. Not all of them, sadly.

Not to even mention other races living on this planet. The earliest wars really worsened the relations we all had with one another. And with a heavy heart I must say that us being neutral with everyone else is the best outcome we can have.

Eh... Enough of writing this self-inflicted misery. I was on the way to the certain mansion of some wealthy man in the capital of one of our provinces. It's vague, I know. Those details aren't needed. What matters is what was happening at that meeting.

As all koz'venn there will be dressed more formally, I knew I had to find something more fitting. The part of me was saying that my usual robes would fit there quite nicely, but I still decided to wear something more appropriate.

Nonetheless, I wanted something in my style. And I found something like that. It was called kuntush. I got a dark green one and it was a bit shiny. I rolled up my sleeves below of my elbows. And I was feeling quite comfortable wearing.

Apart from it having some form of shine, it was just a plain kuntush. No intricate patterns, no expensive additions, no label that it was made by a famous tailor. Just a simple piece of clothing, for a simple man.

Yes, I still consider myself a simple man. I may be Ascended, I may have the title of loremaster, but I don't think anyone should worship. I appreciate the respect and help, but those saying that would do anything for me, even if I don't know them? That's honestly sad.

But if someone really would just randomly come to me, saying they would do anything for me, I'd just tell them that they should go out and help their fellow koz'venn, be a better person. Not everyone must be a hero, but they can still be someone's support.

I digress, again... I got to the mansion. Since I was in the part of Hegemony where there was a lot more water, it's usually expected that the buildings would be more colorful. And it was like that in this case.

The guard, bolar-mosvar zmezha, as I identified him, asked me for an invitation. I reached inside my kuntush and grabbed a folded piece of paper. He read through it rather quickly, after which he returned it to me, wishing me fun there.

I passed the guard and was going to the mansion proper. The door was open and even from the outside, I could see that the interior's color palette was toned down, but I could safely say that it was still done in a skillful way.

"Aqadus Zoryan," the chamberlain said loudly. "The loremaster of Koz'myr."

I nodded towards the chamberlain, which he quickly joined me and led me to the main hall of the mansion, where most of this banquet was supposed to take place. One thing I could immediately notice that it was big.

Mostly white room with warmer colors mixed in the specific places really help with tasteful composition. The furniture helped with that too. All of them looked well-made, but more importantly, they looked quite soft.

However, the most important things for me were the tables. Or rather the contents on them. Various kinds of food pieces, prepared dishes, some appetizers, as well as desserts. And there were drinks. Water and wine mostly.

"Ah, master Aqadus..."

I turned my gaze towards the source of that voice. That source happened to be a tall mosvar, having his body in pristine condition. He was wearing a combination of a suit and a robe, while he could still move freely. I recognized he was the owner of that mansion.

"Welcome, master Aqadus." The wealthy man simply nodded in my direction.

"Lord Lerg Krazgyn," I replied in a calm tone, while placing my right hand on my chest, bowing slightly. "Greetings."

"With all respect, master..." Mosvar continued the conversation. "But I did not expect you to be a zmezha. Not that this is some kind of problem... However, I want to ask... Which subspecies are you a mix of?"

"All," I stated with a calm tone.

"Interesting..." Lord Krazgyn placed his hand under his beak. "I have met many kinds of koz'venn, but seeing someone like you... Nevermind. I invited you, since I was curious about you. For several reasons."

"One of which revolves around me being the loremaster, I assume," I replied to that information.

"Indeed." Mosvar nodded. "Can you tell me something interesting?"

"As Your Lordship probably have heard, there was unnatural frost wave that could destroy Bolar province," I started saying a thing related to my loremaster journey. "It was not some spell, nature's call or even an anomaly. It was a living being. A being that was imprisoned within a sword, thus creating a powerful artifact."

"Seriously?" The lord was quite surprised. "Interesting thing, indeed. I would love to hear more of those, but probably later, when the banquet will be slowly coming to an end."

"From what I see, it did not start yet," I stated, as I looked around the main hall.

"You have arrived quite early," the mansion's owner responded. "There are only a couple of guests as of now. More will come later. I hope you will enjoy your stay here, master Aqadus."

We both bowed slightly towards one another, after which lord Krazgyn went towards the side hall, most likely to attend to his other duties and make sure the banquet that he was organizing will go smoothly.

I went to the tables and looked at the dishes on them. I saw a few types of krazkona, one featuring more meat, of different kinds, while the other had more nuts in them. However, I opted for a grilled shashlik, which I started to consume slowly carrying it in my left hand.

"Greetings, mister," garra koz'venn said, while going towards me.

"Welcome," I replied, putting shashlik aside, after which we grabbed each other's forearms. "Who do I have the pleasure of speaking with?"

"Zadar Kvairin," garra introduced himself. "Engineer from the governor line of our capital."

"I have heard about you," I stated looking at his attire that looked like a long shirt with some traits of an apron. "I saw "Kvairin Spires" that were placed near Garra-Bolar border. Very beautiful and also functional, considering they power a considerable part of Koz'myr."

"I am glad I met someone who appreciates my work." Zadar smiled slightly. "Who are you, mister?"

"Aqadus Zoryan," I replied with a confidence in my voice.

"The loremaster?" The engineer was a bit shocked. "Huh... I sometimes hear about you. Or rather I hear about you often, since my wife likes to talk about your book. For her, it is best book that she ever read in her life."

"I am glad to hear that," I said with a wide smile.

"I actually have her copy right here," garra pulled out a copy of the book called "Ravenous Planet", which is the one I had written. "I... or rather my wife would be really happy, if you could sign this copy for her."

"Alright." I grabbed the book from Zadar's hand and pulled out my fountain pen from insides of my kuntush. "What is your wife's name?"

"Brava."

I opened the cover of "Ravenous Planet", seeing that it was kept in great condition. I decided to write a message on the cover's insides with text "For my beloved fan, Brava Kvairin. ~ Aqadus Zoryan, the loremaster of Koz'myr." I passed the book to garra, while hiding back my pen.

"Fantastic," Zadar said happily. "Thank you. We can talk later. I must get something to eat now, though."

I nodded and let the engineer go, so he could look at the tables. Meanwhile, I grabbed my shashlik and went towards the other part of the hall, which also had food tables. I was staying there for some time.

With each passing minute, more people were appearing inside the hall. I was trying different dishes and looking at koz'venn of all subspecies talking with one another. I felt a bit left out, since I didn't really have close friends in such social sphere.

However, I noticed a woman approaching me. Warm-colored coverage, four horns on her head... she was a mosvar. She was dressed in matte green long dress that was going along her body, which was shaped quite nicely in my opinion.

"Master Aqadus?" The woman asked, a bit shocked. "Here?"

"At least some recognized me," I chuckled.

"Tahrye Venena." Mosvar lady introduced herself. "Senior archaeologist at Mosvar Archaeology & Searching Society."

"I heard there is a mass of people there," I laughed and she was laughing with me for a moment.

"Yeah..." Tahrye sighed, with a smile on her face. "I wanted to contact you, actually. It seems, however, that reaching you is quite hard."

"As is the case with other koz'venn that are similar to me." I shrugged. "I suspect you wanted to talk to me not because you wanted to check how am I doing."

"True..." The archaeologist chuckled. "I read your book, "Ravenous Planet". A few times, actually. It was really helpful with finding some lost settlements and artifacts. However, we both know you did not include all things you saw in that book."

"Of course." I nodded slightly. "I did that mainly to not include sensitive details about people in the team I was a part of."

"Which is understandable," Tahrye commented. "Would you like to do some interview about things that may help me with finding more lost things?"

"Sure."

"Splendid!" She was really enthusiastic. "I want to talk to a few koz'venn here before that, though. But after that, we can go to some private room and discuss those things."

"Alright."

Tahrye was going away from me, sending me a specific look. Judging by her expression, I wasn't certain if the interview was the only thing she wanted to do. For that moment, though, I was enjoying the atmosphere. And some homemade bread that I was eating.