

Bar Fight

Come now, didn't you say we'll need to find work here soon? So what's the harm of buying something useful now when we'll make it back later? Mortimer said, as if nothing was wrong.

You...are you really that stupid?! I'm not sure how long it'll take for us to make this back, and by then what will we do?! We still have need of supplies for our trip to Hedge Holt and not to mention the inn, yet you think it's more useful to buy leather armor? Have you gone brain-dead?!

Mortimer snorted and ignored the comment, which only made Noah want to find the closest hole and bury the dragon in it. “Good, good. I’ll take your measurements now and get to work on your wear. It’ll take about two days to finish, but due to your business I’ll throw in a pair of pants for you to wear till then.”

“You’re a good man Mr. Toto.” Mortimer slapped him on the shoulder.

“Wait, two days?” Noah ears dropped.

Mr. Toto tilted his head over at Noah. “That’s the fastest I can make one. Is that a problem?”

Of course there is! That means two nights at an inn!

Mortimer stepped in front of Noah, blocking Mr. Toto’s view of him. “Not at all. That’ll do fine. Though, how do you want to get my measurements?”

“Yes, let’s go in the back and I’ll also give you your pants. Lad, you stay here.” Mr. Toto said and walked away.

“Mortimer…” Noah said, couldn’t hold back his growl.

Smiling innocently back at him, Mortimer’s tail brushed against Noah’s leg before following after Mr. Toto. “Be back, pup.”

I’m going to kill you! Noah clenched his fist and forced himself to sit down on a chair by the door. This was a disaster. They were only supposed to come into town, grab pants and potentially a shirt, then gather up supplies and sleep at an inn. Not spend almost half of their funds on a blasted leather armor from an old man, and then most likely the rest of their funds on the inn!

Noah ran his nails through his head fur. *Maybe we could sleep one night at the inn and the other outside?* Noah sighed and his head dropped. That wasn’t going to work out at all. He already knew Mortimer well enough that the moment he mentions outside he’d put up a fight since he been wanting to experience sleeping somewhere warm for a change.

That dragon is truly like a curse, one that was specifically made to drive Noah insane. Yet, there was no helping it now. The damn dragon had already closed the deal and he wasn’t up for making a fool out of himself two times in the same day.

If anything, he should be planning out their next move. Another reason for them coming to this town wasn’t just to gather supplies and a warm bed, but to get more information. Noah crossed his leg and slipped the map of Pangea from his travel pack. The map held a treasure of information that his mother had written down during her journey through Haven. It was large

enough to cover an entire table and then some, and held a plethora of notes and markings, most of which listed safe zones, magic points, and danger areas.

Which would be amazing, if the map wasn't over twenty years old.

Noah's brows furrowed as his fingers traced the outline territory of the Starry Peak Providence, where they were currently located. Too many things could have changed since his mom had settled in Crescent Lake. Most of her markings depicted territories that hosted old and powerful mystics. Since older, more powerful Mystics are more territorial, Noah wasn't worried about any information regarding them to be incorrect.

It was anything dealing with the Church or Nightwalkers that had him worried.

Looking over Starry Peak, he couldn't help but remember how Owen had always told him that it was considered a backwater section of Haven. It was the third largest province out of the eight, but the bulk of it was made up of The Wilds. Thousands of miles of forest, mountains, and plains were found in the Starry Peak Providence, making it well-known for the hunters it produced.

It also made it well-known for the Mystics that resided within.

His mom had told him that Crescent Lake was like a miniature paradise within The Wilds. The fact that there were little to no mystics surrounding the mountain village was a miracle on its own, which would explain why Mrs. Porker and the guard were completely disrespectful. Since beastmen and Mystics were born from Pangea it made sense to harrase the party who can't harm them.

He glanced at the area where the town was located. They were a few hundred miles south from the border of Sanctuary, which the capital resided in. Both the royal family of Haven and

the high officials of the Church made their home there. It was considered the safest area for humans to live in Haven since all seven provinces surrounded Sanctuary.

Mrs. Porker's words echoed through his mind, and it caused his ears to drop. A Spellcaster and a beastman would be a perfect target for the stakes, and Noah wasn't enjoying the thought of cooked husky over an open fire. They really needed to get more information about the local towns in the area. He needed to know which had churches and Nightwalkers. The last thing he needed was Paladins chasing after him or being shot at by a Nightwalker.

Noah tapped a section of the map where a trail of mountains lined from one end of the continent to the other: Pangea's Spine. It was the border line between Haven and Hedge Holt, where they were currently heading.. It lay several thousand miles to the west within the Cold Creek Province. The distance alone on horse would take almost a year to reach. That didn't take into consideration of food, inn expense, food for the horse, grooming, and all the other implications!

At best we won't reach Cold Creek for a year and a half.... Especially with our money situation as is. Augh! Why in the hell did I even let Mortimer open his mouth? By the gods, why did he not take the badger up on her offer before? Why couldn't he see that she was trying to tell him that Mossely was filled with bigoted assholes that hated their kind? Surely he would have taken her up on her offer then. Now he was stuck sitting out in an armor shop, and wanting to strangle that damn dragon.

Noah's ears shot up and he glared as the door open to the back. "Those should do for awhile. I'll have another pair of pants made along with your armor," Mr. Toto said as he walked out.

Getting to his feet, Noah's gaze softened as he watched Mortimer walk out. Although he didn't have a shirt yet, Mr. Toto wasn't completely stingy. He had given Mortimer some slacks to wear, and although they looked a bit tight it was a big improvement from the loin cloth. "You know you didn't have to do that, you old geezer."

"Nonsense, it's been ages since I actually had any business and even longer since I had a good haggling. It's the least I can do." Mr. Toto smiled at Mortimer. "Just make sure you come back in two days, you got it?"

"Will do. Though are you sure you don't want us to pay you now?"

"Absolutely not. I only accept payment for when the work is done and you're satisfied with it." Mr. Toto's face hardened as he crossed his arms at Mortimer.

Noah could sense a ripple of contentment flowing into him from Mortimer. Not that he could blame him; outside of Owen, he had not met someone like Mr. Toto that was so serious about their craft. It made giving up forty-two copper a bit more tolerable, at least.

"Then we'll be back on Friday, Mr. Toto," Noah said while wrapping up the map and slipping it into his travel pack.

"Okay. Now both of you head off, I've got work to do!" Mr. Toto walked to the back without a second glance.

"Well he's a pretty easygoing old man," Mortimer said, smiling down at Noah.

The fur on the nape of Noah's neck stood up as he smiled over to Mortimer, making the dragon flinch. "You better have a damn good reason for splurging our money like that."

"Don't worry, I'll make it up to you pup."

Hell yeah, you are. Noah thought to himself after barricading his mind from Mortimer.

“Whatever, let’s find an Inn already before I change my mind.”

“Actually I already have one in mind!”

Noah stopped right at the door and looked at Mortimer with ears perked. “Excuse me?”

The dragon gave him a lazy smirk. “Mr. Toto actually recommended a spot that would give us a good deal if we mention his name. It’s called Moonless Night Inn.”

Noah could feel his muzzle scrunch up at the mention of a *deal* coming from Mortimer’s mouth. Obviously seeing the distrust in Noah’s expression, Mortimer shrugged helplessly. “At least it’s worth a shot. We don’t have to stay if you don’t want to.”

Clicking his tongue against the roof of his mouth, Noah shoved open the door of the shop. “Fine. Let’s take a look at this Inn.” Hopefully he didn’t have to worry about being screwed again.