

Essence of Time - The Forgotten Journey

Von Deamond

Kapitel 27:

Chapter 27

A mild breeze blew through the streets of Menel as Narwa AINU walked slowly through Asgard's capital city. The angels and valkyries on the street greeted her respectfully as she made her way to the Tower of Eternity.

"Mom, you are back!!" A familiar voice reached Narwa's ear as a freckled god with golden hair tripped while running towards her.

"Ifrit!" Narwa chuckled and walked up to him. "Are you alright?" She offered her son a hand, smiling happily.

"Mom, what is wrong? You look so satisfied?" The man grinned sheepishly while patting off the dust. "Dad wanted to talk with you as soon as you are back!"

"Clarion?" Narwa sighed. "Alright... I will visit Ariia then I will go to him afterwards. Can you tell him this?" She smiled friendly and patted her boy.

"Okay!" Ifrit smiled and hugged his mother. "But promise me to tell me next time when you are making vacations! I want to come with you next time!" He grinned and walked ahead towards the Tower of Eternity.

Narwa waited for a few seconds before following him. 'This is, why I can't tell you, dear...' She sighed mentally and flew off towards Ariia's floor.

"Now this is interesting!" A child-like goddess with white-black skin and dark eyes stared into a crystal ball. Her childish body floated in midair in a room filled with giant snow-white crystals.

"Ariia? May I come in?" A female voice rang through the giant silver entrance-door that led to the other rooms of the crystal-goddess's floor.

"Of course." The black hair flew around playfully as Ariia placed her crystal-ball on the ground.

"How are you doing?" Narwa entered the room, a friendly smile on her lips. Ariia's eyes doubled in size as she spotted her friend. She flew over to her hugging her friend tightly.

"Narwa, you are back! You just have to tell me anything from your trip!" The little goddess smiled brightly and led the white goddess to another room.

"How about you tell me first what you saw so I don't have to bore you." Narwa grinned and patted the kid-goddess. Ariia giggled sheepishly.

"My visions are blurred. I can't really tell what is going on on Midgard..." She sat down on a seat, taking a glass of water from a small table in front of her.

"I see." Narwa sat down next to her friend, filling a second glass with water from a can on the table. "Have you seen who is involved in this?"

"No, I wasn't able to find out who is responsible for Midgard's conditions so far... But I know that the seal—"

"I meant who is traveling along with the 'van Tirith-clan-member'." Narwa laughed, taking a nib from her glass while relaxing in her seat.

"Oh... uhm, no I haven't seen anything like this... But the seal that holds down the Spirits is located in the center of Midgard. I hope this will help somehow..." Ariia lowered her head... "I wish I was able to control my visions any better..."

"Well... It seems the Grozen-family has entered the fight over Midgard's future as well." Narwa's eyes turned soft for a short moment. "Zeyir Grozen is amongst the companions of Allen van Tirith. Oh yes..." She grit her teeth and shot Ariia an angry glare. "It was Allen van Tirith... not Alena Vantrith or whatever..."

"Oh..." Ariia chuckled. "But... isn't this a risk? Letting a demon from Utgard join this journey... Maybe we should get rid of him!"

"No I don't think so." Narwa smiled warmly. "Zeyir is a demon, yes, but I think deep inside he is a good person. I trust him."

"Narwa." Ariia rose an eyebrow. "I know you disgust the simple contrasts of Gods being good and Demons evil, but... trusting one?"

"Ariia, in my 700 years of life I learned that sometimes we have to ignore the things we learned just to make our own experiences. I haven't met a single demon so far that didn't have someone they cared for. A demon without friends, companions, goals,... It is easy to lose sight of moral and good intentions if you are lurking in the dark without seeing the light... Besides... We always treat the demons like creatures... maybe, if you are treated long enough like one, you start acting like a monster..."

"..." Ariia bit her lip. "Maybe you are right... so what should we do next?"

"I hoped you were able to tell me... I was a little too late, so Allen already had a lot of Mana from Sol and Luna inside him when he got the amulet... He is too weakened to take on all 8 pacts at the time being..." Narwa's voice became serious at the subject. "I guess it is best if I return to Midgard and see whatever I can do for them. Allen will have to take on the Great Spirits one after another... Otherwise his Mana will collapse and all our hope has turned to dust."

"Just answer me one last question, my friend... Is it true what they say about Midgard? The place where light meets darkness..."

"Yes..." Narwa smiled. "I never felt so alive before." And with these last words, Narwa stood up and left her friend behind.

Yaaaaaaaawn Zeyir sat on a tree-stump, watching Callo and Shade playing a game of tactics... He was totally beaten from the long journey on the riverside... It was their fourth day and still no signs of life... Slowly the demon started to question his idea of following the river...

"An old saying on Midgard is that if you yawn without holding a hand in front of your mouth, the dark spirits of Utgard can enter your body..." Allen chuckled, watching the demon getting annoyed by the fact Callo seemed to beat Shade in this game... "But considering the fact you are from Utgard I guess you won't listen to such childish stuff, huh?"

"..." Zeyir rose an eyebrow while glaring at Allen confused.

"Just forget about it. You just will get headaches again, Zeyir..." Callo looked up from his game as he played out the last card, defeating Shade with high flags.

"Haha, how funny..." The demon rolled his eyes, standing up from his 'seat'. "How about we travel on? I desperately need a warm bath... and therefore I need a DAMN town in this DAMN forest!!" Zeyir growled with such a dangerous voice, even Callo got a chill for a short second. "Come on, better we find a monster I can let my frustration out on before I use one of you guys..."

"Now this would be interesting... How about a training-match?" Callo's eyes gleamed with eager at the thought of a worthy opponent...

"Guys, we better don't... fight against each other." Allen grew nervous at the thought though... "We don't have a healer any longer so if you need to get rid of your hormones, go and play tag with some monsters around!"

"..." Callo lowered his head disappointed and hopped up, drawing out his swords. "Alright, then let's go!"

"Here, don't you want to take a cup of tea, dear?"

"I'm not your 'dear' any longer, Clarion." Narwa sighed and looked up from her chair at her former mate. "You wanted to talk with me?"

"Yes..." The brown haired, freckled god sighed deeply at the cold tone of the white goddess. "I wanted to ask where you were all these months? We haven't seen you around Menel for rather long."

"Is this going to be some twisted kind of examination?" Narwa sighed and leaned back. "It is none of your concern but... I searched for new runes and books about healing plants."

"..." Clarion eyed her curiously. "Narwa... When did I make you angry at me?"

"You are still trying to get me back. We are divorced for over 300 years, and you still act like the jealous boy-friend from when we were children!"

"But-"

"No buts! You have even asked my father about where I am, ain't I correct?" Narwa crossed her arms angrily.

"Well, I thought you were at his place... maybe..."

"I haven't even talked with Bel'Zath since nearly 50 years. Just stop spying on me already!" Narwa hissed, leaving the realm of the firegod.

"Mad?" A deep male voice reached her ears from not too far. As Narwa turned around she faced a tall god with black hair and a violet gem attached on his forehead. Next to him stood another god with just the same cold eyes and white hair. The god wore a white armor that even covered parts of his wings.

"Yarna, Marduck." Narwa whipped some silver hairs out of her face. "Not really... I just don't want others to stalk me all the time..."

"Then you should talk some serious words with your friend Ariia!" Yarna laughed and patted the goddess. "We are going to get ourselves a drink. Do you want to join us?"

"Yeah, we want to celebrate!" Marduck grinned eagerly and rubbed his ankles.

"And what exactly is the reason for you to celebrate?" Narwa bit her lip suspiciously... Marduck and Yarna weren't the kinds of person that just go out and enjoy themselves... They were veterans, used to fight in battles against Utgard... Their whole loyalty belonged to Asgard... Did they manage to capture a famous demon-general or just win a battle...?

"Well, let's just say a wonderful plan seems to work out fluently." Marduck grinned and walked on, taking Narwa's arm in a buddy-like manner. "How about it? I invite you to a drink!"

"T...thanks, Marduck, but I have to reject... I need to prepare another journey of mine." Narwa smiled innocently. She liked Marduck. He was a kindhearted person that always did whatever was necessary to keep the people of Asgard safe... Yarna however was a little too radical for Narwa's taste... When she freed their 'demon-prisoner' fifteen years ago, Yarna almost bursted out in fury about the letting a chance of gaining control over Galdor go...

"A journey?" Yarna scratched his arm while staring at the goddess blankly. "Searching for new runes and plants again?"

"Yes, something like this." She smiled and turned around. "I wish you fun with your little party. I will join you another time."

"I take this as promise, Narwa!" Marduck cheered and swung his arm around Yarna.

"That was fun!" Zeyir chirped as he just cleaned his claws from a rather bloody monster-fight... Callo and Allen just gulped at the sight and fastened their unused weapons on their belts again.

"Uh... yeah... sure..." Allen tried to smile but it didn't really turn out the way he wanted. In the meanwhile Zeyir already licked his claws, receiving a weird glare from the summoner and a smack from Callo...

"You are such a girl..." Callo sighed.

"Huh? What makes me a girl if I kill monsters and lick my claws?! That's what demons are doing!" Zeyir rubbed the spot, Callo hit before.

"Well..." Callo thought for a second. "I have no clue, but I couldn't think of anything better at the moment." The tan man started chuckling, unable to suppress the urge to laugh at his own mistake.

"Howev—" Zeyir was interrupted by two nimcats, black catlike monsters with two tails, walking through the bushes close to them. "Alright, the big one is mine!" Zeyir started running after one of the monsters as they started running into two different directions.

"Then the other one is mine!" Callo grinned and rushed after the other one.

Allen stood in the middle of the forest, blinking confused. "Guys, they didn't do anything!!" He talked to no one in particular as his companions were gone already... "I feel like a baby-sitter..." Allen gasped while sprinting after Zeyir.

"Oh come on!" Callo looked around. "This can't be happening!?" He had lost sight of the monster. If Zeyir managed to catch his nimcat, he would tease him with this for the rest of his nearly eternal life... He turned around, looking for the others, but Allen probably followed Zeyir... A wise decision... Somehow the demon acted strange ever

since they had separated from Raven and Narwa...

"Shade?"

"Yupp, here I am!" The little spirit appeared on Callo's shoulder leaning against his head playfully.

"Hey, don't forget about me!" Steel appeared, floating above them, grinning wildly. "Anyway, how are we going to get back to the others?"

"Good question..." Callo sighed. It would be best to get back to the river. "Steel, can you try finding Allen and Zeyir for me? I will make my way back to the river we were before." The river seemed like a good idea to Callo... This was the only orientation they had in the deep forest... As the tan elf slowly walked on, voices reached his keen ears... But it wasn't the voices of his companions.

"Maybe these people know where a nearby town is!" Shade whispered eagerly.

"Yes, but as long as we don't know who it is, we better remain quite..." Callo tried his best to not gain the attention of whoever was there on the riverside.

"No! I don't want to!"

"B... but I defeated you! I proved my worth to form a pact with you!"

"But I don't want to form a pact!"

"I can't return without a spirit-pact and I met all the conditions!" A male elf with dark green hair and a bow in hand stood in front of the river talking with someone Callo couldn't see properly. The only thing he could guess out of the conversation was, that the second person was a spirit...

"B...but..." The female voice was almost crying.

"I need this pact!" The elf rose his voice more and more.

"..." The spirit kept sobbing. Now Callo was able to finally catch a view on the female spirit... It was a small waterspirit with golden hair bound to two long ponytails. Her body reminded more of a mermaid than an actual woman and her size was about the same as Shade's and Steel's.

"I demand this pact!" The man seemed outraged by the fact the little spirit denied him her powers...

"She doesn't want to form a pact with you!" Callo stepped out of the bushes, his rapiers in hand just in case... "Why don't you go and hug some trees instead?"

"WHAT!?" The elf blinked first confused then blinded by rage. His blue eyes shimmered dangerously. "Why don't you go back into your desert and count dust-

corns!?"

"Hehe..." Shade floated above Callo, amusing herself about the deep hatred between the forest-elf and the desert-elf... "Alright, before you kill each other by throwing flowers and cactuses at each other, maybe we ask the little spirit what she wants!" She smiled and sat down on her master's shoulder, leaning against Callo.

"Good idea indeed!" Callo grinned evilly, tightening the grip on his beloved weapons...

"Hmpf!" The elf bit his lip, not turning his gaze from the stranger. "I wonder what a desert-elf is doing here in the deepest woods... Shouldn't you try to crop dust out in the sands?"

"And you should sit in your tree-house writing poems, but let's not change subject." Callo walked over to the small spirit, smiling softly. "You are free to go."

"Thank you!" The little spirit's eyes sparkled with happiness. She looked at her savior with dream gazed eyes as she disappeared in a splash of water.

"Hey! Stop!!" The elf rushed forward, but the little spirit was already gone. "I need that pact!!"

"A pact with a spirit is formed by sharing each other's Mana. This is a sign of deep trust and respect, so both, pact-maker as well as spirit, should feel comfortable with it." Callo's eyes sparkled dangerously. His faith in the deep bonds between spirits and their masters was the only thing he hadn't left behind in the desert he once called home...

"I don't need a lesson from you, desert-elf!" The green haired man bit his lip angrily.

"My name is Callo Moerbin, not desert-elf!" The tan man turned, weapons still in hands. "And if you ever dare forcing a spirit to form a pact again, I will hunt you down, so better remember this name!"

The young man gulped. He tightened the grip on his bow, ready to defend himself.

"Callo! Hey!! So there you are!" Zeyir's voice echoed through the trees. Both men turned around towards the source of the voice. The young demon rushed through the bushes, followed by Allen and Steel. "My cat got away... those beasts are fast as—" He stopped as he noticed the forest-elf close to Callo. "Hey! What are you doing?!" The demon's claws were ready to fight if the elf dared shooting an arrow at his companion. The elf looked from Callo to Zeyir and back to the tan elf. He decided it wasn't wise to fight 3 travelers at once, so he ran away into the deep woods.

"Wow, that was strange!" Allen blinked while walking towards his companion.

"Don't worry a-- ... Oh wait... Dammed, I wanted to ask him where the next town was!" Callo hit his forehead with his flat hand while realizing he had just let the only hope for a quick journey getting away...

"You are a little slow today... You sure you don't get a cold?" Zeyir grinned widely.

"I used to live in a desert. I can't understand what you like in this cold out here! I'm freezing!" Callo shook his head. "Of course not! I'm a moonguard! I'm out in the desert during night most of the time. I'm used to worse than this!"

"May I correct you? You were a moonguard." Zeyir lolled out his tongue while refreshing himself on the cold water.

"How about another break?" Allen smiled, changing subject before any of his companions got the chance, ripping the other's head off...

"Sounds fair enough!" Shade flew right into Callo's chest, causing him to fall down to the ground. Giggling she sat down on the confused elf's lab.

"Tse, thanks Shade..." Callo rolled his eyes, patting the spirit playfully.

From afar, a small creature kept watching the team, staring at Shade with angry eyes.

"Just so you wait..."