

Epics of Isavoire

Chapter 11: The Magicborn

The war with the Echelon was one of the longest running and most brutal wars in Isavoire, having lasted for hundreds of years, and all in secret. The dark, dank cave in which Noameve rested now was lit by fire and luminescent stones, while the magical beings known as Qualarin tried their best to recover before their next battle.

Noameve contented herself by creating shapes of light with her magic and making the fire dance, a pastime that she found enjoyable. It was in moments like this that she could truly enjoy her magical skills and use them for personal amusement, rather than for the destruction of other Qalairn.

“Noameve, we need to get ready for the Echelon’s next attack.” One of Noameve’s allies said.

“Please, Baydal. Those old buzzards wouldn’t dare attack us now. We’re too close to a populated city.”

“And if they decide to?” Baydal asked, his arms folded. He was a rather muscular, fatherly man. Noameve considered him the closest thing to family, and possibly even the greatest reason the Reclaimers had stayed active during their centuries of war. He was a firm believer that all Magicborn should be allies, whether they were Qalairn, witches, or other gifted practitioners.

“The Echelon has operated the same way for a millennia, you said so yourself. They’re too scared some other race will get wind of them so they stay to the shadows. Honestly, I don’t see why we don’t ask one of the bigger countries to support our cause. It would go a long way to ending this battle.”

“Because, we can’t afford to be beholden to any other group. It’s a lesson se should learn from our forefathers.”

“You’d think people would change after a few thousand years. Maybe we should just consider changing how we do things.”

“We will, Noa, but first we have to take care of ourselves.” Baydal smiled softly. “Speaking of, perhaps tonight you can go to town. We need to get some new books for the children to read anyway.”

“Sure. It’ll be my pleasure.” Noameve smirked, showing off her sharp fangs.

With a small chuckle, Baydal left. Afterwards, Noameve continued to practice her magic and visit her fellow Qalairn. It took hours, but eventually night came, and Noameve was free to go into the small town.

Walking quietly and calmly, she didn’t realize that the whole square was empty. Typically, a beggar could be found, or at least a few travellers in the night. It wasn’t even that late, as dusk had just fallen.

There was silence... Then the jingling of bells... Then, Noaveme felt a stunning chill run up her spine. Instantly, she faded into shadow, just as a knife was almost plunged into her back. Moving back, she avoided the damage and faced the enemy.

It appeared to be a harlequin, dressed in purple, green and black. The entertainer stood absolutely still, as if a statue, but Noaveme noticed the gold knife in his hand.

“Who are you?”

The figure was silent.

“Are you deaf? Answer me.”

They only moved their head slightly, bells ringing and another knife appearing in their other hand, coming from their sleeve.

“An enemy, huh? Kind of flamboyant, but I can dig the outfit choice.” Noaveme then grinned. “I’ll at least introduce myself. I am Noaveme Vas Sacrason Vas Exarellia, the Black Flame of the Reclaimers.”

The harlequin nodded and pointed one knife at her, just as Noaveme’s hands caught on fire.

“So, shall we dance?”

The harlequin nodded once more, and before Noaveme could blink, she felt a trickle of blood come down her cheek. She saw that her foe’s blade had a hint of red upon its edge, and realized that she was cut. Instead of becoming fearful or enraged, Noaveme laughed and grinned, her fangs showing.

“Most impressive! Now that you’ve shown off...It’s my turn.” Throwing a fireball, Noaveme watched as the harlequin cut it in half, almost lazily, but smirked as the cinders directly honed in on him, impacting his body. She could see him recoiling in pain for a brief moment before he moved back into the shadows, disappearing. Following suit, Noaveme disappeared too, and both found themselves in a world devoid of light.

“Hm...I’ve never seen anyone come here before, myself aside. This is intriguing.”

The knife wielder made no signs of sharing the sentiment. Instead, he attacked, gracefully. Noaveme was ready and prepared herself. Casting several protective wards, she went in for close combat.

From her palms came streams of fire, honed to be a single flame, but the temperature was high enough to melt steel. Casting a solidity spell upon it, she made literal knives of fire.

Immediately, the two warriors clashed, Noaveme's graceful, free-spirited style matched in kind by the harlequin's own whimsical, theatrical movements. An art well practiced and honed, meant to be both attractive to watch and effective to use.

As Noaveme exchanged blows, she found that his skill with his weapons exceeded hers with the material fire she had created. Even so, her wards created several layers of shield that would protect her, which was rapidly depleted by both his clever moves and sleight of hand.

Noaveme watched as he pulled back for an exaggerated stab, only to see that, within a second, he had thrown five knives, all of which depleted one barrier each.

'This clown's a trickster....' Noaveme cast out a hand. "Flarewall!" A literal wall of fire appeared, separating them as far as the eye could see. Taking a moment, she tried to reforge her barriers, but found that her opponent had broken through almost without a moment's rest.

Catching her breath, Noaveme took a moment to spew out a large, all-consuming fire from her mouth, the stream catching her opponent. She would have relaxed, had she not heard the jingle of bells behind her.

Turning, she saw he was behind her, having evaded the attack in an instant. His speed was unbelievable. Still, she had her magic, and a full wall of fire behind her....

"Be consumed by the flair of flames...One million cinders." Speaking her incantation aloud, it enhanced her magic and turned the wall of fire into a million,

focused balls of flame. They were small, but each was concentrated and bursting with heat.

Zooming to the jester, Noaveme watched as he began to cut at them, each of the cinders destroyed by his edges of his blades. Again and again, almost too fast for her to calculate, he defended himself.

Noaveme decided to not leave it to chance and combined the rest into one, devastating ball of fire. She planned to fill the whole area with flame and leave, reasoning that her foe could not dodge everywhere at once.

“Ignited Devastation.” Creating the outward burst, Noaveme left the realm of fire and shadow and smirked, satisfied her foe was naught but cinders.

As she started to walk away, she once again heard bells behind her.

“ENOUGH!” Throwing a massive, pillar of fire directly behind her and watching it shoot straight up into the sky, she waited, until she felt only the slightest whoosh of wind behind her. Turning her head, she saw her opponent, knife extended and his body still whole.

She jumped back into her own pillar of flame, unscathed by the fire, but disappearing. She had endured enough of this foolishness and was feeling careless, not to mention she had used large portions of her magical energy to no avail.

As she disappeared, she picked up a single bell her enemy had discarded, still unscathed by the flames. Holding it in hand, she disappeared, while her foe stared at the flame, until it was naught but a circle of ash before him.

A month and a half later, Noaveme's trek from the village to the Elder's Quarry was boring. The rebel icon and magical mistress was annoyed that her time was being spent on a mere collection mission, especially one that involved mining. While her powers made it mere child's play, she also felt as if it was a waste of talent, that it was a task that could be postponed.

Even so, Baydal had encouraged her to go, though he did not elaborate why. This further frustrated Noaveme, who began to wonder why she was even around there at that point.

"I wish something interesting would ha..." She began, when she noticed several stones rising in the air. "...ppen? What was that?" She asked, suddenly intrigued, she ran over to the site, wondering who was using magic.

Casting a cloaking spell over herself, in case it was an enemy Qalairn, she snuck over and saw a mysterious woman with chalk white skin, moving the boulders and clearing a path. Noaveme was amazed. She had seen more vast displays of magic, but the stranger was doing it quite easily, almost carefree. It made Noaveme wonder if she was a Qalairn, but it seemed unlikely. "Curious..."

Meanwhile, the stranger, a golem named Zyanya, was placing the boulders aside, using magic to set them off the path that had covered the quarry. With her way forward now clear, she smiled and began her next spell. Wordlessly, she reached down and picked up a stone, casting magic over it to change it into a gem, one that she raised to the sky so it sparkled with sunlight. Casting another spell, she fixed the radiance of the stone.

“How fancy...” Noaveme commented, still intrigued. Now amused, she decided to creep closer, wanting to observe the stranger as she worked. What she didn’t expect was the stranger to turn and see her.

“Um..Hello?” The woman asked, “Are you trying to hide?”

“...I was, but I suppose that’s out the window now...Quite the impressive magic you have.”

“Thank you, but it was really nothing.”

“Yes, but shifting magic is hard, even for us Qalairn...Well, not hard, but it is a tad tricky.”

“Well, I’m not exactly a Qalairn, I’m a golem.”

“One of the stone-people?”

“Something of the sort. Still, why are you at the Elder’s Quarry?”

“Oh, you know, travel, training, money, things of that nature.”

“So, money mostly?”

Noaveme nodded. “My friends and I are a little short on funds and I came to mine some gemstones for sale.”

“I think someone else had a similar idea, but got greedy and blocked the entrance. I was going to do the same myself...Collect gems, I mean, not block the door.”

“I’m sure.” Noaveme giggled. “Would you mind some company on your trek?”

“Not at all.”

With the two now acquainted, they soon entered into the Elder’s Quarry.

Once there, Noaveme created a small flame in her hand, the magically sustained fire lighting the path as much as Zyanya's light crystal. Part of Noaveme wanted to intrigue her new friend.

"The heat isn't bothering you, is it?" Noaveme asked.

"Not really, though it's very pretty. Are you controlling how it flickers?"

"Yes, I got an idea from a dance my people do. After awhile I just managed to get the flames to dance rhythmically without thinking, and even change shapes and color."

Zyanya smiled as she watched Noaveme make the shape of the fire change, as well as its color. "How pretty."

"Thank you. Maybe I can show you how to do it if you show me how you did your light crystal trick."

"Well, my friend Helah taught me all about how it works," Zyanya said. "She's a musician, but also a Heofonite."

"Oh...One of those." Noaveme's expression turned less than cordial. "What did that snooty cloud walker tell you?"

"Hey, Helah's not snooty at all! Don't rush to judgment."

"Helah? Who is that?" Noaveme asked, quizzically.

"A friend of mine," Zyanya elaborated, "one I made just a few weeks ago. She's a Heofonite."

"Sorry, but the few I've met haven't made a good impression."

"Why's that?"

"They tend to be meddlesome, act superior, believe their little rules outweigh free will and the wants of others."

“She’s not like that at all, she’s actually rather down to earth.”

Noaveme listened to Zyanya’s words. She couldn’t imagine a Heofonite who was actually likable, but she’d only met a handful, after all. “Well, I suppose I trust your word.”

“Thank you.” Zyanya smiled before returning to her search for any valuable gems. She couldn’t see any around, but she remembered a method that could facilitate their search. Stopping, she stood firm and knelt on the ground, pressing a hand flat against the cave floor and using magic to make the light stone float.

“What’re you doing?”

“Shh...I need to concentrate a moment...” Zyanya closed her eyes and began to focus. She felt as one with the earth, her sense of self fading for a moment and she could sense the minerals of the earth. She could sense quartz, a plethora of it, a number of zircons, but then she felt what she was searching for...Corundum. “Rubies.”

“Yes. Rubies are pretty, the red on your face reminds me of them, but why do you mention them?”

“Because there’s a lot of them, further down the mine, a fair distance below the ground.”

“What magic did you use to do that?”

“Wasn’t magic.”

“An Earth syncral, then?” Noaveme asked.

“No, not really. Earth Syncralists can move earth, but they can’t connect with it in the way we golems can.” Zyanya held out a hand. “We were formed of the soil. Even if

we are not born in the sense of most other beings, we can always reconnect with our home, and gather information from it.”

“Fancy.” Noaveme smiled. “Any gems you think I can mold with my fire? I’d love to create something personal.”

“I’m sure we can find something for you.” Zyanya smiled. “I sensed something else down there.”

“What else? Sapphires?”

“Rubies and sapphires are both corundum, so maybe. What I really sensed, though, was adamant.”

“The legendary ore? Isn’t that really rare?”

“Incredibly. Magic proofed, too.”

“As I thought. I’ve never seen it, but I’ve read a few things about them. It sells very well.”

“Yes, they do. Still, it’s a mineral you shouldn’t consider lightly.” Zyanya motioned her new friend to continue with her.

As they delved deeper into the Elder’s Quarry, they came at last to a dead end, a large, spacious expanse where countless gems sparkled, and Zyanya sensed many more below

“It’s so beautiful,” Noaveme commented, intensifying the fire in her hand, further amplifying the light. Right after, she commanded the flame to fly up and continue to burn, as if it was a lantern on the ceiling.

“Yes, it’s almost a shame to take them, but we have to use these for our purposes. At least they will be appreciated.” Carefully, Zyanya set down her light stone and began to dig the gems from the cave.

Noaveme joined, doing the same as she admired the luster and the shape of the unrefined gems. Once she collected them, though, she heard a rumble and felt a minor quake. “Um, Zyanya?”

“I felt it too...Be careful.”

“C....care...” An unknown voice mimed, the sound rough at first, before the two saw the rise of a light green hand rise from the earth. The earth began to split and was shoved aside as a body made its way out, climbing from the Quarry’s depths. “Care...”

“A Newform!” Zyanya gasped. “It’s a new golem!”

“Does this mean we get to name them?”

“Name?” The new Golem rose, its body made of a light green metal, one that the women recognized as Adamant.

“He’s likely going to choose his own name when he learns how to speak properly. It’s best to help guide him.”

The Adamant Golem, however, reached down to the ground and picked up a large Adamant crystal, holding it like a crude dagger.

“Um...is he threatening us?”

“That can happen. Some Newforms are scared and apprehensive.”

“And know how to use weapons?” Noaveme asked, fearfully. Immediately, she began to use her magic, sending a fireball at the golem, only to see the flames turn to cinders and sparks before they even made contact. “...Excuse me?”

“Adamant is magic proof.”

“...I thought that only applied to non-Qalairns!” Noaveme tried harder, her eyes now darkening while her body glowed. The flames were more intense and more concentrated, and this time they didn’t fade as they made contact with the golem. “Hah!”

The fires gradually died down, but the Adamant Golem was undamaged. Instead it continued its walk forward, dagger raised.

“Noaveme, stop. Hurting him is only going to make him fear you!” Zyanya put out a hand to stop her before reaching out to the Golem. “We’re here for you...Trust me.”

“Trust?” The golem looked down at Zyanya’s hand. For a moment, it looked at its own dagger before handing it to Zyanya, letting it go.

“Thank you...Can you come with us?”

The golem said nothing, but nodded. It seemed to have a basic understanding, but Zyanya realized it would have to learn, fast.

“I think it’s best we teach him quickly, but how?” Zyanya asked

“What if you do that little trick you did to become one with the earth? Could you have him do it at the same time and exchange information?”

“...Maybe that could work. Thank you, Noaveme.”

“You’re welcome. I’m surprised your people don’t do that more.”

“I’ve never asked. I don’t think it is commonly done.” She turned to the golem and placed her hand on the ground. “Do as I do...”

The golem was nervous at first, but managed to obey. He was fresh from the earth and only had basic knowledge, but as he made contact again, he felt a wealth of knowledge enter into his being, and a connection to the white golem, Zyanya. It was something that startled and overwhelmed him, but soon it faded as the two ceased to communicate through the earth.

“Are you well?” Zyanya asked.

“Well enough...I know things, now...Zyanya.”

“He knows names!”

“And yours, Noaveme. Thanks to Zyanya, I know who I am and what I am...I suppose I am lucky it was you two who found me, and not the Hadean.”

“Who is the Hadean?”

“Someone you needn’t have concern for...Yet.” Zyanya looked serious. “It seems you learned more than the basics.”

“Perhaps I have, but knowledge is power, and I know I owe my being to you...That has earned you my loyalty.”

“Thank you.” Zyanya smiled. “Still, what will you do?”

“I suppose I’ll find my purpose, like everyone else.”

“Perhaps your purpose could be with me?” Noaveme suggested. “You can resist magic, and my allies and I could use someone like you on our side.”

“Perhaps. Your attempts at attacking me aside, Zyanya seems to think positively about you.”

“Really?”

“Yes, I do.” Zyanya smiled. “I know we haven’t known each other long, but I have a good feeling about you.”

“Then, I thank you. So, what do you say we leave after we pick up a few more gems?”

“It sounds fine to me.” The newform Golem turned to Zyanya. “Please, keep the dagger. It is crude, but it may be of use to you someday.”

“Thank you, but...Do you even have a name?”

“I suppose not...I’ll have to choose one...Perhaps Skandr?”

“Skandr it is.” Noaveme managed to place a hand on the bigger figure’s shoulder. “I guess this is the start of a great friendship.”

“The start of more than one, I say.” Zyanya smiled, happy to have made two new allies, and hoping her other friends could meet them too.