

The story of Chi Si Chen (Autumn Silver Reed) as told by Draenimaullair

Chapter 129: Carp Diem (3rd ride of Mirtul 1371 - Feast of Lanterns)

Father was adamant that the pretty half-elf (half what?) was not a proper companion for me. I told him I really thought it was time for me to spread my wings, although I could not keep the quiver from my voice. Mother, luckily, took my side, and agreed that I could go seeing the world for a few years if they could find a good companion. I felt a bit down, because I knew there were not that many of our servants the elves that would like to return to the mainland, and there were hardly any of another race on this island. When the festivities began to celebrate our victory over the forces of darkness and chaos they spent a day checking a group of 'adventurers' that had been helpful in defeating those evil and twisted beings. A human companion of a moon elven princess sounded like an acceptable one, but it turned out he was to stay here. The others were seriously lacking in orderly thinking, and worse, were not pure in their decisions, except for two: a dwarven paladin (dwarf! but him a paladin compensated for a lot), and a human female that followed nature, Art, and song, yet, as nature followers were, was a bit lacking in the order department. The dwarf turned out to have an unreasonable dislike of our kind, while the human was very good in the one thing my parents thought I should learn more: reading the intentions of others. She seemed overjoyed to have the honor in showing me the world, so my parent decided it was alright for me to leave. They gave me several items from their own treasure(!), and the elven queen even was nice enough to give me a special piece of cloth that could shape in several different sets of clothing. We were going to the eastern realms, a place called Shou Lung! It is named after dragons!

If I feared for a land ruled by Chaos, but luckily that realm understood that the rule of Law was the only rule worth following. I was warned, however, that many creatures there tried to use the Law to their own advantage, and that, outside the cities, chaos was far from unknown. My father made me promise that I was only to interfere if it was clear that my actions would help order and goodness, and if I would not betray my presence. There were many who would love to hunt and kill one of our kind, and my mother pointed out that I could not expect my companion to save me: she was, after all, only a human. To my dismay I found that the human had pledged her soul to save others. I was not quite sure if this was a good or a bad thing, but it was clear that saving souls was the best option, so we were to find a tome lost near five hills in that far away realm. The description of the hills suggested a limited area to those knowledgeable in these matters, so we used a magic mirror to get close to city there called Tai Tun. We were to find high placed persons who had access to maps, as few lower ranking persons were deemed trusted enough to learn the layout of the land beside the major roads.

Spring it might still be, but the group had some serious problems with the temperature, especially the dragon blooded elf. Only him being extremely fleet of foot by nature allowed him to keep up. Quite logical if one thought of his lineage. For some reason I could not fathom they had disguised his bear companion as an ox. I would object to this trickery but for the fact I was not quite sure what the reason was. The bear was far smarter than normal, and not at all dangerous to courteous people. Perhaps him being in disguise stopped people worrying where no worry was necessary if they had the proper knowledge. These decisions were so tricky! The wild warlord wannabe had been left behind under tutelage of the paladin, but a soberly dressed halfling (masquerading as a child in these parts) has joined this venture. I had no idea why he had come along, but he talked sense, so I was glad we had at least one thoroughly dependable person in the group next to myself. We had not been walking long when we saw a fishing ship of odd design, but seemingly sturdy construction. As our presence coincided with a bountiful catch we were invited on board, as we clearly were 'lucky'. Luck. Everybody knew golden dragons were lucky. Clearly this fisherman was a wise elder, which was proven again when a gigantic carp tried to gobble up the whole ship. I considered if I should take action, but the creature, while big, was clearly neither evil nor unreasonable destructive, so I waited to see how these adventurers would handle things. My companion tried to scare it away, but the demon human took drastic action by blinding the poor fish at one eye, and the tainted elf decided to rob the creature of its mind. It fled, still alive, but I found I felt a bit miserable.

*H*arbors are always busy, but I discovered I was misinformed about the bustle and the amount of people working there. When we arrived an enormous throng wanted to know what had happened, who we were, where we had come from, in a vocal rainstorm that made me see the wisdom of my father in not changing shape and staying a finch. The fisherman Wok, however, and his four sons capably shielded us from most inquiries, as he diverted the people with a harrowing (and not totally accurate) tale of what had happened. One son arranged for a palanquin for the half-elf, so she could travel to the nearest inn in style. My companion walked, and I found that the demon human positioned himself to guard us. It would be improper to notice flaws and not notice correct behavior, so I noted this down for my evening talk with my parents. Near the inn was another minor mishap as two groups argued over religious matters, or to be more precise, who had the right to be here. One the one hand the orderly bear claw monks looked far more proper to have such status, but the gray cats also followed Guan Yin, which was my companion's divine inspiration. Again I stood in doubt, but, whatever their other failures, the human and the elf were not going to let somebody threaten her. After a short impasse the monks decided to withdraw as they were needed for the evening ritual. I hoped I would not have to choose between either.

*Y*esterday I slept in the Silver Hills, this evening I was to sleep in an odd, but pretty, building called the lucky dragon. Well at least I felt at home. Dinner was interesting, many of the group unable to handle the spicy food. I rather liked it, fire in food form. Must remember to take some of these 'peppers' to mommy and daddy. My companion and the halfling were fairly quiet, she not even playing her newly gotten instrument, but the half elf talked prettily to people, the demon human broke several customs just because he could, and the tainted elf glowered in a corner. He was a bit more threatening than I remembered, must be that basket hat he was wearing. The hal-elf mentioned that bad things were rumored to happen in the cemetery so we went there to check it out. It was evening and normally the gates would be closed, but now it was the evening before the festival started and many people were still moving. The cemetery was... I felt unhappy. Things were bad here. Then we were surrounded by undead wearing white masks. I wasn't worried. They could not fly, and I could fry them to bits with my breath. Yet the group worried, thinking that any visible action could expose us, and we had no good reason to be here. I told them listening to rumors was bad! Oh, no, I hadn't. But next time I would! So the demonic human tumbled out, while the elf just ran. Coward. But what would one expected from those non-choosers? My companion used fiery whips that stayed close to the ground, so I did not have to take action. Who had been so impolite as to use bodies for his own end? It was terribly improper! When we stood outside the cemetery it was suddenly quiet again, all shapes gone. The demonic human thought about ransacking some burial vaults, but he decided against it as he could be seen. Should I punish him? Mummy said that I should let the humans handle humans, as long as it wasn't dragon business. Well at least I learned a lot on this day, I wonder what tomorrow will bring.

Human female Paragon/3, Wu-Jen/1, Naturalist/3, Ancestral Hierophant/2, Heartfanner/1, Sublime Chord/1