

The story of Chi Si Chen (Autumn Silver Reed)

Chapter 58: The hunt is on (2nd ride of Elesias 1370)

We were back. Changed. Some of us more than others. Cuura, Zhae and Felina were least changed, I think. The first two more aware, the latter slightly more present. I rather liked how Zhae looked at the world. He looked, trying to understand why, changes and reasons. Good. Grimwald had changed too – but mostly on the inside, not the outside. He had grown more distant from his gods, more martial. Was this good? I hoped he would find his way back. Nethander was odd. He no longer was the weak man I remembered, and he felt closer bound to this world. Yet he still carried his heritage, he still had to fight to become something better. While we were traveling I did not think I had to worry, but what if we ever got to a big city? I had to think about that.

Kendalan was most changed, and the least. His armor had disappeared like it never had been there, and he moved with a step I could hardly keep up with running. I suspected he left his fear of caves behind, he was less jittery. Still, with all these outward changes he still looked at the world with the same eyes. Elves are hard to change.

We stay with the gnomes for a few days, Grimwald deciding to reforge my sword. Felina had been first and I could tell: part of the smithy had been made almost comfortable. I could still see the dwarf's frown but had to smile. Some things just 'were'. The rest of the time I spent reading the Book of the Brotherhood, trying to understand how one can break a possession. Things would get hectic soon.

Rebecca decided to continue straight to Baldur's Gate. Perhaps we'll meet her there. It had amazed me she had stayed with us for so long. I hoped she finally understood that she really was free. She even tried to teach Felina some things before we left. It is sad, in a way, but Rebecca and I never communicated, we just... were different people, different styles and beliefs. I wish her well.

We left, and within minutes a Druid of Silvanus stepped out of the underbrush. I can hardly believe he found us so quickly, so he likely heard from the gnomes and waited until we were ready. He stated there was a conclave of some important matter and that we were invited. Druidic is a subtle language, but I understood the nuances. We were asked, not ordered, but there was a fair amount of pressure. Things were not as they were supposed to be. I tried to open myself up to the future, but I only got the haziest of answers. There was danger to the others if we left, a clear danger that I could almost taste. Yet to ignore this meeting... that felt bad on a far more substantial level.

He came prepared and we traveled by tree to a place leagues away. Five others were there, three of Silvanus, one of Eldath, and one of Milikkie. They treated us fine, but there was a certain undercurrent. Neither Kendalan nor I were true druids: we both had other interests, and our druidic paths were 'uncommon'. A bit like family who married below their station. I could understand their point of view and the druid of Milikkie had a bit of a problem in how he talked to our elf: he could sense the goddess touched Kendalan, but he also disagreed with the arcane focus. A difficult problem, which he solved by being silent most of the time.

We talked long, but the oaths preclude me from writing anything specific. The book we carried was a serious problem, but there were at least three other major interruptions in the natural balance, and something local that is quite worrisome. I will have to do what I can.

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