

Results of Agreements

Nayra walked through the valley filled with Death Essence. It made her strong, and was testament to the destruction that they had wrought all around. There were dead everywhere, and the Grey Horde's forces were moving slowly, clearing up the debris and retrieving bodies.

Even with an army surrounding the valley, they hadn't managed to kill everyone. They had succeeded in their goal, an army hadn't survived long in the Real Realm, but individuals had.

Some of the spirits that had crossed over were very powerful, and they couldn't hunt all of them down. Though, Grey Horde's ships were attempting to. Nayra knew that some would get away, it was inevitable.

But spirits in the Real Realm were something that could be dealt with. They crossed over from time to time, perhaps not in this number, but it did happen. True, they had vessels now, but it was still not a large issue in her mind, they had stopped the army, that was more important.

What worried her was the Shades. Many of them had managed to escape as well, and that was... worrisome. Nayra had more insight into it than most, and she knew that the Real Realm was not a place for a Soul without a body, and that was what Shades were, except that by the very act of crossing over they had regained their physical forms. She had seen them bleed, and die a second, true, death. In many ways they reminded her of Ryun, and how his Soul's meaning crafted a body around him.

For the Shades, it was as if reality bent around them to create the Essence of their old bodies, bringing them back to life in a manner of

speaking. She didn't know what the far-reaching consequences of that happening could be, but she knew that there would be some.

She walked past a group of Ethereal and Summoning experts working in tandem to mend the breaches and bolster the boundary between the Real and the Ethereal. They had a few smaller breaches since the battle, with some lesser spirits coming through, though those weren't really that dangerous and never stayed for long. They bowed to her in a clumsy way that told her that they rarely used the Sect way of bowing, but she couldn't miss the respect in the gesture. She inclined her head as she passed.

She found Ryun sitting on a rock, his back towards her.

"You ready?" He asked without turning his head.

"I am," Nayra responded.

Ryun stood up and gestured to a group of people nearby. The Grey Horde's experts hurried over, attentive.

"Open up a way for us," Ryun ordered, then after a beat he added. "Please."

Nayra got ready, Resav in her hands while Ryun equipped his armor and scepter.

"You talked to Grey Horde?" Nayra asked as they waited while the people around them worked.

Ryun nodded. "Briefly," he said. "She is pursuing the stragglers. And there is much that she needs to do, our alliance is agreed."

Nayra nodded, there wasn't much left to do here.

"How do you think they will react?" She asked after a moment.

Ryun shrugged. "We'll see," he said just as the gathered group opened up a portal to the Ethereal. Ryun stepped forward and entered, and Nayra took a deep breath before following.

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The valley in the Ethereal Realm was almost completely deserted. There were a few spirits around, but most of them ran as soon as Ryun and Nayra stepped through. He could perceive the entire valley, and he could tell that the damage here was worse than in the Real Realm.

The space was torn up in places, gashes in space and time were open that led to places that he could see into. He also felt like there was something different about the valley around them.

He tried to figure it out as they walked out of the valley, but he couldn't quite put his finger on it.

It didn't take them long to reach the small grove where they had met with the other two Grand Spirits. Ryun was prepared to wait, but as it turned out there was no need.

The two spirits arrived promptly, appearing out of the forest in a blink of an eye.

"What have you done?" The Grand Spirit of Transition demanded. Its long neck raised its heron-like head above Ryun, glaring down on him as it spread its wings.

Nayra tensed next to him, her spear and shield raised at the spirit.

"We have done as you have asked. War is imprisoned," Ryun answered calmly.

"We all felt it," the Grand Spirit of Transition squawked. "Change is no more! And to do this now, when so much is... Knowledge is gone, but its spark remains, we do not know what the consequences of this will be."

Ryun tilted his head at the news about Knowledge, he was pretty sure that Zach went to learn from it. Perhaps they were not so different after all. He turned his attention back to the two spirits, then shrugged. "The Grand Spirit of Change attacked me, it proved itself a threat to the Real Realm. It made a choice."

The Grand Spirit of Mysteries moved, its cloak waving gently as if in the wind. "You have no idea what you have done, no one knows what this means for the reality itself."

Ryun didn't say anything, there wasn't much that he could say.

"This was not our agreement," the Grand Spirit of Transition said.

"Our agreement was for War," Ryun said. "We had no agreement about Change."

"You didn't need to do what you did," the Grand Spirit of Mysteries added.

"Change was, by its very nature, a being of Change. It would always seek to pervert the order of things," Ryun told them.

"That was not your decision to make," Transition said. "We had kept Change in check for eons, we would've continued to do so."

"You couldn't even control War," Ryun said, then he shook his head. "Take us to the Tower, it is time for us to fulfill our part of the bargain."

The Grand Spirits looked at Ryun and Nayra, and then they moved, the Ethereal shifting around the four of them. A moment later they were in front of the Felltower, the gate was already open.

The Warden of the Tower was waiting for them.

"Transition, Mysteries," the Warden greeted. "I've told you before, your insistence on losing yourself in your own natures has led you down this path."

"We are not here for a lesson," Transition said.

The Warden turned its attention to Ryun and inclined his head. "Chosen, you have something for me."

Ryun approached, then reached into his territory and pulled out War trapped inside the armor.

Warden leaned down and stared at the trapped spirit with eyes from all three of its faces.

"War," Warden said. "We are going to get to know each other very well. You have forgotten your purpose, but I was here at the beginning, serving the Dealmaker's will. You will learn the error of your ways."

There was no response, War was completely trapped, unable to even speak.

The Warden gestured and a group of spirits came out of the tower and picked up the trapped Grand Spirit and carried her inside. The Warden

looked at Ryun then nodded and walked after them, the doors closing behind him.

"We are done," Transition said. "We should've never trusted a chosen to deal with our matters."

Ryun turned to look at the Grand Spirit. "This was only our part of the bargain, you owe us yours."

The two spirits exchanged a look that seemed to hold great meaning, then they looked at Ryun and Nayra.

"Fine," it said. "Let it not be said that Grand Spirits do not hold to their word."

Transition approached Nayra, then before she could react it snapped out with its beak and touched her head. A light Essence filled Ryun's vision and Nayra stumbled back.

His Qi roared up through his body and his Aura spread around them. "What did you do?" Ryun asked as he caught her.

Nayra shook her head then got her footing. Transition didn't react, instead it raised its beak. "I gave her a gift," it said.

Then Mysteries walked over and pulled something out of its cloak, then threw it at Ryun's feet. It was a long bar, shaped like an ingot, and made out of an Essence that Ryun had never seen before.

"What is this?" Ryun asked.

"Our part of the bargain," Mysteries answered.

"This wasn't what we agreed on," Ryun said.

"You asked us for a way to combat Ra'azel, we have given it to you. We are done," Transition told him, then the world shifted and the two Grand Spirits were gone, leaving Ryun and Nayra stranded.

"Well," she started. "That was interesting."

Ryun nodded as he leaned down and picked up the ingot then stored it for later study.

"Are you alright?" He asked, looking at her for any signs of injury.

She nodded. "I think that it gave me a way to see as it does, or at least that is what it looks like."

Ryun tilted his head. "See as it does?"

"I can see... residue? Up here," she waved her hand in the direction where the two spirits used to stand. "And there," she waved to the side where the four of them first arrived. "I think that it is a place of transition? I think that I can now see places where a teleportation or similar type of powers were used."

"Is your eye perk changed? Or did you get a new one?" Ryun asked, the ability to see that was useful, he had to admit.

Nayra blinked, then tilted her head. "Ah, I see it," she said. "My eye perk is changed. I was right. I can see the places of all transitions."

Ryun nodded, at least they got something useful out of all of this.

"What now? You can get us back to the Real Realm?" Ryun asked.

"I can," she said. "But I can't aim, we'll end up in Dall'dvor."

Ryun grimaced, that was the place where the Felltower's Ethereal location was bound to in the Real Realm. It was very far away from their home.

"Or," Nayra started. "We can go where we initially intended. I mean if you want to come with me. There might be a way for us to get more power there."

Ryun glanced at her. "Well, we did get something out of this at least."

Nayra gave him a look.

"What, it's true. I got the prison, figured out a way how to suppress people, I have a corpse of a Grand Spirit to experiment with, and that mysterious ingot. And you got your eyes upgraded!"

She sighed. "I would still prefer to find a way to improve my Class choice. Besides, my perk will only last for a month."

Ryun nodded. "I guess that we do have some time yet," he looked in the distance. Tali was heading to the dome, and it would be a while until she returned. Ryun didn't plan on hunting the yeti until after they had all gathered back again.

"Well, lead the way."

"You coming with?" Nayra raised an eyebrow.

"I've always wanted to see the afterlife," Ryun shrugged.

Nayra smiled then turned and raised a hand. Ryun felt her perk activate and then Essence shifted in front of them, and a giant door manifested itself, the gate to the Warrior Afterlife. They approached, and the doors opened. Together, they stepped through into the light.

