

Sorry I am posting this later than I hoped. Not only did it take longer than I hoped to go through it after **morte24** got it back to me, but there was also snow that had to be shoveled LOL.

A brief note: I have to apologize guys. I got a bit of the lore wrong. I thought the Highmountain Tauren lived in the same mountains that the Frostsabers and giants did. This was a mistake. They actually live in the Broken Isles. I will eventually go back and correct that – and the various corresponding points - in the first chapter, but I will mention this fact here.

As stated above, **morte24** has edited this for me. **Tomon** has not, however, and I have sent it to him. So this isn't quite the final product. In particular I imagine he will add more WoW lore. But I told you all I would have this out for you for the Super Bowl, and here it is!

### **Death's Avenger Chapter 2, Episode 1 Friendships and Bloodletting**

Harry tried not to stare, he really did. But as the Frostsabers continued to explain how the Frostmaul giants had come to dominate the mountains of Winterspring, he just couldn't concentrate. To Harry, the tale was a simple equation: the Frostmaul giants were composed of frost and stone, and the Frostsabers were flesh and blood. As powerful and as strong as their jaws might be, and Harry could tell their physical abilities had been enhanced Azeroth's ambient magic just like their intelligence, he doubted that they would have it an easier time of biting the Frostmaul giants than Quetzal did. And Harry's serpentine friend had his paralysis venom to aid him, which allowed him to paralyze his prey even with shallow bites. The Frostsabers didn't even have that.

Worse, was Tyrande's presence. Harry had been around Lunara and other nymphs for several months before this, but that bit of exposure wasn't helping right now. Tyrande was drop dead gorgeous, her light purple skin almost luminescent in the moonlight, like a lavender flower made into skin. The silver strands in the deep blue of her hair grabbed his attention, almost lighting up the blue of her hair. Her eyes were like twin stars, and her body...

Quetzal's tail smacked into Harry the side, lightly for the massive snake. "§Stop staring. I know you mammals do things differently, but surely staring so much must be off-putting to two-legged women, especially since you look like you're going to start drooling at any moment.§"

Harry shook his head, then looked away, grateful that Tyrande at least hadn't seen to notice his moment of teenage stupidity. "§You're right my cold-blooded friend. Hormones, they are from the bloody devil, I tell you.§" he whispered. With that, Harry turned and pulling out his trunk, began to work on a series of wards to help defend the Frostsabers valley from their enemies.

In point of fact, Tyrande had noticed his looking, but since he had not, in point of fact, been drooling, or attempting to flirt with her, she wasn't going to mention it. Indeed for the most part he had kept his eyes on her face, only looking at her arms for some reason occasionally, never letting his eyes wander to more sexual areas. She was even amused by his comment, as she could remember when she was young thousands of years ago and had seen young Kaldorei acting much the same way throughout the millennia since. *Hormones are indeed of the bloody devil, whatever the devil might be.*

*And yet, for all his complaints about them, he is handling himself quite well.* Tyrande had been told all her life she was a rare beauty. Even though every Kaldorei knew she and Malfurion were an item, she still turned heads today, though honestly she didn't know why people made such a fuss. Harry had been practically polite with his staring, and his control was very good for a seeming-sixteen year old. *Although perhaps his people age physically or mentally faster than mine?* Harry certainly seemed older, looking out at the world through eyes which had seen far too much combat, the eyes Tyrande saw in other veterans of the War of the Ancients.

*Yet what beautiful eyes they are. Like emeralds, or like the greenest leaves on a summer day. Yet, I wonder what caused that strange lightning bolt scar on his forehead?*

Still, despite Harry not being a Kaldorei – or even a cursed Vrykul as Tyrande had first assumed - his use of Arcana concerned her, and the sheer number of spells that he used. *Although, I might be willing to overlook everything for free access to that's translation spell* she mused with an internal chuckle. *That would be a major help, for both herself, and my people in general.*

Tyrande internally shook her head. *Do not leap to conclusions. His Arcana seems different than my people's and regardless, I should judge him by his actions. And continue to listen to the Frostsaber's tales about the Frostmaul giants. Silly woman, information is power after all.* Eventually, the Frostsabers had finished telling her story, as well as what they knew about the movements of the Frostmaul giants, and Tyrande turned to look at Harry, wondering what he thought about it all.

When she voice this question, Harry shrugged. "I attempted the translation spell on them, the one I just used on you, Milady..."

"Tyrande, or Miss if you feel you must give me a title. Milady sounds too much like a noble title, and I am not here acting as leader of my people or as a priestess of Elune, which would be the only real title I would lay claim to," Tyrande interrupted. She was well aware that formality and decorum had a purpose, but in this time and place, she did not wish to deal with them. *I am on sabbatical, blast it.* "Further, if Cenarius planned this meeting, it would behoove us to get to know one another. Being overly formal would get in the way of that."

"I... alright Miss, but give me time please. I'm not used to being so informal so quickly, er, especially with women" Harry answered, somewhat embarrassed, although he had to smile

in agreement at her words. "Anyway, I tried to talk the first group of Frostmaul giants Quetzal and I ran into. It didn't work. The translation spell hit them, but the Frostmaul giants don't seem to have enough native intelligence in order to really have anything like a language."

"That is interesting, and very strange. I have seen the Vrykul of Northrend and their diseased brethren, who I thought at first you might be. While they are immensely aggressive, they are not without their own type of intelligence and language. Worse, these Frostmaul giants seem more magical construct than living creature."

"Yep, literal ice and stone, there's scant little even of their remains to tell us they were truly alive in the first place," Harry agreed, then went on more hesitantly. "Erm, do you have a problem with taking the campaign to them, Miss? Only, if the Frostmaul giants are spreading as they seem through these mountains their numbers have to be pruned back, if not more. That could be a bloody business."

Tyrande sighed. "While I am wondering why you seem to be overusing the word 'bloody', I must admit I would normally disdain any such thoughts of making war upon an entire race. And yet, I have never had any dealings with the Frostmaul giants for this. And what you are saying and from what the Frostsabers are saying, they are inimical to all other life. It... it is possible that they might be a creature of the Old Gods, which somehow survived the fall. That would make it my duty as a priestess of Elune to look into at the very least."

Harry scowled at that, shaking his head and Tyrande smiled internally, having thought she would get that reaction to anyone who would call Cenarius Shan'do. "I've learned about the Old Gods from Cenarius. What he told me about them was not pleasant listening. Especially what he said about Andrassil, and how the druids were forced to cut the world tree down."

"Aye, they were, and that is all that we Kaldorei can do with those Tainted by the Old Gods touch. There is no way to free someone of an Old One's influence once his hooks are in a being." Tyrande then paused, frowning at Harry in unspoken question.

Seeing that, Harry chuckled, shaking his head. "No. If you want something attacked, stunned or an area awarded against threats, like I'm working on now," he held up the stone tablet he was working on, showing the runic array he was working on. "I can do all that. But cleansing something..."

Frowning in thought, Harry looked down at his work and correcting a mark on the stone, adding a tiny line to a rune. "I did it off the cuff, once. But..." He looked up at Tyrande closely and asked, "I suppose you would have been told about a incidents with the satyrs? About..." he paused, then looked a little lost. "Heck, I don't even know how long ago it was. Spending time with Cenarius is strange in that way."

Tyrande nodded. "Mortals can find it so, I've been told. Although I am surprised that your serpent friend wasn't able to keep track of things."

Quetzal blinked at her, then shook his head slowly. “§What care snakes of the passing of days? We think in terms of seasons. In that term, it has been nearly five seasons since the Master of the Forest met Harry and I.§”

“Is a year a long time among your race?” Tyrande asked, thinking that Harry’s face looked almost bemused and shocked in the moonlight. “But yes, in answer to your question, I did hear of satyr’s preying on distant settlements. It was very worrisome at the time. As is the fact many seemed to have switched allegiances to the the Old Gods.”

“A year is a okay amount of time, not really long for my people,” Harry mused, smiling faintly as he considered he’d only been training for a year with Cenarius. *Makes me less annoyed at my lack of progress with Nature Magic at least.* “Anyway, during that incident, I attempted to free a few of the Cenarius’ people who had been captured of the Taint that being forced to drink Satyr blood had given them. It wasn’t easy. The taint within them almost fought back. I was able to eventually combine spells to clear the Taint from four of them.”

Tyrande’s eyes widened at that, but Harry hastened on, while the Frostsabers all around them were all listening in some confusion, having no understanding of the terms the two were using. “But it put me on my rear, and if we assume that these Frostmaul giants were born with that kind of taint, it will be stronger. And their bodies are way larger than the nymphs and keepers I freed. I don’t think I have the strength to do it. Not with my current bag of tricks.”

At that, Tyrande nodded, thinking hard. She was pleased that Harry was willing to acknowledge the fact that he wasn’t all-powerful, something few magic users in her life had been able to do. But, that just left them with violence as the only solution. When she said so, Harry nodded. Then Tyrande frowned. “Wait, what do you mean you combined your spells?”

“I basically had to use a spell that creates a... call it an aura of goodness I guess? Where I come from there were these creatures that fed off the souls of the individual. When they attacked, they brought with them an aura that suppressed any good and happy emotions. This spell creates those good emotions, uses those to power an attack spell of sorts. I coupled that with a spell that allowed me to invade minds...”

“What!!” Tyrande had previously been able to ignore the fact that Harry was a magic user thanks to his actions and his acquaintance with Cenarius. But the very idea of entering someone’s mind? That was horrendous.

Harry took Tyrande’s anger in stride just nodding his head. “I know, I don’t like it either. But where I come from there are spells that allow one to invade another individual’s minds. I sued it this time to send the aura of goodness from the other spell into the minds and then the bodies of the Tainted victims. It worked but was very hard.” Harry looked at the Kaldorei high priestess then shrugged, and decided to get this over with, somewhat like pulling off a scab. “There is even a spell that will allow the user to completely crush the minds of the individual it uses it on. Only people with strong willpower can toss it off.”

Tyrande stared at him, then breathed in, slowly controlling her initial rush of fear and disgust. "Very Well. I am grateful that you are being so upfront about these spells of yours. And yet, that does not make me feel any better about anyone having access to that kind of spell in the first place."

"For what it's worth, I agree, and I'm utterly pants at that spell. You have to have this desire, this need, to dominate other people, and I don't have that." Harry shrugged wanly. "I am in fact the exact opposite."

Tyrande cocked her head thinking about it, then said slowly, "You have a propensity to rebel."

"More to go my own way than actively rebel, but yes. I didn't grow up with it more's the pity, acting out more often would've made my life a lot easier, especially if I started to ask questions about what was going on around me, but I didn't. Yet now, I am very much antiauthoritarian in many ways."

Tyrande slowly nodded again, then her lips quirked slightly. "I would wager, that being around Cenarius has been a trial then."

"Not really. He isn't all that authoritative." Harry looked at Tyrande anxiously, understanding that had been a trap to see if he did indeed know Cenarius. "I know Kaldorei have problems with Arcane users, and I can tell my earlier words are still bothering you. Er..."

Shaking her head slowly, Tyrande raised a hand, stopping Harry from speaking. "I can tell that you have met Cenarius, both from your reply to that trap and more. I can tell further that you feel remorse even for the existence of those spells. Simply swear to me that you will not use them on me or my people, and I will be happy."

"What do you want me to swear by?" Harry asked warily. He'd never liked magical oaths, understanding just how badly they could be abused, but Harry reminded himself that Tyrande wasn't just a random Kaldorei Warrior, she was the highest religious and social figure of the Kaldorei race. Getting her on his side was an extremely important thing.

"Swear by Elune," Tyrande answered promptly. "Swear you are no threat to me and my people. That will be enough. And in time, I will even be able to use that to aid in introducing you to other Kaldorei, if you wish."

Blinking, Harry looked from the priestess up to the moon above them, and then smirked shaking his head wryly. "Heh. I suppose that is appropriate." With that he held his hand to his heart, and, looking earnestly at Tyrande, intoned, "I, Harry Potter, do swear on the light of the moon and the Goddess Elune, that I am not a threat to you and your people through my own actions or magic."

Tyrande looked at Harry as he spoke, and her eyes saw the glow of truth around him. Whatever else occurred, Harry was no danger to the Kaldorei. At least through his own actions.

Danger might come to her people because of Harry's existence, but not directly from him. "Elune has heard your words Harry Potter, and declared them truth."

"Well, that's good to know," Harry said, frowning as he hadn't felt anything there. Still, Tyrande seemed much happier than she had been a moment ago, so Harry wouldn't question it. "So what do we do now?"

"While I do have more questions about you, and your past, I do think we should begin to move." Tyrande leaned her head back, closing her luminescent eyes for a moment as if the rays of the moon were coming from the sun, and she was enjoying their worth. Regardless, she looked up at the sky, which was beginning to lighten and frowned. "I would prefer that we moved at night, is that a problem?"

Harry shook his head. "I have spells that will allow me to see in the dark as well as I can during the day, and my friend is, as you noticed, a serpent."

Chuckling dutifully at the small joke Tyrande got to her feet, saying farewell to Shy-rotam and the other Frostsabers. Although the cub and she had bonded, Tyrande would not bring her along on this mission. It was simply too dangerous, and she would not have the time to look out for her either.

The cub mewled at that, wrestling with Tyrande's foot in an effort to stop her from leaving, but eventually, the tiny cub's father came over and picked her up by the scruff of the neck, carrying her away. "//Your time to hunt will come daughter. But no hunter can find the trails of his or her prey with a young one bounding around their feet.//"

"//Mrmrmm...//" The cub made a noise that was like a verbal pout and snarl combined and Tyrande spent another moment to rub her head before taking her leave.

"So where are we going?" Harry asked. As Tyrande had been 'fighting' with Shy-rotam, he had finished his makeshift ward-stone and had placed the rune stone down in front of the cave. Like the ones Harry had used to defend his tree house before learning Nature Magic, it would keep the cave from being found by anyone who wished harm upon the Frostsabers within.

"We will need to see what tracks these creatures left, then track them to their nearest lair. From there, we can decide whether or not there are indeed enough of them in these mountains to warrant the kind of campaign that our Frostsaber friends seem to indicate is necessary. As much as they do not want to admit it, there could be far fewer Frostmaul giants out there, given how impotent against them the Frostsabers are," Tyrande replied.

Harry blinked at her, then pulled out a stick from the ground, set it lengthwise on his palm, and said, "Points me nearest Frostmaul giants."

"That cannot possibly work, Harry," Tyrande chuckled. "You are making a joke..."

She paused as the spinning stick stopped spinning and pointed in a direction that was through the side of a portion of the tiny valley and up a ways. "They're that way." Harry smirked at her. "Will that be all, Miss?" He asked, as if he was a merchant trying to sell her something. "A warming cloak perhaps, you look a little chilly."

"Actually, I'm quite fine," Tyrande retorted. "My people tend not to notice the weather as much as yours," she taunted back, beginning to understand why Cenarius had enjoyed being around the young human. He was like a flower almost, so vibrant and bursting with energy. Quite unlike her own people, who tended to be more stolid like the great trees they so revered.

"That spell isn't all-powerful" Harry added, ignoring her jibe. "Initially it was just supposed to point north, acting like a compass. Now, while it's good for finding specific people, it will be messed up by any active magic in the area. It also wouldn't point you toward, say a good meal, as that's too existential, although you can use it to find fresh water. Nor can you use it to find the nearest threat. That's not specific enough, nor is the idea of a 'safe place' or something because it can't tell what danger you want to be safe from."

"Could you teach me how to ward myself against it? If you can use it, that means an Arcana user might be able to use it, correct?"

Harry frowned, looking over as Quetzal joined them, slithering out of the trees to look down at the pointing stick in Harry's hand. "I don't know enough about Arcana magic to say but I know Cenarius was able to use nature magic to hide from it. I tried to use it to find him and once to try to find Lunara. All it did was point to the nearest darn tree."

At the look of annoyance on his face, Tyrande snorted. "And let me guess, Lunara was hiding from you for some reason? Something related to her rather... robust sense of humor. I can well remember the tricks she would play on Malfurion when he was studying under Cenarius. He still is not a fan of the color bright orange or seeing bows in a person's hair."

"Heh, yep, although I avoided the bow in the hair thing. Thank you I'm going to have nightmares about that now," Harry replied dryly.

Tyrande chuckled again at that before sighing, becoming somewhat more somber. "I must admit, Harry Potter, your attitude and oath is putting me at ease. Yet the very magic that allows us to speak and how much magic you used in battle continues to bother the part of me that went through the war against the Burning Legion and Azshara and then had to deal with the remaining Arcana users who refused to give up their power despite the dangers."

Harry nodded thoughtfully, remembering what he had been told of the disaster on Northrend and before that the banishment of the Highborne. "I understand, and that is part of why I was so willing to give you the oath I did. Beyond that, all I ask is that you judge me by my words and actions, not by my magic."

“That is what I am trying to do. Alas, even I am not entirely free of prejudices as I would like to think. Still, I will do my best Harry Potter, I can promise you that.”

The friendly smile she bestowed on him made Harry grin back, although thankfully by this point Harry had gotten his hormones under control, so it didn't cause him to break out in a blush. He then looked down to the stick in his hand then the direction it was pointing. “In that case, I think we should be off.”

The stick pointed to one side of the entrance to this hitting little area of trees, but Harry figured that the Frostmaul giants certainly wouldn't be able to get around as easily as he and Quetzal, or even Tyrande could. So there had to be some kind of path leading to wherever the nearest Frostmaul giants were, which he assumed as Tyrande had, would lead to a village or central town of some kind.

At first, Harry rode alone on Quetzal's back, while Tyrande marsh along beside them, keeping up with the fast-moving snake's speed well enough. “How is it that a snake is so active during winter?”

“§A heating spell,§” Quetzal replied. “§Perhaps the greatest magical creation known to humanity.§”

“Humanity? Is that what you're species calls itself?”

Harry nodded, then looked over at her. “You know, if we're going to play 20 questions, perhaps it would be easier you rode as well?”

“What is 20 questions?”

Harry chuckled, and told her about the game, and after a few more moments, Tyrande agreed that it probably would be easier if she joined Harry on Quetzal's back. “Can he really carry us both so easily?”

“We'll have to get off Quetzal when we come to cliff, but other than that, he should be able to handle our weight with ease.”

As Tyrande climbed aboard Quetzal, Harry glanced up at the one moon visible at the moment. It was a crescent shape at the moment, larger and closer than the moon back on Earth, and far whiter too. *No wonder it is called the White Lady. Although I still think Blue Child is far too silly sounding for the name of a moon.* “I've been told of Elune, Cenarius' mother, but seeing her like this, without clouds or trees to get in the way, makes you really think that there could be truly something godly about it. Mystical anyway.”

Tyrande followed Harry's eyes, then smiled faintly. “Would you like to know about the faith of the Elune?”



Harry nodded slowly. "Yes, I think I would. I've heard about her as an individual, but you are the first actual worshiper of the Elune I have met."

"Very well, I will explain." Tyrande's lips quirked. "But this will count as your first question to me. Is that acceptable?"

Harry laughed and nodded, and Tyrande began to explain about Elune, the worship of her, and why she was the patron goddess of the night elves. Indeed, nights like this, when half of the moon was unseen, and the other half starkly luminescent, were seen as the most spiritual nights by her people. Harry asked a few questions of his own during this explanation, and always worded them as a statement rather than a question.

When she finished, Harry leaned back against Quetzal's head, which he had been using as a backrest as the snake moved along, its head and upper body held off the ground. "That was interesting, thank you."

"I suppose it is only fair to ask you in turn about your religion? Who do you pray to?"

Harry barked a laugh. "I don't pray to anyone, Miss. I was an orphan, sort of, long story. But my relatives thought of themselves as following the predominant religion from where I came from, but they certainly didn't practice what they pretended to believe in. My own people, Arcana users like myself, believe in a kind of ancestor worship coupled with hero worship. I never really espoused that belief either."

"But from what you're saying, the belief in Elune is, while in some ways more formal is also much more personal. But perhaps that's not quite the right word. There is a more direct connection between your goddess and you, and your people than there has ever been in my world. A lot of people believe in God without any evidence, whereas you know your God exists." Harry then smiled. "And now for my question..."

"§I think it is time to put questions to one side and prepare yourselves,§" Quetzal said, frowning and hissing the words out in amusement. He pointed forward. "§I just saw something large moving out there somewhere. Just on the edge of my heat vision.§" Despite seemingly being made of stone and frost, there was something within the Frostmaul giants that created enough heat for Quetzal to sense in the dark.

Harry nodded, and gestured with his hand, about to touch Tyrande to use a spell to hide her. Then he paused, looking at her for permission. "Er... I am going to cast a spell on you. It will hide you by basically covering you with a chameleon covering. Don't be alarmed, and don't move too fast, or else the spell will begin to fail."

Cocking an eyebrow, Tyrande nodded. "This should be interesting. Let us see."

With that Harry touched Tyrande briefly on the forehead, and Tyrande shivered as if she had been splashed with cold water. Looking down at herself, Tyrande watched the spell as it began to cover her body. Then afterwards she could see her body again, but now it seemed as if

it was covered by some kind of film, which apparently would hide her from sight. In contrast, Harry's face was still visible to her, but the rest of his body was simply not there. It was almost eerie, to be frank. Then his face was covered with the same kind of spell that he had just used on Tyrande, but she could still see his features through it. "That is terrifying," she admitted.

"It's part of my preferred method of combat," Harry answered, shrugging his shoulders, though Tyrande could not make that out thanks to his invisibility cloak. "I prefer to at least start any fight I can from ambush. Makes it all easier. I had enough of standing up and facing my opponents in open combat when I was younger."

Tyrande nodded, as that made sense to her. While a human might have sneered at the idea of ambushes as dishonorable Harry was pleased to see that she didn't have that response. Perhaps as a Kaldorei that simply makes sense.

The two of them moved forwards around the bend in the path finding the way in front of them suddenly slopping upwards and around several more bends in the bare stone of the mountain. With Quetzal following they spread out, putting some distance between them on the path, which had widened the moment they came around the bend and beginning to head upwards. About five minutes after Harry had used magic to hide them, they spotted what Quetzal had seen. The path turned there once more to reveal several large stairs seemingly hacked out of the mountain leading up to an open area. Several Frostmaul giants there moving around, their movements just barely visible from the path below.

Luckily, the Frostmaul giants didn't seem to be on watch or anything, just milling about in the massive area, which Harry felt was about the size of a Quidditch field. Along the interior wall of the area was a series of large caverns which looked as if they had been carved out of the stone by equally large, very strong hands.

Harry estimated there were nine Frostmaul giants standing around the openings to the caverns, shouting and growling at one another. It was hard to make them out given how they all looked generally alike, and were somewhat bunched up. But they didn't seem to be doing anything that Harry could see. They were just standing around. *Almost like the worst guards you could ever imagine*, he thought, then whispered out his assessment. "There could be something important in those caves, something that can tell us more about these creatures."

Tyrande nodded agreement, frowning slightly. "How good is your camouflage spell?"

"Invisibility, please," Harry replied, affecting an annoyed air for a moment, before sending her a smirk, causing Tyrande to wrinkle her brow at him.

*Are all humans so... facially emotive?* Among the Kaldorei, showing emotions like that, especially shifting from serious to teasing and such, would have been shown in their tone of voice and their ears, rather than in their face. *It's fascinating, but his emotions shift so quickly that it is somewhat off-putting. In an amusing way to be sure, but one I doubt many of my*

*people would be able to get used to quickly.* With Kaldorei, especially with combat so possible, any emotions would have been pushed down or disregarded beyond the desire for battle.

“At least in my case,” Harry went on, unaware of Tyrande’s rambling thoughts. “The one I used on you is a Disillusion spell, it makes is an illusion of what you are standing in front of and can be negated if you move too quickly or pass over loose stones. My cloak hides me from anyone attempting to find me in order to do me harm, and I can cover our tracks in the snow with another spell. Why?”

“Would it not be better to know what we are facing entirely, rather than just assume the nine guards are the majority?” Tyrande replied dryly.

She seemed to have a sort of dry sarcastic wit, Harry reflected. Not that he minded. He did think that Quetzal did sarcasm better though and said so.

“Ouch,” Tyrande muttered, then she chuckled. “Nonetheless, my point remains. We need to know what we are facing, how should we go about it?”

“Well I think I’ll just sneak past them then,” Harry shrugged, the movement once more unseen. “You two wait here, and I will report on what I find.”

“I don’t like the idea of you going in there alone,” Tyrande began, but then sighed. “However, if you think that my own invisibility won’t stand up to moving through them, then I suppose we are left without a choice.”

She moved herself over slowly backwards, then with a rope and grapnel from her pouch, she moved herself slowly up a nearby promontory. There, she noticed that climbing had seemingly been too much for Harry’s spell. *Still, I might not be a Sentinel, but that doesn’t mean I cannot move unseen without magical aid.*

Knowing that fast movement drew the eye, Tyrande slowly pulled off of her bow and quiver, setting the quiver down in front of her. Still moving slowly, she placed one arrow on her bow, pulling it back to her ear, where Tyrande held it motionless. *I am rather grateful that I have kept up my training these past thousand years, or else I would be quite sore right now,* Tyrande thought ruefully.

Having left the others behind, Harry had moved forward as quickly as he could, trusting to his cloak and the spell hiding his footprints. Slinking in between the Giants was hard given their size and how they were constantly moving, stamping around and roaring at one another. At one point he had even had to duck and roll straight between two gesticulating giants, entering the first of the caves.

It was a very short trip. In fact, the cave only went about perhaps a dozen paces before enlarging into what looked like a cavern, which connected to the other two entrances. Harry had thought that perhaps this would be a kind of home for the Giants, and it did look sort of like that, except for one thing. Or several things really, Harry reflected as he looked around.

One, beyond a single ditch and a series of beds, there was nothing homely about this area. No paintings on the wall, no interesting designs even. Nothing to show that the Frostmaul giants had anything like an artistic bone in their bodies. Nothing like the pictures he had seen in history books about Neanderthals or Cro-Magnons. Indeed, there wasn't even any kind of fireplace, although there were several animal corpses laid out in a heap in the middle of the area.

Nor were there any children or women around. *Unless their males and females look exactly alike? A gender neutral race?* Harry thought, before shrugging. Beyond that, there were another twelve giants inside, most of them sleeping on massive slabs carved out from the side of the huge area, with one of them tossing fitfully from side to side.

The exception to this was the largest of the Frostmaul giants in the cave and this Frostmaul giant lay next to the pile of animal corpses in the center of the cave. He, it, Harry wasn't certain, was, at least half again the weight of the others. All of that weight was in his shoulders and stomach, rather than in height, and for just a moment, Harry wondered if perhaps that meant he – the giant still had a beard – was a female. *Weren't dwarves supposed to be the ones whose females had beards?*

A loud crack resounded then, and Harry nearly tripped, staring at the overweight giant in shock. As Harry watched, the Frostmaul giant split. It was that simple. One moment, it was a single large giant with a massive potbelly and huge shoulders, and the next moment, it was two giants, each only slightly shorter than normal.

They growled and roared at one another, then began to fight as they rolled to their feet. This went on for a few moments, but eventually, the fight subsided as the other Frostmaul giants, woken up by this activity, roared in amusement at them. The two now shorter giants growled back, before grabbing at some of the stone below them and chomping it into bits, then they made a meal out of some animal that must've had the misfortune of running into their fellows. Stone and meat went down together, without even a fire to warm the meat up, let alone actually cook it.

*All right, that wasn't what I expected but...* Harry's thoughts paused suddenly, his eyes arrested. At the foot of one of the two Frostmaul giants who had been created via division from the first, there was a small luminous black kind of stone, almost hidden under the carcasses of the various dead animals. *That looks almost like the kind of corrupted stone that I saw before with the satyrs. Looks like Tyrande was right. But I don't know if I would call them corrupted by the stone. More created by the Taint itself.*

Regardless, Harry had enough information. There were now fourteen more Frostmaul giants inside the caves, coupled with the nine outside. *And if that black stone is part of how these Frostmaul giants are created, then perhaps destroying this place will halt their creation.*

With that in mind, Harry returned to Tyrande, noting her and Quetzal's new position, although with difficulty. *Good grief, I don't think Kaldorei need my help to be invisible,* Harry

thought ruefully, only able to make out her figure with difficulty and only because it was now approaching dawn, providing him with more light to see than even his night vision spell.

In contrast to the poised, ready Kaldorei, Quetzal seemed relaxed. He leaned his head against the rock right beside her. Moving in that direction was tough, but soon, Harry was perched beside Tyrande, scratching his friend's head behind the eyes, which the snake seemed to like.

"And what have you discovered?" she asked in a whisper, looking up at him.

Harry explained what he had seen, and Tyrande scowled angrily. "I see. This stone you have described is very disturbing. Especially if it is somehow involved in the creation of the Frostmaul giants, surely another sign of the Old God imprisoned below. Regardless, it is time to stop investigating, and start attacking."

This group of Frostmaul giants were not only examples of the breed, but the closest to where the Frostsabers had been. She looked up at the sky, frowning slightly as she saw the sun rising over the horizon. "I could've wished we could have attacked during the night. I can more easily call upon the power of Elune when the moon is out. Yet I will have enough tricks under my sleeve regardless."

Harry shrugged, noting that Tyrande was practically vibrating in place with the eagerness to be about it. "We could wait, but I really don't see a point to it."

"With your abilities added to my own, nor do I. How are we going to go about this however?"

Harry shrugged. "Prepare an ambush, wipe them out. Pretty simple frankly. Although I wish we could use the tactic of just bringing that cave down on top of them. But the way they were eating stone as well as meat, I'd wager they could probably just chew their way out."

"Truly, it would be like trying trying to trap the mouse in a cake," Tyrande murmured another faint smile on her face. "Yet how then are we going to trap them?"

A few moments of discussion later and Tyrande was waiting once more as Harry moved around the area, dropping several runes he had created behind.

Most of the runes he knew wouldn't really work on the Frostmaul giants, because they were, well, made of frost and stone, but entrapping or paralyzing runes would probably work just as well as they would on anyone else. For himself, fire had worked on them if the heat was hot enough, and Reducto spells as well. Harry put the runes around the edge of the open ground in front of the cavern and then some more in front of where Tyrande was situated before moving back to the base of the stone steps.

With the trap actually created, he now baited it.

Using a conjuration spell, he created several hundred giant rabbits, each the size of a normal Frostsaber. He did so right in the center of the Frostmaul giant giants who were outside the cave.

They took one look at them, then as a single creature bellowed, raising their massive clubs and bringing them down as they roared in delight. Instantly the Frostmaul giants inside began to boil out, several to a tunnel, showing why they had three entrances instead of one. They all began to attack the bunnies, roaring in rage and delight mixed.

Instantly Tyrande began her attack, thinking, *I do hope that Harry's conjuration spell isn't pulling those poor creatures from somewhere else. Such a waste of animal life would be rather sad.* Her arrows, blessed by Elune to penetrate anything they hit, took a giant in the eye. The giant stumbled, then collapsed, but this wasn't noticed by his companions, so delighted were they with the carnage they were causing. She was able to get off five more shots, downing two more giants and wounding another, although even blessed, her arrows were having difficulty penetrating the Frostmaul giant's skin.

But by that point, the Frostmaul giants had noticed the dead comrades in their midst and turned, roaring in rage and fury as they charged toward where Tyrande was on her perch. The giants tried to climb up the edge of the rocky promontory, only to run into the wards Harry had set up. The first few giants froze, their hands tearing into the stone even as they ran into the paralysis wards. Two more giants climbed over their frozen fellows. But Quetzal smacked them off, the giants being forced to use their hands and feet to climb up the mountain face meant that they couldn't protect themselves from the snake's tail.

As the giants began to turn their attention to Tyrande, Harry attacked from behind. "Reducto," He murmured, the cutting spell, which he was now overpowering thanks to having run into the magical resistance of the Frostmaul giants before, lashed out into the mass of the Frostmaul giants. His spell cut into several giants, maiming several but killing none. His next Reducto though downed almost as many as the first had injured permanently. At that point the giants seemed torn, debating on which enemy to attack, but since Harry was still under his Invisibility cloak, the spells seemed to come from nowhere, despite the fact he was standing out in the open.

"Bombarda!" Harry went on, sending explosive spells into the mass of giants, while Tyrande kept up her attack at range.

Soon the last of the giants was down, and Harry, still invisible moved forward, making certain all of the Frostmaul giants were dead. Tyrande scaled down from her former position, with Quetzal moving after her. "Well, that was relatively easy," Harry quipped.

"These creatures aren't intelligent enough to require any grand battle plan, and they seem extremely susceptible to simple ruses and confusion. I have to wonder if they would even have noticed my depredations if they could have continued slaying your conjured creatures. By

the way, those beasts are not taken from somewhere else, are they?" She actually glared at Harry as she said that.

"Heh, didn't think of you as someone who would like bunnies, I thought you were a cat woman," Harry teased, but when Tyrande's ears flicked down and her eyes narrowed he went on hurriedly. "Er, no. That would be a summoning spell that would bring a living animal to me. A summoning spell has to be specific, and I honestly only know how to summon snakes and mice."

At that, Tyrande's look became somewhat more wary than angry. "Why mice?"

"Something to feed the snakes for their help of course," Harry replied, as if it was the most logical thing in the world. "You can't eat conjured food, you know."

Tyrande kept glaring for a moment then laughed, shaking her head, her ears standing upright once more. "Truly, you are a droll fellow, Harry Potter. You remind me very much of a young Malfurion, before he found his calling or I mine. I have always felt a decent sense of humor is necessary in this life." Her eyes narrowed then. "I just hope that your sense of humor does not include practical jokes. Or those mice. If it does I will stick my double-bladed swords into places you will not like, am I clear?"

Chuckling Harry held up his hand, glad that the woman was willing to joke with him, despite the wariness he could still see in her eyes when he used magic. *Yet it's my magic that makes her uneasy, not the fact I'm a different race. Well, my magic and the fact we don't actually know one another very well, Harry thought ruefully. Still she seems open to being friends at least. Although, dropping her boyfriend's name... was I accidentally looking where I shouldn't again? Something to be aware of.* "Duly noted, Miss."

Tyrande then turned her head towards the caverns. "But now, show me this black stone."

Grimacing, Harry nodded, and after asking Quetzal to stay outside on guard he turned to lead the way towards the nearest cavern entrance. The snake grumbled a bit, "Oh yes, now that the transportation and fighting is done, why don't we just leave the snake out in the cold. Nevermind that it's utterly unusual for a snake to be around in wintertime, let alone out and about all this snow. Oh woe is me..."

Turning, Harry cast a warming charm on the snake again, and heard his hissing turn into one of pleasure. "Better?"

"§Oh yes, that's the stuffs,§" the snake murmured, for all the world like a druggie that had just gotten a hit.

Harry frowned a little at that, whispering to Tyrande, "Is it possible for a snake to get addicted to feeling like he's in the sun all the time?"

While Quetzal hissed out, "§And what's wrong with that!§" Tyrande shrugged although she was smiling at the interaction, and the fact that she could still understand the snake.

*Oh yes, just his ability to translate things is going to turn out to be a major boon for my people, if I can get them to accept him.* "I do not know, though I confess to not having much to do with snakes or any kind of reptiles over my lifetime. I have always, as you put it, been a cat person, although it has been nearly 1000 years since I last bonded with a single animal. My duties as high priestess have allowed me much time for such things."

"I've heard about the Sentinels and their bonded animals. How does that work actually?"

That talk took them to the entrance to the cavern, as Tyrande explained the process through which a Sentinel. With the use of water from the cup of Elune could come to almost share the thoughts of her chosen animal. The two would then act as one, with the Sentinel able to direct and ride the animal in question, who would also be able to convey his or her own thoughts to the Sentinel. "But only in emotions and images, not words like your translation spell allowed with the Frostsabers. It will be fascinating to discover if other mounts have the ability to communicate so well," she enthused.

"They should, given the intelligence of the Frostsabers. But I understand most of them are cats too, and as I've always thought of myself as more of a dog person. So will it be hate on sight if I ever meet one of your Sentinels?" Harry teased, although there was some seriousness below that. Harry was indeed worried he would be either attacked on sight as a stranger or as an Arcana user by other Kaldorei.

"You will not be attacked out of the blue, never fear. The Nature Magic I sense about you would preclude that. And once the two of us get to know one another, I will further vouch for you to my people," Tyrande soothed, somewhat amused by his joke about being a dog person. She couldn't see it, honestly.

Yet as they entered the cavern proper, Tyrande's attitude turned serious. She frowned, looking around, and shaking her head, holding up a hand to stop Harry's current joke. "I feel a subtle, almost cloying sense of decay perhaps, in the air. It is hard to put into words."

Harry just nodded. Although he didn't feel it as Tyrande did, he too knew the black stone was unnatural.

Moving forward, Harry banished the remains of the animals the Frostmaul giants had been eating, showing her the stone underneath. With the carcasses out of the way the black stone was larger than he had expected, almost bulging out from the ground of the cavern in a



low dome-like shape about the same size as his outstretched arm, although shaped more like a long ovoid. And as Harry looked at it, within its depths Harry could see a faint throbbing almost, like a pulse from the stone itself. "Is it... alive?"

"No," Tyrande said coldly, her lips peeled back slightly in a small scowl. "Although that does not mean that it is any less foul!" She moved around it for a time, frowning, then looking over at Harry. "I do not suppose that you could create something for me to write with, some kind of parchment and ink?"

"I have parchment in my trunk, and a pen too," Harry replied, tapping the small square box hanging from his neck.

A second later, she watched as he once more enlarged the trunk, rifling around inside it. Tyrande had seen this before when Harry had prepared to make the 'runic arrays' that he had put down to help guard the Frostsabers' cave, but she hadn't watched closely, having been busy playing with Shy-rotam. Now once more Harry's magic interested her. It is so much more utilitarian than most any magic I have seen before. Fascinating.

Tyrande's fascination increased alongside her confusion when Harry handed over a pen, Tyrande looked at it in confusion, then at Harry's gesture pushed down at the top, and watched as a bit came out of the bottom. She looked at it in wonder, turning it this way and that, seeing the liquid move ever so slightly inside. "Amazing! And what is this material?"

"Plastic, but don't ask me how it's made, I don't think I could explain, since I don't know myself." When Tyrande looked at Harry in confusion, he shrugged. "Could you explain everything to me about how to make boots or jewelry?"

"Beyond making it shiny, and making them fit the person, no," Tyrande conceded before sighing take his paper that Harry had handed her and drawing a description of the rock along with her own impressions of it.

"What are you doing?"

"Just because I am on sabbatical does not mean that my duty to my people stops entirely. I must send a message to the Council to make certain that they are on the lookout for stones like this. Especially if there is any connection between it and the satyrs and their own activities. But do not worry, I will not say anything about you or your abilities."

While wondering how she was going to send the message, Harry just nodded, staring at the stone himself in thought. "... I'm going to try something. It might not work, but it shouldn't hurt."

Tyrande looked up from her note-writing in confusion but watched as Harry held out his hand. Using the memories of his happy time in the forest, with Cenarius, Quetzal and Lunara, Harry whispered out the words for his spell. "Expecto Patronum."

From his outstretched hand blasted out a giant, silvery phoenix causing Harry to start surprise. This was the first time he'd used the Patronus spell unmodified since his rebirth, and a part of him realized he shouldn't have been surprised it had changed forms, but he had been. And besides being a different form, this new shape seemed both somehow more Harry's in some fashion. His father's Animagus form had seemed a connection to his past family, which he had longed for when he first learned the spell. The phoenix though, that connected to his life now.

Harry could also tell the Patronus was more powerful. The feeling of goodness, of fierce protectiveness and joy blasted out from the magical construct, filling the cave to a degree Harry had never felt before.

Tyrande gasped in delight, staring at the thing. It is as if Elune's light was given form, Although that wasn't the case. As inviting and protective as Elune was, never had calling upon her power brought along this feeling of such joy. Goodness, yes, but not joy and happiness in that act alone.

The Patronus flew twice around the cavern, then to Harry's surprise, ignored him to alight down next to Tyrande staring at her in curiosity. *Huh, it's rather more curious and alive acting than most Patronus I've seen. Is it because of Azeroth's ambient magic?*

Tentatively, Tyrande reached out a hand, and began to stroke its plumage, astonished to almost feel the sensation of real feathers under her fingers. "This is amazing! What kind of spell is this, Harry Potter?"

"Do you remember me saying that I had a spell which could scare off those soul eaters back in... where I had lived previously? This is it," Harry gestured, and ordered the Patronus to attack the black rock. "Now, if I had ordered my Patronus to attack a Dementor, the Dementor would have been destroyed, let's see what happens here."

Unfortunately, as the Phoenix turned in the direction of the stone, it already began to lose its corporeal form. Harry grimaced, and reached out a hand, closing his eyes and concentrating, pushing more of his magic into the spell, further empowering it. With that, the creature of light flashed towards the stone, landing on top of it.

But a bare instant later it was almost instantly dispelled in a pop of air and blazing light, so loud it hurt Tyrande's ears.

Harry gasped as the blowback from having his spell broken like that hit him, along with the normal tiredness from holding such a power-intensive spell. He stumbled, but Tyrande

caught his arm, glaring at the stone. She could see gouges that had been almost burned out of the stone by the phoenix's talons. These gouges were currently glowing almost with black energy, like bleeding wounds. *Or was the stone at one point a liquid? Is it more like ice instead of stone, or is it somehow volcanic in nature?*

Whatever the case, and she made a point to remember to put that concept down, Harry's attempt to destroy it had not worked.

As she helped the young human over to the cavern entrance and leaned him against the wall there, Tyrande mused aloud, "But I think you are on the right track, a **cleansing** is what is needed here, not an attempt to destroy it. Destroying it, unless we could do away with it entirely, would simply leave it in smaller bits, its nature would not change.

Tyrande cocked her head staring at the stone and frowning in thought, one finger going up to an ear and gently moving along the underside of it in what Harry recognized as a thinking gesture. "Silver," she said aloud, "silver and Elune's blessing. Do you think you could conjure true silver into being?"

Harry nodded. "I can transfigure something into silver or conjure it, but it won't last very long. Hard metals, especially rare ones, like that are tougher than say changing one stone to another or changing something into iron or steel. I'm not certain that conjured silver will do for what you want."

"At the moment, I'm not even certain that what I want will work," Tyrande admitted. "However, looking at that stone, I am more positive than ever that it is a foul, unnatural thing, and should be destroyed." She looked back towards the entrance to the cavern, then back to the stone "I only hope that there are not too many similar sites."

"In relation to the size of these mountain ranges, there probably won't be, but even one is bad," Harry agreed. He stood up, pushing away from the wall of the cavern, then looking at Tyrande. "I think I might be able to destroy that stone through continued use of the Patronus charm, but I don't know, and even if it worked, it might put me on my rear for several days. If I could figure out a way to use Nature Magic to power the darn spell maybe it would be better," he grumbled, smacking his hand against the side of the stone. "But I don't know how."

"After less than a year with Cenarius even being able to feel Nature Magic is amazing, Harry. Do not denigrate your achievements. Malfurion took nearly a century before he could do the same to any extent," Tyrande soothed, a faint smile on her face as she remembered that time, when she, Illidan, and Malfurion were young. *Things were much simpler then, before they began to fight for my hand, before I found my calling as a priestess, and before Azshara's fall from grace.*

With a shake of her head, Tyrande turned her attention to more practical matters. "First, I think that we need to open this cavern. Do you think you could carve out a large enough

hole in the ceiling? Without bringing the whole thing down," she added hastily. "That would rather defeat the purpose."

Harry frowned staring up at the ceiling. "Maybe a slow melting spell, or a drilling spell of some kind? The whole not wanting to bring the whole cavern down does limit my choices. But yes I can do that, I think. Just will take a bit of research and trial and error."

"What can I do to help?" Tyrande asked earnestly.

Harry's stomach grumbled, and he shrugged. "Prepare a campfire and some food?"

"I had forgotten for a time how young you are," Tyrande laughed, shaking her head. "The young are always hungry, I suppose, regardless of race."

Harry rolled his eyes but didn't reply. It was true, after all. His body was young and the whole idea about teenagers being walking stomachs had some firm basis in fact.

By the time Harry had figured out what kind of spell he wanted to use and had begun the work on creating a tunnel up through the ceiling of the cavern to let in daylight, Tyrande had returned, and had begun to cook over the fire. She had found some fresh herbs somehow, and had trapped a hare, which was cooking over the fire as Harry came out of the cavern. But that wasn't as surprising as the fact that a giant owl almost as large as Harry was sitting on a rocky perch nearby, as Tyrande put the finishing touches on a message, and tied it to his foot.

The giant bird turned staring at Harry, fluffing up its wings, and looking at him as Harry slumped down next to the fire. "All done. Controlling that spell was a little more difficult than I had thought though." Harry had decided to use the Gouging Spell, which he had initially learned in Herbology of all things, . But continually using it through the bedrock of the mountain had been tiring. "But where did the bird come from?"

"I called for him," Tyrande said simply, watching as the bird continued to stare at Harry, then made a happy sounding hoot, as Harry moved over and began to stroke its plumage. A bird like this would normally not even be pleased to be in the presence of most Kaldorei, let alone a human, a being from someplace beyond the forest. But the touch of Nature Magic within Harry was such that enjoyed his presence. "It will take my message back to the council."

"And will they then send help up here?" Harry asked, suddenly wary. He knew that the majority of Kaldorei would not be nearly as accepting of him and his magic as Tyrande was, regardless of his connection to Cenarius. He might get a pass from the druids who looked to Cenarius as their ultimate teacher, but not from the rest of their society.

"No. That would be pointless and would interrupt my time away from my guardians and fellow leaders, which I am not willing to do. I merely told them to be on the lookout for more black stone is all." Tyrande looked at Harry, understanding his worry, but not addressing it. It

was true after all, her people would not be happy to see someone using Arcana-type magic as openly as Harry did. And few among them would understand that it came from an entirely different type of school than that which had been previously used by the Highborne.

Instead Tyrande deliberately changed the subject, asking "Are you strong enough to start to try conjuring silver?"

Harry thought about it, then asked, "Why silver? Where I come from it has a certain defensive property against one or two types of so-called dark creatures, but..."

"Here it is the metal most easily blessed by Elune. Once that is accomplished, the silver has some holy properties. With that directly touching the black stone, and with the moon above, I believe that I can call upon Elune to erase the taint of that stone."

Harry's eyes widened at that, and he suddenly nodded, looking eager. This would be an entirely different kind of magic, one that he had never seen before, not even from Cenarius and his family. Though they revered Elune, none of them called upon her for their power. "I'll start experimenting. I don't know which method of transmutation will work best, but I can find out," he said earnestly. "But that means that we will have to stay here until nightfall, right?"

Tyrande nodded, and sniffing the air, moved over to the fire, removing the skinned hare from its bed of fresh herbs. "This is ready". The two of them ate in silence, both of them lost in their own thoughts, but strangely it wasn't an uncomfortable silence for either of them.

After having a piece of the hare, the owl took off, winging through the air with a long hoot trailing behind it. Quetzal, after demanding another heating spell from Harry, curled up around him, warming Harry in turn, as he began to take several flat stones out of his trunk along with an etching kit, working on a series of protective wards to put up during the night. Then Harry began to experiment, conjuring into being a small silver pin, and then transfiguring a piece of stone from nearby of similar size.

It turned out that transfigured silver lasted longer, although both lasted far longer than Harry had expected. In his old world, transfiguring anything to silver or metal never lasted very long. And conjuration lasted for even less time. That was alchemy territory. But here, the rules seemed a bit more elastic. The transfigured item lasted for about three hours.

By the time Tyrande came back from hunting once more he had repeated the experiment and had just created a large silver ingot around the side of his forearm as she appeared, racing up the steps like the wind. The Kaldorei woman carried two birds, which made Harry wince. He had stopped eating birds during his time with Cenarius, and even now he decided that he would rather go hungry instead.

For the rest of the day, as Harry worked on his ward stones, Tyrande watched the silver, occasionally reaching out to touch it, closing her eyes and trying to commune with Elune.

During the day that was much tougher than at night, but she still got the impression that Elune approved, and that what Tyrande wanted was indeed possible with transfigured silver.

When the moon rose once more that night Tyrande smiled up at it, her hands outstretched to either side of her as she began once again to commune with her goddess as she murmured the words to a prayer. The connection now came quickly and Tyrande's smile widened slightly before she concentrated on her task.

In front of her, the latest bit of conjured silver lay, the same size as his third experiment, conjured out of the same lump of stone and from nearby Harry watched intently. He could almost feel some kind of power, a new kind of magical energy moving within Tyrande. For a moment it was almost like he was sensing Nature Magic again for the first time, but on an entirely different frequency perhaps. It was very interesting, but that faint sense was all he could feel from it.

Tyrande touched the silver. For several moments, Harry and Quetzal both watched, as she simply held the silver in her hands in order to catch the light of the moon above. Then the ingot began to glow with its own internal light for a second, gleaming like a shard of the moon had come down and taken solid form in between Tyrande's hands. She stood up, nodded to Harry, and said simply, "Come, it is time to deal with this aberration to the natural order of the world."

Harry nodded wordlessly, deciding that speaking further would somehow break the mystical moment that had come upon them at the moment. *Is this what muggles think when they see magic, that they are seeing something unfathomable?*

The two of them moved into the cavern, where Tyrande set the silver down, and asked Harry if he could magic it up onto the black stone. She did so through gestures, as if Tyrande too felt that speaking at the moment would somehow ruin the mystical energies around them. Nodding, Harry gestured with his fingers, casting a Leviosa spell on the silver, and then gesturing it forward, until it clinked gently down on top of the black stone.

Above, the silver light of the moon shone through the hole that Harry had created, bathing both the cavern and the silver in its light. Once more, the silver, which had dimmed during the brief walk through the short tunnel, seemed to glow, and Tyrande stepped forward, her hands outstretched in prayer, her eyes closed at the moment as she mouthed the words of a prayer again, asking the goddess for aid in cleansing this place.

The beam of moonlight from above seems to grow brighter, and Tyrande and the ingot of silver both shimmered in reflected glory, while the black stone underneath began to smoke and sizzle, foul smoke erupting from where it touched the silver.

The gleaming from the silver quickly became so bright that Harry had to close his eyes, and he could still see through his eyelids that the glow was getting brighter and brighter that

seem ethereal glow, coming from the silver itself. Behind him, Quetzal, who had followed them in, ducking his head and closing his eyes tightly, twisting around and exiting the cave quickly. "§I don't think you need to be here for this,§" the snake hissed. "§And something tells me that something is about to go boom.§"

Harry's instincts were also telling him the same thing, but instead of running, he moved towards Tyrande, arriving just as the reflected light within her went out. She stumbled back but Harry grabbed her arm, and asked lightly, "So, is this when we run?"

Wordlessly, Tyrande nodded her head, too tired to speak, and Harry propelled her towards the nearest entrance to the cavern. The two of them had barely gotten outside when there was a tremendous crackling 'boom' behind them, and a rumble of displaced stone.

As he turned around at the entrance Harry saw that the cavern hadn't been destroyed, but the black stone certainly had been. Thanks to the light of the moon above he could stare straight into cavern now and could see that the black stone was completely gone. In its place was a kind of splash of silver and black marks spread out across the stone of the cavern.

Beside him, Tyrande straightened up, also turning to stare, her breath coming in gasps. "Ask, and Elune provides." That was as far as Tyrande got before she collapsed, the spellwork having utterly drained her.

And why wouldn't it? Communing with her goddess, she had been informed that she was correct, the black stone was from the Old God Yogg-Saron. It was in fact the foul being's own blood, the blood seeped into the stone of his prison and then eventually forming in tiny veins through the stone up to the surface. The prison was still strong, the creature could not break free, but as Tyrande had told Harry, it could certainly still influence events.

Luckily, once destroyed, the stone would not be able to reform for a long while even as the Kaldorei thought of such things. It took thousands of years for even a tiny droplet of his black ichor to reach the surface, and far longer for it to build up to the point of being able to create such abominations as the Frostmaul giants. These droplets of black stone had been here since before the Sundering.

Not that this particularly mattered at the moment, as Tyrande collapsed into unconsciousness, stumbling to the side and down to the ground like a marionette with her strings cut.

Harry caught her, but in so doing, he had forgotten one important factor. Tyrande was quite a bit taller than his currently teenage body. Catching her like this, his arms around her waist, had pressed the Tyrande's chest directly into Harry's face, filling his nose with her smell, a kind of lavender and flowery scent of some kind, which, coupled with the feel of her soft skin against his face was enough to cause a bright blush to cross his features.

Nearby, Quetzal hissed in amusement. "§I thought that touching a mammal in the mammary glands was supposed to be some kind of sexual thing. Is that not the case, Harry? Not that I can see the appeal myself.§"

Turning his head very slightly, which caused Tyrande's breasts to bounce lightly against his head, Harry glared as well as he could through his current blush at his reptilian companion. "We will never speak of this ever, am I Understood? Not even Tyrande will know of this moment. Or do you want to taste the scent of skunk whenever you eat **anything** for the rest of your natural life?"

"§I'll be good,§" Quetzal replied hastily, although he was still hissing to himself in amusement, his tongue flicking in and out. He was greatly amused by his friend's embarrassment right now.

With Quetzal carrying Tyrande, the two of them cleaned up their campsite, moving it back down the trail a bit. Harry had a thought of retreating entirely to where they had met the Frostsabers but decided that might take them in the wrong direction from the next target, and so made camp a little ways down from where the steps had begun. This also served as a more defensible position, just in case the other Frostmaul giants became aware of the destruction of their fellows somehow. After what he had just seen, Harry was not going to assume that anything was impossible.

They stayed there for two days, with Quetzal and Harry doing some hunting, and between them they sacred a giant bear out of hibernation. It had seemingly been able to avoid the Frostmaul giants somehow but in attacking Quetzal showed that had been luck rather than basic intelligence or instincts.

On the second night of their stay at the steps, Tyrande revived as the moon once more rose into the sky. The first words out of her mouth were, "Did it work?"

Laughing, Harry said that it had, and told her about what he had discovered when he reentered the cavern.

"Good," Tyrande said with a sigh, then, she blushed very lightly, her lavender skin noticeably darkening around her face, as her stomach roared in hunger. "I don't suppose we have some food?"

"Would bear stew do?"

Evidently it did, because in the next few moments, Tyrande had three helpings of it. After her hunger had been sated, Tyrande said thoughtfully, "That is what we will have to with all such places I'm afraid. While I was communing with Elune, she gave me some information about that black stone, which she called saronite." With that, she relayed what her goddess had told her of the blood of Yogg-Saron.



Harry frowned, wondering if there was a way to stop the saronite from rising to the surface like that. *But if it just pools underneath, would it then start corrupting the land and the mountains? I just don't know enough about how that would go frankly. Nor Harry thought ruefully do I have any idea of how to stop it from happening in the first place.* Instead of giving voice to those thoughts, he asked, "And will it put you out next time like it did here?"

"Perhaps. Being the conduit for my goddess's power is draining normally. Being the conduit as she does battle with the blood of an Old God, a creation of pure corruption? That was worse." Tyrande shrugged. "Still, it must be done to do away with the Frostmaul giants at the very least. I can only hope that such patches of foulness have not begun to appear in the forest."

"Then I suppose that we should get going," Harry said, standing up and moving around the camp cleaning up, knowing Tyrande preferred to travel at night. "That is unless you want to rest some more."

Tyrande shook her head, then with a smile gestured to Quetzal, who had been watching their discussion from nearby. "I can rest as we go."

"§Oh yes, that's me, just the beast of burden to you two legs,§" Quetzal muttered, but he was too full of bear meat to put the proper amount of sarcasm into his voice.

With a plan in place, and a chosen method of attack, the various battles against the Frostmaul giants became rather straightforward. Find them, place Tyrande nearby, defend Tyrande with wards, conjure bunnies, attack from behind. Rinse, repeat. Fighting truly stupid enemies was a treasure that neither Tyrande nor Harry had much experience with, but they were greatly enjoying it now. Although of course, as Harry had been concerned about, dealing with the saronite still took time.

Nor did that time decrease as Tyrande continued to act as a conduit for Elune's power. Every cleansing would see her unconscious for at least two days, and sometimes as many as four days, reviving as the moon came up.

Time passed quickly as the trio traversed the mountains. Even with Quetzal and Harry's spellwork, it was often slow going, and as they moved through the mountains, finding food also became somewhat troublesome, taking time out from their travelling.

And then there was the weather to deal with, which was often very nasty. Even Kaldorei and Harry with his magic spells could not see well in a blizzard.

But despite that, the ease of the actual battles allowed them to concentrate more on getting to know one another. Although they did abandon the twenty questions format. Looking back on it later, Harry felt that there were a few moments that meant the most to him, and

though he didn't know it, Tyrande too, as they moved from acquaintances to traveling companions and fellow warriors, to actual friends.

The first occurred five weeks and three similar ambushes later. It began with Harry and Quetzal trading barbs and gibes. Quetzal had just insulted Harry's physical youth and had hinted at the moment with Tyrande after that first ambush, and Harry had quickly silenced the snake. This infuriated Quetzal, and he quickly shimmied, tossing Harry off his body and Tyrande too. Tyrande was able to use her Kaldorei reflexes to grab at a passing tree, which had grown out of a small crack in the mountain. Harry however was smacked into the snow, where Quetzal's tail thwacked him down deeper into it before lifting away.

Gasping, Harry pushed himself with difficulty out of the snow, the snow having been the kind of white puffy snow that had barely anything to push out of. He glared angrily at his companion, while Tyrande pulled herself up and onto it as she watched proceedings. "What did you do that for!?"

Quetzal glared at him, flipping his tongue towards his mouth, and opening his maw wide, obviously angrily, although the sound was still silenced.

Grumbling, Harry canceled the silence spell on his companion, but then used a modified Accio spell, like the one he had used to grab multiple fish, to grab up a giant amount of snow, packing it into a large snowball and then tossing it at the snack. "I think you need to cool off!"

"§You warm-blooded bastard! This means war!§" Quetzal gasped as the large snow smashed into his face. He then retaliated, using his tail to smash some snow back towards Harry like a wave.

As Tyrande watched, shaking her head in amusement, the two of them began a snow fight. "Given your age, I suppose I should not be surprised that you have moments of childishness like this," she said aloud, only to squawk as a snowball hit her, levitated up from behind and flung with unerring accuracy into the side of Tyrande's face.

She glared down at Harry, who grinned up at her. "After the life I've led, I think I deserve to have some moments of childishness," he quipped.

Tyrande's eye narrowed. "Interesting terms used there. I know you are older than you looked, but you sound as if your life has somehow been renewed."

Harry shrugged, not answering but Tyrande sensed a moment of seriousness. Yet after a few moments, she shook her head. "Well, I always knew you were older than you looked." Then she reached over to a crook in the tree which had accumulated some snow of its own and began to create her own snowball. "And this is supposed to be my sabbatical after all. Acting like a child for an hour should be alright."

With that, she flung the snowball down with unerring accuracy right into Harry's face. Harry would tell her what he wanted when he was ready. Until then, Tyrande would not pry. Harry recognized this, and even as he fell backward sent her a wider smile than normal.

The two of them also had several discussions about past battles now that Harry being much older than he looked was out in the open, if not the method behind his rebirth. And both of them discovered that they had similar codes in a way, a mixture of honor, pragmatism and kindness. Harry in turn learned about the histories of her people from Tyrande's view, the view of a person who had been involved with many of the greatest, most momentous moments in that history.

One evening, they had fallen back to the copse of trees where they had first met the Frostsabers. There they found that several other smaller families of Frostsabers had joined the king and queen's clan there. The king had sent out lone hunters in search of their fellows, and as Harry and Tyrande had begun to prune back the numbers of Frostmaul giants, this task had begun to bear fruit.

Tyrande spent much of the night playing around with Shy-rotam, which Harry had thought ridiculously cute, seeing the last bits of her decorum and self-control disappearing. But he wouldn't say it aloud. After all, she had joined his moment of childishness. So instead he played around with a few of the other cubs, while Quetzal watched in somnolent torpor, having eaten the better part of another bear who had decided it didn't like the giant snake coming into its lair.

Shy-rotam had grown quite a bit in the months since they had been here, and Tyrande had quite a lot of fun roughhousing with the little Frostsaber, enhancing their connection further. Now, with Shy-rotam curled up on her legs, Tyrande sat down with Harry for a meal he had cooked at the fire. Eventually as the day wore on, she opened up about her involvement with the overthrowing of Queen Azshara. That movement, and the reason behind it, was the moment that had truly shaped Kaldorei history. And yet, though it was almost six thousand years in the past, it remained prominent in her thoughts.

"It was necessary, but I never wanted to be our leader. But when Prince Farondis died, someone had to take command of the rebellion. And that was Malfurion and I. Now Malfurion is involved in the battle in the Emerald Dream, keeping Yogg-Saron's darkness at bay there, while I lead our people. Now I cannot turn away from it. Especially now perhaps, when in this time of peace, factions and divisions are arising within my people. That cannot be allowed to go so far as to damage our unity."

"Then I suppose we have something in common, although you couldn't pay me to become a leader," Harry said with a chuckle, that was almost but not quite bitter. Tyrande looked at him in question, and he shrugged his shoulders. "Neither of us have it within us to turn away when we see something that needs doing, particularly when it comes to defending other people."

Tyrande smiled at that, and then allowed her expression to turn sardonic as she once more showed her own sense of humor by looking around them then back to Harry. "You don't say..."

Another moment on Tyrande's side came several months after that discussion. They had decided to push on during the day due to a heavy snowstorm having fallen the past few nights, slowing their progress significantly.

In the light of day, Tyrande looked at Harry thoughtfully, causing him to ask her what was wrong. "I don't have something on my face, do I?"

"In a way you do. Hairs," she supplied with a chuckle. "You seem to be growing a beard. And at such a young age for your people too. At least what I assume is a young age, perhaps your people mature faster than mine in that manner as well as in others."

"Sixteen going on seventeen? That's pretty young for us yes," Harry answered dryly. "Not that that ever... well never mind." Harry raised a hand, and touched his face, feeling the hairs there. "That's interesting, I don't remember growing hair like this was when I was this age before. Still, I don't think it is all that unusual."

While he hadn't shared the full details about his new lease on life, Tyrande understood that this was indeed a second life for Harry in some fashion, though she didn't know how it had come about. That was somewhat worrisome, but again, Harry's general attitude, and the fact that he was a student of Cenarius kept it from bothering Tyrande too much.

"Truly? Growing a beard so young was not unusual among your people?"

"I wouldn't call it a beard," Harry chuckled, "more peach fuzz than anything else."

"And yet, even that is more than most of the men of my race would be able to do at anything less than two hundred years old. Indeed even afterwards our males take decades to grow much of anything. I know many a Kaldorei youth who would love to be able to grow a beard so quickly. My mate Malfurion, spent more than a two decades growing his beard."

Harry shook his head with a laugh. "That speaks of far more dedication to a beard than I could ever have, in fact, I'm thinking about shaving this bit off."

That caused Tyrande to blink in surprise. "Everything? Why ever would you do so?"

"Because it itches something fierce," Harry said with a laugh, causing Tyrande to laugh aloud as well, shaking her head with a chuckle at her friend's words, then pausing suddenly as she realized that she had thought of Harry as a friend despite the fact that the two of them had not even spent a year getting to know one another yet. *And yet, perhaps it is not so unusual as*

*it might seem at first.* She thought, allowing her smile to widened, at which Harry's did the same.

There were lots of little moments like that. When he created the bath for them, two separate ones, separated by the vast bulk of Quetzal, who reveled in the heat coming off of the bath. Harry didn't peek, despite the frank appreciation Tyrande could see in his eyes occasionally when he looked at her. Indeed, beyond looking at her as if she was a woman, which few of her own people would allow themselves to do, Harry was always the perfect gentlemen, despite the teasing she inflicted on him occasionally for his physical age.

Another moment was when Tyrande told Harry more about her lover, and when Harry in turn told Tyrande about his past associations. Ginny and the two of them breaking up in order to defend Ginny's family. Hermione, and how he had refused to become involved with her for fear of what might have happened. Tyrande had completely understood that decision and talked about how she and Malfurion had been leery of becoming involved for fear of one or the other being seen as a target for their enemies.

"We did get together, but by that point neither of us had any family left to threaten, save Illidan, and he was far more dangerous in a fight than either of us. I completely understand why you and Hermione made that decision. In a perfect world I have no doubt you and she would be happy together, friends make for the best lovers. But this is not a perfect world, Harry Potter, no matter where you came from that truth is eternal. And you are the type to run to the sounds of battle. Anyone with you must be willing and able to do the same."

"I understand that. But understanding doesn't make it any easier to live with though," Harry retorted somewhat tartly.

"No, nor should it. Life is often bittersweet filled with what ifs and supposes. The trick is to not get tied down by them," Tyrande answered serenely.

The campaign into the mountains lasted nearly eight months and perhaps the most important discussion in terms of Harry's growth going into the future occurred as the campaign began to wind down, the trips between ambushes becoming longer and longer. The Point Me spell was simply that useful, but the weather was against them more often than not, and at times they did have to find ways around certain obstacles. Yet the Frostmaul giants themselves were no real threat to either of them.

They checked back in with the Frostsabers every month, finding more and more Frostsabers congregating in that secret Dell every time. By the time the campaign started to wind down, bands of Frostsabers had been sent down into the hills for food for the growing clan. Normally lone hunters, many had begun to learn to band together as wolves did.

That night, after again playing with Shy-rotam, who now was big enough that Tyrande felt that she would be taking Shy-rotam with her when she left the mountains, Harry explained

about what he had been studying with Cenarius, and the problems he was running into with learning Nature Magic. "I don't know why, but I've run into some kind of bottleneck. Cenarius said it is probably because of my Chimera status, and my not understanding my own nature."

Harry shook his head, remembering the last conversation he had with his Shan'do. "He said to get in touch with my various sides, but I don't even know where to begin with the Basilisk. I've tried to meditate on it, thinking it might be like Quetzal, but it hasn't worked. I mean let's face it, the only basilisk I ever met was the one that injected me with its venom to the point that I needed Phoenix tears to stay alive."

"§One snake is most decidedly like another, as I've told you before,§" Quetzal retorted, the words 'idiot' left unsaid but certainly hinted at.

"Oy, I know that idiot, I just through that observing you or a cobra would give me an idea of what the basilisk side of me is like. But then again, even my attempts to get in touch with my phoenix side hasn't worked. No matter how hard I try to meditate while remembering Fawkes or anything I think is connected to a phoenix hasn't worked."

By this point, Harry had shared his status with Tyrande, although he was still silent on where he had come from. Still, Tyrande had gotten enough hints at this point to believe that Harry was a planeswalker, coming from some other world to this one. That should have made Tyrande even more concerned about him, and why he was here. But every time she communed with Elune during the past few months to ask for aid in destroying the saronite deposits, Elune had been very firm. Harry was not here to cause problems, although problems might come from his being here. Rather, Harry was here as an ally, and eventually, perhaps as important an ally as the green or red dragon flight.

Although she was still somewhat bemused by the idea of phoenix tears. An animal's tears having such amazing healing properties? That was very strange. Basilisk venom at least she could understand, generally speaking. But the two of them combining to change Harry on such a fundamental level? Now as the two friends continued to bicker, Tyrande leaned back, her cub curled up next to them, stroking the young female feline's head as she thought about Harry's issues, when an idea came to her.

Gently coughing she drew her friend's attention and began. "I think part of the problem with your interacting with Nature Magic comes from the fact that you are trying to learn like a Kaldorei. Meditate about connecting to nature, reaching out to the Emerald Dream as a whole before, eventually, deciding on which animal or animals to begin to emulate. Perhaps that is not the way forward for you. Perhaps, you need a new medium. One that will allow you in turn to understand the animals within."

Then Tyrande laughed. "And of course, you don't have twenty to thirty years to spend in meditation before discovering your own connection to nature."

"No I don't," Harry chuckled as well. "I mean I probably could use that time, but I don't know if I would be able to stay on task for that long. But what do you suggest?"

"There are other ways to commune with nature. Through the use of totems, sacred beasts and shamanism rather than directly as Cenarius would teach you." She coughed delicately, looking away. "Further, while Kaldorei are able to achieve certain mental states through dedication and fasting, you might not be able to do the same without... medicinal aid."

Harry blinked, then nodded slowly, the movement speeding up as the idea took hold. "Like the Tauren? I ran into one of them during that whole satyr business. But he was so badly drained and weakened by whatever they had done to him that I sent him back to the Furbolg village where he had been staying." Then his lips quirked. "And 'medicinal aid'? Do explain that one Tyrande."

"I understand that the Tauren, who really are the only race my people have had peaceful contact with, ingest certain herbs and herb smoke to aid them in achieving higher mental states as they commune with their totems, at least for the first few times." As Harry looked at her in amusement, Tyrande hastened on. "Most of the Tauren might have left Ashenvale for the south but others moved to the Broken Isles, and it is those who my people still have relations with. They are called the Highmountain Tribe, and their mountain bears the same name."

"That name, I recognize that from Cenarius' history lessons. That's the name of the Tauren leader who brought their tribes together to join with yours during the War of the Ancients, correct? Huln Highmountain."

"Yes. They have long been allies of my people, although distant ones. While the other Tauren tribes left our forests long ago and cut off contact, the Highmountain clan has never done so, and our warriors often journey to one another's lands. I think if you merge their teachings about sacred beasts with the meditation that Cenarius has been teaching you and your own people's mental disciplines, this Occlumency and mental realm business, it could work to get you in touch with your animal sides."

With a laugh, Harry got to his feet. "In that case, let's finish this campaign and then you can introduce me to the Tauren. After all, we are coming up on the end of your year-long sabbatical, aren't we?"

Tyrande actually winced at the reminder but nodded reluctantly. She was somewhat dreading going back to work, although not as high priestess. That, she would never regret in any way. But the mantle of leadership was still not one settled comfortably on her shoulders. "We might run out of time before we can leave for the Broken Isles, but if so, I will write you a letter of introduction to them." *Or perhaps make it a formal diplomatic mission. That seems like a better idea, frankly.*

Moreover, Tyrande knew that she would have to tell her fellow leaders about Harry, and she was not looking forward to it. The fear and loathing of the Arcana ran deep in her people. *Still, I will make them understand. Whatever else he might be, wherever he truly comes from, Harry is not evil, and I think he could be a very strong ally for our people.*

A month and a half later, most of which had been spent traveling to and from through the mountains, Harry's Point Me spell no longer found any Frostmaul giants. When he tried to use it to instead discover the black rock, no matter how he visualized the black rock in his mind when he cast the spell, it didn't work. It would simply point to the nearest stone that was colored black. So while the issue with the saronite might come back, there were no more Frostmaul giants living within these mountains.

With that, Tyrande, after one last visit to the Frostsabers where Shy-Rotam joined them. With the Frostsaber, now more than cub but nowhere near fully grown, gamboling alongside them, Tyrande led them down into Ashenvale and then to the east to the edge of the forest and the continent of Kalimdor.

### **End episode 1**

I am not happy with the ending of this chapter, but I REALLLY did not want to take an entire episode with getting to know you discussions and I didn't think of a better place to end it. Anyway, I hope you all liked this, even if it isn't the final product.