

Don't make gods angry

Day was very cold and very rainy. Sky was dark and full of clouds. Few houses were burnt because of thunderbolts. You would rather say it was night. It looked like gods were angry. Very angry.

In orphanage day was quite typical. Younger children were crying, older were fighting. Marvo – one of the nurses was baking third cake this evening, when she heard a loud knock. She washed her hands and walked towards the door. She opened them and saw nothing. She had wanted to close the door when she heard a faint cry. On the ground, there was lying little basket with a baby inside.

She went inside and put basket next to the fireplace. She took off the blanket and saw a baby-elf. He had very black hair and perfectly blue eyes. He was very dirty and weak. He tried to cry because of lack of food and cold, but he didn't have enough strength to do this. Marvo was scared about him. Not only because he was so weak. Orphanage was only for humans and being an only elf among humans was rather a bad situation.

So he stayed with Marvo, who became like his mother. She named him Drago, because he was strong like dragon and he fought like one. He was generally very quiet and everyone liked him, but when someone had hurt him or had done anything else to him, he could fight to blood. And he never was a loser.

One night someone came to Drago. It was night of his 25th birthday and he was still a child. He was sleeping when tall man appeared in his room. He was very skinny and very pale. He had extremely black robe and even blacker hood. He walked to Drago's bed slowly. He was looking at him for a while. Than he said touching Drago's forehead:

- Remember. Death is life. Through death you can live forever. Controlling it is unbelievable power. Do not waste it.

He stayed beside the bed for a while and walked into nowhere. No one saw him coming and no one saw him going away. There was only one sign of his presence. On Drago's bed, there was lying one ring that fell of the necromancer's finger.

Drago stayed in the orphanage until he was almost 50. He took the ring that he had found. It was black with some gold inscriptions. No one knew the language they were written in and so no one could read them. Drago didn't know whose ring it was, who made it or why it was on his bed. He only knew it was very important for him to keep it.

One day tragedy happened. Someone started a fire. Whole orphanage was burnt. Only few children didn't die. Ring helped Drago survive. Young elf didn't have serious injuries even when big part of a roof fell on him. So, he was alive but had nowhere to go. Only clue he had was mysterious ring.

But first he went to the nearest tavern. Unfortunately, he chose a bad moment. When he walked in there, there was a fight. Elves were fighting dwarfs. Barkeeper was hiding behind the bar. Few elves were lying unconscious under their tables. Dwarfs, as usually, were sober. Only dwarf on the floor had fallen down with few swords in his chest and a dagger in his eyes after killing five elves with his ornamented battleaxe. He also had a spear in his throat. Dwarfs were stronger but there was larger number of elves. Drago didn't even walked in – just opened the door – when a stool hit him. Than he passed out. Someone tried to take his ring. But when he touched it, he only burnt his hands. Also he couldn't take anything from Drago's pockets. Ring protected him.

From the time Drago had left the Orphanage someone had been watching him. He had been like a shadow. Hiding all the time and always barely visible. When man had tried to take Drago's ring and had been only burnt, this man smiled. After a while he walked towards lying elf, saying words of protective spell. He took the body and walked away disappearing in mist.

When Drago opened his eyes, he saw nothing except darkness. He felt like darkness was everywhere around him, filling everything. He almost felt darkness running through him. He could also feel wave of cold air. He touched the wall and felt rock. He tried to move along the wall. He hit himself few times, but finally he touched candelabra. There was also stuff to light it.

Light didn't manage to totally overcome the darkness but it was bright enough for Drago to see what was in the room. It was made of huge blocks of stones. There was only one window with massive shutters on it. He tried to open them. When he finally did it... he saw only rock. Also there were two holes in opposite walls, through which air was coming in and out of the room.

Besides the bed there was table, stool and chest of drawers, which was locked. On the table there was some food and a pitcher containing water. Drago didn't try food nor water 'cos they might have been poisoned. He tried to open the door but they were protected with a basic shock spell. When it worked, elf passed out.

When he woke up, he was in his bed again. He opened his eyes and saw a wizard sitting on a stool and looking at him.

- At last. – Said magician. – That’s good you’re awake. You probably want to know why you’re here, don’t you?

Drago said nothing and just stared at the wizard. He was scared. He didn’t understand why someone would kidnap him. He wasn’t anyone important. He even wasn’t a child of anyone important or rich. He didn’t have any unusual abilities or much money. He was just ordinary orphan. He thought that being silent was the best he could do.

- So? Aren’t you going to say anything? OK. As you want, When you’ll need something, just clap your hands and my servant will come. Oh, I almost forgot. He will come here in a moment and bring you new clothes. You can’t wear these rags all the time.

And so did the servant come. You could say it was a ghoul. But you could also clearly see that he was alive. He looked as he had survived explosion or failed magical experiment. He didn’t have any hair and one of his eyes was made of glass. There were few of his teeth missing. Few places on his body were burnt by fire, magic or acid. He didn’t say anything. Just left clothes and walked away

Drago’s clothes were indeed in very poor condition. He took them off and put on the new ones. He didn’t really like them, but what could he do. He looked at food and thought that it might not have been such a bad idea to eat something. He was very hungry. He took one of the apples from the table and ate a small piece of it. He waited for a moment and when nothing happened – ate the rest of the fruit. It was so delicious that in very short time, there was no food on the table. Just after he finished eating a chicken leg, he felt terrible pain in his stomach. He just sat on the bed and clapped his hands. Moment later came wizard’s servant and said:

- How can I help you, sir?

- Bring me some medicine, please. I have a terrible stomachache – Drago asked.

- Yes sir! Immediately.

Drago wasn’t used to such things. Usually he had been ordered to do something. And it had been him who had had to say “Sir! Yes sir!” when one of the principals in the Orphanage had told him to do something. On the other hand, he enjoyed it. He liked not being a servant. It was a better life than the one he had had before.

Moment later came sorcerer himself. He had a little flask with green elixir in it. He gave it to Drago. Young elf took it and drank what was inside. Then he asked:

- Thank you for the medicine, but who you are? And what am I doing here? Am I your prisoner or what?

- I’m glad you’ve decided to speak with me. I’m Ion the archmage. And you’re not my prisoner. I want to teach you something. I brought you here, so that you could survive and find out what your destiny is.

- My destiny? What are you talking about? And what do you know about me?

- I know enough. Not everything. But I will be able to help you. Your future is written on the ring you have.

Drago first looked at Ion, than at his ring and than at the wizard again.

- I knew it was connected with me – He said. – Somehow I knew. But how? Why?

- It’s connected with someone from your family. He once possessed it. Or she... I don’t know yet. But let me see it.

Drago said nothing. He was thinking. After some time he took off the ring and gave it to the mage.

- Death is life. Arngoth – kingdom of death...” I can’t read the rest. It’s too faint.

- “Death is life”? – Asked Drago. – I heard it in a past. But I don’t know who said it and when it was said. And Arngoth. What is that? I’ve never heard about such kingdom. Where is it? And why is it written that it’s a kingdom of death?

- It’s a kingdom ruled by a powerful necromancer. – Drago could see fear in Ion’s eyes. – It’s very long way from here to there. And it’s called kingdom of death because it is such kingdom. There are not many humans’ settlements there. Those people who have their homes there live in fear. Death rules there. The worst kind of it. Necromancers’ death. Zombies, skeletons, bone dragons and many, many more. And if you want to find out more about yourself, I’m afraid you’ll have to go there.

Drago was terrified. He had to find out who he was. On the other hand, going to such place wasn’t very optimistic option.

- I know that it’s a hard choice. Go to your room now and rest. And whatever you will decide, I’ll do everything in my power to help you. – Offered the wizard.

So did Drago do. He immediately felt asleep. And had a dream. He was sitting in a long hall by a table. Around him there were a lot of strange looking people. Someone gave him a golden cup with some liquid in it. He drank a little of it. It had a very bitter taste but Drago didn’t manage to resist desire of drinking it. So he emptied a cup and saw everything becoming black.

Next day wizard’s servant found Drago’s body in his bed. No one knew what had happened to him. At least no human did. Gods knew. They were angry when little bay-elf was born because they knew that if he

meets with his father, necromancer will surely make his kingdom bigger and bigger every day. And that could threaten gods also. So when Drago was so close to meeting his father, they poisoned his soul. He died almost immediately.

Necromancer somehow knew that his son died. He was angry. But he had a surprise for gods that they knew nothing about. His second son, born shortly after the first one. And he knew who he was and was ready to rejoin with his father.