

Handwritten Arabic calligraphy in a highly stylized, cursive script (likely Thuluth or similar) on lined paper. The text is arranged in four distinct groups, possibly representing a single word or a short phrase. The top group is the most prominent, followed by a group to the left, a group to the right, and a final group at the bottom. The ink is dark, and the lines are clearly defined against the light background.

## PROLOGUE

*King Trixus* of the Kingdom *Clacto* was a very powerful, wealthy and famous; he ruled his kingdom like no other and had numerous mines where he stored all his riches and treasures, some included the trophies he got from other kingdoms and the statues of most of the important men of *Clacto* and beyond.

In all the secrecy of his mines and riches, there laid one unique chamber within the mines; in a tomb which was built and crafted especially for him, he kept a specific weapon, an armour to be precise. He uses it only for ceremonial events and sometimes in battle removing it when it gets too heavy on the inside.

The armour which was crafted by the most powerful sorcerer of all ages, *Zamundarius the Great* casted a spell on it that whoever possessed the armour would be one and the same with it, the more it lasted undisturbed the more its power would develop. The armour had only one rule; that it chooses its own master and only its master has the sole right to wield its powers.

After *King Trixus'* death, his heir apparent, *Lolaus* took over. *Lolaus* being a greedy and self-centred man changed *Clacto* into a military camp and termed his nation to others 'the *Enemy's Front*'.

One day the armour lost interest in him and decided to leave; he had just finished a very long and sorrowful battle having only him and his captain left and was on his way home alongside his captain when he was attacked. The armour which has already fallen off him made him an exposed prey and was killed almost in an instant. The captain though managed to escape by pretending to be dead after being struck by an arrow in his left abdomen.

*After arriving home with bruises all over, the wounded captain ordered the most loyal of his soldiers to take the King's son, Tracus and wife, Helen out of the kingdom because they were no longer safe.*

*The armour on losing an owner laid in rest until a day when it shall rise again and bring upon its new owner strength as never before.*

## CHAPTER ONE

### 200 Years Later

“Hey, wait up”

“You are so slow, hurry up”

“You are too fast, what do you want to show me anyway?”

“Stop whining and hurry up”

“Seriously if this is a prank I will ...”

“Finally, you can stop your whining now”

“What the hell is this?” totally bewildered

“I don’t know, I just bumped into it on my way back from school yesterday”

“School ...? Your house isn’t in this direction at all. What were you really doing?”

“You always did know how to pester my life best; anyway that’s a story for another day. For now we need to start digging”

“Start digging for...?”

“For heaven’s sake, to take that thing out of course”

“Why should we?”

“I don’t know. Stop being an ass, just pass me the shovel”

### Moments Later...

“Wow, it’s beautiful”

“Yeah it is, it was worth the trouble too”

“How did you find it?”

“My dad has been doing a lot of research on it but unfortunately for him, when he was about getting his reward after years of search, he passed out unexpectedly”

“It was quite a day, one I always wish to forget each time I think of it. Why did you continue?”

“I believed in him, many people didn’t and mocked him severally, I wish to prove them all wrong”

“Come on, you shouldn’t involve yourself in such cases”

“I should and I will. Enough talking, let’s lift this thing up, alright?”

“Alright”

“One... two... three...”

With a heavy sigh of relieve “that is one heavy armour”

“Indeed it is”

**Hours Earlier...**

“Marc?”

“What ...? I didn't do anything mum”

“Sure about that?”

“Absolutely”

“What then does the principal want to see me for?”

“Anything but definitely not my case”

“I wish I could believe that”

“You don't trust me?”

“I do but I don't trust your mischief”

“Mum ...?”

“Finish your breakfast, I'll drive you to school, see your principal and then head to the office”

“Seems you got the morning figured out already”

“I sure do, as always”

The dining which was a small room with large enough space for a dozen or a little more contained a perfectly polished and styled wooden dining set for eight, it had a white silk flowery linen on the table covering the central part, on it laid a large bowl of fresh fruits; some oranges, apples and bananas. By the rear edge which faced the kitchen Marc sat and was enjoying a nutritional cereal breakfast.

On entering the dining room “time to go son”

“Right timing then”

“How I wish you were a little more like me”

“Ooh too bad, I needed your affections more, that’s why I chose Dad’s characters”

“Haha, you sure took everything from him, even his looks”

“Except for the eyes, I always preferred yours”

“Thanks darling”

“No need to thank me mum”

“Sure?”

“Yeah, but it could be in kind, you know?”

“Thanks but no thanks dear”

“Mum ...?”

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“Marc, how would we get this thing to somewhere safe; besides where is actually safe enough to put a thing such as this? What about your place?”

“After what happened to my dad, the police have not left us alone for an ounce second, they watch us day-in day-out. Taking it home won’t be a very nice plan I’m afraid”

“I guess my place is the last option”

“Won’t your mother be mad; I’m sure she would be worried sick”

“She would be if she sees it, she won’t see it, at least not yet”

“Let’s find a way to take it over then, it is one heavy piece”

“The person who originally owned this was really a mouthful”

“Haha, it seems so”

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“Mrs Fiore”

“Good morning Principal”

“Good morning. How are you doing?”

“I’m fine, thank you”

“Please have a seat”

“Thank you”

“You’re welcome”

“You called for me”

“Indeed I did call for you”

“Hope it hasn’t anything to do with my son?”

“I’m afraid it does”

Sighing heavily “what did he do this time around?”

“Mrs Fiore please calm down, he hasn’t been mischievous of late”

Smiling warmly as best as she possible could at the moment “I’m calm thanks and I’m also glad to know that he hasn’t been mischievous too; why then did you call for me?”

“Give me a second”

The Principal a little slightly overweighed wore a cotton white shirt tucked into a black trouser and wore a matching tie of red, white and black, all in slant successive strokes.

The principal’s office was actually a little large for a principal but nonetheless it was very cosy and pleasant. Around the walls hung three large portraits of the President, the Governor of the state and himself; the portraits were directly facing the entrance, while around the walls laid other decorative pictures, mostly wildlife photographs, giving the room a uniquely elegant look.

Papers were stacked on top and directly beside a shelf in the room in neat succession; the shelf was beside the principal’s

desk. Left of the desk laid another trophies, medals and memoirs all wrapped and perfectly laid to rest on the shelf.

The principal buried himself deeply for a few minutes looking for something on his book shelf; after about ten minutes he returned back to his seat looking rather spent but had a gratifying look on his face though.

“I’m sorry for the delay Mrs Fiore, Ms Geremi isn’t going to be around today and I have an ugly feeling I’m really going to miss her”

“She is your secretary, you have the right to”

“You and your husband share the same humour level. May his soul rest in peace” sounding down and sober

“Amen”

“Why I called you here was actually to give you this”

Tossing a rolled lengthy paper towards her; she opened it and couldn’t make out words until it just came out all at ones  
“This is my husband’s; how did it get to you, is it Marc again?”

“Marc’s teacher brought it to me yesterday, he collected it from him and because it looked rather important for a boy to be handling he sent it to me”

“I’m glad I did”

“I have to be on my way now, I’m getting late for work”

“Sure, it was nice having you here madam”

*“I’m so going to kill that boy”* she thought furiously as she walked out of the door.

## CHAPTER TWO

“This thing is so heavy; I almost died carrying it here you know?”

“Sure, I feel your pain bro” Marc smiled creepily

“I know that smile Marc I just hope you aren’t mocking me?”

“Me? Why would I ...”

“Better”

“Why would I mock you when you mock yourself every day?”

“Marc if you weren’t my friend you would have eaten your words instantly”

“Wow, what a threat”

“Come on; am I not up for it?”

“Ah, what a question”

“You are impossible”

“Gush, what an appraisal”

“I’m going to kill you through your arse Marc”

“I’m counting on it bro”

“How does your mum cope?”

“She is managing; I’m not so crazy around her, but you ...”

“I know, no need reporting again”

“Haha ... that was my line”

“Yeah, I stole it after you made me realise I talk too much”

“I know, stop reporting”

“But ...”

“I said stop repor...”

“You ...”

“I said st...”

“Okay, let me ...”

“You are still reporting, you know?”

“I know: now get your ass down here and move this damn old armour of yours to the basement”

“Yes sir” Marc kept chuckling as they took the armour to the basement

“Could you stop?”

“Stop what?”

“Flashing your teeth which aren’t exactly white”

“Ooh ... and should yours be on a better scale then?”

“Come on Marc, get serious”

“I’m serious when I get flogged seriously in the buttock”

“Thanks for the tip”

“Don’t try it”

“And if I do?”

“You would so regret it”

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“You finally remembered you had a home”

“I was at Steve’s place”

“As always; what have you two been up to, or rather what have you been involving Steve in?”

“Nothing mum; we were just preparing for a pop quiz tomorrow”

“Pop quiz, huh?”

“Yes mum”

“Does your pop quiz also require you going through your dad’s stuff? So I can give you more room to be mischievous as always”

“I’m sorry ...”

“I specifically told you not to take any of his stuffs, didn’t I?”

“I’m sorry”

“I told you to honour his last wish, didn’t I? Now I’m telling you this ‘You are grounded’”

“Mum?”

“Two weeks; no phone, no friends, no spending and no late comings”

“But mum ...?”

“Get to your room this instance”

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“Now what Marc”

“Now what ...? Steve”

“I’m talking about this pointing at the old cramped looking armour which was laid on a thick wooden shelf at a corner of the basement. It looked old and from the cranky noises made from the rusty joints it looked as if it hadn’t been used in a very long time

“I don’t know Steve. One minute I was extremely eager to bring it out from its resting place and see why my father was so overwhelmed with it”

“You don’t know Marc, after all the troubles?”

“Yeah, I’m quite certain though that its use would come in pretty soon”

“How soon Marc”

“Not entirely sure, just promise me to keep it safe”

“I’m not sure why I’m making such a promise but I will Marc”

“Thanks Buddy”

“Anything for you Pal”

With pleasant glances filled with memories stories which could only be explained completely by the smiles both wore on their faces; they closed the shelf, dusted off traces of dust on them and went out of the room.

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“I can’t possibly imagine how things work”

“What things?”

“Everything natural to be exact – I have seen people age and die; I have seen seeds turn into seedlings, seedlings turn into young trees, young trees turn old and eventually die; I have seen whole lots of plain bushy fields cleared out and transformed

into metro cities; I have seen everything natural change form with just the precise timing”

“Ooh! That’s how evolution works brother”

“If that is how evolution works and everyone and everything can’t possibly run away from it why then are we immune to it?”

“Who says we are?”

“I have lived a millennium and you a little more than that; no one needs to tell me”

“Yes indeed, but have you actually forgotten the first time you knew you had magic, you were thirty-three then”

“So what are you driving at?”

“Immortality is a gift to us brother, we had better learn to embrace it”

“But it has been more of a curse to us; we have seen the impossible become possible and we have seen how depressing it can get”

“Yes we have; you failed to realise that no gift is ever given to a person without a price asked in return”

“What is the price then brother?”

“In time you would find out, in time you would know why immortality chose us above every other”

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“Mum?”

“Do I need to come drag you up there myself?”

Grumbling, Marc turned rather sharply and then stormed furiously to his room climbing each stair with enough anger to rip each one apart if at all he had the sheer strength to do that.

Marc’s room was on the second floor, two rooms to the right of the stairs which widens up into a long corridor tiled with marbles and with little side walk decorations but elegant paintings falling at the extreme end of the corridor passing through five doors left and right.

Marc’s room was totally filled with teen hood – his bed although contained neat bed spreads and pillow cases, it was totally in an unravelling state; books were everywhere; the drapes on the lone window was of cream and designed with blue and green flowers all round it. The spot where formally stood his television set, game consoles and computer was now totally filled with odd looking but familiar books. Moving closer to view the sudden change in his room he couldn’t help but throw off all the anger that filled his chest by shouting vigorously as he read the note his mother addressed to him as he picked it up from the top of one of the books on the shelf.

*The Principal gave me the very same thing I asked you to lay your hands off exactly two months ago. Since you are so eager to be like your dad and you want to as much as possible torment me, why don't you for a change, start by studying some of his elementary books. He would be so proud of you*

*Mum!"*

## CHAPTER THREE

*“How on earth would I finish this?”* Marc spoke furiously to himself as he paced in front of the stack of books his mother graciously handed over to him to study *“How on earth would I finish all this?”* he continued with quick angrier steps

*“You were so keen on getting to know much more about the armour, weren’t you?”*

*“Yes I was but definitely not in this way. It would most probably take a hundred years to finish all these”*

*“So much for your interest in maths”*

*“How did you ... besides, who are you?”* turning around to check who he was actually talking to *“where are you?”*

*“Why ... In your head of course”* the voice continued

*“That is so impossible”* Marc responded mockingly

*“A few centuries ago I would have thought so too”*

*“Few centuries ... How old are you exactly?”*

*“Hmmm, promise not to laugh”*

*“Promise it won’t be laughable”*

*“Such humour, I love your spirit Marc”*

*“Thanks, now answer Marc’s question”*

*“I’m over a thousand years old”*

“Ah! What a lengthy age for you then”

*“Are you mocking me?”*

“I promise not to laugh I didn’t promise not to make a joke out of it”

*“So much for humour”*

“Exactly; now tell me your real age and come out, some playing hide and seek b’cos it sickens me”

*“Okay; I’m a thousand years old and I’m inside your head”*

“I’m going to hate you for this if I do find you”

*“Not until you take back your words Marc”*

“Are you sure about that?”

*“Absolutely, don’t bother checking underneath the bed or even asking your mum if at all anyone came in today, you’d look totally stupid afterwards”*

“How did you know what was in my mind, did you read my ... Ooh crap, I forgot”

*“Yeah, you forgot I’m in your head right?”*

“I’m not so sure you can stay in here for so long, my head is filled with secrets”

*Secrets like the armour you and your friend Steve found and are presently hiding in his basement?”*

“Ooh crap”

*“Yeah, crap”*

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“I talked to the boy earlier”

“What’s your judgement; is he fit?”

“The armour never makes a mistake when choosing”

“But he is just a boy”

“He is exactly what you think but with a mind like that, no mortal man can stand his equal”

“Even so he is a just a boy and he is vulnerable. I’m quite certain he won’t be able to stand to the hit of battle for long”

“Yeah he won’t be able to stand to the hit for long but with the armour ... if you recall King Iolaus even though he wasn’t rightfully chosen, the armour still helped him but left him at its weakest”

“Yes I recall, he deserved his death”

“Yes he did, the armour and its strength grow with each passing day”

“Darkest lurks over it as never before as it opens up into this modern world”

“That is why we are here, to protect it from harm’s way”

“I guess we have found our immortal calling then brother”

“I guess we have; time would explain the rest”

“I have always counted on it”

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## 2 Days Later

“Marc, long time”

“Cos you don’t see me in two days doesn’t mean I’m missing”

“According to the law, its 24hours; what’s with the crampy mood all morning buddy?”

“I’m just at it with mum again”

“For what this time ...?”

Marc gave him a hard cold stare for some seconds

“Why staring at me like that? It wasn’t my fault, was it?”

“No, it wasn’t”

“Good now ...”

“You two want to carry your conversation outside; I’m still in class boys and you know my rules and also know as much as I hate them when they are broken” Professor James addressed the two boys without taking his attention over the equations he was pouring out on the board

“No sir, we are fine”

“Sorry for the slight disturbance sir” Steve added

He turned looked the boys briefly eye-to-eye with nothing like a friendly communication between the three and then he continued his earlier torments, equation torments as it was nicknamed “Very well then, I don’t give room for second chances; hope you two know that already, don’t you?”

“Yes we do” both answered in unison

“Good then”

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“We need to talk to him DeZamundarius”

“It isn’t the right time”

“We need to act now”

“We need to be patient and careful in our trends”

“Why do you always wail on patience?”

“As immortals we have to embrace that than no one else.  
You still have your mortal instincts in you”

“Mortal instincts ...?”

“All mortals are prey to death; they fear their grand predator because it is ever hungry and it feeds on whosoever it feels like whenever its appetite replenishes but a little. That is why humans are always on the fast lane, they try to accomplish all their goals because they never know when death would come knocking”

“So you are trying to say that we have the time, we should be patient. You know I’m never good at that”

“At a time, yes, you were poor with being patient but you were mortal then and during the face of immortality nothing has actually given us any reasons not to be patient other than this”

“Yeah, that’s right”

“So ... Be patient”

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### **Few Hours Later**

“I’m expected home anytime soon, I don’t want to be late. Two days and it is hell already, I don’t want an increase”

“Okay; sorry for being grounded. I really feel for you and miss your company”

“Me too” giving Steve a gigantic hug, they parted ways and he headed back home with a sorry face and a down tracked mind because of the punishment he was about to go resume which has twelve days more to go

“You can’t even say hello to your mum again?”

Turning to look towards the direction the voice came from, he then apologised with a face that betrayed its meaning and then without hesitation went up to his room, entered, shut and locked the door behind him.

*“That was a rather harsh thing to do to one’s mother, you know?”*

“This is rather a harsh thing to do to one’s son” he argued

*“True; though harsh but not cruel”*

“She is cruel; she is cruel, really cruel”

*“She isn’t; if you have faced life the way I have, you would know how lucky you are being here with your lovely mother today”*

“But ...”

*“No buts, you annoyed her”*

“I did but it wasn’t intentional, I swear”

*“I know”*

“I guess I need to apologise”

*“Sure you do but first you need to do something for me”*

“Do what?”

*“Check page 24 of that book. The red cover over at the right corner of the shelf”*

“What do you want with my diary?”

*“It isn’t”*

“It is”

*“Check it then”*

*A.O Sulciman*

“Why should I; so you could read the contents in my diary, right?”

*“Just open it, will you?”*

“Okay, stop pestering me” As he opened the book, he looked rather confused and asked in that state “How did this get here?”

*“Thank me later, go to page 24 and let us have a look on what it contains”*

## CHAPTER FOUR

*“... The Armour on losing an owner laid in rest until a day when it shall rise again and bring upon its new owner strength as never before”*

“Is this the armour my dad was really anxious about?”  
totally bewildered

*“Not just your dad Marc”*

“Ooh right, me too unfortunately”

*“I actually wonder how you got to know the whereabouts of the armour. It has been lost for centuries”*

“My dad’s final write-ups and calculations were really helpful but how I really got the location is still a misery; I just came to find it out that faithful day”

*“Tell me all about it Marc”*

“Promise to show yourself to me first; if at all you could get to my head, playing one more trick won’t be so hard after all, would it?”

*“Okay, but not now”*

“Why can’t it be now? I love sticking to my words and I appreciate it when people who do the same as well”

*A.O Sulciman*

*“Ooh, such nobility”*

“Exactly, you make the promise and I will tell you”

*“I’m a man of my words but I’m afraid it might be a little difficult showing my physical self”*

“How difficult”

*“It would require a painful start, then you being partially unconscious for a little while”*

“That sounds bad; all because I just wanna see you?”

*“I’m a pretty hot catch, you know?”*

“I can see. I’m prettier than you Mister”

*“Are you?”*

“Sure I am. It is a deal, I would let you know when I’m ready”

*“Hope it won’t be long?”*

“My choice Mister”

*“Alright; call me DeZamundarius and not Mister; you make me look so modern”*

“Over a thousand years ...? If I were you I would hate it”

*“I hate it”*

“Cool”

*“Exactly”*

“Now to our bargain; on that faithful day I was going through my dad’s stuff in his study when something I don’t know what drew my attention to a map that was quite hidden and perfectly rolled up. I took the map out and studied it closely; looking for something I really wasn’t sure about”

*“Go on”* DeZamundarius urged him

“I was still confused about the map and how it fits in to my dad’s work so far. The map was a location map of this district. I took it to school and Steve and I looked at it for clues, but we were caught off short by one of my teachers who seized the map and handed it to the principal”

*“Did you get the map afterwards and how did it lead you to the armour?”* DeZamundarius asked

“I was on my way home after parting ways with Steve and on a usual sense I was supposed to straight home, but that day was very different, I felt a great urge in me to take the opposite road. As inquisitive as I am, I followed my instincts and somehow I got to the exact place where the armour laid for probably two hundred years.”

*“You then called Steve, dug the hole, carried the armour and took it to his place, right?”*

“Yeah”

*“Why did you want to hide the armour?”*

“I don’t know exactly; dad was very secretive on his work and mum always felt displeased, she didn’t complain much though, so I was certain it wasn’t of bad/evil plotting. The urge to hide it I guess came from the armour; it seems it chose me”

*“It seems you have solved one of your puzzles already”*

“I don’t just know why and what it has installed for me”

*“Things are too complicated for you; I would have to introduce you to a lengthier history on the armour and not just the bit you find on the book you hold”*

Just noticing that he still held the book he read earlier shedding more light on the armour he found only days ago, he smiled rather awkwardly, dropped the book by the edge of his bed and then continued his conversation “till then DeZamundarius, but at the moment I need to do something first”

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“We need to prepare brother”

“Prepare for what?”

“The worst; the armour would be hunted for now more than ever from the dark one”

“Why do you say that?”

“The armour’s strength has matured more than I expected”

“You have been talking to the boy again”

“He is just a boy and for some reasons I’m not so sure on why the armour chose him as its new owner after two hundred years of being dormant. I need to find out why the long wait”

“You bother yourself than you should”

“I need to, if the armour falls into the wrong hands or worse can be controlled and it releases all its powers, no army, nation or worlds would be safe. Doom is what makes me bother, I fear for I have made the impossible possible by creating what I shouldn’t have”

“The armour has a will of its own; if it could draw the boy to him and could hide itself for that long; I’m sure he had a plan all along”

“I wish that was true but not withstanding, I have to be sure”

“I’m with you brother”

“Thanks, I’m glad you are” smiling dotingly at him “*Marc I’m coming with someone who also wants to see you, expect me anytime soon*”

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**After two weeks...**

“Your mum really dealt with you buddy”

“Yeah she did but I don’t regret it”

“You were grounded for two weeks and you are this gentle about it”

“Sure, I wasn’t imprisoned just grounded”

“Men, you really are aging. Where is the overwhelming and over reactive Marc I used to know?”

“I sent him packing”

Chuckling hard “that’s harsh”

Chuckling too “mum did a pretty good job in cooling my overwhelming attitude; can you imagine the principal smiling at me earlier today?”

“That is a miracle Marc; I hope it isn’t all for show?”

“Steve ...?”

“What?”

“Till now you don’t know me and yet you boast around that I am your best friend”

“Who does?”

“Okay, sorry”

“Haha, cheer up, just kidding. I know you are such a naughty brat but a noble and humble one and you are my best friend always and forever”

“A promise...?”

“A vow, promise, oath, et cetera, name it whichever way pleases you buddy”

“You are the best Steve” smiling and opening wide to welcome him into a warm embrace

“What’s that for?” looking surprised

“I’m learning compassion bro; come hug me or quietly walk out now”

Taking two steps away from Marc who was actually smiling from cheek-to-cheek, seeing his reaction not altering for a second, he went between his arms and then out so fast and awkwardly funny “happy now”

“Very, Steve”

“I promise to knock that compassion away from you; I can stand the others but not this”

“Haha, give your best shot”

“Trust me, I will”

“Haha, I so missed you Steve; how’s my armour anyway?”

“I missed you too” smiling affectionately at Marc he continued “Your armour is fine and free from harm’s way”

“Let’s go see it”

The both of them left Steve’s room for the basement passing through a rather long corridor, climbed down some stairs leading to the sitting room which was large and spacey. They headed for the front door which was four feet long and wide; the door reminded Marc of King Iolous a little and he couldn’t help but giggle, before Steve could notice, he had controlled himself. Outside the door, they turned left, went to the parking lot, inside, turned left again entering further. Passing through a rather dark room which was later brightened as Steve switched on the lone fluorescence light; the switch box was just a few inches to where he stood.

“Your antique is exactly where you put it Sire”

“Come on”

“Don’t you like the appraisal?”

“Not exactly”

“Okay, let’s check the armour and bounce off from here before someone comes looking for us”

Opening the shelf, Steve stare and shock couldn’t be summoned up with that of Marc’s

“Steve did you ...?”

Before Steve could reply, a voice from their back brought the two boys to an extraordinary state of shock “I did”

## CHAPTER FIVE

“How do you do Marc, Steve?”

“Do I know you, Marc questioned”

“I’m afraid not but we have spoken a few times though”

“Spoken?”

“Yeah, don’t you recognize this voice?”

Cracking his head hard in order to remember – suddenly he recalled “You”

“Yes me”

“You know him?” Steve asked a bit unsteadily

“You don’t look so old to me; to be honest you look modern”

Chuckling lightly “We have immortality to thank for that Marc”

“I guess”

“Who is he Marc?” Steve questioned

“Wait a second, did you just say ‘we’?”

“Yes I did”

“So, where’s the party?”

“Won’t you introduce me to your friend first, he seems really eager to know me”

“Urgh, okay... okay... Steve, this is DeZamundarius; DeZamundarius, this is Steve”

“DeZam... what” Steve sounding rather confused

“...darius Steve, DeZamundarius” DeZamundarius responded

“Ooh, nice meeting you” Marc teased

“The pleasure is mine Marc” DeZamundarius winked at him

“Tell me DeZam, did you follow Marc all the way here or was he the one that invited you?”

“Why the question”

“I love the sound of that ‘DeZam’; cool” Marc mocked

“Shut up Marc” Steve replied rather coldly

“How did you get in here Mister, how did you know about the armour and why did you clean and polish it without our consent?” Steve stormed

“Nice to see you too Steve” DeZamundarius wearing a rather girlish smile

“Don’t play smart with me Mister, I’m sixteen and I can kick your butts if not your brain”

Marc and DeZamundarius stared at each other, when they could not hold up the rumpling laughter that was forming vigorously in their tummies, they busted into laughter.

“It isn’t funny; I can kick your butts, I tell you” Steve continued angrily

“I swear it is” Marc responded between laughs “You are the greatest comedian of our time. All hail Steve the Great.” With that they both went for another round.

By the time they had their fill, Steve was staring at them with an eye that actually betrayed his present state; he was actually trying to force a smile but his eyes had anger signing at every eye lid “You guys are finally done”

“Sorry Steve, we shouldn’t have behaved the way we did” DeZamundarius apologized “Marc would explain the whole story to you, let’s head to your room

“Marc?” Steve looking suspiciously from DeZamundarius to Marc and then back again

“Let’s go Steve, we have got some catch ups to do”

“Okay, stop being so perky”

\* \* \* \* \*

“A day after his punishment and he is home late again”

“Me?”

“No, me”

“Sorry mum, I promised to behave and I’m working towards it”

“Working towards it?”

“It is a gradual process mum”

“I see”

“A promise is a promise”

“I think it is but my eyes are on you all the same”

“Detective Mrs Fiore in action”

“Don’t try to be funny”

“Okay, take it as an appraisal then”

“Get out of here” giggling

“Love you mum” he winked at her and was off with a satisfactory smile on his face

“Love you too son, love you too” feeling joyful at heart as well

## By Morning

“Good Morning Marc” stretching himself and wearing a face of sheer content as he rose from his bed with the first ray of the morning sun flowed freely into his room

Staring at a frame on the wall beside his bed, he smiled as it brought a rush of pleasant memories. After what seemed to be a brief moment he was up and into the bathroom. The bathroom was attached to his room and if he loved his room for more than anything, he loved it more because of his proximity to his personal bathroom.

“Marc”

“Yes mum”

“You got a visitor, get yourself down in five. You know how I hate it when visitors are kept waiting”

“Who is he mum?”

“Some guy named DeZam”

“DeZam...?”

“Yeah; get down here in five tops”

“Okay; do me a favour and keep him company, will you?”

“*You bet*” she said inwardly, smiled crookedly, arranged herself, dusted invincible dirt from her skirt, using her hands to set her hair, moistened her red glowing lips with her saliva and headed down the stairs to meet the most handsome man she agreeably have seen all her life “*Marc, you are such a blessing*”

*“What on earth does he want to see me for this morning?”*  
 Marc confusedly confronted himself as he dressed up in a rather plain yellow T-shirt which had an inscription upfront *‘The world sucks but I suck too; I guess we are even’*. Smiling as he remembered just how much his mother hated the cloth and since he was in no mood to be naughty, he pulled it off and then took a red T-shirt which had no inscription on; *“much better”* he thought. Putting on his thick blue jean, he brushed his hair which were golden and had a strike of silk on its texture, making it rather pretty.

Finally done, he left the room taking along with him the red covered book he had read days ago “DeZam has got some things to clear out for me, doesn’t he?”

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

“My lord, the armour has been found”

“Who was the lucky devil?”

“A boy; I don’t know much yet my Lordship”

“You don’t know much yet but you know he is a boy”

“I’m sorry I failed you my Lord” totally freaked out

“Failed, no, not all”

“I was almost getting in on him but DeZamundarius got in first”

*A.O Sulciman*

“DeZamundarius is your brother, isn't he?”

“A fool, just a fool my Lord”

“A fool he may be but he has bested you severally and you have been a complete failure”

“I'm sorry my lord, I won't fail you this time around”

“I hope you won't”

“I promise”

“You should, this time I will aid you than I have done in the past; I have more reasons to anyway”

“Thank you my Lord”

“Don't thank me yet, I'm just only beginning with you”

## CHAPTER SIX

“DeZam; what a pleasure seeing you”

“I share the same Marc”

“Seems you have met my mum”

“I sure have and to be honest, I have enjoyed every bit of her company”

“I bet you have” eyeing the both of them crookedly

“Your mum was just telling me about work and funny enough I just got transferred there”

“Ooh my God, you don’t mean it DeZam” Marta Fiore responded in total bewilderment

“I do Marta, I would be moving in next Monday”

“It would be wonderful having you around”

“It sure would having you too”

Blushing heavily “Thanks”

*“Mum is really the most vulnerable woman I have met all my life, but she can’t be blamed, can she? The guy is so damn handsome”* Marc thought

“You are most welcome Marta” DeZam replied

“How did you and Marc meet by the way?”

“Over the internet; I got to see a very interesting post which caught my attention, after reading it I had no option left than to get to know Marc and we have been hooked ever since”

“Ooh, I see”

Marc couldn't believe what his ears just captured “*I never knew wizards were good liars too*” he thought

“You decided to come see him when you came over then; seems you two were really close” Marta continued

“Yes we are; I happen to take interest in most of his activities plus his sense of humour is absolutely mind blowing”

“*DeZamundarius the Liar*” Marc smiled as the thoughts kept flowing in

“What's so funny Marc?” Marta words interjecting his thoughts

“Ooh nothing, I just remembered something Steve told me” he replied

“Steve is his best friend and both of them combined are hell on earth”

Chuckling hard “With Marc's attitude most times, I bet I know the feeling”

Chuckling too “I had to ground him only two weeks ago and the moment I released him, which was yesterday, he actually did the same thing all over again; one out of the many though”

“Although he might be naughty, but I bet he is a darling, isn’t he?”

“Most of the time he is” She winked at Marc as she replied DeZam

“I sure am” Marc responded, smiled and winked back at her

“Let me leave you two to do some catch ups, I have got some things to attend to”

“Thanks for your time Marta, you really made me feel at home”

“I’m glad I was charming”

DeZam raised an eyebrow and wore a rather charismatic smile on his lips “You were indeed very charming”

Marta couldn’t control the blushes any longer “thanks DeZam” and she was of before losing all her grip. As she went she kept wondering “*I pretty acted like a teen than Marc who DeZam came to visit and not her.*” A tint of jealousy crept in but before it could linger she shoved it off.

“*Could he take me to dinner someday; could he arrange a picnic for just the two of us, or maybe with Marc someday; would he even come to see me again?*” She couldn’t control the thoughts as they kept flowing in and after several attempts to stop, she gave in to the inevitable and focused on the breakfast she was preparing instead

\* \* \* \* \*

“STEVE”

Florence yelled louder “STEEVEEN”

“Yes mother”

“Come over here this instance” She sounded hurt rather than angry

“You called me mum” when he was just a few feet away

“Indeed I did” pausing to catch her breath “I found some things that belongs to you at the basement earlier today”

Steve’s heart was pounding so loud that his mother could probably hear it if she but concentrated a little more “You saw something?” As he spoke with a shaky unsteady voice hot sweats trickled down his forehead

“Yes, I saw your notes”

With a heavy sigh inward, he gathered himself upright again

“What were your notes doing at the basement anyway?” she continued

“I most probably forgot it there”

“And what were you doing there?”

“Umm, going through dad’s stuffs”

“I bet you miss him”

“I always do”

“Same here; things have never been the same since he passed away” as she spoke uncontrollable tears trickled down her cheeks

“I’m sorry mum”

“For what son”

“For making you remember him again”

“You don’t have to be son, I remember him all the time, awake or asleep”

“I want you to be happy mum; I’m sure dad always and will always want that for you”

“You sound just like him. I’m blessed having you son”

“I’m blessed more having you mum” with those warm words flowing in the hearts of the both of them, he moved closer and hugged his mother tightly yet tenderly showing her in every action that he meant what he said with a hundred percent certainty.

\* \* \* \* \*

“We saw yesterday; so, why are you here today?”

“I needed to see you”

“Or you just miss me?”

“Haha, I wish I did”

“Ooh!”

“I needed to see you Marc; I missed you a little too actually” smiling as he revealed what Marc was eager to hear

Chuckling lightly “I knew DeZam” Gathering himself, he continued “why do you need to see me?”

“I just had the feeling; I was about asking why you wanted to see me as well, but the book you hold I guess I have narrowed the questions in my head already”

“Wizards; complicating creatures”

“You bet”

“There is something in page 168 I want you to interpret for me. I don’t have a slightest clue on the language in which it was written”

“You could have done your research”

“With you around the block, why increase my stress level”

“Modern age, so making youth in their prime lazier than their grannies”

“Haha, I object”

“Another argument for another time”

“Sure; which language was it written in DeZam?”

“Greek”

“Greek...?”

“Yeah, at the time the book was written I hadn’t learnt English then”

“So, you wrote this?”

“Sure, I made the armour; every out of the ordinary being or thing needs a story to back it up and stories are best preserved in scribes”

“Hmmm, that’s right”

“The words go

*‘Κατά μήκος γραμμής αίματος του  
βασιλιά, κάθε νέο ηαϊδί θα έχουν γένυση  
από μεγάλο εξουσίας (κάποιος που είτε  
θα είναι η θεία δύναμη)*

*Κατά μήκος γραμμής αίματος του  
βασιλιά, ο φίλς μον, κάθε νέο ηαϊδί θα  
έχουν γένυση από μεγάλο εξουσίας  
(δύναμη της δικής μου κάνοντας)*

*Κατά μήκος γραμμής αίματος του  
βασιλιά, ο γιος της κόρης μον, κάθε νέο  
ηαϊδί θα έχουν γένυση από μεγάλο*

*εξουσίας (ισχύς εγώ δεν θα επιτρέψει ποτέ  
να πέσουν σε λάθος χέρια)*

*Κατά μήκος γραμμής αίματος του  
βασιλιά, το αγαπημένο μου εγγόνι, κάθε  
νέο ηαϊδί θα έχουν γέυση από μεγάλο  
εξουσίας (εξουσει μπορώ μόνο να νικήσει  
όταν κρίνω δεν χρησιμοποιούν  
περισσότερο χρειάζεται)*

*Κατά μήκος γραμμής αίματος του βασιλιά  
(εμένα και τον αδελφό μου να γίνει την  
πανοπλία και από το αθάνατο δύναμή μας  
θα τη δύναμη και την αντοχή των  
ζωοτροφών πανοπλίας κατά)'''*

“Wow; do you mind translating it to the English I understand better?”

“Sure

‘Along the bloodline of the king, every new born would have a taste of grand power (one which would either be his doom or divine strength)

Along the bloodline of the king, my friend, every new born would have a taste of grand power (power of my own doing)

Along the bloodline of the king, my daughter’s son, every new born would have a taste of grand power (power I would never allow fall into the wrong hands)

Along the bloodline of the king, my  
favourite grandchild, every new born  
would have a taste of grand power  
(powers only I can vanquish when I deem  
it use is no more needed)

Along the bloodline of the king (me and  
my brother become one with the armour  
and from our immortal strength shall the  
strength and durability of the armour feed  
upon)'''

“My God; why on earth would you do such a thing?”

“At that time, the king whom happens to be my grandson  
was highly threatened, I needed to protect him somehow”

“King Trixus?”

“Exactly”

“King Iolaus was also from your bloodline, why didn't you  
protect him?”

“I couldn't, his death was of his own doing. If you happened  
to know the whole family tale, starting with my dad, you would  
understand why I did what I did”

“Would I?”

“I bet you would”

“Something tells me not to get involved”

“Most probably”

“But the armour chose me, why, I don’t know; all I know is that I want to find my part in all this, if it has to do with hearing your tale and many other sweeter or uglier ones, I’m in DeZam”

“I bet you are” DeZam responded giggling

“I hope you two weren’t discussing on how hungry you both were?” Marta entered the sitting room with an apron upfront and wore a perfect smile which could melt the heart of any man

“Not exactly” DeZam replied smiling hard

“Not at all mum, but speaking of food just made me remember and to be frank, I’m starving”

Chuckling lightly “come and feed your hunger then; DeZam join us for breakfast”

“No thanks, I don’t want to disrupt your plans”

“I would be happy if you do; I insist you join us”

Marc’s face didn’t leave DeZam for a moment; he was actually trying to see if wizards were as vulnerable as men and to his widest surprise...

“Thanks Marta, I would love to join you for breakfast”

Expecting that to be all but of course he had more up his sleeves

“You look beautiful, really beautiful Marta”

Marc couldn't control his focus as they moved from DeZam to his mother who as expected was blushing powerfully from cheek to cheek

“Really”

Not really paying attention on whether DeZam replied or not Marc kept his focus on his mother

“Thanks DeZam”

Marc couldn't believe what he actually saw. He wanted to laugh at the same time he wanted to spank each for being so foolish

“*Adults...*” he exclaimed as he walked passed them shaking his head lightly left-right. He heard what seemed like a giggle but didn't really pay attention to know who it came from, he was starving “*every other thing can wait for all I care*” he thought as he headed for the dining table.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

“Thanks Marta, I really enjoyed it”

“Marta who was awkwardly silent throughout breakfast gave a warm smile and blushed a bit but before DeZamundarius could linger and gather flattery words to describe how she looked again she was off to the kitchen”

Taking his eyes finally off her “why are you looking at me like that?”

Marc gave a wry smile “Nothing, I just have been wondering when wizards became master flirts”

“Flirts, wizards ...?”

“Um, um”

“Hope I’m not thinking exactly what you have been thinking?”

“I’m just an ordinary teenage kid, how would I know?”

“You aren’t ordinary Marc and I just see your mum like you see her”

“How do I see her?”

“Most definitely in a beautiful and lovable way”

“Yeah, right; there is more to the way you see her DeZam, I have been watching you”

“Have you?”

“Yes I have. Be honest with me, do you like my mum?”

“Of course I do, who won’t like someone like that?”

“You know what I meant DeZam, do you really like her?”

“Marc let’s talk about something else, okay?”

“Don’t try dodging my question”

“I’m not, I have answered you already”

“Have you?”

“I like your mum Marc, I like her but I don’t know how much yet, time would tell”

“Patience, hmm”

“It’s a virtue Marc, it is indeed a virtue. I have on more than one occasion seen how it works”

“I bet you have”

Marc was about saying something when but kept quiet when he saw a glimpse of his mother coming out from the kitchen.

Marta entered a little more composed than Marc would have expected but when he noticed that she couldn’t take her eyes off DeZam for less than a minute, he knew exactly why she was so but he kept quiet.

The room was getting stuffier by the minute as the tension grew from both parties, Marc thought of no other way to release it than excuse himself with one of the newest but unknown love birds in town. “DeZam, care for a stroll?”

“What?” Marta asked rather shockingly, disappointment all round her face

“Yes mum, a stroll with DeZam if he cares for one”

Looking a bit confused, he stared at Marta for a long while but until when her face fell back to its normal state did he reply “Hope you won’t mind dear?”

The word ‘dear’ brought a new flush of waves over her cheeks “of course not. I was just surprised he asked for a stroll right immediately after breakfast”

“*Were you?*” Marc thought inwardly and gave a little shake to his head as he tried to control the mocking laughs that could soon burst out any moment

“Nah, it is fine Marta, I need a stroll anyway”

“Right after breakfast ...?”

“It helps increase metabolism”

“Right; biology”

“Not a fan of the subject, I suppose?”

“Not really”

“We all have our dislike, don’t we?”

“Sure. Let me leave you two now, I got some assignments to finish anyway”

“Any we could lay hands on before we step out?”

“Not today DeZam thanks” winking at him

Marc gave a light whistle then pretended as if he was really concentrating on the book he was reading, although both of them knew what that was for

DeZam still smiling turned to Marc “let’s head out”

“Okay DeZam. Bye mum”

Sinking heavily on one of the dining chairs after she heard the front door slightly closing behind them “Damn, he is charming and he likes me too, wow” Her smile could virtually make the world greener as she took her adventurous mind into a very pleasant day dream.

\* \* \* \* \*

“What information have you gathered about the boy?”

“Quite a handful; his name is Marcus Fiore, English-Italian by birth, sixteen and presently attends Staff High College, three kilometres away from his home”

“You call that a handful?”

“Not exactly, I have got more”

“Let’s hear it, all of it, and better pray it is of use to me”

“Okay. He is presently with his mum, Marta Fiore; his dad, William Martin Fiore died early last year; cause of death – unknown, but from my findings, he wasn’t really buried because his body was never found”

“You mean William is still alive?”

“Not certain, but I will give a huge bet on that though”

“Will you?”

Before he could respond his employer broke his neck in one swift move.

“That was quite helpful but not really what I needed to know, anyway, William would provide more information” The rather tall and handsome looking man dusted his stylish black suit, brushed off his well-polished leather shoes with the already dead man’s cloth, straightened himself and walked out of the warehouse wearing a rather innocent smile on his face.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Why?”

“Why what DeZam”

“We didn’t need to go for a stroll I have answered all what you needed me for”

“Yes we do, in fact there is still more”

DeZam eyed him suspiciously “more...? Ask then”

“Patience DeZam”

“Patience...?”

“It is a virtue, remember?”

“That’s my line and it is over a thousand years old”

“I didn’t ask you to report, did I?”

“What the ...” DeZam who was looking at Marc rather unbelievably with a smile which actually didn’t want to leave his face but was interrupted as he tried responding

“Don’t mind him DeZam, he is a fool; guaranteed and certified”

“Turning to receive Steve’s smile “Hey Steve” DeZam and Marc greeted

“Hey DeZam, hey Marc; isn’t it too late for a morning stroll?”

“I thought the same until you showed up” Marc teased

“Sorry to disappoint you dear Marc, I’m off to St. Louis store, mom requested I get some groceries for her”

“That is still a stroll” Marc continued teasing

“A meaningful stroll, not like ours” DeZam responded

“Just admit it DeZam, you wanted to stay with my mum for a little while, didn’t you?”

“No”

“You did”

“No I did not”

“Yes you did”

“No”

“Be sincere for once DeZam, you did”

“Maybe I did”

Steve who was enjoying the argument stood smiling as his glances shifted from DeZam to Marc then to DeZam and Marc again in repeated succession

“You could just have said it”

“And make you look stupid and me, desperate?”

“Come on, you could telepath or something. I thought you needed space, I guessed the complete opposite”

“My telepathy is really complicated and I don’t want your mum to get involved in my business, not just yet”

“Thanks for your concern DeZam. Sorry for dragging you out as well”

“No need to be sorry, I actually needed the walk”

“So as you could try clearing your mind off her?” Steve entered the conversation

DeZam looking rather childish in-between the two “I think so”

“Trust me DeZam, it doesn’t work that way”

“How do you know?”

“Because he is a guru” Marc replied smiling wryly

“Stop your prank, DeZam here got an issue” Steve told Marc

“Does he?” Marc looking surprised

“Yes he does”

“Mind telling me what issues I have got?” DeZam asked giggling

“Mind guessing?” Steve responded

“Marta called you guys ‘Hell on Earth’, I see why now” chuckling lightly

“Don’t divert the question DeZam, we got good brains too” Marc responded chuckling

“I can’t guess” DeZam responded

“Why can’t you?” Steve cuts in

“Because I hate guessing”

“Liar”

“I’m not lying; I don’t guess”

“Even if Marta asks you”

DeZam was hesitant for a bit as he looked both boys in the eyes with total bewilderment “maybe”

“Hehehe, got you there” Steve broke out

“No you didn’t”

Marc then entered “seriously you have got an issue DeZam and the issue is that you are in love with Mrs Marta Fiore”

“Oh my God” DeZam couldn’t alter a word than this, he kept staring at the two boys until they had their fill of his gaze upon them and they walked passed him, heading down the street to St. Louis grocery store laughing their hearts out

## CHAPTER EIGHT

## 984 Years into History

“DeZamundarius hurry up”

“Father I’m trying”

“Don’t tell me such, hurry up or I swear you would crawl like a snail all through the way back home; now, HURRY UP”

*Hours Later...*

“Don’t tell me you made poor DeZamundarius crawl all the way back from your crazy hunt trip, did you?”

“Don’t yell at me woman, you have softened his heart and now I can barely see the man in him” Baros yelled back

“He is Just a boy Baros, he is just a boy” she sounded wounded

“So I recall, but what of Heraculion, he is but a boy as well, isn’t he?”

“Everyone is different”

“Everyone is different?” Baros barked “Everyone is different, you say?” barking louder

“DeZamundarius is our son for crying out loud, Baros please show a bit of gentleness in how you treat him” she spoke apologetically

“He isn’t my son, I have only one son and that is Heraculion, when he decides to become a man, he then can stand shoulder to shoulder with me”

“Baros but ...”

“Then and only then” as he finished his statement he walked out, leaving poor DeZamundarius with the pain his ears just made him gather less than an ounce second ago.

Deborah was very supportive but DeZamundarius had made up his mind on just how to be the perfect son for the man he calls his father.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Do you have any news on the boy?”

“Nothing of substantial worth but I have something better”

“And what might that be?”

“News my Lordship, brilliant news”

“What news son?”

“The whereabouts of the boy, Marc’s father, Martin Fiore”

“Martin Fiore, hmmm; my long lost friend”

\* \* \* \* \*

## The Day After

“Dear, do you really have to go?”

“Yes mum, I have to”

“We could work this out son”

“No we can’t. I’m being a nuisance to dad and a burden to you, and I feel less like a man mum. I really have to go”

With light sobs “We will all miss you dear, please be careful. I need you back in one piece, promise me that”

“I promise mum, I will be back in one piece”

Smiling, she hugged her eldest son as he was about to embark on a life changing adventurous journey to become the man his father really want him to be. As thoughts of her son kept entering her mind, uncontrollable tears kept falling off but DeZamundarius had already made up his mind on the matter and there was no turning back.

He waved and exchanged a quick handshake with his brother, nodded respectfully to his dad who was in an awkwardly quiet mood that morning, and was off.

*“Turn back now while you still have the chance”*

*“Not when my dignity and place is at stake with my father”*

*“Turn back now DeZamundarius”*

*“Follow your heart DeZamundarius”* went his heart as he kept

\* \* \* \* \*

Heading off the grocery store Marc gave a light cough. DeZam who knew exactly what the cough meant totally ignored him and kept his pace as he headed back into the main street following Steve’s lead instead

“Marc, your friend DeZam got issues with ladies and women” Steve spoke after a few minutes ignoring DeZam’s hard stare

“He sure does. He has got their eyes glued on him like a superstar or something”

“He is if he shows a little bit of what he has up his sleeves”

DeZam eyed the boys with total bewilderment “You know I’m right here, right?”

“Sure, my very own superstar and friend” marc continued teasing “let me let you in on something DeZam”

“And what is it Marcus Fiore?”

“DeZamundarius the Great, keep up the charade”

“What charade are you talking about? DeZam looking surprised

“Take my advice DeZam, don’t give him a listening ear because his head is filled with nonsense” Steve finished with a wink

“Yeah right, but it is about Mrs Fiore” raising an eyebrow to catch DeZam’s gaze which as expected fluctuated a little

After a brief moment of silence Marc continued “DeZam, DeZam; two days back into modern civilization and you are back into the BCs”

“Am I?” laughing as he responded

“Every lover is and my friend, you are in love”

“Even me?” Steve asked

“You call what you and Carrie have going *love*?”

“Speaking of the devil” DeZam began laughing hard

“DeZam we were talking about you, weren’t we Marc?”

“Yes we were” pausing to catch DeZam’s gaze which had shifted from Steve’s to his face as he spoke “mum hates superstars”

“Why would she?” DeZam and Steve asked almost at once

“Attention; no more, no less”

DeZam continued “with the kind of beauty she carries, I bet attention isn’t far from her grasp”

“Don’t let her hear that because you would be in trouble my friend”

“Point noted” winking at him

“She believes superstars get too much attention, they forget their moral self and create laughable scandals all the time”

“Is she right?”

“When last did you watch television?”

“Yesterday; why?”

“Celebrity shows ...?”

“Not in a long time. Why?”

“How long”

“Hmmm, I think around the late 70s, I was not really a fan anyway”

“That’s long; try watching one, get a dish or something”

“How sure are you that I don’t have one”

“My dad told me that the only celebrity shows this town ever had died out in 1978”

“You guessed then that I have been in the town for that long or even longer”

“I know you have been; your armour has been in this town and you keep a good track of all your possessions, don’t you?”

“Yes that’s true, but the armour is for you”

“Before it chose me, it was yours”

“It was King Iolaus”

“Who is King Iolaus?” Steve sounding surprised

“A long dead and forgotten man” Marc replied with a half smile around his lips. Returning his gaze back to DeZam “two hundred years ago”

“So?”

“You made it, so it is yours”

“We can argue about this all day but the armour chose you, learn to take responsibly”

“You two can argue all day but for me, I need to get home now”

“Steve ...?” Marc sounded exhausted

## CHAPTER NINE

“Why would you allow him leave?” Deborah yelled at Baros who was still awkwardly calm than he usually was

“Why won’t I?” he responded back

“Why won’t you? He is your son for crying out loud, your eldest son”

“I’m perfectly aware love”

“Don’t call me that”

“Come on, DeZamundarius is a man now, he is responsible for the decisions he make”

“You call him a man now but always treated him less than one”

“I was only training him Deborah”

“Training him for what?”

“Hmm?” looking a bit surprised

“Training him to be a loser like you?”

“Don’t you ever call me that; ever”

“You are a total loser Baros leave with that and don’t drag our sons into the madness because of your misgivings. I would and won’t stop calling you that until you bring back my son”

“I sent him no where”

“You did; you drove him out of his mind”

“That’s enough”

That isn’t enough”

“I said that is enough” his voice trembling in rage

“That isn’t ...” before she could complete her statement he had walked out banging the door behind him with such a force that could virtually bring down its roof

“Good riddance” hissing as she tried cooling her temper

\* \* \* \* \*

“Mum”

“Steve is that you?”

“Yes mum, got your items already” entering her room and dropping the stuffs bought by her bed-side drawer

“Why did you take so long?” she asked

“Sorry mum, I got caught up with some friends on my way to St. Louis”

“Marc was the gang leader I suppose”

“It wasn’t actually a gang mum”

“With Marc, I can assure anyone here it was even though I didn’t see a thing”

“Mum...?” laughing as he tried absorbing his mother’s ideology of Marc

“I love his spirit and the way he carries himself, he makes the word ‘jovial’ actually fit perfectly”

“That’s Marc for you, mum”

“How’s his mum, Marta? I haven’t seen her in a long while”

“You haven’t been out in a long while”

“True”

“Care for a walk later today then?”

“Walk where?”

“Fiore’s residence”

“Who...?”

“Mrs Marta, mum”

“Oh, I’ve forgotten; I’m so used to her first name”

“So, care to be my walk buddy today?”

“Marc has really been influencing you, hasn’t he?”

“Positively, yeah”

Chuckling lightly “it seems so”

Trying to be pensively set out her day's routine "I don't think I can, I still have the laundries to attend to"

"I will get that done right away"

"You really want me to go there"

"Yes mum, you need it seriously"

"Hmmm"

"What do you say ma?"

"I say I would be ready for that walk you promised as soon as you are"

Smiling and feeling a new form of joy within "I would be counting on it ma; no turning back today"

"Cross my heart"

"Need to get to the laundry room now"

"Thanks son"

"Anything for you ma"

\* \* \* \* \*

"Steve had never left me hanging, you know?"

“He was on an errand and we delayed him. You delayed him actually”

“Why blame me?”

“Because you are to blame”

“Like, seriously?”

“Yeah, seriously”

“You are no fun at all. Okay, No more comments”

“Hehehe, cat caught your tongue?”

“Not really, don’t just want to argue now”

“Where should we go Marc, you brought me out for a stroll anyway”

“Let’s go home”

“Why?”

“Because of you definitely”

“Enough reasons not to go back then”

“Why?”

“I want to make certain things clear first”

“Things like?”

“Things concerning my new relationship with the world”

“How long have you been in isolation?”

“Too long to remember”

“Why?”

“You don’t see a man that has lived for a thousand years often, do you?”

“Not at all, but that isn’t a good enough reason, is it?”

“It is, I don’t relocate much and staying in a place too long is very risky”

“But you have been in Stockholm since the 70s or even earlier, haven’t you?”

“I didn’t move in here till the mid 70s when Stockholm took its first big leap into civilization”

“I suppose your move was due to the fact that you wanted to ensure the armour safety”

“Kind of”

“Hmm”

“It was more of studying. I moved in to study the armour and how he could fare greatly or less when people start coming in close”

“Oh I see”

“The armour had been long without a master; he could have actually made a mistake in choosing one?”

“You term it as ‘he’, why?”

“It has a will of its own; it is more human to me Marc”

“Oh I see. Let’s go over to the spot I found the armour”

“Why?”

“Clues might still be left and I know you are in need of some right now”

“Yeah, right”

“Let’s get going then”

## CHAPTER TEN

“You said this is the spot”

“Two weeks earlier I would have sworn, but now I’m not so certain”

“Are you really sure this is the spot?”

“Come on DeZam help confirm please, I’m lost here”

“Oh!” smiling as he saw the startling face Marc wore

After a while, he turned his head left, right and left again  
“how disserted is this place?”

“Let’s go ask the Mayor”

Looking surprised “why?”

“Because I’m not one and I don’t keep records of streets and districts of Stockholm in my pocket brain”

“Haha”

“What’s so funny DeZam?” sounding a little less than himself a minute ago

“What?”

“What is so funny?” repeating the question

“DeZamundarius eyed him for a few seconds then replied  
“nothing”

“Nothing?” raising his voice

“Why stare at me then?” raising it even louder

“We need to go now” DeZam pleaded

“No we don’t. It’s my armour anyway and I will be the one  
to ...”

“I said we need to leave now” raising his voice as well and  
staring deep down Marc’s gaze which then melted from its  
intense burning state almost instantly

“What happened?”

“Let’s go Marc; let’s go now”

“Okay DeZam, I don’t feel too good anyway”

\* \* \* \* \*

“DeZam has really gone deep with the kid, you know?”

“He seems to be fond of him and he is very secretive about  
him too”

“Doesn’t he trust you?”

“After what transgressed between the both of us, I hate to  
think trust is actually close by his heart ever since”

“And why haven’t you worked on that. DeZam took my dear  
wife’s sentiments”

“I have, I’m not being pushy”

“Work harder”

“I’m on it my Lord”

“He needs to be on my side or out of the my way for good”

“Out of your way...?”

“Exactly”

“He is actually growing too strong, I fear for the worst”

Raising an eye brow “the worst...?”

“Yes, the worst”

Reframing cautiously as he saw that no other information was to be passed on “very well then, I would work harder”

“You’d better do”

\* \* \* \* \*

“DeZam...?”

“What”

“Tell me, tell me what really happened out there”

“Let’s drop the issue”

“I don’t want to”

“Please you have got to”

“It might get complicated for you if you are involved”

“Complicated as how?”

“Really complicated”

As how DeZam?”

“Where should we go now Marc?”

“Don’t try acting smart with me”

“I guess the park would be the next best choice”

“What’s the best choice?”

“Why? Your place of course”

Chuckling heavily “did I just hear you say that?”

“Absolutely not” Chuckling too

“Absolutely not you say?”

“Not really”

“DeZamundarius the Great being a coward over his emotions”

“I’m not, definitely not”

“Let’s see about that then”

“Come on Marc give me a break on this issue”

“I just did”

“How come I didn’t notice?” chuckling

“Maybe you were preoccupied with her thoughts again”

“Who”

“The beautiful and charming Marta Fiore of course”

“Come on”

“Don’t worry DeZam I’m sure she feels the same way”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Mum, time to go. Ready?”

“Yes son” stepping out of her room

“My God” Steve’s eyes were almost bulging out from their sockets

“What’s wrong, I look horrible, right?”

“Far from it” Steve staring at his mum with disbelieving gaze

“Why the deep stare then?”

“I’m shocked; I never knew my mum was the prettiest woman in the world till today”

“Ha, my God!” giggling and blushing heavily

“Where did you learn all those words from?”

“It was divinely sent to me ma”

Chuckling “I bet it was”

“I just hope I don’t run into Carrie on the way” speaking his thoughts out loud

“Your girlfriend, I suppose?”

“Who...?”

“The Carrie you just spoke about?”

“Oh my God”

“Caught you straight at the neck, right?”

“Hmmm, I guess”

“When is she coming to pay old Florence here a visit?”

“You aren’t old ma”

“Thanks Steve”

Smiling warmly “soon enough; at the moment things are pretty rough between the two of us”

“Rough, why?”

“She constantly complains that I don’t give her enough attention. But I try my best, I swear”

“That’s a typical lady for you”

“Hmmm, yeah”

“If you like her enough, work more on your feelings, it would lead the way”

“That’s the problem, I’m not sure if at all I like her enough”

“Try finding out then”

“I guess I would do just that”

“It is safer and healthier”

“Enough talking mum, let’s head out”

“Yeah, it has really been a while and I’m a bit nervous”

“You are by my side mum, I have got you”

“Thanks son, I know you have”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Let’s head home DeZam, I’m tired already”

“You bet”

“We were supposed to be home an hour earlier or thereabout, weren’t we?” looking straight at DeZam

“What have we being doing here all these while?”

“You changed our course and told me the park should be n ideal place to stay for the time being”

“Did I?”

“Yeah, you did”

“I can’t remember a thing”

“You have got to be kidding me, right?”

“I wish it was all a joke as well, I remember nothing”

“This is really serious and becoming strange”

“I guess an explanation from you would be helpful”

“I think so too”

Staring at Marc straight on “I believe the armour has began connecting with you”

“Connecting like?”

“He is trying to become one with you, sharing equally from you what you share with him”

“I don’t get it DeZam”

“The armour sees you happy, it feels less burdened; old disturbing memories are brought up and you get angry, like

what happened earlier. But why he brought us to the park, I still can't place reasonable fingers on"

"Wow" looking at DeZam with a face of pure shrieking fear

"What have I gotten myself into?"

"Nothing to be afraid of Marc, you would eventually get use to it as well as control it. Most importantly, you would be back to your normal self in no time"

"I should have listened to ma" speaking absent-mindedly to himself

"What kind of mess has Marc placed his hands on?"

"Come on Marc, it isn't so bad"

"It isn't so bad, you say?"

"You would later come to love it, trust me"

"I pray I do"

"You would have no greater companion than him"

"What about Steve? He is the best I have had in years and I'm not complaining, am I?"

"Tu, Steve e l'amatura sarebbe una squadra grande, trust me"

*A.O Sulciman*

“I never knew you speak Italian”

“Non ho mai saputo che eri un italiano”

“Ti ho mai mentito prima?”

“Non hai”

“Allora non sto mentendo anche adesso, avere fede”

“Mi fido di te DeZam”

“Grazie”

“Credo che le cose trovare un modo per uscire all’aperto a volte”

“Queste è la natura per voi Marc”

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

“It’s about time” smiling uncontrollably as she went to open the door

“Hello Ma’am”

“Oh, it’s you” feeling disappointed

“Yeah, it’s me. I brought someone to see you also”

Just realizing the presence of a woman standing about a foot away from Steve “Oh my God”

“Long time Marta”

“What a pleasant surprise”

“Indeed it is; thanks to Steven here who drew me out”

“I bet he noticed it has been long overdue” smiling dotingly at Steve for a few seconds then returning her dancing stare back to Florence

“He always had that skill in choosing the perfect timing” smiling as well

Feeling over his head “excuse me ladies, is Marc home?”

“Ladies...?” Marta looked incredulously at him

“Yeah; I doubt ‘ma’ would fit perfectly”

“Chuckling “and why won’t it?”

“In all my years on this earth I haven’t seen two women who are already over the age of forty but look half their age”

“Steve...?” Florence feeling embarrassed as she blushed uncontrollably

“Thanks Steve, but I think ...” Marta was suddenly caught short by a familiar voice that came from beside her

“I believe Steve gave the best definition yet. Don’t think Marta, it is the truth”

Turning to see who spoke and almost at once waves of flawless joy started emitting from within her. You both are finally here”

“Missed us?” Marc smiling broadly

“You bet” she replied smiling broadly too

Steve who kept smiling as he saw firsthand the emitting emotions between *the two unknown love birds* as Marc termed them

“Steve, what a surprise”

“I thought you two saw earlier?” Florence looking a little surprised at Marc

“Seeing my best friend will always come as a surprise to me ma’am”

“I bet it would Marc, it happens to me often times too” smiling as she revealed her thoughts

“Let’s head inside everyone” Marta taking the lead and DeZam staying behind to shut the door behind them

“DeZam, I bet you would have to hold on a little longer, won’t you?” Marc whispered

“Hold on for what?” looking surprised

“Still asking him?” Steve intercepts

“You two again?” shaking his head rigorously

“What are you boys whispering about, hope it isn’t about me, hmm?” Marta grinning as she saw the sudden leap the three of them gave

“Yea... no... Not at all” DeZam spoke almost at once

“Oh” giving a disappointed look “let’s head to the sitting room DeZam”

“What about us?” Marc giving his mother the stare

“Tag along if you want” winking at him

Before Marc or Steve could hold him down again, he hurried to Marta’s side “shall we?” smiling heavily and feeling an awkward sense of joy flowing in ripple waves round him

With dancing eyes Marta replied placing her hands under his arm “most definitely”

\* \* \* \* \*

“This isn’t how I planned things”

“How did you plan it, you expected less from them?”

“Not exactly, I just expected I could be the upper hand”

“Upper hand, you say?”

“I had the two of them where I wanted them but I guess that armour of his knows how best to spoil a party”

“It is still a misery how it could be this hidden; I searched and searched, it just didn’t ...”

“You failed in your search. There is no excuse for failure”

“Come on, I did my best”

“I bet your best wasn’t good enough”

“I guess so. What’s going to be our next line of action?”

“With the armour around, we have little chances of victory. What we have to do is get the armour, channel its powers, and then destroy the Great DeZamundarius afterwards”

“What about the other?”

“Leave that to me, with the new power that would be flowing through me after I channel the armour’s strength and DeZamundarius gone, he would be but a roach to squash whenever I feel like”

“Seems you got things all figured out already”

“I have been waiting for centuries for another family reunion. The last didn’t end well; this time around, I’m changing things and playing on the exact deck they played with me then”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Watch closely Marc, DeZam is making a move again”

“I’m sure he is. On my count, I have lost count” grinning as he realized how stupid that sounded

Grinning also “I lost mine too”

“What are you two grinning about Steve, Marc?” Florence drawing the attention of the other two towards them

“Hun, why” Marc responded absent-mindedly

“Why...?”

“You just spoke suddenly and weird, that’s all”

“Oh I see”

“We were talking about a friend at school Ma” Steve changed the subject

“Carrie I suppose?”

“No, not at all”

“How did she get to know about Carrie?” Marc whispered

“Later Marc” Steve replied twitching his lips and almost making it sound as if he was whistling

“Who’s Carrie?” Marta jumps in

“Some girl in school mum”

“Hope she is just some girl, I don’t want you to get mixed up with girls now”

“But mum, she is ... Never mind”

“What he was trying to say is that she is not into him ma. Marc isn’t into any relationship at the moment” Steve comes in

“Oh I see” Marta replied slowly

“Come on, he isn’t a kid any longer. He can have a girlfriend now, can’t he?”

“At sixteen...?”

“Which age were you when Martin first courted you?”

“That’s a different case Florence”

“Is it?”

“Come on ladies, no points arguing over points like this; just give them the necessary guidance, they are your kids anyway but everyman has his destiny already written ahead. Don’t push them too hard or drag them behind, it is unhealthy”

“True” Florence absorbing DeZam’s words completely

“DeZam dear, this is different”

“Prove me wrong Marta” staring at her straight in the eye

“Relationships isn’t crafted by destiny, it falls in place by chance” trying to avert his penetrating gaze as she spoke

DeZam who had clearly forgotten the presence of every other person present in the room, moved closer to Marta, held her gently by the chin, placing his other hand by her waist, driving both of them into a rigid state. He smiled a little and as the smile faded away, the glitter in his eyes intensified “Our meeting isn’t by chance Marta; I was destined to meet you, I was destined to feel this way and for you to feel the same, I know you do, right?”

Marta could have sworn she was shouting as she said yes but it was far from that. Her heart beat was in an emphatic race and it kept beating faster and faster still as realization kept settling in

Her response even though was but a whisper was all DeZam needed, his grip on her chin tightened a little, his hand around her waist raised a little, now resting on her spine and sending a cold shiver through her. Her change of state made DeZam’s extremely drawn lips twist into a half smile as he moved closer still trying to seal this new contract destiny brought on a platter of gold to him.

“Hum Hum”

*A.O Sulciman*

Florence's intended cough brought the two love birds from their adventurous journey. Marta and DeZam kept smiling as shyness and realization brought them back into the real world.

"I guess we have got our kids to thank for today"

"You sure do" Marc responded to Florence's comment winking at his mum

## CHAPTER TWELVE

About a Day ago

“It has being a while DeZamundarius”

“Yes, I have been busy”

“Too busy to come say hello after all this while”

“Come on, you know as well as I do that coming to see you isn’t safe”

“Even so”

“Even so...?”

“What about now?”

“I really had no choice; time is against me, against a whole lot of people actually”

“What have I been missing?”

“Quite a lot”

“I bet. How’s Heraculion by the way?”

“Still the same Heraculion”

“I wasn’t expecting much, evolution played quite a hard trick on you both”

“He hates it till now”

“If I were in his shoes, I would have well have hated it”

“Thank goodness then that you are not. Any news for me, I sense there is”

“You always were a genius at that”

“Someone has been snoozing around asking about that armour of yours”

“I knew it won’t be long before that happens”

“A friend of mine who also happens to be a spy was caught in the middle of your troubles and unfortunately he didn’t come out alive to tell the tale”

“A spy...?”

“So...?”

“You are weird”

“So are you my friend”

“I guess the world likes it that way”

“Not really, but it really has no choice”

“Hmmm, I doubt. Tell me more about this spy friend of yours and what information he was paid to get”

“What else?”

“The armour...?”

“Yes in a way. He was asked to gain information about a boy named Martin Fiore. How the boy fits in I don’t know, but from your tales I bet he has a link to the armour somehow”

“Yeah, he does”

“Why he was killed, I have no idea, but I know he is good in what he does. He got little information on Marcus, he is but a boy anyway but his father was more than enough”

“His father...?”

“Yeah”

“He is dead, what use is he?”

“So you do know him”

“Let’s say I have done my research”

“And I wasn’t invited?”

“Are we going to argue on this again?”

“Just kidding; his father, Martin who everyone believes dead and peacefully resting six feet under Mother Earth is actually false”

“False...?”

“He is presumed dead but not buried rather lost”

“How did you come about this information?”

“Same way I get you cleared from suspicious eyes right from the day you set foot in Stockholm, and also the same way I got that job for you”

“Oh right”

“How certain are you that Martin is alive?”

“I never said I was certain but if you want to give a shot, I won't stop you”

“The man your friend worked for, any clue who he was?”

“He covers his tracks well, nothing on his records yet”

“Are you certain he passed the message about Martin to this employer of his?”

“Quite certain, he had little information other than that to give away, and he told me he always felt this fear whenever he approached this man”

“Although, Martin is actually one of the best I have seen in decades who could keep to himself no matter where he is”

“And you say he asked about the armour, didn't you?”

“Yeah, I think he is among the hundreds of fools that think they can be lucky in getting it”

“This one is no fool and he has really done his homework”

“What are you saying DeZamundarius?”

“You just gave him a better idea of getting the armour without necessarily going through me”

“My God”

“Yeah, you could have consulted me first”

“I think I got things perfectly under control”

“You thought wrong”

“What do we do now?”

“We have to find Martin Fiore before they do”

“They...?”

“I’m certain he isn’t alone on this one”

“How certain are you?”

“A hundred percent”

“Besides, who is he?”

“You don’t want to know”

“A hundred percent”

“Okay, I think that was scary”

“You should be scared, really scared”

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“Come on, nothing is here”

“You can’t be so sure, can you?”

“If we get caught, things might go wrongly on our part, this is private property, remember?”

“Hasten the search then and stop whining”

“What are we looking for anyway?”

“Anything unfamiliar”

“Unfamiliar, as in”

“This is a farm, right? When you see anything that shouldn’t be on a farm, let me know”

“Like that?” pausing towards a stone which was unusually hot and red “how on earth did you know there would be a meteorite here?”

“I have been observing”

“What do you want to use it for, it is rather small”

“An enchanted meteorite stone could be one of the best things anyone can give you as a gift”

“Hun...?”

“Watch and see” placing the hot meteorite on his hand, raised his head up and gaze towards the stars, he started

mumbling some words. After about a minute or thereabout, he pointed to the star up north from where they stood

“That’s our direction”

“The meteorite told you that?”

“I told you it is what people could kill for if but they knew its worth”

“So where are we heading to? I’m sure that space thing showed you also”

“Yes it did. We head to Stockholm now”

“Great”

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

“Any leads on martin Fiore?”

“Nothing at all, he seems to have vanished into thin air”

“Don’t let him here that”

“Who...?”

A voice suddenly brought the two men into a startled state  
“me”

The two men turned to see the person whom was actually the last they wanted to see. With shaky voice and sweaty palms, they spoke almost at once “We didn’t know you were here”

“No one does” as he replied he dashed swiftly towards the second man, lifting him from the floor with a single hand placed on his lower jaw

“Like your colleague told you, I hate the word; he is alive, and as long as he is alive I want results and I want them fast”

“Ye... yes sir. Not altering it again, ever again” as he spoke he shook all over fearing for the worst which he wasn’t so sure about it

Placing him down, he moved backwards entering into the shadows until his face was well hidden only his perfectly corporate wear were visible “I come and go like the wind and as well I lack patience like it. When next I come and no results, you both would wish you had other destined paths”

“But ...” Before the first guy could reply, he was off

“That dude is creepy”

“Creepy, cranky and deadly” still trying to straighten his neck

“We better not get on his bad side again”

“I for sure won’t”

“Let’s get to work”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Finally”

“You can say that again”

“How long do you estimate our time of reach?”

“By dusk we should be at the border”

“That is still somewhat far, let’s rest a little”

“We would end up getting there by night fall and I really don’t think things would turn out so nicely for us then”

“And what could possibly go wrong?”

“The same thing that goes wrong every thirty-sixth full moon”

“Oh, I nearly forgot”

“I bet you did”

“Seriously...? Enough talking, let’s head for Stockholm; sunset isn’t actually a think I like”

“You don’t have to be sad about it, things would be for the better”

“I’m not sad”

“You are; it is perfectly okay to admit it”

\* \* \* \* \*

“What’s the latest development son?”

“I’m afraid nothing my lord”

“Nothing...?” as he responded steam of anger flowed in therein

“My Lord, I’m trying my best”

“You are?”

“My Lord ...”

“Leave this instance and don’t make me regret doing to you unthinkable things if you ever show here empty-handed”

“Yes, but...”

“You want to test my patience?”

“No my Lord; sorry my Lord”

“Always sorry, the next time you come to me without results I would truly make you sorry” with raised tone filled with anger and regret

\* \* \* \* \*

“Right on time; you are a genius”

“Not quite, but thanks for the compliment all the same”

“I know you will say that”

“Come on, it is the truth”

“Deep down you know it isn’t”

“That is a lie”

“Meet my brother DeZamundarius and your theory of me would change in an instant”

“I doubt”

“We would find out soon enough”

“Yeah right; is your meteor thing showing us the way or should we have to act like we always do when we need info especially in foreign lands”

“In a way, yes and in a way, no”

“I had that thought too”

Smiling lightly “We’d need to get information on any passerby on how to get to that side” pointing up north towards a plain field with scattered buildings all around. That is where the compass points towards”

“Over there, how gross”

“Why?”

“I never knew DeZamundarius was a farm boy”

“So...?”

“I hate farms”

“You can go home then”

“Why?”

“I thought you hate farms”

“I love wizard shows a lot, let’s go”

Shaking his head and laughing in disbelief “it is still a misery how I ended up with you”

“Misery solved”

“Solved, as in?”

Thank the heavens you have a compass with you, it would take you to that faithful day we met for the first time, maybe then you would know why you were destined to be with me”

Chuckling “we met at a bar, didn’t we?”

Looking confused “did we?”

Laughing hard “I think you would actually be the one in need of travelling back into time and not me”

“That’s not fair” wearing a babyish look across his face

“It is now” laughing even more

\* \* \* \* \*

“It was really lovely having you around Florence”

“I have totally forgotten how happy I used to be in your presence”

“I’m glad I haven’t dropped in that aspect”

“No, not all at” turning towards her left to catch a glimpse of DeZam who was buried deep in conversation with Marc and Steve “to be honest, he seems to be the best so far” winking at her

Marta followed her gaze and settling them on DeZam, she knew exactly what Florence meant; new set of pink cheeks fell perfectly in place making her more beautiful than she already is “It is all so sudden Florence”

“Love is timeless, remember” winking at her

“That’s the problem, I’m not sure of my feelings yet. I don’t want to fall completely for someone I just met today. I would be less than a teenager”

“With a guy like that, any teenager won’t think twice about falling completely when the chance comes in. You are not a teenager, doing the same would make you foolish and cheap”

“Exactly”

“He seems to like you a lot”

“He admitted it to Marc earlier today”

“You were eavesdropping in their conversation?” sounding shocked

“I didn’t intend to” feeling ashamed

“I know you didn’t and I understand your predicament. From the way he looked, held and confessed his feelings for you moments ago, no one needs to tell me anything, it is all clear”

“But it is too sudden also”

“You don’t need to rush into anything; just let your emotions drive you”

“He spoke about destiny and to be honest I never believed in it until today”

“How”

“He was transferred to Land and resource Department, Stockholm’s Agency for Environmental Evaluation”

“Isn’t that where you work?”

“Exactly; not only that, out of all the about twenty-five thousand kids that in Stockholm, he got to meet Marc”

“You knew him through Marc? Interesting”

“He came for a visit today that is how we got to meet”

“How did both of them meet?”

“He said online but I don’t know why I don’t really believe that like I should”

“Marc is a very lively young kid, it is possibly Marta”

“Yeah I know, but I know my son also, he can’t stay stocked to a chat mate miles away for a very long time”

“How sure are you? He is growing Marta and growth accompanies changes”

“I’m very sure; he says it all the time”

“So, what do you think?”

“I’m not sure Florence but I think either he, Marc or both of them are hidden something from me”

“What possibly could they hide from you?”

“Time would tell, it doesn’t feel threatening though”

*A. O. Sulciman*

“Sure about that?”

“Instinctively sure”

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

“What does the compass say now?”

“It is directing us further east”

“It has been doing the same thing for three good days”

“I’m not sure what’s wrong”

“That crap of yours is not by any means reliable”

“It is, I’m sure of it”

“Are you sure DeZamundarius or the armour are in Stockholm?”

“I’m certain, really certain”

“What the hell is wrong with your meteor then?”

After a long pause “His powers are limited to animates, he possibly isn’t the one doing this”

“What about your other brother?”

“Oh Heraculion the failure”

“Precisely”

“He isn’t close by”

“How sure are you?”

“Our bonds grow deep”

“What about DeZamundarius?”

“I never really had the chance of staying with him long; I doubt he even knows I exist”

“What a family?”

“Weird, I know”

“Very weird” paused a bit then continued “what or who do you think is manipulating with the meteor then?”

Thinking deeply for a couple of seconds “it can’t be possible, can it?” speaking his thoughts out loud

“What can’t be possible?”

“DeZamundarius’ armour was crafted for such purposes but it never crossed my mind that it could work at such great distance. It really has become better than I expected”

“It brought us here for a purpose. It was its entire plan”

“This armour of a thing, isn’t it still in its resting place?”

“Before now, I believed so and thought its powers can be channelled as it hungrily looks for a person to control it, but I guess I was a bit late on that”

“Late, as in it has a new owner already?”

“Exactly”

“That’s why it is behaving with such charisma”

“But from the scroll you got me some time ago, it said the armour can only be destroyed if the bond between DeZamundarius and Heraculion has been broken”

“It isn’t as strong as it was then, that is if its exist at all”

“Hmmm”

“Heraculion works for my father now and DeZamundarius is all alone; if I can get the armour, breaking its bonds from whoever possesses it which is relatively easy. I won’t have to break the bonds between the two brothers again when I can end it and end it for good”

“Great plan; how do you want to channel the power?”

“That isn’t for your ears”

“You don’t trust me?”

“Trust can be expensive; I’m in no need for one at the moment”

“If you insist, I would never betray you though”

“I count on your words”

“Since the armour controls the compass, what do we get to move next?”

“I would be suggesting through DeZamundarius, but he is always two steps ahead of the game. Once he senses me, he would act in a way we both would least expect”

“That is if you let him know your motives”

“You are a genius” snapping his fingers happily as his plan set into place in his head “DeZamundarius has always been close to the armour and even though he failed to admit on two occasions when I tried looking for it, I know he was the one who moved it”

“But the armour has a will of its own”

“A will of its own when it gets a master, without one it is just an old artefact”

“Hmmm”

“Don’t be amused, that is the least of his creations”

“Least of his creations, you say?”

“If he had the means, he would have created a planet by now”

“You seem rather proud of him”

“Not really, I feel envious”

“Who won’t?”

“I doubt too”

\* \* \* \* \*

“DeZam, Marc, it was indeed a pleasure having you two to keep me company”

“We are glad you enjoyed our presence” DeZam replied smiling

“I sure did” winking at DeZam “Steve, time to go”

“Yes Ma. DeZam sir, Marc, I’m off; bye”

“Bye buddy”

“DeZam, don’t forget that the purest of water fall right before dawn and also that is the best time to catch it before it gets melted by the morning sun”

“Absolutely, thanks for the tip Florence” winking at her

“Closing the door behind them, he turned, rested his back against the door, smiled as the thought of how boldly he acted when he felt he needed it the most sank in”

A light, direct and suiting cough brought him out from his thoughts which he had merrily slipped into “DeZam seems you really don’t need to sleep before you reach fairytale land, do you?” smiling broadly as his penetrating and desperate look fell upon her face

“I wasn’t in fairytale land” smiling as he replied

“Where were you then?” as she spoke she moved closer, held his hands and playfully dragged him away from the door

As the laugh from his face settled he replied “I was in treasure Island”

“Treasure Island...? You never told me you were a pirate”

Chuckling hard “searching for love actually made me one and I just happen to find my very own Treasure chest”

Blushing heavily “I believe I have found mine too”

Marc who had been looking at them for about five minutes, smiled, shook his head and headed for his room with a satisfactory look on his face *“this two need privacy really bad. I never knew adults still acts this way”*

*“Hey Marc”*

Looking round to see if DeZam had left his mother to fall by his side *“I thought you me you can’t do this with relative ease”* smiling as his face locked with DeZam’s which was also wearing a smile on it

*“How sure are you it is with relative ease?”*

*“It is showing all over you”*

*“I’m controlling it, I have learnt some incredible techniques through the years that has really been helpful”*

*“Have you?”*

*“Besides, you are not far away”*

*“You would let me in on those stuffs later”*

*“No problem”* smiling even broader

*A.O Suleiman*

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