

Trabolt wandered through the night, stumbling on the far side of the wide open streets filled with the usual hubbub of Haven. Night markets, pubs and inn restaurants filled the knight with whatever urge they had this time around.

The sight of a drunk knight was not out of the ordinary, he was lucky enough to only get as many stares as he did this time. There were times where he would the cold stare and under breath chuckles as people would murmur about some insane spectacle he'd just pulled off. He found it very annoying that no one actually bothered to tell him exactly what happened.

He quietly stumbles into a just as silent alleyway, his gloved hand tracing the wall for balance. Taking another sip from his drinking-pouch, he looked up and saw the moon. He squinted, as if the moon wasn't too big already. He squinted some more. It's awfully bright. Squinted so hard, no one's really sure if his eyes are opened at all. He went crossed-eyed and fell over.

Through the wall and into the women's restroom.

Chapter 1

A Phase In Life

There was always something about a woman's slap that always penetrated the armor of knights' helms and their beverage-pickled minds. Trabolt was trying to reel in what happened last night.

He looked at his emptied pouch, unable to down the remainders and just stared at it. Surely his usual supplier hasn't been trying to kill him? No, Khamath would've rubbed him out long ago; he's not the sort who'd play the long game.

So, what happened? Maybe this was it, maybe this was one of the so-called crazy stunts he pulled when he was smashed. No, surely not. Surely walking through walls hadn't anything to do with watermelons. He dismissed the idea and continued to analyze as he sat there on his bed in his small apartment somewhere in East Haven.

He got up, aimlessly paced back and forth. He stopped, looked around and locked his gaze on his computer's clock. The Mewkat desktop told him the time. He carefully considered the time of the morning, picked up his weapons of trade and made a mad dash for it to the Hub.

"You were late."

Ymistar looked over the offender. The offender was panting heavily, his body bent over on the iron grate floors and his weakened arms trembling trying to keep him up. Trabolt wasn't so sure what made Ms. Ym's voice so impossible to disobey. Maybe how it jabbed his back with icicles or how her gaze burnt through him like a hot sword

through jelly even when *he didn't see it*. When she smells offenders, discipline will commence.

He gave a cough and slumped over.

She signaled the other two of the party, some fresh recruits eager for battle, and they walked towards the keeled over knight.

There were blurred lights, shapes and colors. There was polite sounding voices and someone flipped Trabolta over onto his back, resting his weary head on their laps. *Peace at last*, he thought. *At least I'll die happy amongst good company*.

And then there was a sharp pain in his arm. The sensation itself rocked his soul right back into his body. As the massive emptied needle left his arm, Trabolta's body spasmed through recuperation in an instant, newfound energy flooded right back into him. He literally sprang back up from the floor, arms pointed straight down by his sides, standing stiff on his heels. And he just stood there, cross-eyed.

It took him seconds before the initial rush wore off, where he could feel his body again. "What in the flying whirlies was that?!" He yelled at the recruits. He stopped. He felt the icy cold, burning gaze meeting the back of his head and knew better.

"It's just something that the newbies cooked up back at the Rescue Camp. Steem-paks? they call it." Ym's voice was too smooth, too cold. Comparing it with ice wouldn't do it justice.

Much to his annoyance, the other two chuckled and he could've sworn he felt one of them rolling their eyes. He'll show 'em later down on the battlefield. Oh, he'll show 'em, alright. He tightened his grip around the handle of the giant sword he had shouldered. There was a faint sound of teeth grinding. The recruits dismissed it, but Ym knew.

Riding down the elevator to the first floor, Trabolta saw how the recruits reacted to the world within Cradle. Spheres made of spheres, all attached to an impossible machine that runs the surfaces below. It was a network of biospheres, Floors of worlds alien to Cradle itself, but no one knows about the construction behind this planetary zoo.

The knights' sole mission on Cradle was simple; leave. But as it turns out, Cradle didn't like that idea.

It had been years ago since the Skylark incident; the Knights of The Spiral Order's fleeting battleship having found the planet after a jump and crashing right on top of it after something real big interfered with the entire ship's system. The knights had to bail and launched themselves right out.

Some scouting rumors suggest that there are tribes of lost knights living in the wilderness, or even inside the belly of the beast itself.

Chapter 2

[Insert Name Here]

So ... I haven't really discussed about myself. Aside my rather monstrous transformation.

I'm Trobolta Traver. Fancy isn't it? just had my 24th birthday and the best gunslinger from Argaroc and heavy drinking champion several years straight. Not really proud of that though ... but I guess it was worth it. Argaroc is a nasty slum outside of town full of thieves and drunks but an important energy mining town. I used to work there. Those were prolly the best first 10 years of my life. My parents were non-existent. Or at least died in a fire, or so my caretaker told me before i got conscripted into the Order. I graduated at the top of my class as the best gunslinger there at the age of 15 like everyone else.

Being a full fledged Knight didn't really help with my life. Sure I helped out my Care taker with protection against thugs and such, but it didn't really helped much with trying to figure out who my parents were. Technically, she told me that my mother died in a fire. Dad abandoned her when he figured out that she was pregnant. That bastard. At least he had the decency to leave her with some cash to get her and my life going. Up until the incident of course.

Since I had lil money to get by, I only had issued Cobalt armor and regular Order

equipment except for the Antigua I was given by Granny Caretaker before she left for Isora's Court. Bless her heart. She was one damsel you didn't want to mess with. Died after the pastor claimed her be bad. Had her executed, the Pastor did. But the Pastor got what he deserved after they discovered he was doing drugs, a regular pastime in Argaroc. An Enforcer came to town one day to help clean up some shady business and he set me up for Enforcer training after. I became one, but I was honourably discharged after when I didn't go right in the head because of a soul bound weapon.

Now I'm just roaming around Haven, drinking my pay. And my pay is rather considerable if I'm drinking this much. But the most fanciest thing about me thus far is how those Kats are really affectionate of me. They don't bite or shoot energy pellets at me. They just came up to my legs and rub on me and mewl and all that. I still haven't figured out why. But I'm guessing we all will as this story goes along. Now, back to me. As far as things went, I'm to be given my next level of Cobalt armor from the Order soon. Not the shiniest of armor, but I'm just happy the Order at least cares for their Knights.

Now back to the mission. I was to recover a box from the Main Hall. Apparently the Hall's centerpiece, as written in the message. The mission briefing also told me that the place is crawling with nasty Grimalkins. Not really a problem for me. Or so I thought. I put on some extra polish on my little Mighty Cobalt Helm, adjusted my round shades and fixed my Cobalt issue scarf. I went to the Item's Depot, a wall mounted communications device connected to the Cloud, a massive database and storage for all Knight Equipment located within Spiral HQ on Cradle. I pulled out my what previously was the Antigua, but now a really fancy Blackhawk. I know, I know; not really effective against the dark forces, but I really like it. It has sentimental value. Don't judge me.

I also took out my Fireburst Brandish, which I named Nur, or "Light" in an old now defunct language I learned back then. I got my supplies ready and I called up an Operator for gate directions. "Operator, I need a gate that'll get me to Stratum 2 Level 3, an Owelite Keep level," I spoke into the in-built intercom in my helmet. "Hold on, Knight," She replied in a soft tone, leaving me some time to tie my boots as I listened to the quiet waiting music in the background. She came back no sooner as I began to strap on my other boot. "Gate 7 is currently the only one leading down to that particular level right now," She spoke. I wished her a good day and I went off.

The Arcade is always scare of Knights, only a few who knows the value of this marvelous structure lay here. The Arcade used to be a bustling center for busy Knights working for their pay. Not anymore since Missions are much more rewarding and energy

cost efficient. I head on over to the old Gate 7. A dusty elevator heading down to the Core like all the others. *I wonder why it looks so underused.* I jumped onto the old thing and pressed the coordinates. I released the energy cost and a cloud of pure mist energy bursts forth, being absorbed into the elevator. The safety rails rises and with a jerk, I went down to the depths with the classic whirring sounds of the elevator.

The trip down is always feels relaxing. The rhythmic whirring of the elevator spring under the platform spinning at a quick pace. I leaned over the safety railing, looking over the heart of Cradle. Biospheres in multiple stratus. Personally, these are an incredible feat of engineering. Just wished they weren't inhabited with all sorts of evil beings and monstrosity. I have to wonder though, *Where did they sent all that dirt to?* I understand smelting all the minerals into iron and metal they use now, but where did they manage to remove so much dirt and turn the entire planet into an empty shell?

My train of thoughts were derailed when I past down through another level. The air was ... cold. Chilly even. The atmosphere slowly changed from its usual brown/green of industry to bright blue and white. It was a strange feeling. It felt cozy and welcoming, but at the same time, hostile and misleading. It even almost felt like of all places; Home.

The Hall slowly came into view, it was a huge complex, being the Main Hall after all. It was huge and the shelves went on and on. Those Grimalkin warding Owelite candles were lit everywhere and I saw my prize in the center. Im guessing something special was about to unfold as the elevator stopped and the safety railings fell. I stepped off the elevator after the long trip, taking a stretch, popping my back. I think I'm getting too old for this. It felt really strange down here. Like I felt a genuine sense of belonging. But that's crazy, there's Kats everywhere, and I don't even like reading old musty Owelite text. Blasted ancient paper. *Nobody uses paper anymore!*

After my little rant, I went up to the porcelain vase, the so called "box" i was paid to retrieve. My benefactors sure don't know what they paid me to do. I looked at the heavily decorated pot. Weird. It has a Kat motif painted all over it and 2 guys fighting. I looked around the area and found myself an open book on the reading pedestal. I stepped up the stage and took a looksy at the bare pages. They were empty. Strange, wonder who wrote this book. I touched it. That was the worst mistake I have done in my life so far.

Visions fled into me. Visions of an apocalyptic future. Haven was on fire, everyone was being overrun by goo monsters that partially resembled Grimalkins. And worst of all; I was in the middle of it. That horrendous macabre version of me i saw in the mirror

this morning, wearing a black and purple Spookat Mask and wolver coat, or something that resembled a dark version of the Vog Coat, and holding up an odd weapon. It resembled both Sentenza and the Argent Peacemaker. But something was off. It was both. Both guns meld together into a new weapon of both light and dark. And I blasted a mind deadening shot into a civilian. I watched in fear as my evil self laughed at the destruction he's unfold.

I couldn't take it anymore, I flipped the pedestal and held my head, the visions stayed, they won't go away. It was just me laughing at the madness. I stumbled through the main foyer and knocked over the vase. The vase crashed open and two souls emerged. I was able to break the spell long enough to watch the spectacle. The souls intertwined with each other violently, as if they were fighting, then they looked at me and lunged. I found myself waking up, to a sight to be seen.

Chapter 3

Mirror mirror on the wall ...

I woke up in bed. At home. My bed and covers wet with my sweat. Guess I hadn't slept well last night. What did I saw? Was it all real? I stumbled out of bed and took a look out the window. It was night time. I took a good look at the clock, it was yesterday. I took a look into the mirror and i felt like i was going to wet myself again. Instead of my demonic looks, I saw instead an angelic version. Bright white and blue in his own version of a wolver coat and Spookat Mask. This time, the wing was on the other side. It's starting to freak me out. I just wore my Mighty Cobalt under my wolver coat and cap costume and ran out.

It was raining. The puddles didn't help stop me from slipping off my sanity again. Everywhere I went, I saw me. Angelic me. Valkyrie me, holding the Argent Peacemaker in my shooting hand. It was impossible to shake off. So I stood in a dark alleyway, the pitter patter of rain bouncing off my cap. I looked down at another puddle, but instead of Valkyrie me, it was Demon me. But, that's impossible. I was a Valkyrie not even a moment ago. I stepped out from the alley and looked at another puddle, Valkyrie me. I stepped back into the dark, Demon me.

I finally came out from the alley and looked up into the sky. The moon is awfully close tonight. The streets were filled with busy nocturnal people, but no one noticed the madness I am experiencing right now.