

[M4F] Still Waters Run Deep (Your orc companion defends and comforts you after a heated meeting with the chieftain)

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- **DATE STARTED:** 7 August 2024
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- **AUTHOR:** AstraWrites (u/icing_desu)
- **TAGS:** [fantasy] [orc speaker] [human listener] [friendship] [protective] [comfort] [hugging] [wholesome]
- **SUMMARY (for listener):** While you are grateful for the protection and healing given to you by the orcs, you grow restless and wish to return to your own kingdom to confront those who were responsible for the assassination attempt. Negotiations for you leaving didn't go well however, as the orc chief was displeased with you sending a secret letter to your King without his express knowledge and consent. Your orc general defends you, but ultimately, you fail to convince the chief to let you go. Now stuck as a political guest, you both try to find a way around this dilemma.
- **SETTING:** The kingdom is barely able to sustain itself as it wages war against other races on 3 different fronts. The peace treaty with the Orc King and the subsequent change in political alliances and dynamics will provide a most-needed respite for both the human kingdom and the other races.
- **CHARACTERS:** SK (abbv. for speaker); LT (abbv. for listener)

Legend:

- *[sfx:]*: sound effects
- *[*text]*: setting/stage direction
- *//*: listener response
- *(*text)*: tone
- **CAPITALISED/italicised**: emphasis

[sfx: crackling fire]

Good morning, duchess. *[pause]* I'm guessing you've already been informed?

//:

Ah, not yet. There had already been talks in the last few days about escorting you back to your capital.

//:

[chuckle] I don't think I've ever seen you this happy during your stay with us. *[pause]* But, anyway, the plan would have me and my warriors accompany you back.

//:

Yes, those of us who rescued you from the assassins, so that you'll have actual witnesses to back up your claim should your king ask for it.

//:

... You mean my team? No, they don't hate you. Why would you think that?

//:

[chuckle] *(embarrassed)* Oh those stupid fools. They just don't know how to act properly. You'd have to forgive them for not having the needed social skills, since that's– um... not really a priority when you're a soldier.

//:

You want to “know more about them”? Hmm... Let's see– the strongest one, Naktu, whom you know as my lieutenant, doesn't talk much. He likes to listen instead so he comes off as a bit stand-offish.

//:

The one with the warhammer, Korg; he likes to talk with his fists. *[pause]* Grishna, our shieldmaiden, has always wanted to be your friend, but you're both nervous around each other so nothing's happening between you two at all *[teasing laugh]*. Russul is the strategist. He, on the other hand, talks so much that it could get annoying sometimes. He's also learned our ways of healing, which is the only time he ever shuts up.

//:

Don't be. They like you, or at the very least, they don't hate you.

//:

We can go talk to them right now. *[pause]* Yes, right now *[chuckle]*. It's not like we have anything better to do at the moment. Might as well make friends with your soon-to-be protectors, right? *(excited)* Come on–

[sfx: footsteps approaching]

Oh— hm, a message from the Chief? *[pause] (serious)* We've been summoned to the Great Hall.

//:

Yes, both of us. The messenger didn't say why, only that we should go right now. Let's go—

[Scene change; sfx: crackling fire; breaking pottery and a thud]

[LT frowns as the Orc Chief berates her for sending a secret message to her uncle, the King. It was to reassure him that she was alright and inform him of the truth behind the attack, however, the Chief saw it as an affront to his authority as leader and as host. SK observes, his face unreadable.]

****[suggestion: audio heard from one ear only, to signify that the speaker is talking to someone else and not directly to the listener]**

If I may put a word in edgewise, we apologise if we've insulted you, Great Leader.

Chief//:

Yes, I speak for both of us. She has stated her reasons for sending the letter, and I believe that she's well within her rights to have done it.

Chief//:

She's harmless and you're just paranoid.

[sfx: weapons being drawn]

[chuckle] (slow and deliberate; concealed rage) The duchess is *my* ward. I suggest you all think twice about challenging me before listening to what I have to say.

//:

[angry sigh] Now, as I was saying, the duchess had given me permission to read it beforehand: it was personal and did not contain any extensive talk of politics. Rest assured, it was a letter sent by a niece to her worried uncle, not by a diplomat to her King.

Chief//:

(hint of frustration) She has done everything that you have asked of her. Your subjects adore her and in case you forget, I'd like to remind you that she is a *guest*. Not some common prisoner. We should

be grateful that she is willing to stay with and learn from us; what with our races being enemies and all for the last hundreds of years.

Chief//:

If there are repercussions then I'll be glad to suffer them with her.

Chief//:

[angry exhale] As you wish.

[sfx: rustling cloth as SK and LT leaves the Chief's tent]

[Scene change; sfx: desert ambience; quick, angry footsteps then something getting kicked in frustration]

Having a tantrum won't do you any good. Come, sit with me for a while.

//:

I know he stripped me of my rank, but it's just for a couple of weeks. I've been through this before. This reaction was as mild as it could get.

//:

Of course, I don't agree with him, but he *is* the Chief, and his word is law. If he says that we broke his trust, then we did. We should avoid angering him further if you want to get out of here as soon as possible.

//:

"How can I be so calm"? *[pause]* I'm not calm... at least, not as calm as you saw.

//:

Come on, let's walk together. Might help calm you down better than sitting still.

[sfx: two sets of footsteps on sand]

[sigh] Believe me, I was furious inside that tent, but it won't do well to show people your emotions. Remember, little one, your only true companion in this world is yourself. So keep everything close to your chest.

//:

No, I'm not saying that you distrust everyone else. I just want to remind you that not all people are genuine. Everybody has their own agenda and it's always good to practise restraint in showing emotions so people won't take advantage of you.

//:

No, you won't be stuck here. He doesn't want to keep you here forever, he just wants to be the first *and only* one to decide what to do with you.

//:

[chuckle] Well, all chiefs are like that; no matter the species. Let's just leave him to fume about our "insubordination" while we figure out what to do next, okay? *[long pause]* *(concerned but reassuring)* Hey, it'll be okay. You're not alone in this.

//:

I know it's not fair, but you have to understand— *[stops himself and sighs]* You know what, I don't want to rationalise anything. That's the last thing that you need right now. Come here.

[sfx: rustle of cloth and leather]

//:

Hm? I'm... giving you a hug. I see humans do it all the time. *[pause]* Why— did I do something wrong? We usually don't show this much empathy with each other in our tribe, but you look like you need it right now.

//:

[deep breath] Comfortable? *[pause]* Okay, good. There, there. It's okay, there's no one else here who might see you in this state. There's only us. *[long pause]*

//:

I understand. *[pause]* No, I really do. I... wasn't the brightest or the strongest as a young orc. I was sickly, even. I had to work twice as hard just to keep up with the others. It always felt like my successes were only worth half-merit and each of my failures garnered double the wrath from my mentors.

//:

Yes. I had a feeling you were in the same position when you were young. *[pause]* In a society that dictates the future of their children at birth, I struggled to earn the right to take my fate into my own hands. Everyone took it upon themselves to decide *for me*. *(hint of bitterness in his voice)* ...I *hated* that.

//:

[chuckle] Why are *you* sorry? It's not your fault.

//:

"It's to show empathy as well"? Ah, I see. Maybe I should also try to learn more human customs from you someday.

//:

[sigh] Look, I think what I've been trying to say is: it took literal blood, sweat, and tears for you to gain control of your own life, and when someone just casually tries in any way to wrench that away from you, you'd do everything to resist. And I understand that. That's why I stand with you. Remember that always.

//:

Feeling any better now? *[pause]* Okay. That's good.

[sfx: rustle of cloth and leather]

//:

There's no need to thank me. I did swear to support you as much as I'm able. *[chuckle]* Fine, If you insist then— you're welcome, little one. *[pause]* Here you go; I have some cheese and dates left over from last night. I know how much food cheers you up. *[chuckle]*

//:

No, no, I'm not teasing you. Really, I'm glad that you're someone with a big appetite and an even bigger attitude. I know how to deal with those types; I wouldn't know what to do with you if you're not.

//:

[chuckle] Exactly. Can you imagine me talking and looking after one of your highborn friends? *[laugh]*

//:

Hm? Ah... our plan to return you to your kingdom. *[sigh]* They should be halted; for now at least, but it'll be up and running again once the Chief calms down.

//:

Don't worry about me too much. If he doesn't reinstate me as a general, then I'll just have to climb up the military ladder once again. Besides, the people won't be too pleased once they learn about this.

//:

Well, *I* was the one who gave him most of his battlefield victories, and *you* are the key to lasting peace between our races. So, seriously, everything will be fine in the end.

//:

[calming inhale then exhale] Now, we were about to formally meet my team, before we got so rudely interrupted. Shall we pick up where we left off? *[pause then chuckle]* Alright then, let's go.

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