

The Green Fire

On a cold solstice night on the southern continent of Doemir, two Kazian scouts sit by a green fire. Each looking deep into the fire, the coal black creatures rest in a massive open field with grass that is in the shade of butterscotch yellow.

“It is said that the fire might provide insight into one’s future,” one of the creatures says in a deep, cautious voice.

“Future or past,” the other one says, almost as if it’s a question.

Lowering their horned heads, they return to silence. As they listen to the hum and crackle of the fire, one of the creatures stands up tall to stretch, the distinctive emerald green light of the fire covering the entirety of its body. The glow of the fire reveals its apparent height, but also the black protruding horns from its head and the jagged horns sticking out from their elbows. It begins to walk to a brown muslim bag it had placed on the dusty ground earlier. Quickly opening and closing the bag, it returns to the fire and sits once more.

“How many do we have left Quintel?” the creature sitting asks.

“Enough for the rotation.”

Quintel reveals the white crystallized rock she had taken out of the bag and begins to rip it into two separate chunks, throwing one into the fire, and placing the other by her side.

“I wish we still had the carving knife,” the creature sitting states.

With the crystalline rock entering the fire. The fire begins to expand, resulting in a loud whoosh. The green light has now brightened and expanded, the hum and crackles have increased. Quintel sighs. Feeling the heat of fire against her coarse body.

“The sound when a crystal enters the fire, reminds me of waking up at the commune.”

“Brax, you are not to speak of the commune again,” Quintel states firmly.

Brax looks up towards Quintel in disgust.

“You and I both know what had to be done, but that does not mean we cannot discuss it,”

Brax says with anger.

Quintel closes her neon blue eyes and plans to rest but begins to think back on the first time they entered the commune. They were welcomed and accepted into their group. Having been on the retreat for a scouting mission for their High Ambassador. Brax was injured having received a spear wound the day prior, Quintel was forced to kill the southern tribe member that attacked them. They arrived at the commune in the dark, only seeing the familiar green fire lighting the town.

“Are you injured, northern?” another tall black creature asked.

“He is, I am not.” Quintel carrying Brax on her back, having her lower leg and back covered with the same color as the fire green blood dripping out of Brax. “We saw your green fire and knew we would be in good company.”

“Indeed. I am the master of these people. Place him there and we will tend to his wounds.” The master motioned his arm to members of the commune to gather supplies and food for the entering scouts. Quintel laid Brax down near the fire, standing back and letting a smaller black creature tend to him.

“Thank you,” Quintel stated, placing her bag and spear onto the ground. Sitting down next to the fire. The Master slowly sat himself next to Quin.

“Are you two scouts of the empire?”

“We are,” Quin said looking at the master.

“Good, we enjoy members from the empire here.”

“I assume you were a part of the expansion down here into the south a few months ago. We have not seen many green fires in our travels.”

“Yes, I was,” the master stated.

Brax screamed as the smallest black creature removed a crystal from the fire and placed it upon his wound. The master and Quintel looked over to Brax and saw him reeling in pain and passing out, yet they knew he would be alright. The smallest creature returns the crystal to the fire, resulting in a whoosh of hot air.

“How did he receive the wound? If I may ask,” the master says.

“Southern female tribe member. Attacked us on our mission,” Quin responded while looking into the fire.

“Ah, the southern tribe are nimble and protective of their lands,” the master said with a slight grin. “What was your mission though?”

“Letter delivery,” Quin stated factually.

“Just a letter?” the master asks.

“You ask a lot of questions for a northern tribe member,” Quin says aggressively. The master calmly looked at Quin and leaned back. “No more questions then.” The master raised his arm and yelled. “Hail! Fetch us some food.” A very small creature with a childlike black body, red-tipped horns, and neon red eyes appears. “Yes master.” The creature says, entering into a building. Quin noticed the red tipped horns and began to look back into the fire, she could feel the worry arise within her. The creature returned to the master and Quin and provided them each with a bundle of fruits.

“Enjoy my friend.” The master states.

Quin smiling and leaning her head down in a gesture of gratitude, took a bite into the fruit. Quin and the master proceeded to eat their fruit in silence, basking in the hue of the green fire. Brax began to wake up, sitting up in a sense of daze.

“Quintel?” Brax groaned as his neon blue eyes begin to flicker into sight.

“Over here, my friend.” Quin responded.

Brax eyes began to adjust and his body began to feel the heat of the fire against him. He pulled himself up and saw Quin sitting next to a creature he does not know, yet seems to fear.

“Who are you?” Brax asks.

“I am the master.” He states.

“The master of what?”

“The master of these people and the commune we reside in. I am here to keep all safe.”

The master began to scoot closer to Brax and handed him a blue odd shaped fruit. “Eat it, you must replenish your strength.” Brax took the fruit and chomped down into it. Looking back at the master with gratitude all the time peering at Quintel.

“We will provide shelter and beds for you each tonight, hopefully by morning our defenders will return.

“Defenders?” Quin asked quizzically.

“Def-fen-ders?” Brax stated with a mouth full of food.

The master stood up and motioned its hands to the little creature from before.

“Yes, defenders we sent them out to scout a southern encampment that has been harassing us the last few rotations.” The master stated. “Hail.” The master looking down at the little creature who was staring at his hoofs. “Please make beds for our guests for the evening. I

also need you to send out a runner to meet with the defenders and tell them we have northerners in the camp.”

“Yes master.” The little creature with red tipped horns peered at Quin and Brax with a slightly menacing grin and she ran off. The master sat back down and started to eat his fruit once more. As they finished their food, Hail returned.

“Beds are ready and the runner has been sent master.” Speaking in a higher tone and faster cadence than before.

“Wonderful.” The master stood up. “I guess it is time for us to retire. Hopefully tomorrow we can get you underway.”

Quin and Brax both stood up and Quin grabbed her bag and spear.

“Show them to their beds Hail,” The master said. “Yes master.”

Hail started to walk towards a building on the far side of the commune. Brax and Quin started to follow Hail. While walking behind the small creature, Brax and Quintel began to notice not only the buildings but also the people of the commune. The building resembled that of the northern tribe ones, yet oddly each member of the commune they walked past had either red or yellow eyes. Brax noticing this looked over to Quintel who was making eye contact with Brax. Quintel proceeded to point toward Hail who was a few paces ahead of them. Brax for the first time noticed the red tipped horns protruding from her head. Brax recoiled at the sight of this, almost stopping in his tracks. Knowing that a red tipped Kazian is from no northern tribe, but a southern one.

“Here we are.” Hail said with her attempt at what a smile should be. “Tomorrow will be a great day. The defenders will return and we can help you on your journey. Good Night.” Hail

slipped away and proceeded to run off into the commune, waving goodbye to the two scouts with her right hand revealing it had red spots all over it.

“Thank you.” Quintel stated with a manner that does not give away what she knows. She turned towards Brax, who is about to enter the room and placed her hand firmly onto his shoulder.

“Brax, can you fight?” Quin asked quietly.

“Not effectively, I don’t have a spear. Nor am I sure I have the strength to fight just yet. Brax opened the door into the make shift wooden building. Revealing a small room with two northern tribe beds, a cabinet and a green candle burning on the night stand. Brax entered the room, Quintel closely following him, closing the door behind her.

“Odd isn’t it.” Quintel asked.

“What it is?” Brax questions as he looks up.

“This room, this compound, this commune of people, the green fires.” Quin said motioning to the candle. “Everything seems northern, yet the people aren’t.”

“I think we both know why that is.” Brax said motioning to his blue tipped horns.

“Yes but why keep us alive. Why not just kill us and be rid of two Northerners?” Quintel stated in bewilderment.

“Not sure. I do know we need to get out of here before that group of defenders shows up tomorrow.”

“Agreed. Should we attempt to flee right now?” Quin said as she grabbed her black spear with a black and neon blue arrow head.

“Soon, but we have to find a way to distract the people. We arrived late at night, and a large amount of the town was awake. I’d say someone will be awake for the whole night.” Brax said with confidence. “At least until the defenders arrive in the morning.”

Quintel reached into her bag and pulled out a pink cubed crystal and placed it onto the cabinet. Brax picked it up and looked it over.

“You know what this would do, right?” Brax asked.

“Yes, and we were given one to use in an emergency. I’d say this is an emergency.” Quin states cautiously, grabbing the pink crystal out of his hands.

“We were also told to value it. As we all come from the crystals,” Brax says.

“Yes, I know, but I’d rather lose this pink rock than to die at the hands of a red tipped southern.” Quin firmly, safely put the crystal back into her bag.

“What if we use the carving knife to minimize the blast?” Brax asked.

“Can’t, I lost the knife.” Quin said as if it was not a real concern.

“You lost it? We need it to ration some of the crystals.” Brax was concerned.

“I know, but I used it to get the rid of the southern who stabbed you, or did you forget that?”

Brax sighed, knowing Quin was right, but also knowing what would happen if they used the entirety of the pink crystal.

“All right, fine,” Brax acknowledged in agreement and shifting to their plan, “We go under the guise of more food, walk to the fire, drop the crystal in, and move out for the north and we move fast. Sound good?”

Quintel nodded her head in agreement and tightened the bag around her shoulder and motioned for Brax to take the spear. Brax grabbed the spear firmly as he could and walked out the door of the wooden hut. Quintel followed him closely as they both walked towards the fire.

A distant sound pulls Quin back to the present. Not able to place the sound in her mind, she leans back against a rock knowing she did not get much sleep. Upon opening her eyes, she looks to her right and then left and sees Brax holding a small carving knife.

“Brax?” Quintel is stunned.

“You said you lost it.”

“It was either us or them. The whole crystal should have taken out the entire town. I have no love for a savage red eye.” Quintel commented as if it was nothing.

“We could have cut off a piece and just used that. It would have been enough for a distraction.” Brax was clearly disappointed in the trickery.

“I’m not going to argue this with you. I feel no remorse and neither should you.” Quintel says.

“What if you saw the smoldering remains of a child? Would you feel remorse then?” The deep voice of the master cuts through the smoke.

Quintel and Brax jumped up for their seated positions. Brax reaches for the spear and points it at the ready. Quintel quickly takes hold of the carving knife brandishing it in preparation for an attack. They both look out toward the south of the green fire and see the outline of a man red eyed, with his protruding now colorless tipped horns, burns covering his arms. How could he have survived?

“I am not here to fight you.”

“Doubtful,” Quintel stated, moving closer to Brax and searching the area surrounding them with her eyes.

“I want you to deliver a message for me to that high ambassador of yours.”

Quintel and Brax briefly looked at each other and back toward the master. He seemed to be alone but they cannot be sure, each tightening their grip on their weapons. The master walked forward and placed a small package wrapped in some kind of animal hide leather on a rock by the fire.

“We need to stop this killing now. Deliver this package to him, tell him the master of the south will be waiting. Unless you do not want this destroying of both of our peoples to stop, or burn the package for all I care. Just as you did my daughter.” his anger burning as strongly as the fire beside them.

As suddenly as he appeared he turned and disappeared back into the night. Quintel and Brax watched as the green fire reflected off his burnt skin as he retreated into the golden grass as if he was never there. They each relaxed a bit still holding onto their weapons. Brax slouched back down and looked into the green fire. Quintel walks over to the package left by the master, briefly picks it up and drops it in the fire.

“Are you sure we should burn it? It could have been important.”

“Don’t let that creature fool you. He does not fool me. What kind of important message could that savage from the south have for the ambassador, why would the ambassador listen to such a man.” Quin turned returning to her spot on the ground.

Brax holds his tongue and returns to watching the fire crackle and burn. He stares at the animal leather package as it begins to lose its brownish original color and becomes blackened due to the heat. The smell of the burning leather in the air hits both of the scouts nostrils. They each take a deep whiff looking up to the stars above as it reminds them of home they are now so

far away from. In that moment Brax looks down at the fire to see the wrapping of leather fall off the package and into the fire and in that second he sees the pink cubed crystal from before his time covered with a child's red spotted hand print of flesh cast onto the cube.

The master watches from a distance as a large flash of pink energy engulfs the former campsite of the two scouts of the empire. The pink energy ignited the yellow grass the camp once resided in. As the grasses burned, he turns around and begins to walk back to his commune knowing he has avenged his daughter.