

The Art of Restoration: Part 2

Three looming towers of crystal and glass pierced the dense forests that held elaborate tree villages connected by vine laden bridges. The Tribosi were considered the last of the ‘true elves’ who hadn’t ‘soiled’ their bloodline with that of other races. Many would go off and venture to the worlds of men and dwarves and dryads, but they were never Tribosi again. Druil’s mother, now a hundred and twenty three, refused to even entertain the idea of returning. “I would not go to my home as an outsider,” she told Druil when he offered to take her with him. “One does not dig up graves for the memories...”

Druil felt his seasickness wash away as the vessel glided into port. Everyone was on the main deck for the final docking, watching the acrobatic elves leap off the ship and mooring *The Ember Wave* in place. Almost as soon as the gangplank was down, Druil shouldered his healer’s kit and travel bag and then rushed towards the island.

The House of the Great Healer was located at the foot of the Coronal Tower, at the very center of the island. It took the better part of a day and threatened to ruin Druil’s new shoes with mud, but he found the place just before nightfall. The building had been grown from three oak trees, bound together and latticed with ivy vines into a palace fit for a divine healer. Glowing sheets of moss hung by each doorway, welcoming travelers in and showing the sick and weary where they may find rest. Druil walked to one of the sheets of moss and gingerly pulled it aside to gain entry.

“Healer Sorit?” Druil called. The ground was a carefully laid bed of stones with wild flowers growing up between the edges. More trees had been grown and shaped into walls, staircases, even furniture. At the top of a broad staircase, Healer Sorit loomed over Druil. Druil bowed, though there was no custom that demanded it. “You honor me with your invitation, Great Healer...”

Healer Sorit seemed to be made of the moonlight that peeked in through the canopy roof. His slender face was sharp like ice and his long, white hair seemed to indicate experience more than age. It took a lot to make Druil feel inferior to someone, but Healer Sorit nearly made him cower beneath his steely glare. After silently sizing the visitor up, Healer Sorit spoke. “You have come to learn the Art of Restoration?”

“I am simply a witness to your teachings. If I am skilled enough to learn, I will consider myself very lucky.”

“Indeed,” Healer Sorit said. His voice was stale and neutral, no flicker of amusement or disdain coloring his words. “Tomorrow we have a procedure coming in. You will witness. And if—if you are, as you say, ‘lucky’—we will attempt to teach you.”

“You honor me, Great Healer. I will do my best to be a suitable student.”

Healer Sorit only grunted a cold ascent, folded his hands behind his back and glided upstairs. Druil nearly left to find somewhere to stay when an elven woman approached him with a bowed head. “This way, please,” she said. “I will take you to your room.”

Druil didn’t sleep. The bed was comfortable and the stable room was a welcome relief after so long at sea. The meal that had been given to him was superb and the wine had been excellent. However, Druil was buzzing with anticipation. A healer may witness a true miracle once, maybe twice, in a lifetime. Yet Great Healer Sorit simply had it on a schedule as if it were an every day occurrence.

The moon slowly crossed through the sky, beams of moonlight dancing across his room. When sleep clearly was out of reach, Druil sat at the table in his chamber and read through the books that he’d brought with him. His own journal contained daily learnings, his treatments and meditations on his craft. His copy of *The Medical Compendium* contained detailed illustrations of human, elven, and dwarven bodies, organs in extreme details and step by step instructions of procedures. Despite all of this, the Art of Restoration was discussed more like a myth. Still, Druil remembered the first time he’d encountered it.

The man had come to him a while ago, an arm missing from the elbow down. It was a brutal wound from a lion attack and Druil had been able to save his life, but the arm was gone forever. The man had been depressed for days, finally heading out into the world to try and live without his appendage. It had been months before the man came back with a fresh arm, perfectly resembling his old one. There were no sutures or signs of medical procedure, yet Druil remembered suturing the bleeding stump where the lion had bitten clean through muscle and bone. Now, the arm was fresh and renewed. Druil decided he had to learn the technique.

Warm, golden-yellow candlelight danced across the pages of his journal as Druil recounted the event. He had fallen asleep at some point, but barely remembered closing his eyes. A new attendant knocked on his door, bringing a sampling of bread and fruits. “Great Healer Sorit must attend to three patients before performing the Art of Restoration. Once you have eaten, please join us down in the viewing theatre.”

Druil fought the urge to rush through his breakfast, trying to convince himself that his speed wouldn't get through the three other appointments faster. After eating and getting dressed, Druil walked down to the viewing theatre.