

Shadows of the Past

ein englisches Intime, editiert von Kim Schneider;

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Shadows of the Past Hours later...

A soft, discreet knock on the door wakes all of you almost simultaneously.

Phinael opens, and there come three monks, walking nearly soundlessly to bring the traditional stola (note: one like the traditional roman ones, a piece of cloth, about four meters in length, and 1 1/2 broad, of the form of a halved oval, cut across the length), dyed in the colour of each order for each Engel.

"We are to help," the furthestmost monk says, smiling, bowing slightly to you all. He unfolds a stola in pure white, trimmed with silvery thread and adorned with the symbolic eye of Phinael's Order. She gasps and clasps her hand to her mouth. "I've never seen something more beautiful!"

Another monk approaches Thommariel, unfolds another white stola with a golden trim and the Key and Corona on it. "Please, revered Engel, raise your arms. We will show you how to wrap these and wear them. You are to unwrap them before the final flight and end of the ceremony. But they may be kept as festival garments for later use."

Phinael already observes the monk who lays one end of the stola on her left shoulder, proceeds across her back to the right side und her wings, wraps the long end under her right arm to raise the soft cotton sheet over the other shoulder.

After a few turns and folds, Phinael ends up with elegant folds around herself. The right arm is still free, the left half covered by heavy folds of the fabric.

Her usual garment is half hidden under the stola.

All of you end up looking something like this:



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After this, the monks wait for all of you to get ready.

"If you would please follow us, revered Engel. Your belongings will stay here until after the ceremony."

The monk smiles at them all, turns around and leaves the cella, closely followed by his two companions.

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Calahel looks stunning in the stola, as the rest of his host. His eyes gleam in excitement and he starts to tremble a bit. He knows what is to come, he often talked to his raguelitic brethren and over and over asked them to satisfy his curiosity. Of course they didn't tell him much, they were not allowed to, and in the end, it made Calahel even more curious, but he didn't seem to mind.

The time was to come, in his mind images appear of the ceremony itself and for some short seconds he gets lost in his daydreams. The talking of the others brings him back to the here and now and he follows the monks with a big smile.

Ronariel nods towards the monk who approached him to help with the Stola. After the stola is in place he stands there with pride gleaming in his eyes. Now he is ready to follow the monk.

Thommariel smiles for a moment then he looks to the other Engel. "Let us follow them!". He turns and follows the monk.

With a gracious bow of his own, Egriel ceremoniously adorns himself with the monk's assistance, a slight smile on his face.

The time has finally come he realizes, When, like this stola, we shall bear it along with the responsibilities of our respective orders.

He, too, follows the monks.

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Carniel watches with a surprised look Egriel bowing before the monks. We are angels of God himself. We should not bow down before a monk.... Then he follows Thommariel. Carniel walks near Phinael. It seems as if he wants to say something but then he looks to the ground and walks on without a sound.

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Phinael gazes over to the Gabrielite, and seems to ponder over something which troubles her. Her face is a single study of deep thought. And while the monks lead the host through the huge Himmel and to the flight platform, she nervously tugs at her stola.

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The Engel now have the chance to practice the usage of this new garment. The hundreds

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of steps down to the St. Peter's Cathedral is a long way.

It is traditional for the Engel to go by foot here - to spend the way in humble contemplation and not to use the wings.

Hundreds of other Engel accompany you, all arranged in hosts like their own group.

More than two hours pass to reach the ancient cathedral, where they hear the echoed murmurs of hushed conversations.

The escort of monks keeps quiet all the time. Not much talk, just soft coughs and nervous titterings around them. The rustle of feathers can be heard.

The feet hurt, and they welcome the opportunity to kneel down in a perfect circle on the cool marble floor.

The circle is made up of bodies and slightly extended wings, whose tips touch the cool floor and the wingtips of your neighbours to your left and right.

One by one, as the last hosts enter the building and settle on their places to rest on their uncushioned knees, it grows more silent. A singing voice can be heard, a lonely Sarielite in the last passages of a devotional hymn.

Then, even this sound dies away, echoing to silence.

The huge doors close, and the sound reminds the Engel of a clap of thunder. It turns very quiet.

The dim illumination, provided by hundreds of candles overhead, colours wall, the high ceiling and the floor beneath you in golden and orange tones. The typical hushed feeling of a huge cathedral overcomes you all. Slight echoes wander around the room. Strange sounds, made up of a mix of rustling feathers and garments, soft breathing sounds and murmured prayers slowly die away.

One by one, the hosts around them settle in meditation.

But you are sure, that some Engel are too excited to rest now. Moving heads can be seen everywhere, though the motions are obscured by the outstretched wings. You can see every coloration and pattern of feathers here. Muted gray, silver, golden tinges, dark-tipped wings, lightly banded ones, from dim rust colours to radiant blueish white. The coloured dots of green, blue, white and black mingle with dozens of hair colours.

The hosts look like slightly swaying resting birds, so many of them...

The lonely Sarielite raises her voice to sing again. She is nowhere to be seen, but her sweet voice easily climbs up and down the reaches of the soothing music. You can almost feel the sound gently stroking over your skin. Weird sensation, which calms and exhilarates at the same time.

Thommariel enters the St. Peter's Cathedral and looks around for a moment but he doesn't forget the teachings of his order. We are like God, we are his voice. All this is another quest for me

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He kneels down for meditation looking for a moment to the other members of his host and nods subtly to them.

At home within the tranquil halls of the cathedral, Egriel enjoys the peaceful atmosphere. He looks around, surveying the murals on the walls and ceiling and listening to the unseen Sarielite's voice, storing this experience into memory - a day that he will never forget.

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After the Gabrielite has spoken he takes a short look at him without saying a word. Ronariel only shakes his head and thinks about the unworthy behavior of this Engel. He looks towards him again and decides to walk on in quiet and dignity. Half the way down later Ronariel becomes a little uncomfortable about walking. He ponders over the reason and at last he decides it must be part of the ritual. So he takes every step to his new life with pride, ignoring the burning feet.

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In the Cathedral, after the last host settled down and the silence grows, he takes a look at the others and then he listens to the voice of the Sarielite. How beautiful this singing is. Nothing could make this more remarkable - this will be forever in my mind. Now he perceives that his body shakes a little, not from the cold but from nervousness of what is ahead of them all.

Now, that all hosts are settled in meditation, he falls into it as well. Right at the moment that the Sarielite rises her voice again, Ronariel starts to relax and dreams of flying over snowy mountains. The wind on the flight platform of the Himmel right at sunrise when the sun hits the horizon the very first time of the day; And other similar emotionally intense pictures of his young life as an Engel.

After a few unsurveyed moments of meditations, there is a sudden commotion in the great hall of the dome.

A brightly clad Sarielite carefully searches her way between the kneeling and meditating hosts until she reaches your full circle. The clean-shaven head of the Sarielite is covered with an intricate tattoo pattern of her order, clearly visible in the dim candle light. Her wingless back marks her as clearly as the lack of all hair, save the long lashes. Big, bluegreen eyes gaze at the Engel, as she carefully tiptoes between the meditating hosts around them.

She carefully slips between two of the Engel and settles on her knees with a quick smile. "I'm sorry," she whispers. "I am late. Forgive me." The last sentence is directed at Thommariel.

She kneels in meditating position and uncomfortably shifts on her legs. "We've got time to discuss," she whispers. "No one will take heed until we're quiet enough. And I know you will have a lot of questions. Not only for me arriving late. And, I forgot to introduce myself. I am Ashviel, of the Order of the Sarielites."

Thommariel looks up to Ashviel and smiles. He whispers "You are welcome Ashviel of

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the Sarielites. I am Thommariel of the Michaelites, leader of that host. It does not matter that you are late. You are here now, it is the will of the One. But you are right, I am a surprised to welcome one of your honorable order with my host".

What??? We will have a Sarielite in our host? Thats quiet interesting.. it must be a really important quest where we should be send... Carniel thinks with a bit of pride. Then after he realizes the forbidden sin which has settled down in his mind he pushes it down and clears his head to go on with meditating.

Phinael gazes over to Ashviel and whispers: "Phinael, of the Raphaelites."
Ashviel grins. "I know. I heard your names. Was it your host that had this little ignition incidence in your cella?" She grins over to the Gabrielite.

"Rumours spread fast..." Calahel whispers with an impudent smile. Then he noddos to the new hostmember and raises his calm voice: "Although you know my name yet, I am Calahel, as obvious -" he gestures at his appearance. "- from the Raguelites. It's an honour and I am surprised as well as my hostmates. As I can't see other hosts also supported by one of the members of the angelic choirs." He bows his head in respect and then falls silent again.

"Egriel, of the Ramielite order." Egriel nods. Somewhat surprised at this occurance, he looks around cautiously, hoping that this soft conversation isn't disturbing the other hosts, which were in meditation. He understood the proper respect for quietness back in the libraries, and this is no different.

He turns to Thommariel, "With respect to the other hosts," he whispers quietly, "perhaps another mode of dialogue would be ideal." Somewhat uncertain, he adds, "If I recall, you are capable of granting us all the ability to temporarily 'speak' silently to one another. Am I correct?" He leans back, glancing quickly around in hopes that his barely-spoken words have not disrupted the other hosts.

After the Sarielite introduced herself Ronariel takes a look at Carniel and smiles; then he looks to the Sarielite and wispers: "Ronariel from the order of Urielites."

Ashviel sighs and arranges her hands in her lap. She looks behind her, smiles as she sees the crossed wingtips of the two neighbouring Engel touching behind her back.

"You see," she goes on softly, "With those huge wings of yours, you take much more room than I do. But I envy you this freedom. You can fly, and I never will..." She bites her lower lip, shrugging. "Bit if HE chose me not to fly, it's all right for me. After all, he had reason to take away the wings from Sariel." She quickly glances around.

"Now, we should meditate. And, Thommariel, your communcation won't work yet. It al-ways never does after a few hours. Wait 'til sunrise, maybe then you'll be more effective with this. Besides," and now she winks at the Michaelite, "they don't like it in here, not in this situation."

After this, she props up her long skirt as sort of a pillow below her knees and comfortably arranges her body in meditating position.

Softly, almost unheard first, she starts to hum under her breath. The sound is soothing,

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like a soft, shimmering blanket of sound. Now, it is easy for every Engel in this host to calm down, to meditate. Even the discomfort of the cold stone floor below you seems to cease...

Ronariel looks up and whispers to Ashviel : "No place for sorrow we al life for the ONE . HE made us all for different but it is not ever a disadvantage to have no wings. But you are right we all should meditate now . I hope you feel comfortable and... welcome in our Host." After that Ronariel folds a pillow similar to Ashviel's, and than he closes his eyes and meditates while listening to the soft sound of the Sarielite's voice.

Sitting at Ashviel's immediate right, Egriel shifts his wings in sympathy, as if trying to hide them. Once she starts her soft humming, he relaxes into a more comfortable meditating position.

After Thommariel heard about that ignition problem he looks at the Gabrielite with a hard look and whispers "Carniel, we need to speak after that ceremony! And now let us meditate".

Ashviel gazes apologetically over to the Gabrielite, without stopping to emmit her soothing hum. Her eyes seem to say: "Sorry for that..."

Then, finally, the Engel sink into meditation.

Before Carniel sinks down in meditation, he whispers to the Sarielite as if he fears to interrupt her singing: "I am Carniel, of the Gabrielites" He softly tips his reight fist against his left shoulder and nods a bit to her, then looked to the michaelite and also nods. / *really want to know what he wants from me.. mhm..* , Carniel thinks.