

# Shadows of the Past

ein englisches Intime, editiert von Kim Schneider;

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**Shadows of the Past**  
*19.th March 2639 in the year of the Lord*

**Morning-pout**

*March 22.nd, 2639*

A gentle knock on the door awakens the Engel. Ashviel stands at the door, whispering to someone and gently waves off a person before the door. The spectators have the short impression of huge, white wings with silver tips, as she closes the door.

Time to get up," she announces, grinning broadly. "I've brought you some tidbits from the kitchen." She points to a nearby tablet with a steaming pot of aromatic tea in the middle. Neatly sliced fruit surround the teapot.

Phinael stretches carefully, stifles a yawn and drops from her stool like a bird from a branch. "Whoa, sun's not over the horizon yet," she mumbles, rubbing sleep from her eyes.

Ashviel regards her with amused tolerance. "You'll get well and widely awake." She kneels beside the teapot, distributing cups. "I've made a strong brew from this one. Would make a grown elephant sit up and bark."

She gazes over to Thommariel. "We're to meet some monk after breakfast. He'll come to see us. Probably about our first mission."

\*

With a blink, Carniel awakens. Slowly he watches the surrounding Engels and mutters a morning greeting. Then he stands up, nods to Ashviel and says "Tea? Uhm... none for me. Thank you.." He looks at Thommariel and soon after he awakens: "I will go, do my morning-exercise. I hope this is ok for you. I will be right back before the meeting. Anyone who wants to join me?"

"Oh, I'd like to!" Calahel also drops from his stool and takes a short look at the hot tea. "I'm also not that into tea... And some physical exercise would be more proper to get awake."

He walks towards the Gabrielit and gestures him to proceed. "Anyone else? We'll be back soon enough of course!" He smiles in the direction of his Michaelite.

\*

Egriel awakes with a slight grumble. He wasn't ready to arise just yet. At the mention of refreshment, he drops off his stool and plods over to the table that Ashviel pointed, muttering incoherently and looking rather sleepy. Pouring himself a cup of the brew, he sniffs at it, takes a tentative sip, and then quaffs it down in one big slurp.

"Not bad", he concludes, smacking his lips, "It's similar to the concoction back at my Himmel, but not as strong."

"And since Carniel and Calahel aren't having any.....", Egriel pours himself 2 more cups,

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salutes to both Engel, and chugs them down in rapid succession.

"Ahhhhh....", he sets the cup down in satisfaction, feeling more energetic. "Although the activities of my order are of a more sedentary nature," he turns to Carniel and Calahel again, "I would be more than happy to accompany you." he glances over at Thommariel, "Provided that this is permissible?"

Ashviel groans slightly, a barely audible sound and then gently shakes her head. "Now, see there..." She prods the cup from Egriell's hand. "You don't gulp it down like that, and I'll bet all of your wings' feathers, that you're going to feel the consequences of that rushing soon. Not as strong, yes, but it kicks in dearly after a few moments. Now, at least, take these with you, if you still have to go."

A bit exasperated, she holds out a small bowl with fruit slices for the three Engel.

\*

Phinael is grinning broadly at the mood of her sarielitic companion. "Now, if that's the early morning routine, I'll quit," she quickly says while rising to take her own offered tea. She folds her fingers around the cup, blowing into the steaming liquid. "I'll get my exercise soon enough."

With this, she settles beside the table, neatly serving herself, shooting an acid look at the eager trio. "Now, wouldn't the three of you try to be social? At least today? It's our first morning together, and exercise won't be running away."

\*

Calahel says: "Nice, that you want to join me. I know some helpful techniques which I can show you.. Perhaps they will help you when I'm not there to guard you" He smiles happily. Then after Ashviel spoke: "Oh.. do you think, that I am not social? Sorry.. but this training is really important for me. But if you wish that I stay here.. I shall stay. Or..?" He looks seeking for help towards the other angels.

\*

After Ronariel awakens he speaks with a croaky voice; it seems he talked too much last evening, and that's the price. "Good morning sisters and brothers. I hope you all meditated well? For me I can say that it was so."

With his eyes still only half open, he understands, that Carniel wants to leave for training.

"Ashviel is right. The training can wait until we have had breakfast. Is there tea? I think I could need a cup of it. My voice seems to fade away." Ronariel reaches for a cup and the teapot. Then he pours some tea into the cup and takes a sip. "Oh that tea tastes great. That's the stuff that gets fighters to stand upright in a row!" Now he drains the cup and again he pours tea into it. He seems to be really thirsty this morning. After the second cup is empty he looks for something to eat.

\*

Egriell shrugs apologetically to Ashviel as he accepts the offered fruit. "Regardless, I am

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awake now." He gestures to Carniel and Calahel, "I agree with their proposal for a morning stretch. The exercise does sound appealing."

He grins at Ronariel's comment toward the tea.

\*

Calahel looks a bit disappointed: "So what shall we do until breakfast is over? I'm not really hungry, I ate so much last evening..." He pats his flat belly. "I simply can't eat anything more..." He smiled. "But if you want us to sit down doing nothing, we can do that too..."

\*

Ashviel's patience seems to be about to snap. She glares at the other Engel with bright, hard eyes, but bites back a sharp reply.

Phinael, seeming to sense her exasperation, turns around to her, a soothing look on her face, hands half raised.

"However," Phinael smoothly puts in, her eyes on Ashviel's darkened face. "We shall eat, then go and exercise all together. Now, is that tolerable?"

The Sarielite raises her eyes towards the Raphaelite. A few seconds, the two of them just look at each other, seemingly communicating on the unspoken matter. Then Ashviel shrugs indifferently and pointedly takes a seat beside the table.

"A good idea. I shall wait then." Egriel agrees.

Returning to his stool, he leans back, flaring his wings out directly behind him. Bracing themselves up against the wall, Egriel tips the stool back as if about to fall, but his wings keep him safely suspended. Slowly furling and unfurling his wings, he rocks in his stool, back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.....

Ronariel looks over the gathered and now awake Engel. "Now hold on, there is no reason to be rude, I am sure. I'm not the only one in this room who did not eat too much yesterday, so I'm hungry and will end my breakfast without any hurry. And then I will make some exercise as the rest of you will. If someone believes that he'd eaten too much, I think that the Gabrielite of our host will train with you. Another option is to accompany me on a little flight over Roma Æterna." A short time after that Ronariel finished his breakfast like the others and now prepares himself for the exercise.

\*

Carniel seems to be REALLY irritated. He looks towards Phinael, then he stares to the others and then back to Phinael. He begins to fiddle around with his black tunic. "Uh.. so.. I'll wait.. and then we all go and work out... or what?" With a helpseeking glance he looks at Thommariel.

Thommariel takes his breakfast and enjoys it. He nods to Carniel and Calahel as they bring up the exercise. "I hope there is no problem if I join you", he smiles. "And after that we will head towards our first mission".

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Carniel makes some noise which sounds like "hmpf", then he moves away from the door in which he already stood. "Of course there is no problem if you join us. Perhaps all should.. So we could train some maneuvers which we may use in battle, so that the host gets something like a feeling for it. What do you think?"

Ashviel gives a grunt and slowly rises to her feet. "Then, let's be off," she snorts. "Coming, Phinael?"

The Raphaelite made some funny faces behind the Sarielite's back and now freezes, in the middle of a rather rude grimace. Ashviel, eyeing the other Engel, mutters something she shouldn't know or even be able to utter before turning around.

\*

A few minutes later you're on the huge flight platform. A cold wind tugs at skirts, wings and hair.

"We'd warm up quickly," Phinael shouts over the howling. "Or we'll have the choice to be simply blown away!"

"What?", Egriel raises his voice above the wind. At the first sign of the gusts, he began tightening the various belts on his garb, as well as securing his satchel and dagger.

"Yes Phinael, you are right" Thommariel shouts. He looks to the Gabrielite and uses \*Soul of the Fellowship\* It is up to you to show us some exercises for warming up.

Ashviel violently shakes her head. Drawing near Thommariel, she loudly speaks into his left ear: "I don't know why we should stay up here. It's cold, it's stormy. There are training rooms deeper in the Himmel. The only point it has being up here is to watch the sunrise."

With an outstretched arm, she points to a brightly lit point in the thick cloud cover, illuminated orange and red by the obscured sun below.

"And that might indeed be something to watch," she shouts, her trained voice carrying clearly over the wind.

\*

Carniel has put himself in his completely wardress. Soon after Thommariel addressed him, he nods and starts to show the others some first movements to warm up their muscles. He seems to be really concentrated and doesn't stop as Ashviel talks to Thommariel. While he stretches his arms he watches the constitution of the other Engels to get to know how their physical condition is.

\*

Ronariel followed the others onto the flight platform. Shortly after the arrival he begins to warm himself up with the method that was shown him in the urielitic Himmel. After a short while he looks over to Carniel who is trying to teach the others how to get warmed up. *What is this Garielite doing?* he thinks by himself, *Does he think that the others don't know how to get warmed up? That's part of the basics that every Engel has been told before the first flying trial.* Now Ronariel shakes his head and continues with his exercise.

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**Exercises of any kind...**

*March 22.nd, 2639*

Thommariel nods softly to Ashviel. "You are right, it is a beautiful moment to see the rising of the Eye of the One. But we have to do some practice for fighting and to fly in formation. You should do some of the exercises for fighting too". He smiles to her and then turns to the Gabrielite.

\*

Ashviel, shrugging, accompanies the Engel with their practice. At least, she seems to be skilled with a few techniques, though she lacks a weapon.

Phinael, unconsciously siding her, works as a practice partner, and together, the two of them engage in something that looks like an artistic dance with not so artistic intentions for an attacker.

As the sun rises over the horizon and pierces the cloudcover, the Engel become aware of a silent spectator. He stands a bit to the side, especially monitoring Ashviel and nodding silently to himself. His huge, silvery-white wings seem familiar to some of you. You have seen him this morning, or better, his wingtips, on the other side of the door as he was talking to the Sarielite.

The tall, muscular Engel with the green-trimmed skirts is accompanied by a short, round monk with odd-looking glasses on the bridge of his flat nose.

Hands clasped behind his back, the monk watches the Engel, lips pursed as if he is about to start criticizing.

After a few more moments, he clears his throat noisily, emitting a deep bass rumble in the process.

Phinael breaks out of her concentration, spreading her wings and lifting a few paces above the platform. The wind carries her a few meters away, before she can land again.

Ashviel doesn't seem to be as startled, but she shoots an angry glance towards the monk.

\*

Thommariel does his exercises. As he sees the monk he turns, takes a deep breath and walks towards him. He executes a low bow and then looks up to him "Good morning. May I help you?" he speaks with a friendly voice.

\*

The monk tugs at his broad leather belt and scowls at the Michaelite.

"You may, indeed, be of help, young Engel. My name is Fra Pitrous." He gestures towards the tall Urielite beside him. "This is Thaël of the Urielites. Your escort and..." He clears his throat again and raises a fleshy hand to his thick lips. As if to cover a smile. "... and to be of service. However," he rumbles on, "I've been expecting to find you in the cella. Your Sarielite told you, I'd come after your breakfast. Very well...?" He clasps his

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hands behind his back again, scowling down at Thommariel. "I may say, that I have been there. With the Urielite. And the host of yours, you included, where nowhere to be seen. Instead, I had to pick up the rumour of a drudge to seek you here. In the cold, in the wind." He pauses dramatically, letting his exasperated gaze sweep over the host. "Your heavenly bones may endure the cold, but me, the old, tired man and monk that I am, I prefer the warmth of a good, heated room. So, we shall waste no more time and search the hospitality of such a room."

He gestures at the Urielite who listened to the old man's monologue, grinning broadly. Raising one shoulder in a little shrug, Thaël waves at the Engel.

"Come," he says in a gentle baritone. "No need to waste the fra's time." He is grinning maliciously now, beaming down at the short and broad monk who turns to waddle towards the nearest entrance.

\*

Meanwhile, Egriel had been participating with the warm-up exercises in the back of the group, observing the moves of the other Engel and following along. Curious as to the sudden halt of the exercises, he holds onto that thought as he drops to the ground to avoid a collision with the wind-swept Phinael. Turning towards the source of the distraction, Egriel slowly gets up and watches silently with the others.

\*

Ronariel stops his training for a moment as the first sunbeam of the rising sun reaches his face. For one or two minutes he only stands there, staring into the rising sun and covering his eyes with his right arm. Then he takes a deep breath and thinks by himself, What a beautiful morning! The only thing that this view could make better are mountains, right now I am going to miss them.

Ronariel is about to continue his training as he sees that a monk and an older Urielite approaching them. He smiles a bit as Phinael spreads her wings and lifts a few meters into the air. Finally he waits what those persons want from them.

\*

Thommariel nods to Fra Pitrous.

"My name is Thommariel of the Michaelites, but I'm sure you already know. Please lead us to a room of your choice". He watches Pitrous and his escort insistently.

*\*Soul of the fellowship\* Let us follow Pitrous, although I think these temperatures would help this Fra to calm down.*

For a moment it seems that Thommariel grins. Then he turns to Thaël "and you will be our escort, brother?".

\*

Soon after the Monk has started the conversation with Thommariel, Carniel breaks off his current exercise. Then he walks over to them and stands shortly behind Thommariel as to cover him. He waits until they both ceased to speak and uses the channel Thommariel opened:

*Am I allowed to say that it was my idea to have some training before we come to him? I*

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am sure that it is in his interest as well, that the host is fit enough before we go on our first mission. He nods to Pitrous.

\*

Thommariel still concentrates to hold the connection to the host while he watches the Urielite and Fra Pitrous. *\*Soul of the fellowship (to Carniel)\* Acknowledged. But be careful. I don't know why, but I have a bad feeling with both of them...*

\*

Thaël nods towards the Michaelite. "Not only escort." He grins, looking over to Ashviel who blushes deeply and lowers her head. Something in the way Thaël copies the gesture to look down at her seems very similar to Ashviel's own movements. Why, they even seem to have the same strange eye-colour...

**Time for the cards. Draw one and decide if a not so obvious fact is revealed to you. Tell me if you think it is so per eMail.**

The Urielite grins before turning around. "I'm here as her means of transport. You're to be off very soon, after Pitrous had his talk with you. Oh, and he's in no good mood, anyway." With this, he strides off, following the short monk.

Ashviel follows the tall Urielite with her eyes, shaking her head gently, a thoughtful expression on her face.

Phinael nearly bumps into her as the Sarielite suddenly stops and kneels to pick something off the ground. She stuffs the small object into the folds of her skirt and hurries to catch up with the Urielite without waiting for anyone.

Calling after him, she grabs him by the elbow and the two of them disappear in the entrance.

\*

After Ronariel heard the voice of Thommariel in his head he takes a look to see where the Michaelite stands now, and then sees that Carniel stands right beside Thommariel. Ronariel hopes that the channel is open to both sides:

*Excuse me Thommariel. Am I right that this is not only a "have a nice day" visit? If it is not I suggest that we all be very careful and if I may suggest something? We should leave Carniel on the top of the Himmel. Without his help I think we are running into enough trouble.* Now he follows the others back into the Himmel.

\*

Carniel speeds up to get the monk. "Excuse me, but it was my idea to train this morning with the host. I think it is in your interests, too, that everybody stays tough and we are all fit before our first mission, isn't it?"

\*

*\*Soul of the fellowship (To Ronariel)\* They are here because they have to speak with us about our first mission, so Carniel will be with us. We have to be there as a host!* He

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looks towards Ashviel for a moment, then to Thaël raising an eyebrow for a moment. Then he speaks to Thaël. "It is not my problem if he is in a bad mood. He'll have to show respect for us! But we should not let him wait". He follows the Monach.

\*

Carniel, following the monach at considerate speed, seems to bump into an unseen obstacle at the obscured inside of the entrance. Two things can be clearly heard. A startled and furious exclamation from Ashviel, and then a hard, slapping sound.

The short silence afterwards is punctuated by smoldering curses from the Sarielite whose voice is drowned out by the gentle baritone of Thaël.

\*

Ronariel nods as Thommariel speaks in his mind.

\*

Soon after the silence, the quiet voice of Carniel is heard. He seems to be angry. "I hope you know that this was an unprovoked attack at another Engel.." He wants to add something but then he turns around and goes to the rest of the group. Now the others see, that the one half of his face is very red.

\*

Ashviel hisses after Carniel: "Unprovoked nothing, you dimwit!" With this, she wedges herself through the entrance, still half blocked by the very worried Thaël. Closing up to the monach, she hurries after the short man, skirts gathered in her hand, head high up an her spine erect and almost painful to look at from behind.

Phinael, still outside, gives a short, soft whistle as she sees the reddened half of Carniel's face. "Lemme see that. I suggest I should make that vanish. Wouldn't do to let people see you running around like that. Uh, your headband's loose." She points at the loose cloth. "Maybe you shouldn't have triggered her on the wing business. She could have that thought that this could have been an... unprovoked verbal attack towards herself." She looks towards Thommariel. "Please...?" Her gaze beholds the unspoken plea she must have bit back.

Thaël, inhaling deeply, waves the younger Engel to follow him, muttering under his breath that they'd wasted enough time. "We should be off after that. Quickly," he adds, looking deeply disturbed and troubled.

\*

And all the time Calahel simply guided his brothers and sisters into the Himmel, silent and with an unseen excitement and curiosity in his stoic face. Only his eyes flicker lightly and with a high grade of empathy the Engel would be able to notice, that he seems to have a little problem with Thaël.

But Calahel doesn't know exactly why, too. So silently and equipped with his enormous

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long vibro lance he follows the others, passing other Engel and monks busily running around. As the sun rises, the slumber falls even from the last sleeper and the Himmel awakes for a new day in the glory of God.

When a friend of him, another Raguelite passes him, he smiles at him for a moment, knowing him for a long time the brotherhood in between the own order is very strong. Just with a glance they greet each other and then rush on, each in his own direction.

\*

After Ashviel seems not to be in the mood to answer Ronariel's questions, he looks for Carniel. That little Engel seems to need a few lessons on something and he had to learn it very fast. So he talks to him:

"Carniel I think you should reconsider those things you think and the things you tell people. Maybe there is a reason why some of us are a little older when they come here to this place to receive their first ribbon from the Pontifex himself."

On the way in he tries to speak with Thaël:

"Brother excuse me. You know that it's the fortune of our Order is that we all got very good eyes, so it is not a miracle that I've found out some similarities between you and Ashviel...? Brother can you tell me if you know this Engel from somewhere else?"

\*

Eyeing the Raguelite wearily, the tall Urielite gently shakes his head, still following the Fra. At Ronariel's question, he simply smiles down at the younger Engel. "You know as well as I," he starts, following the monk into his rooms, where the round little man takes a seat behind a huge desk, nearly disappearing under paper and writing utensils, the walls adorned with a huge goblin, and the insignia of the Ramielites behind the short man on the wall. "Some of us look similar, others don't. It happens."

Waving in the younger Engel, and scrutinizing especially the Raguelite and the Gabrielite, he closes the door, continuing his speech softly.

"He chose to make us so. But if you do suspect something else behind this, mind. Your mind could settle on a wrong path. But then, maybe everything's nothing more than another test. And you, of your order, you do know about tests as well as I do, do you?"

He gazes at his younger brother of the order of the Urielites, his strange eyes narrowing. Nodding to himself, he then turns around to address the Fra. "Well, all assembled, so nothing's stopping us." He takes seat on a higher stool as the other Engel, arranging his skirts in much the same fashion as Ashviel does, who sits - incidentally? - to his left side, smiling up at him.

Fra Pitrous noisily clears his throat, settling on his huge, padded chair, clasping his hands across his enormous belly. "Don't want to waste more of my time as I already have. So's it." He nods towards Thaël.

"He'll guide you to the place. It's a convent. You'll learn the rest while you're on your way. The Sarielite'll be of use there. Has to do with the special abilities of this Engel's order." He waves a round hand at Ashviel.

"So, this being your first mission, you'll have more time to solve the problems. And a few hard breads to chew. Things to learn. Discretion, for one!" His eyes flicker over the Gabrielite. "Politeness and respect of superiors will be the other. Amongst other virtues.

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Patience. And at times, closed lips and NOT to utter thoughts! Even if they're obvious!" Unexpectetly, he brings down a massive fist crashing onto the massive desk. Ashviel jumps.

Obviously pleased with the results of his deed, Pitrous leans back into his chair, caressing the polished armrests with stubbly fingers. "Very well, that be it. Off with you! Thaël will escort you. And now, out!"

He waves the Engel off, while Thaël quickly rises to summon the host with his eyes. Ashviel gives a snort and whips around, nearly ending nose to nose with Thommariel. A bit cross-eyed, she steps aside, hurrying out of the room.

\*

*That was harsh, wasn't it?* Calahel thought and rearranged his grey skirt as he lifted from the small stool and for a last time glanced over to the Fra. *How meaningful to bring us down here for just those two small sentences...* he thinks when he reaches under the folds of his skirt and presses one of the small tiny buttons on the little box.

Still silent and without any signs of haste he leaves the small room and joins his siblings, thoughts once more flashing through his mind: Ashviel's skills will be useful for what we are going to do? What will we find at the convent, why didn't the old Fra tell us frankly what we were going to do? So strange...

Again his eyes flicker lightly and his glance once more falls on Thaël... *And he will be guiding us? Ronariel could lead us there, too... What's this Engel's further role in this scene? I don't know why, but he seems kind of strange to me. Oh dear, Calahel, stop your paranoia and useless mistrust!*

\*

Thommariel looks a bit angry towards Thaël, then towards Fra Pitrous and thinks, I should use my gifts to teach this HUMAN how he has to speak to an ENGEL. He walks deliberately slowly towards the exit. *\*Soul of the fellowship to all\* We need to talk! Back to the cella*

*\*Soul of the fellowship to Thaël\* May be that you are older than I am, but for this mission you are a member of this host and so I AM the leader and so I will say, when we will leave the room.*

\*

Thaël, nodding respectfully, follows the host towards the cella. Not five seconds pass after the door is closed, that Phinael explodes. "How dare he! That fat, stupid, arrogant, self-loving... simply, he is a human being, nothing more! How dare he? I should-"

Ashviel, raising her hands, cuts her off. "Nothing, pester off! Shut up, whatever! Cursing won't do any good. Keep your mind clean and clear!"

The Raphaelite steps threateningly towards the Sarielite, only to find her way blocked by

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the obstacle of Thaël's spread wing. The tall Urielite only shakes his head at the two smaller Engel, then leans against the nearest wall, folding his arms in front of his bare chest.

"Thommariel wants us to listen. I suggest we just do that." with a courteous and respectful nod, he looks towards the Michaelite. "And, I do apologize, Thommariel, if I intruded into your affairs. Pitrous wanted us to leave quickly, and I know, that he's a sour man. I didn't want to stir up more trouble. And," he adds with a rueful sigh, "I certainly didn't want to spoil your authority in any way. It certainly won't be repeated."

Ashviel hisses, still focusing the fuming Phinael. "Sour is what he is, indeed. Never mind. He didn't hurt us with his words, nor body nor mind nor spirit."

\*

From the multiple bitter conflicts amongst his fellowship, to the grumpy disposition of the Fra, Egriël observed this all with a calm neutral demeanor. There is much to be done, he reflects, and yet there are problems already arising.

He turns towards Thommariel, watching expectantly, awaiting for what he has to say before contributing to the conversation.