

TOGETHER FOREVER

by

Leo "SoulSeeker"
<soulseeker666@hotmail.com>

The rain fell down swiftly upon the dark cloak. He moved quickly, without feeling. Today only one moon shone in the sky. Gremente, the dark moon, showed its ominous light. Tonight was a night of magic... Black magic.

Little sound was heard in the forest, only the whisper of his robes. The dark figure moved about dodging the trees as he paced rapidly through the forest. The leaves rustled when a little gust of wind dared enter the place. The man clutched his staff suddenly and stopped. He tossed his head looking to both sides and then looked to the sky. There only one was greeting him, Gremente. His hood fell back revealing his white hair. His skin was deep black and hard. It was bone... The wide grin on his skull remained as he made a silent vow to his lord.

"Through there! We might catch him if we know what to look for. Be careful. A lone bolt from him could instantly destroy you," spoke Axel, commanding his men to move forward. His voice was full of concern, he cared about his young warriors. They marched swiftly through the forest. They were called forest-runners and often many evildoers feared them. They were usually called for hasty missions, but this time Axel knew his team could not withstand the attack. He only hoped the reinforcements would arrive soon so that he could rest easier. Of course he also knew Zargon could not be stopped unless it was by magical means. He remembered the prophecy well: "One day he, the Dark One, will come back. So, be prepared. His own kin cannot be trusted. For in the end even he can manipulate its powers..."

A crackling sound of lightning was heard followed by a scream and then nothing. "Genlock!" whispered Axel. Nothing... The stillness of the night made him shiver. The cold air from this dark forest went right through his flesh down to his bones. He glanced to his side; Zantas was there. His broad blade called Baron was drawn. He was expecting something and Axel knew the man's blade was magical. He slipped his bow from his arm and cocked an arrow looking around.

A whistle was heard and Axel quickly understood. As an elven warrior he had learned in Wedelen, the elven forest, to communicate through whistles. Zantas cast a puzzled look towards Axel. Being human he didn't have the privilege of elven whistle speaking. Axel nodded to him and swiftly moved away. Zantas understood and followed clumsily.

Another crackling sound was heard. This time no scream followed, only a whimper. Zantas quickly reacted this time. He ran forward with such momentum, he almost knocked a tree down as he lost his step. He fell to the ground as a shadow moved away from him. He rolled to the side and heard a Boom! Suddenly his eyesight was lost under a mass of fire and his whole body felt a tingling sensation. Fast as a snake he stood up and moved away. His cloak kept him from burning up, but the forest didn't have armor.

Elven voices of disgust were heard followed by two more crackling sounds and two more screams. Axel looked for Zantas as he mentally counted his men. "Three down, seven to go." He muttered to himself. He found Zantas gasping for air near a tree. The human slashed at the air as Axel got near. The elven warrior met his blade with his own. Zantas was startled to see such swiftness and speed in an elf. He quickly regained control and spoke. "He shot me the fireball. One of your men took the liberty of casting a spell to save the forest, but he was struck down. Lightning..." he said through heavy breaths.

Axel just nodded and moved forward. He remembered the flash of fire he saw. He also remembered the aching in his heart as the burned trees called for his help. But he knew it would mean his death, unfortunately one of his didn't. Swiftly he glanced back at Zantas and continued forward. Again the human understood and followed. After a few moments some chantings were heard. The stillness of the air caused Zantas to shiver. How could he go through with it? Was he able to kill the wizard? Did he have the power, the strength, the will?

His thoughts went back. He went back to that time when the separation took place. They were in Dragonkeep. A small group of adventurers, himself and Zargon. The powerful mage moved forward and fell into a trap. The fire enveloped him and Zantas jumped forward. He remembered the guilt, he had let Zargon die! His own brother! After that Zargon's soul was taken by something much more powerful, but the soul was still within. Now he must kill him, now he must...

A sudden deep slash through his arm made him wake up from his flashback. He looked around and only saw moving shadows. He grasped his blade with both hands and concentrated. The ecstasy of magic cursed through him and his eyes could no longer see the slim outline of the attacking shadow. He kept his eyes to it and watched it. Suddenly it attacked. With powerful claws it moved the human's blade away and slashed to his chest. But the hulking man hit the claw to one side and pushed the dark figure away. Then with a quick slash and a pierce the shadow was no more.

He glanced around. He heard two more screams. His fears arose, his heart started pumping faster. He was alone! I am no elf! I cannot go through here. Can I? He moved blindly forward looking for Axel. He whispered his name several times, but nothing. Darkness was enveloping him! What could he do? He saw hands close in from the night. Powerful claws tried to grasp him! He broke free and slashed his blade in a wide arc. His breathing and heartbeat were slower now. This was one of Zargon's tricks.

He charged forward, the outline he saw far away reminded him of the mage. In a blind fury of slashes he didn't see the arrows that whizzed past him to hit the mage. They all turned to dust in mid air. Then as Zantas finally realized the barrier around Zargon, it was too late. He tried stopping but lost his step and lunged forward with his blade. As the blade grew nearer a whirring sound was heard, and after a flash of light, nothing could be seen.

The light was very bright. Axel had to shield his eyes. After some time it started to grow weaker. He could make out a figure standing. He saw another one on the floor. Did Zargon kill Zantas? He cocked another arrow and aimed. Glancing around he noticed his men were all dead. He remembered as the shadows slashed through their lungs, and just as a shadow was going for him, he saw Zantas. He screamed at him but he was deaf. His two arrows had disappeared in mid air and now the shadow found a weak spot. Suddenly a whirring sound was heard. He could not stand it, his ears were pumping so hard, and then, whoosh!

"I-I... I killed my brother" was all he could say. Axel walked to him, sighing. "It had to be done Zantas. He was not your brother, he was taken by a dark servant. Zantas looked at him. A calm stillness was within him. Axel watched Zantas as he took the staff from the floor and dropped the sword. The mage's body lying in a pool of its own blood. A deep cut through his belly. Zantas looked at Axel then back at Zargon. The elf nodded in understanding and left them alone.

"Zantas! What...?" This was Axel's last scream. As he heard a crackling sound. He decided to look back and saw that Zantas was pointing at him. The sudden burst of light and the pain in his chest ended his life. All he thought about before he died was how stupid he was. He understood now. The prophecy was right. "His own kin cannot be trusted. For in the end even he can manipulate its powers..." Zargon had taken

over his brother's life. They were together forever. Nothing could stop him now...
No. Nothing could stop THEM now!