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# **Adventures of Naldela Isur’Ra Teleyal**

Kromonos

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## Offtopic

### Licenses

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### The calendar

The dates given in the blog are based on the calendar from the Forgotten Realms. Hammer is thus comparable to January, Alturiak February, and so on.

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Month	Name	Common name
1	Hammer	Deepwinter
2	Alturiak	The Claw of Winter
3	Ches	The Claw of the Sunsets
4	Tarsakh	The Claw of the Storms
5	Mirtul	The Melting
6	Kythorn	The Time of Flowers
7	Flamerule	Summertide
8	Eleasis	Highsun
9	Eleint	The Fading
10	Marpenoth	Leaffall
11	Uktar	The Rotting
12	Nightal	The Drawing Down

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## **eBook publishing**

At the moment I will only publish the English version, because it's much more work than I thought. I also will not publish a new version of the eBook after a new post.

## **Flamerule 1, 1359 DR**

“Seke khalith mii’n tluin hyrr’ol xuil dosstan. Rak’nes vel’drav klezn inbau dubo” were my father’s first sentences in the language of the Drow. In his language it would probably mean as much as “True courage means to be honest with yourself. Especially when it gets difficult”. While I go through the movements given by my mother, as well as my teacher in elemental magic and Kyone veldrin, with my staff on the training dummy, I always think a lot about these sentences and do not understand what he wanted to say to us, me and my sister Miara.

We still live in the small hut south of Menzoberranzan, directly on the Darklake, which my father built for us after he and my mother were banished from Sshamath. They wanted to start again here, but never got it made easy. Again and again our property was attacked by rebels. Faral was sure that they were hired by the houses in Menzoberranzan, but there was never any proof of it.

Today, however, it seemed quiet around the city. I granted myself a little break, pushed my blindfold up, supported myself with my staff and watched my sister take care of a new seedling. She seemed so peaceful and carefree that I envied her more than once for not possessing any magical abilities or even a talent for them. But she had a talent for growing trees where they never grew before. Her newest seedling is a Sussur and she is wildly determined to let it thrive there. Not far away, my mother cared for my father’s grave. Like every first day of a month, she puts a nightshade on the grave. She says it was his favourite flower and the first one he gave her. I never expected her to be so sensitive.

## **Marpenoth 23, 1359 DR**

The stone is getting colder and I am looking forward to the theoretical class, because meanwhile I have pulverized the third mannequin and even if my mother seemed to be proud of me, she drives me further as if I was a useless golem.

After the ashes of the training dummy collapsed, she stood in front of me, ready to fight. I asked her, “What’s this going to be,” but she only tilted her head slightly and swung her staff, from which a spherical lightning came at me, which I could only barely avoid. “Do you want to kill me?” I shouted at her. “A doll is a too easy target. You should practice with someone who can defend himself” she replied calmly and already hurled another bullet at me. Unfortunately I could not avoid this time and she caught me at my arm. Determined, despite the pain, I pushed the lower end of the stick to the ground. The resulting sparks spread into a two-metre-wide carpet of lightning that moved towards my mother. At the same time I followed him and pulled out my staff to strike a blow.

When I came to myself again, I lay in the dirt. “What happened?” I whispered as I pulled myself together again. “You have forgotten your cover yourself” my mother warned me as she pushed her staff into my ribs. “Again” she demanded.

## Nightal 31, 1359 DR

The cycle is drawing to a close. From the direction of the city one could already hear the celebrations, partly even see them. Mother always looked forward to the “event” in a relaxed manner. On this day we always had a mushroom soup, decorated with a Bigwig, and a good Gorgondy wine or, if she got through to one of her friends among the dwarves, Samman.

Usually such evenings are always quiet, but the five drunks who roared towards our property seemed to mean more trouble. Mother gave me her stave. A real magician focus. Even though we were getting angrier, I still seemed to smile. When I touched the stave, I felt its power flowing through me. I felt as if I could crush stone. When the figures were close enough, the first bottle of Ale flew towards Miara and smashed next to her on a stone. “Well, who have we here?” grunted one of the Drow. “The outcast with her two abnormalities. There were almost three of them, weren’t there?” whereupon he laughed gloatingly and the others pulled their daggers. Mother immediately took up fighting position and held the dagger ready, which father, on his way to the Underdark, got forged by the dwarves. “You’d better leave before I water our vegetables with your blood” she warned the figures, who obviously didn’t seem intimidated. “What do you want to do, love?” one of the Drow asked, who was apparently the leader and so close to her that he held his dagger to her neck. Apparently he hadn’t noticed that mother had already placed her dagger in his crotch. “She replied calmly and pressed the dagger more firmly into his crotch. While he laughed, the one who threw the bottle at Miara approached me.”With your black eyes you could almost scare me” he grinned stupidly and carved a hole in my top. “Leave her alone” Miara screamed as she rammed her fists into the ground. From her fists one could perceive a quake before two massive stones came out of the ground and flew towards the two stinking Drow. Mother’s Drow could barely avoid the stone, but his colleague was not so lucky and fell down unconscious on the ground. While I looked astonished at Miara, mother took the opportunity and cut the Drow’s throat. Two of the three others seemed to think that the effort was no longer worth it and fled, while the last one screamed at Mother. I didn’t think any further and hurled a bolt of bullet lightning at the Drow, which made him tremble and go to the ground. After Mother rammed the dagger into the trembling Drow’s skull on the floor, she threw it at me and said, “Finish it and get rid of the bodies”, she ordered to me and looked at Miara, "Miara, we have to talk!

While mother and sister disappeared in the house, my gaze wavered between the dagger and the unconscious Drow at my feet. I was unsure if I could do it, but I knelt down next to him and hesitantly put on the dagger. “You can do it” I whispered quietly to myself, closed my eyes and ... stabbed.

## Hammer 7, 1360 DR

Just as I was going through some new movements with Mother, a voice rang out behind us. A deep, feminine voice. Mother seemed to know who she was, because she put a hand directly on the dagger on her belt. When we turned to the voice, I recognized her as well. Lysha Backdorn. A narcissistic sociopathic leader and teacher of the Magician Academy called Mallagea, which is more than obviously an indoctrinative training centre for assassins. And she wasn't alone either. A few feet behind her a group of different cultures gathered. Dwarves with battle hammers, Drow with magic staff and some elves with shield and sword. At first sight I couldn't see how many there are, but I could spot some banners of the Mybus Larco and Bigot'Fong. Apparently Lysha doesn't want to burn her own apprentices, so she brought her allies with. However, they didn't seem to be very battle experienced. Many of them looks nervous and insecure.

Since I refused her invitation to the academy, she seemed very eager to maltreat the Teleyal family's reputation and apparently found favour with the simplicity of naive, meaningless groups. "Why haven't three of my scouts returned?" Lysha asked slightly angry, whereupon mother quietly replied "And why do you think you know that I know?" "Because they were here" it came demanding. "And why do you send scouts to my property?" wipes mother out. Obviously that wasn't the answer Lysha wanted to hear, because she took a big step back and gave a signal to the mob with her left hand, whereupon the dwarves started attacking us with a battle cry. Mother didn't hesitate for long and with a few hand movements she pulled the dagger from the belt and created a magic shield which protected us from the fireballs of the magicians. After a moment's hesitation, I swung mother's staff as she taught me and threw a large ball of energy at the dwarves, who trembled and fell to the ground. Meanwhile Lysha seemed to have retreated to the magicians. "Don't get your hands dirty yourself" mother mumbled and tried to come after her. After a few steps lightning seemed to form around her and all of a sudden she stood behind Lysha, past the wall of the rather small mages. Mother didn't hesitate long and rammed the dagger through Lysha's neck into her head. "You defamed our family the last time and your lying sociopaths, whom you call friends, are the next!" their determined voice was heard through the mob, whereupon the magicians turned around in surprise. Before they could swing their staffs, I remembered the carpet of lightning I had accidentally conjured up a few weeks ago and rammed the end of my staff into the floor, whereupon the spectacle repeated itself and shocked the magicians. The fact that Lysha was bleeding out of his mouth, kneeling in front of mother, and that the magicians were unable to fight seemed to doubt the Elven Archers and to take a few steps back. Mother still held Lysha on her knees and looked at the freshmen. "If you're smart, don't let yourself be taken in by such lower personalities. Make up your own mind instead of going blind in a war you have absolutely nothing to do with," mother taught the clearly intimidated followers. I think they heard the words, but for fear of ending up as outcasts, like us, they will continue to maintain their weak-willed, reprehensible personality and continue to play the perfidious games of the Academy. Mother pulled the dagger out of

Lyshas head and let the body fall to the ground. “Run before we change our minds and kill you instead of stupefying you” she demanded and put a kick in the dead body in front of her “And take your trash with you”.

So we let them collect the bodies and disappear in peace. “How did you do that?” I asked Mother, “That was impressive” I continued enthusiastically “Do you really think you are ready for this?” Why did she always think that I was not ready? “Why shouldn’t I?” I asked her confidently. “Well then. We’ll start training tomorrow, but now you’re going to bandage my wound. One of the archers caught me in the arm.”

## **Ches 21, 1360 DR**

Although I don’t like to be the center of attention, I always loved my birthdays. A human custom introduced by father. Mother always sent us outside in the morning to collect so that she could take the kitchen apart in peace. She was a grandiose alchemist and elemental, but after baking or cooking the kitchen always looked like a Night Hunter had raged, which is why Miara or I usually took over. Even though she was a natural disaster in the kitchen, her cakes were always tasty.

When Miara and I came back from collecting, Mother had already decorated the house a little. Not much, since mother knew my dislikes, but it was obvious. A small garland and a festively laid table with a cake in the middle. Behind her place lay a great gift. About 4 feet in length, but very narrow. What could that be? “There you are finally” it came from the kitchen.

It was a festive meal. She had surpassed herself again. After we had cleared the table, mother fingered a bottle from the shelves. A 150 year old Samman from the Duergar. “I have kept this bottle for a long time” she says to herself, while she looks at the bottle slightly dreamy. “Your father brought it. I’ve always wondered how he got the grim pessimists to give him a bottle of their best ales,” she says, slightly snivelling and pours out 3 cups. “Your training is going well” she addressed to me “You have already proven your magic in several situations, so we should make your training more interesting. Miara, can you please?”. She pointed to the longish package that Miara gave me with a comment “Wow, that’s hard”.

Instead of what usual, I tore away the packaging and opened the box. My mother’s battlestave came out. “I can not accept that” I said as I slid my fingers gently over the stave. The jumping sparks from the stave into my fingers were not unpleasant, on the contrary. And although I touched the stave only gently, I felt the power flowing through my fingers into me. “Yes, you can. I have tuned it to you and it should serve you faithfully, as it did to me in the slave revolt of Sshamath”. When I took it out of the box, sparks poured into my arm and the crystal at the tip lit up. “It’s beautiful” came enthusiastically from me. “I will hold him in honour” I assured mother.

## **Kythorn 12, 1360 DR**

The last few months have passed quietly. Mother says this is the calm before the storm and we should be prepared for everything. For this reason she also gave me the family dagger. “Always have it ready to hand. Even at night” she demanded when she handed it over to me.

On the night of the 13th day she hectically woke us up: “Get into your war clothes and grab your weapons!” she just shouted and disappeared again on the ground floor. The war robe? I wore it only once and then only so that Mother would see that it fit me.

As soon as Miara and I were laced up, a horn sounded, not far from our property. “Is that the sound of a war horn?” I asked Miara, who answered me with a trembling voice: “I have no idea. I hope not”. We grabbed our weapons and went to our mother, who was already waiting for us outside the door. “They come from the hill there,” she pointed to a small hill which it glowed up reddish. “This is the storm” she explained calmly, as if she had expected it. I wonder what’s coming towards us.

It didn’t take long until the first flag bearers could be seen. The flags of the Mallagea, Mybus Larco and Bigot’Tong. Why wasn’t I surprised? What surprised me, however, was that they apparently called together a whole regiment. For two and a half magicians. When they were only a few hundred feet away from our property, a Drow on a lizard approached us while the rest waited. It was Maris Nyr, the leader of the Mybus Larco guild, riding directly towards my mother. “Isn’t it enough?” my mother asked with a calm voice, while I held my staff slightly trembling. “We really tried to integrate you and your tala waess. But you had to kill everyone who tried to help you” “So you call the spreading of falsehoods and discredit an attempt of integration? How limited do you have to be in your mind to believe that?” Maris Nyr only slightly pulled his face and rode back to the group.

At the group he pulled his staff from his back and threw a fireball while he turns with his lizard in our direction. At the same moment the pack started moving with a roar. In contrast to Miara and mother I was undecided what I should do. While mother conjured up a shield, Miara made the earth tremble, which upset some of them. When the fireball struck the shield, I was shocked briefly, then took courage and summoned some lightning bullets, big enough to paralyze some of the attackers and throw them to the ground. “Miara, stone wall” mother called over to sister. Determined, Miara rammed her hands into the ground and created an 8 foot high and 20 foot wide stone wall between the attackers and us. “Naldela, now” I got to hear as mother began to put pressure on the wall with a storm. I didn’t try to think for long and did the same as my mother until the stones fell thunderously over the enemy. That we were spared the hail of arrows and the fireballs was due to the quick reactions of mother. She always managed to summon shields at the right moments. But it came as it had to come. Some of the fighters came through to us, despite the obstacles that we put in their way.

Mother implored a huge shield that locked us three, as well as a portal behind Miara that pulled her right in. “Run” she gasped exhausted. “I can’t hold both for long” she shouted in my direction. The pull

of the portal also caught me and slowly pulled me in. “What about you?” - “Don’t worry about me” and just at the moment when the pull of the portal completely caught me, mother’s shield collapsed and before I disappeared completely into the portal, I saw a blade piercing my mother.

### **Kythorn 13, 1360 DR**

I woke up with a headache in a small cave. Apparently a dead end. From the open end of the cave it shimmered in a warm yellow light. “By Lolth, where did I end up here?” I whispered in a soliloquy. When I leaned down to get back on my feet, a stabbing pain forced me to ground again. An arrow apparently caught me on my arm when I was pulled into the portal. He not only ruined the leather, but also left behind a painful, deep cut. I provisionally bandaged the wound, straightened up and magically stowed my staff on my back, as mother taught me. I called “Miara” into the cave, but received no answer except an echo. Since there was no other way, I followed the tunnel towards the light.

The closer I came to the light, the brighter it shone. At some point the light was so bright that it burned in my eyes and I could only have gone on with my eyes closed. I withdrew into the cave and looked away for another one. But there seemed to be none. “What am I doing now?” I spoke slightly desperate to myself as I looked around. I tore a strip of thin cloth from my cape and blindfolded it. “Nothing helps. I have to get out of there” and with these words I walked towards the light again. The fabric was thick enough so that the bright light would not burn my eyes, but thin enough that I could see through it. “I ... I am at the surface” I thought perplexed. I pulled the half mask over my nose and wrapped my cape around me, so that only little of my grey skin was visible and made me on the way.

### **Kythorn 14, 1360 DR**

For a few hours I just moved out straight so that I could find my way back to the cave. As the hunger slowly began to manifest, it began to get so dark that I couldn’t see through the blindfold. I gently lifted it and looked around, “It’s a good thing I didn’t truant the lesson ‘The Surface’ at school” I mumbled softly as I completely wiped off the blindfold. I looked up and spoke “A real star sky” to myself with enthusiasm. However, the rumbling of my stomach brought me back to my senses. I pulled out my dagger and went off the beaten path in the hope of being able to hunt something down.

It took hours, but I could kill a small animal and collect enough firewood for a small camp. As I sat there and looked at the fire as if spellbound, I thought about what had happened. Where was Miara? Did she also land on the surface, like me? I have to find her. She is the only one I have left.

## **Kythorn 18, 1360 DR**

To spare my eyes, I only travelled at night. I hoped to find a nearby village where I could get supplies and ask for Miara, but except for a few small farms, I only found a small trail I followed.

After hours of marching I finally arrived in a small village in the early morning hours. “I needed a shelter before the sun rose” I said to myself and looked around until I discovered a building with a jug on its sign. This must be a tavern, I thought to myself and headed towards it. Before I even reached the door, I saw another building with a picture of a needle and thread. A tailor’s shop? That would be perfect, then I could also repair the crack in my armor.

When I opened the door to the tavern, the pale smell of bad ale and the stench of rotting corpses immediately came towards me. I was unsure whether it would not be better to look for a cave in the forest, but a real bed would be a pleasure. So I faced the noise and carefully braved between the visibly drunk to that, I hoped, who could give me a room. I literally felt some glances following me. I approached the bearded man behind the bar and asked for a room. He wanted 2.5 gold pieces for it. Hopefully there will be at least one meal for it. When I took off the gloves in order to be able to reach for the coins better, suddenly a lady present shouted “A Drow”. Hectically I turned around to watch the reaction of the tavern visitors. Many of the women ran away in panic and the few men who could still hold a sword grabbed it. “I don’t want any trouble” I replied to the two swordtails. “Then crawl back into your hole where you came from” one grunted and pulled out to strike. I pulled out my dagger and could barely fend off the blade. “Please. For today I only need a place to sleep and to eat something, then you’ll get rid of me again” I asked and immediately I heard the host behind me “For Drow, 1 Platinum”, but I didn’t turn around to him and started to walk carefully, always looking to the swordtails, back to the door. I tore them open and fled to the nearby forest. Apparently they are not following me. So I thought, “Hunt something down again and look for a cave”.

## **Kythorn 23, 1360 DR**

I really need a decent bath. The little river that flows through the wood is unsatisfactory and too cold. In addition, I feel observed, which is why I only did one small wash at a time.

After I broke off the small camp, I went on and it didn’t take long until I came across the next village. Hopefully not the same as before, at least the tavern looked very similar to the one from the previous village. When I entered the tavern I saw the same picture as before. Some drunks, a few women, some of whom were very lightly dressed and a bartender with more hair on his face than on his head. I headed straight for him and asked for a room. “You are lucky, young lady. We have only one free room” he replied with a deep, rough voice. He said “3 pieces of gold” shortly afterwards. This time however I did not take off the gloves and fished the coins from the bag. Only good that the currency here seems

to be the same as in the underworld. He accepted the coins gratefully and pulled out a key under the counter. "Follow me, I will show you where the room is. Do you also need hot water for a bath?" he asked me with a smile, to which I answered with a nod. "A bath is included in the price" he proudly mentioned, leading me up a few steps and opening a door near the stairs. As he held the key to me, he looked at me with his head slanting and almost whispered, "Please try to be inconspicuous, some guests are not so inclined towards the Drow as I am" I was surprised. Apparently, he was looking at me more than I thought and hoping. I confirmed him with a nod and entered the room. When the bartender closed the door behind me, I took off the mask and hood and took a deep breath before looking around. A small table with chair, a bed and a small, open wardrobe. Very spartan for 3 gold pieces, but better than another night in the forest.

It didn't take long until someone knocked on the door. "Your bath is ready" sounded a young, shy woman's voice. I followed the little brunette into a small room where the bath was deepened in the floor and filled with steaming hot water. "Milady" sounded from the servant who already laid a hand on my robe. I looked at her in surprise, but spread out my arms and let her undress me. She did not answer my question as to whether everyone here would be treated as if they were aristocrats. She constantly directed her gaze to the ground and did not even seem to consider even one look at me. Before I got into the water and leaned back relaxed, I looked at my clothes, which the servant neatly placed on a chair to check if everything was still there. I closed my eyes and leaned my head back. "Ah, that feels good"

## **Kythorn 27, 1360 DR**

For days I have been waking up from these nightmares, bathed in sweat, in which I have again the pictures in front of my eyes of a sword piercing my mother. The small tavern in which I settled today was very lean compared to another one. No bath, bad service and pushy, drunken men.

I pulled a small picture out of my pocket. My mother hired an artist named Maider to create it. It showed my father as well as my mother, who held me in her arms at the age of 8 months. In the picture she looks so carefree, happy and, above all, very much in love. Since the death of my father I had never seen her like that again. I sighed softly before putting the picture back again.

"I have to go back to the Underdark. Miara will probably also be on her way there. I probably won't find her up here" I whispered quietly. But where did I find an entrance? I fingered a map out of my pocket and looked for the next mountain. I think father once mentioned that he found most of the entrances at the feet of mountains. I didn't have to search long either. The next mountain was maybe 3 days marches from here.

## Flamerule 4, 1360 DR

I had been on the road for days, my eyes already adapted to the daylight, explored dozens of caves, but found none deep enough to reach the underworld. At dusk I stood in front of a narrow cave entrance, hoping that this path would finally bring me back home. Should I go inside now and hope, or should I go hunting again before, as my supplies were running low? I took the risk. At some point I had to be lucky.

The cave went deep into what gave me hope. I climbed 5000 to 6000 feet deep into the tunnel and couldn't believe how lucky I seemed to be. From my position I could get an overview of Menzoberanzan. So it couldn't be far to go home. I climbed down and ran, no, I ran. When I saw the charred remains of our house, I stopped. "No, please don't" I said to myself, shaking my head, before I set myself in motion again. After I got around the ruin, I couldn't grasp the view. They had hung Mother from one of the remaining beams of the house. I ran to her and fell on my knees. "Mom" - That's all I could get over my lips while holding one of her charred feet and staring at the floor.

I was startled when a voice suddenly sounded behind me. It was Miara. "By Eilistraee, you're still alive" but she didn't look very good. Judging from her shredded clothes, she must have been through a lot. I ran to her and hugged her relieved. "Leave me alone with Eilistraee. I certainly don't owe it to her that I'm still alive" she said coldly. I let her go and looked at her in amazement. "I've never seen you like this. What happened?", "Not now. Let us bury mother".

We buried mother next to father and laid both fresh nightshade flowers on their graves. The rest of the day we spent recovering from the ruins of our house what might have survived and found father's second dagger. Apparently the sister piece to the dagger that Mother gave me. "I didn't even know that father had two daggers" I whispered to myself as I looked at him. "Mother and father would have wanted you to have him" I said when I handed him to Miara. As soon as Miara accepted him, a protective stone skin formed around her arm, but I didn't get more than a gentle nod from her.

"I will make this il'neathe regret what they did to us" came resolutely from Miara as we sat by the fire waiting for our food. "It will be the last time they act like they are the law!" I could hardly believe what I heard from Miara. So much hate and finality. "What happened to you" I asked her carefully. "I was thrown into a tree. On the surface. Can you grasp that? My eyes were burning and I couldn't see anything. That I didn't fall from the tree and broke my neck is almost a miracle." - I listened to her silently - "It took me a few days to get used to this nasty light and I actually wanted to look up there for you, too, but I thought I'd have more chances if I came back here again. I didn't know we Drow were so hated up there." She gently shook her head "Again and again I had to flee from a group of human, dwarves and Upperworldelves, because they are too cowardly to mess with one at a time. Vith rath'arg" she cursed "Just like the gang that attacked us here."

We exchanged our experiences from the Upperworld until late and decided that only one of us would

sleep a few hours and the other guard. Because we had to be rested for Miaras plan to infiltrate the academy. She seemed wildly determined and I was thirsting for revenge, too. Mother always preached to us that revenge was not the solution to the problems, but ... no matter.

## **Flamerule 5, 1360 DR**

Hoping for late risers in the academy, we left very early. We were lucky because even the guards seemed to be asleep and we could quickly find a gap through which we could slip in.

We sneaked through the corridors and found the wannabe Drow Barmaeril Bimrassar on the first floor. A pale Overworldelf who made a deal with the academy a few cycles ago, through which she could walk in and out of a Drow facility as if she were one herself. If one looked up her in the dictionary, he would find her under Opportunist. But she seemed to overestimate her own abilities, because Miara already stood behind her and rammed her dagger into the skull of the Magisters.

Arriving on the second floor, we could see light shining from different rooms. “How do we know who is in which room?” I asked Miara quietly, to which she only replied ice-coldly, “I don’t care. I say we slaughter them all!” I looked at Miara in surprise. Room by room we left. Miara left, me right, but so far no sign of the Zarethi, of whom Miara was convinced that they were behind the whole intrigue. Looks like they probably found themselves too formidable to live with the common rabble. We searched for a while until we found a door behind a 7-foot statue through which we entered a new wing of the building. A huge wing, decorated with gold, whose value could only be estimated. “By Eilistraee. How puny must their self-esteem be that they have to compensate for it?” I asked myself while admiring the golden masonry. Miara quietly demanded “Continue”. We crept to a giant, gold-plated double door that opened more easily than it looked. The sleeping chamber was splendidly furnished. Next to the huge canopy bed, of course decorated with gold, there was a bathtub, a very well equipped dressing table and a huge divan. “Seems to be more than just worthwhile as a hypocrite” Miara replied coldly as we approached the bed with the daggers ready.

There they were. Mister and Miss Narcissus. I could look Methyra straight in the face as I squatted next to the bed. Somehow she looked peaceful. When she suddenly opened her eyes and her mouth to scream, I rammed the dagger between her eyes in reflex. Miara looked up briefly, but did not torch for long and did the same with Meloth. “Now get out of here before the guards pass by with their round.” On the way out, we had to bypass some guards. Obviously, their routes were shorter than expected, because they were already looking for us.

We just got off the premises unseen. When we reached our old property, we unmasked ourself. Miara quickly started to make a fire and cook. “What do we do now?” I asked her. “I don’t know what you’re doing, but I’m going back to the surface. There is nothing here but misery and suffering. On my way here I met a group of mercenaries whom I will join” she replied resolutely. There’s nothing left here but

hypocrisy, envy and death. Is that different on the surface? I was unsure, at least the people up there don’t seem to be very friendly to Drow. But maybe more friendly than the most Drow down here?

## **Flamerule 9, 1360 DR**

Miara set off again the same night. Uncertain if I will ever see her again. But I stayed a few days longer, cleared away the rubble, covered the graves with stones and put fresh nightshade on them. “F’sarn taudl, ilhar. Usstan’bal ori’gato dos harl.” I spoke quietly to my mother’s grave and could not help but shed a few tears.

While packing a lot of old wooden boxes into my fingers, which survived the fire. When I opened it I saw mother’s jewellery. “Some of it must be worth a fortune” I said quietly while gently stroking the jewellery. When the earrings caught my eye, I couldn’t help but put them on. After a few hundred feet I looked back again and looked at the property. There, where I grew up, were beside 2 graves only rubble and ashes, because it could not bear so some that someone can be lucky, than she herself. I sighed quietly and continued to follow Miaras tracks to the surface.

Shortly before the exit I was thrown with small stones, but at first sight I couldn’t see anybody and moved further towards the exit. But there came more little stones flown. No big ones and they didn’t seem to be aimed, but definitely in my direction. I took out my staff and looked around. Then on a hill I saw a small animal, which still shot the little stones after me. I loaded up my staff and put it on the thing. “If you don’t stop, you’ll be my next meal” I warned, and then it stopped and stared at me with huge eyes, suddenly running at me and stopping in front of me. I tilted my head slightly as I stowed my staff and bent down to the little one. “Up there you looked much bigger” I said to the little being. A hand-sized, blue creature with a white belly, huge eyes and a tongue hanging out. It is very similar to a salamander, but it would be too big for that. But too small for a lizard. “What kind of thing are you?” I asked, although I knew I couldn’t expect an answer. When I approached him with one finger, he grabbed him and nibbled on it. I asked “You must be hungry” while I fingered with the other hand for a piece of bread from my pocket and held it out to him. It jumped at it as if it hadn’t had anything between its cheeks for days. I gave him some more bread and moved on towards the exit, but the little thing followed me. With the bread in between his cheeks, it staggered after me and stumbled over every stone in the way. I bent down to him again and held my hand to him, “Would you like to come with me?”

## **Flamerule 13, 1360 DR**

I lost Miaras tracks on a small river, but my new little friend, who obviously listened to Nimri, seemed to have a direction in sight. He led me to a small clearing with a lake, trees full of fruit and game, which

looked particularly tasty.

I put down my backpack, pulled out my dagger and stalked towards one of the deer, while Nimri made himself comfortable in my backpack. But before I got close enough to the deer, it rushed between the trees, a huge deer jumped out and spurred towards me. “By Lloth, what’s . . .” and before I could even finish my sentence, the antlers caught me and threw me hundreds of feet away. I picked myself up and pulled my staff, but the deer caught me again and threw me into the water. Now I had not only lost the dagger but also the staff. When I tried to straighten up again I saw Nimri trying to bring me my dagger. He had his tongue wrapped around the handle and stumbled backwards towards me. The little worm was almost trampled by the huge deer when it stormed towards me again. But this time I was able to avoid the deer with the trick I learned mother. I clearly have to practice this storm ride more, because I didn’t really get far, but it was enough to reach my dagger and face the deer again. He was already standing before me. His skull, almost bigger than me, and with angry blinking eyes it stared at me as if it was waiting to see what I would do now.

I moved aside and grabbed the antlers with one hand. The deer’s shaking head gave me the momentum I needed to swing under the antlers and sit on its neck. I got caught in the fur and was about to stab the dagger into his neck when the deer rammed a tree and threw me against the trunk. I straightened up again and shook my head slightly dazed. The cattle had joined the other deer, looked at me briefly and then disappeared with the herd into the forest. After I collected my things and limped back to the backpack, I saw that Nimri had made himself comfortable with a few flies and insects on my backpack “Well at least you got your meat”.

## **Flamerule 21, 1360 DR**

I fought my way north with Nimri. I hoped to find a village soon where I could get work and find something decent to bite. It was heartbreaking how Nimri always proudly brought me insects, but I cannot expect the little one to bring me a juicy piece of meat. And before he gets tasty and I think about barbecuing him, I would prefer one of these deer.

When I arrived at the edge of the forest, I could, thanks to the hill, have a wide view over the valley. I wonder who built the wall in the middle of a swamp? A few hundred feet below, I could see a wide passageway, as well as a bright light on the horizon at dusk. This could be a village where I could find shelter. But first I’d have to go through that swamp. “Do you think I could get through there before nightfall?” I’ve got to try.

The first few steps through the swamp were fairly easy. I found a small path, which I could follow for some time. When the trail ended, I waded through ankle-deep mud for some time. Nimri, always on my shoulder, tirelessly caught every insect that came even close to his tongue, which he almost always let hang out. The steps became heavier and heavier and the mud deeper and deeper. I stopped and

looked around a little. There must be some way I can keep going without sinking. I saw a small path, not far away, but as I tried to move I realized that I was stuck and slowly sinking. “Vith” I mumbled. The trees were too far away and the branches did not reach me. I pulled my stick from my back and tried to shovel branches towards me. “This won’t work” I murmured softly and saw Nimri jump from my shoulder and shovel small branches towards me. “You’re not the brightest either, are you?” I asked him. “You’d better look around the area to see if you can find someone who can help,” I ordered him, and he dashed right off.

“How was that again? ... ssuth?” I pointed my staff in the direction of the path and muttered “ssuth”, whereupon I felt the energy flowing through my body and the next moment, just before the path, I was stuck even deeper in the mud. “Oh, great. That worked well.” Another time brought me on the way. As I was tapping the mud, I saw Nimri coming towards me. He had his tail wrapped around the stem of a leaf where he had placed some insects. “You call that help?” I asked him in amazement, whereupon he stared at me with his big saucer eyes.

## **Eleasis 21, 1360 DR**

I spent the last weeks taking small jobs in the village, which I found at the wall by the swamp. Lower level jobs where I didn’t have much to do with the mob. As it turned out, the people here didn’t want to be served by a Drow in the tavern, or were even disgusted when they learned that a Drow was washing dishes and cutlery. They mocked me, in my presence, spat at me and tried to beat me as if I was a lowly creature unworthy of life. I had to resist the temptation more than once not to send them all to their gods. Among all these men who treated me like a piece of meat here, groped me, spat at me, beat me, if I were one in the underworld ... Yes, what would I be? An unpopular half-breed who is despised and hunted even by his own race. Often enough the mob in the schools reminded me that I was not ›pure blood‹.

I have to move on, to a bigger city where hopefully Drow won’t be treated so badly. On top of that, I was so badly paid, it was barely enough for food and shelter. In the beginning they even wanted to enslave me, which I could only escape by beating one of them so soft with my staff and shock-starring another one with lightning bolts. It’s a wonder the guards didn’t lynch me directly because of that.

After I received the last coins, I packed my things and moved further north with Nimri. At the end of the village I met two guards »Where is our slave going to in such a hurry?« one of the two, obviously drunk, guards barked. »I’m not a slave« I answered him harshly. »Slaves are not paid« laughed the other, whereupon the first one came back »That still doesn’t answer my question! Where are you going to so late?« »Away« was all he heard in reply. He came closer and stood up in front of me. His drunken flag and his unkempt appearance were almost enough to make me nauseous. He looked down at me »If you won’t tell me where, there’s something else you can do for me« he demanded with a broad grin

on his face and grabbed my breast. Just at that moment I grabbed the hand that was touching my chest, pulled him towards me and rammed my knee between his legs. As he wriggled and moved away from me with a »you fucking bitch«, I pulled my stick and wiped it through his face. After he hit the ground unconscious, the other seemed to have realized what had happened and pulled his sword and shield. I watched him for a while, but as shaky as he held his weapon and stared at me with eyes wide open, he did not seem to have been in service for very long. I passed him calmly, loaded my staff and prepared for him to find the courage to attack me after all. But he didn't.