
burning the midnight oil

Posted by youthculture - 2007/11/21 07:34

Sinjin, at his most accurate description, was a jack of all trades. In his short history he had dabbled in increasingly darker careers: prostitution, mob courier, thief, hitman, explosive expert -- the list went on and on. Eventually, he settled comfortably into the niche of the man they needed to do something. All the jobs, all the little things, that everyone else refused or could not do.

For the past two weeks, he was hired to follow a string of illegal goods from a curious employer in the West End. All his employers were somehow based there; he didn't question it, though he did enjoy how much simpler it made his life. In this particular case, Sinjin's orders were loose: do not let those goods leave Rhy'din. There was no how, or when, or subtly involved -- so, for the past two weeks, the sinner watched the docks, waited and thought for the best route of action.

The best route of action, in Sin's mind, was the most direct.

Shortly after midnight on the twenty-first of November, the crew of the Kesling were shuttling large crates inside the ship's belly. Like the crew itself, the ship was ugly and unkept; in her day she might have been a fine vessel, but now she was nothing but an eyesore.

It was shortly after two in the morning when the docks shook and the Kesling erupted in bright flames. The explosive went off without a hitch, tearing apart the ship's innards and sending shards of wood and metal in every direction; it took less than an hour for the ship to sink just a few hundred yards away from the docks. In the morning, the crates were still floating there in the water, but the 'goods' were lost and wasted away.

Whatever they were and whoever they were for was now a secret between Sinjin and the bottom of the sea.

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Jarring

Posted by Spirited Corsair - 2007/11/27 18:34

November 21

Shortly After Two in the Morning

The building had a perfectly square footprint, and was one of the oddest structures that she had ever been inside. It towered high, and was so lofty that it seemed endless. She ascended the stairs, going wall to wall to wall. There were no rooms. There was no rail. Just flights and flights of stairs on the perimeter, alcoves, darkness below and light above. She could feel the grain of the wood beneath her feet. Maia's legs felt heavier than usual, as though she had not slept in ages, but she had to know. There was something at the top of the stairs, if only she could get there.

In silence she moved, smelling the dust as she watched the particles of it dance in the beams of light that poured from above. Her heart thrummed powerfully in her chest. Maia was almost there. Just a few more flights, and she would see it. It was at the top. It was behind the door. It was within reach, and so she reached. As she wrapped her hand around the cold handle, the door flew open without warning. The creak of the hinges was jarring, and the door hit her, hard enough that she lost her balance.

She startled, gasped, and tried to right herself. A second passed, perhaps two, but the time seemed to stretch longer between the moment when the door hit her, and the moment when she realized that there was no door. Maia was dreaming, and the violent reaction of her body to the strange place in her mind had actually caused her to jolt upright. The shaking of the bed and the flail of the woman who had, until then, been tucked right where she belonged, was enough to cause the Welshman to stir. He was concerned, albeit groggy.

"Maia?"

After a breath, she sighed at herself and calmed a little. Her breath steadied again as she lowered herself back down to settle beneath the blankets. Maia had rolled over, to curl on one side of the bed and compose her wits, so that she would not fall asleep again only to plunge headlong into a restless dream. As she answered, she was still.

"It's nothing, love. Strange dream, that's all."

"Then don't go back to it," he said as he followed her to that side of the bed, curling his arm around her and drawing her in. Into her hair, he murmured, a content and sleepy sound. "Stay here." Maia smiled a little, snuggled against him, and took hold of his hand. She laced their fingers together.

"Very well, Harry. If I am not mistaken, it would be your birthday, and you may have whatever you like."

A very soft chuckle accompanied a playful little squeeze as he replied, "Be careful what you offer, woman...you might just find yourself..."

He didn't get to finish the sentence. The sound of that explosion echoed through Dockside. A wall of sound disrupted everything, and the world trembled. Maia went stiff and very still, eyes cutting this way and that through the dark, though there was nothing to see on Te Maru. It was just as jarring as the "nothing" that had pulled her straight out of sleep.

"That wasn't nothing," she said. Perhaps it was more to herself than to the man beside her.

"No."

It wasn't long before they were dressed and armed to head outside. If all hell was about to break loose in the city that they were trying to leave behind, Harry and Maia were going to do their damndest to keep it from claiming another of the ships (or Dockside, for that matter). Birthday or no, anything Harry would like would just have to wait a while.

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Re:Jarring

Posted by JolieWilde - 2008/02/19 14:15

Rising up, surrounded by leaves, pale in moonlight, bramble and twig snagging her cardigan, she stood staring gape mouthed at fireflies of cinder blowing in through the hazy light. Her chest swelled with a held breath, fingers dropping the foraged petals that she had been plucking, petals of fortune, will she go back to town and find a present for the Norseman (probably in the form of a stolen apple...) or won't she, will she find that white kitten and take care of it or won't she, the decisions a child makes, important in the scheme of their giant, limitless world.

She ducks around the shrubs and wanders along the open stretch of tar, her skirt blowing about her, ruffled collar bending to touch the throat as the wind took over, blowing hair about jaw and forehead, dizzy she was with wonder at the sight and the sensation, open in the darkness, a windswept, vital moment in a child's notion of time, when there was so much to do, and so standing there, like the days had all ran into one another, she felt a hurricane of suspense tear through her.

Smiling crookedly, she hurried towards where the sound had risen from, boots thumping softly along the road as she darted out of the cubbyholes of abandoned buildings of which grew grass and small trees, like shambled greenhouses, making her way as fast as her little legs could take her, her heart pounding with excitement, an urchin's curiosity awakened with the view of a fiery distance.

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