Road Trip to Goul

The majority of the trip will be transit across the seas to Meracydia to a largish shipping city.

From there it will be by mount back across lands till they reach a small, abandoned fishing village where across the sea a large island bordered in mountains and forests rests. Home of the Goul tribe.

The first stop is along the northern most mountains in the darkness of the canopy, rests hidden in an almost hallowed clearing where she has buried her mother Miltifan under carefully chiseled and stacked bricks of stones.

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Here is where Gabbie unburies the body of Miltifan that is carefully wrapped in cloth.

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The cavern itself resides with the presence of the woman and in the reflection of light her apparition can be seen, dressed in robes of white, adorned with metallic trinkets and necklaces. Her skin painted in tribalistic markings of constellations. Her hair was a bundled mess and one horn missing from the side of her head.

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Gabbie is unaware of this and instead busies herself by unwrapping the woman’s face and neck, the pale stark face and eyes closed revealed. Gabbie murmurs to the woman almost child like and for hours she rests there on her knees in prayer.

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She later leaves with the woman body rewrapped to take it across the sea before engaging the Goul tribe, though she takes her mothers necklace… a pearl drop that glows on a silver chain and places it around her own neck.

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Traversing the sea once more, she spends the night in the fishing village, her face pale and focused. In the morning she cuts her hair, and they make their way back across the sea towards the tribe of Goul and the volcano that rests within.

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Initial interaction with the tribe brings for the obvious contempt and hate they seem to have for Gabriella.

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Further investigation shows that the tribe has been tempered but holds their faculties some they are just emphatic to the deity they worship.

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No conversation is possible, and it ends as expected… as the tribe attacks to capture Gabriella, the slaughter happens… a tireless fight that drives her to kill whoever gets in her way as she moves closer and closer to the mount of volcano in the seat of the tribe.

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As blood runs, children woman and men lay at her feet, tired and worn she drags herself across the ashes of the Seat.

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With in the bowls of the volcano awaits Apoldyon who looks surprisingly human, with the under beads of lava tracing itself through its veins.

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The battle is fierce, but in the end, they persevere to push to their limits, their skin charred. Half Gabbie’s leg and arm seared to charcoal. With Apoldyon cast back into the void and all those that created him dead… Gabbie drags them away though the cooling earth.

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Halfway back to the boat they must rush as the island itself seems to split, its heart cracked and begins sinking into the ocean. Gabbie falls her knee giving out to pain as the adrenaline rushes and is almost incapable of pushing forward, but Star drags her the last of the way and pushes the boat back away from the collapsing land. The water steaming as the heat cools in its depths, the tribe and its hells lost forever.

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Gabbie passes out during the ride back and isn’t aware, they stay in the fishing village for some days as Gabbie rests, Star taking care of her while she has fever dreams where her mother soothes her in her sleep, her leg pain back in full force and nightmares take over her mind.

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Once they rest and heal, their next stop is the slow walk to the Temple along the southern shores of the continent to the last remnants of the Xia village. Her mother's village, where they spend a few days making rites and burns the body of her mother into ashes, collecting half the ashes into an urn and scattering the last of them among the grounds of the village.

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Over the weeks the two travels to a few places that Gabbie frequented when they lived in the fishing village, the loss of the island bums her out as much of her life was spent there.

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Eventually they return to the shipping city where they spend more time resting before the ship leaves.

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Here Gabbie sneaks out to get a glimpse of Ophel, her first love and a noble, eventually finding her married as she spies the woman through a manors window. A husband and kids around the table as they eat dinner, and she simply watches longingly.

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They visit the bathhouse.

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Are called upon by a Midlander, Lord Evenstin, which they later realize is a garlean, who thanks them for ridding Apoldyon and doing this land a favor.

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They eventually return home upon a ship, this time in luxury at the behest of Lord Evenstin, with Miltifan's ashes, and Gabbie's past taken care of.

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Gabbie's wounds don't fully heal, and she is left with burn scars along her leg and arm.

Dear Family,

I hope this letter reaches you as the sun rises, and by that time… I will have set sail, Star in tow… I don't know when the feeling began but I know now is the time to shut the door on my demons… and my past… but in order to do that; I need to leave. While I was going to do this alone, Star insisted and… I'm so scared… but having him there…

We will be gone for 2 months Eorzean time, but you should still be able to reach us in emergencies.

I’m sorry, Hermana… K’ly… everyone… but this is something I need to do alone… Star doesn’t count… I think. Don’t get to angry at Rowan for not telling you anything… I swore her to secrecy.

Rowan… I’ll be back…

Love,

Gabriella

Dear Sisters,

SEE YOU LATER, ALLIGATORS!

Love,

Star Chariot

“Mama, I’m home. I… came all this way… and it’s about time… I’m so scared, so frightened, so hallow, and I don’t know if I have what you’ve told me. But, I’ve come to take you home to see those golden fields of blossoms you wanted to see once more. In your homelands, the ones you use to paint…”

The ghost of the woman shift unheard by the younger girl, her voice but a chisel in the stones of reality; it was never the fields of home that I wished to see blossom my beautiful Ella… you… you were my fields of gold. You were always my blossoms.

The girl continued to speak as both the man an women stared at each other, aware but unable to express what they thought. “Mama, can I die yet… has the stars allowed it yet?” the stone remained quiet in return.

The woman stood towering a golden glow above the man, her eyes weathered and stormy. My daughter will never love again, she can't… she bared all that the stars have given her. Hallowed are her halls, and the woman you all lookup to is naught more. She has buried herself so deep, her light has diminished, and yet she has done what that beautiful melody has taught. She has given herself over to all of you so completely that she is lost. None of you deserve my daughter, none of you will ever love her like she deserves. For you misplace naively the feelings and energy. If you at all wish to see my daughter love, if any of you wish to love her like she deserves, then love yourselves. It is there that what is left of her will rests.

The girls words continued unaltered in the background, a soft strength the felt of worlds that pushed their way through the stars. "Mama… I don't want you to see what I'm about to become… I don't want you to see the hate I harbored within myself ever since I was born. I'm gunna move you to the mainland, okay. Then I'm gunna come back and finish this… I shall rage at the dying of the light."

The woman who was the echoes of time and space upon this moment, a translucent golden robed spirit, where whence a horn burst blossomed a flower of pure light. And she turned to her sobbing daughter with the barest of smiles and kneels at her side. You will keep her safe, you will pull her back to the light, all of you. She was a world of good to do as the stars speak. My daughter, be strong find the fields of gold I once painted and storytold over and over, find rest among the stars. It isn't yet time for you to pass on the light of the verse.

I pulled on the searing heat, and I could hear my screams ricochet off the emptiness of my sight. I could feel my skin come free like a sleeve and I clutched the balled-up mass of sinews and blood as it boiled at its surface. No pain surmounted the feeling of dying without purpose, nor of sinking into the hot lava that engulfed this Seat of Ash, and here I thought child birth was too much.

I looked for the pure aether as I found him, struggling, the sweat on his brow, and his coat blood soaked and heavy. He pushed and pushed himself beyond his limits. All this I knew because I could feel it upon myself. I then searched the blackness of my sight, for the demon of my past, and the one thing that took all my reasons to live from me. I could feel the gloating, the glee, and the victory that seeped the demon's form engulfed within its strength. My rage grew, my will died, and the pain dispersed as I gritted my teeth.

I could not end like this; I would not fail. Abel, Melody, Mama, and Papa deserved their rest from the things I left to their own. My jacket and shirt torn and burned away into nothing, the swaths of flesh that was missing and boiling, the cuts and pains, none of it mattered anymore. This thing stole my heart, and I would steal it in turn. I would put an end to my past even if it meant losing it all.

I felt the world chill around me as my focus hardened and I buried the light so deep that all that was left was the void within me. The world began to freeze as I felt cold droplets and then crystal water touch my skin. This wasn't about me anymore, I wasn't strong enough, but if I just let it take me all would be well; and so, I let it consume me.

The Winter Wolf charged with her blade held firm, a growl following the whistle of the blade as she cut, not a scream of misery burst forth as she was thrown and bashed around, her body cracking and breaking under the onslaught. But with each strike the ice was left in her wake and the demon howled in pain, and the hot lake hardened. I only saw glimpses of the pure aether as it pushed on and on… the only star in my sky today. If they weren't here today, I would have failed, and this spurred the Wolf forward.

The Wolf climbed as the searing heat of the demon's body shrunk with each moment as the wolf reached higher and higher my blade forgotten at the demon's feet, my humanity lost in the rivers of lava, and the rage at the dying of the light burning brighter then this past would ever allow. She plunged her hands deep into Apoldyon's chest and with labored strength as tears ran form her eyes, the heat eating at her cold skin, she pulled and pulled and with a fall from the darkening form wretched the demon's heart into her hands from demon's chest, to press and crush. The heartbeat against the coldness that wrapped around its song, and the wolf drew on more of the aether of the Lifestream as the pressure of gravity suddenly crushed the organ down under its weight causing it to release an unimaginable screech of pain as the universe itself annihilated it, before it fell into silence.

And in this silence, I crashed into the hardening rock as I felt my back crack. The weight of the compressed demon's heart crushing and pushing me deeper into the stone as I felt the heat of magma rise along my back once more. I howled and wished that in these last moments as my eyes shut, the sight of the pure aether came into view heaving the stone from my chest with all their strength that I could see the stars above me, but I never would.

As Star found himself shoving the stone from atop the sinking girl and he rushed to her side his hands reached to grasp and slip across the exposed muscles and fats, but he held on and dragged her from the swallowing magma. There was no screams of pain, crashing of stone, or words of wisdom in the silence as he dropped to her side. And as he looked her over there could be no other feeling then horror at the skinless and broken body of a woman who only minutes earlier was whole.

Gabriella lurched and shook in pain as her jittering eyes sought out Stars and once she found them she spoke with a harsh and stuttered voice, "You have to get Mama home, please Ani. You promised me." Without realizing it Gabriella hand took his as she pleaded but the moment they touched she gasped. "I can see them, I can see the stars. "

Her eyes stared beyond him in wonder almost lost in her own world. All he could do was kneel there as he tried to keep her alive in this hell. As the girls breathing became shallow and slowed, his heart pleaded back silently. You aren't about to give up on her I would hope, for gods sake, she believed you. Star looked up to find that golden translucent form once more staring back, her eyes a blaze of ice cold embers. I don't care what you believe, you must heal her, or are you not here for this, do you not truly care.

In his eyes he tried to portray his feelings of inadequacy, his inability to heal so naturally, to him all was lost. Nonsense, anything is possible if you believe in yourself or has being around my daughter taught you nothing. Come hold her hand still and take mine. I will channel the aether as need be. You simply focus on healing her like you normally would.

Star slowly took both woman's hand, Gabriella's was cold and stiff, while the ghost of a woman's was light and tingly. The bridge between the two was heavy and as he focused on his friends face that was enraptured in a childlike wonder he found himself still as everything else stopped. Simply believe and let nature run it's course.

Star breathed heavy and with focus he felt the energy the ghost channeled through him and with relief watched as the wounds developed a thin layer of skin to protect the girls body. Her hand warming in his, and her breath became more even. He could only do so much as his body began feeling weak and lethargic from channeling aether. This will be enough, get her out of this hell, and to safety. Take care of her.

He did not wait, nor did he look back as he picked her up with the last of his strength and dragged himself from the Seat of Ash. The lands itself crumbling around them without abandon. He would get them to safety; he knew he had to.

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