Torn Diary Page #4 (10/8/1569)

10/8/1569 6ae

It's almost time. I'm too nervous to sleep. Radiant is tossing and turning on his side of the camp too. I think it's safe to say we're all a bit jumpy.

Tomorrow's the big day. Master went over the plans with us a few hours ago. We're going to destroy the final slave encampment, 78000 yalms off the western coast. Then, with all of those prisoners combined with our own liberated ones, we're to herd them across a large battletorn field to a fleet of 3 large ships docked at the shore. We don't expect much resistance, according to some of the rebel scouts. But just in case, Master has some of his “chariots” on the front line, ready to shield anyone from any incoming fire.

This might be my final chance to prove my worth, something I've been longing for ever since the day I left my village. With my spear techniques I learned from Anjelo, training from Master, and all the practice with Radiant, I've come far from the frightened little kit I used to be. To think, last year I was among the slaves at Rabanastre. Now, I'm part of the team to help free others. Lives are on the line, and I'm much better suited to defend them.

I just hope I do enough to be recognized by my Master. To be named a chariot, that is my new dream! To ferry the people to the freedom of the star.

And this time, I won’t let anyone I love die.

12/8/1569 6ae

The handwriting on the rest of the pages are noticeably sloppier than usual

My hands ache. I am alive, but full of scrapes and bruises. I will try my best…..I NEED to….

For their sake…So that I may never forget….I will write as much detail as I can.

It was a nightmare. Taking down the prison camp was easy, but we didn't expect what came after. On the way to the shore with our people, we ran into an army. Not the Garlean one, although they were mostly comprised of what *used* to be Garleans.

It was an army of reanimated corpses. Of Undead.

And who else was at the head of the army, but Soren Steeleforte. That bastard was one step ahead. His obsession with me reached its peak.

Our army of gunbreakers chopped their blades into the flesh of the hoard of bodies that rushed towards us. They were unflinching and emotionless, clawing at us wildly with their bare hands. It was hard fighting an enemy with no fear in their hearts and no tactics in their minds. They had pale skin and completely white eyes, and moaned loudly. I even recognized one or two of the soldiers as I swung my spear at them. Luckily Radiant stayed by my side.

And even with the crazy amount of aether Soren probably used for this entire army, he somehow had enough to channel more surprises for us. He stood at the other end of the field, on an elevated piece of land, hurling explosion magicks after explosion magicks. The dust got into the eyes of many of our men, and from the clouds the undead leaped through and pounced. I saw…many … .of our own…being toppled over and screaming as the zombies tore apart their bodies. But we had to stick to the plan. Master chanted at us to keep moving forward, freedom was almost ours.

And after we pushed through the crowd, Soren stood at the end. Waiting for us. Waiting for me.

“I granted you a favor, child. I know how much you wanted to take your revenge on us.”

Soren spoke with an asshole grin on his face. “So I brought you a gift. The means to strike another name off your list.”

He motioned over a hulking, armored beast man from behind him; His visor obscuring his face. The iron behemoth brandished his javelin toward me. And so…I unsheathed my own spear. Thinking about it now…I didn't understand what Soren meant at the time. I wish I could have realized it sooner before I brazenly leapt at my opponent.

Utilizing my powerful legs, I jumped high into the air, and dove toward the metal man. A technique I remember fondly, one I had practiced hard back at Rabanastre. A dragon slaying move, meant to pierce the scales of the enemy. But to my surprise, the mysterious opponent knew what I was going for and dodged the dive, leaping into the air himself and slashing downward on my back. Who knew this heavy guy could jump?!

I didn't let that stop me. I pushed myself off the ground and readied my next move, a series of thrusts aimed at the gaps in his armor. And to my surprise, he stood there, allowing himself to get stabbed. He didn't flinch, he felt no pain, and he effortlessly grasped the shaft of my weapon and sliced me with his own. Every time I poked him after that, he punished me with a counter, knocking me back over again and again.

I grew tired of taking hits and getting my ass kicked, so I switched tactics. I took a step back and assumed a defensive stance, waiting for him to make his next move. I tried to focus on any opening movements he was about to make, but my eyesight started to act up again. It was very faint, but I saw a double vision of my opponent, bending his knees slightly and sweeping the floor with his spear. So I instinctively jumped, supposedly before he even began to swing. High into the air above him, I kicked his visor cleanly off his face and sent it cascading through the air. I landed and turned to look at my opponent's face.

What I saw…had me stunned. I felt time slow down, the dirt and soot in the air drifted down as it brushed past my face. The sounds of people yelling and the clashing of steel were muffled. Memories of my days at Rabanastre came rushing back at me. His voice rang in my mind.

“That price is a ripoff! You can get a sssstack for lesssss on the market board. WITH Dalmascan taxesssss”

“You idiot. They don't make hatssssss for Vierasssss. Put that back.”

“Order up! Boy, play your bessssst sssssong!”

I felt the tears build up and overflow down my cheeks. My vision blurred as his bulky figure stumbled closer and closer to me.

“Happy Namessssday.” his voice continues to play in my thoughts. “What? You never had a namessssssday celebration? Then what am I sssssupposed to do with thissssss guitar? You may as well take it, improve your bard playing and make me more coin”

My grip on my spear loosened and dropped to the floor. He came at me closer and closer, and I was able to see his face a little more clearly. The same shape, the same sharp teeth, the same leathery skin and unique Bangaa pattern on his forehead. But his skin was pale. His body limped. His gaze was empty and stone cold.

Time felt slow as a snail, and still I was frozen in place, powerless to react as he lifted his javelin and prepared the final blow.

“Boy, what are you doing here?”

A memory from the past rushed through my consciousness. I saw myself at the bar, caught sneaking into the back room to grab a midnight snack.

“I was hungry.”

“Hmph, you ssssaying I dont feed you enough?”

“Fuck off”

He laughed and coughed.

“I know you hate me kid, I’ve seen yer hitlist. I’m ssssurprised you remembered our names ssssso dissstinctly.”

I remember clenching my fists and gritting my teeth at him.

“You all introduced yourselves when Cyprus first caught me in the woods. Big mistake.”

He took a drag of his cigarette as he stared miles into the blank wall.

“Half of them are gone now ... .Think I'll be next?” He slumped his shoulders ever so slightly.“You don't need to forgive me. Hellssss, I'd want you to be the one to finish me off eventually.”

I scoffed. “Why though?”

Anjelo flicked his cigarette as he blew his last puff of smoke.

“What happened that following day…I doubt you remember any of it.”

I shrugged. I just stayed quiet as he kept going.

“I wouldn’t wish that on anyone. Ssssso many innocents sssacrificed their livesssss. It wasss a missstake to get into the buisinesssss of working for the army.”

He then looked at me in the eye, and put one of his overwhelmingly large claws on my shoulder. “Give up on revenge, it's not worth the losssss of your life nor the livessss of otherssss. Find a way to esssscape from here. Find a new life, and live for thosssse that gave you the chance to live again.”

He then lifted his weight off my shoulder and stumbled out of that room.

I remember…I remember getting angry. I remember wanting to hate, hate so much that I could be driven to be a fearful unforgiving killing machine. I can hear the people of my village, every single one of them, crying out for justice. Telling me to remember fondly what happened so that my rage may continue to burn and push my resolve for revenge. But ... .Do I remember?

I remember….I…..remember?…..I couldn’t….I don’t remember….What….happened? What happened to everyone that day?

And whenever I tried to remember that tragic day, one of their voices would ring louder than the rest, and bring them to silence. It was Camie, her voice calm enough to still my emotions. Telling me it’s okay, I don’t need to know. To leave the past behind…and live my own life, looking forward to the new tomorrow.

Next thing I remember seeing….was the bladed tip of his javelin zooming toward me. I thought that was it, my journey would be over. My quest for justice would be at an end, and I would die breaking the promises I've made to myself.

I cried out his name, one last time.

Suddenly, I saw a blinding flash of light. Followed by an ear piercing sound of clashing steel. I tumbled backwards onto my butt. And when I looked ahead, I saw a big aetherical barrier, shaped like a bubble. Inside the bubble was a hulking figure of Hrothgar, his lion-like mane and teeth and his human-like stance. It was none other than my mentor, my teacher and savior.

“Master!” I cried out.

“I'll hold him off!”, he struggled to shout the words as he blocked the javelin with the broad side of his azure blade. “You and Radiant run to the ships!”

I nodded and hopped to my feet without hesitation. Master continued to strike and parry Anjelo’s spear, the steel ringing over and over. As they fought, I ran to Radiant’s side. Radiant at the time was deflecting blasts from Soren’s onslaught of magick.

“We need to go, now!” I told Radiant. He simply nodded and we started to dash away. Soren must have noticed our escape, so he raised his arms in the air and shouted.

“I won't let you escape me, boy!”

I saw him channel a giant electrical ball of magic floating over him, and with an exaggerated motion he flung the magical ball toward us.

Again, my eyes fooled me. I saw the explosion before it happened, it was almost like a vision or a premonition. A giant wave of bright cackling energy was about to wash over all of us. We wouldn't have survived, or worse, we would've been paralyzed from the blast, leaving me to be easily caught by Soren.

“No!” I heard the Master call out to us. Our master again tried to be our shield, as he pulled the trigger and swung his blade toward our direction right before Soren’s magick came into contact. A wave of soothing light engulfed Radiant and I, and the shockwave from Sorens magick was halted in its beams. Master managed to save my life yet again

But then I realized, the shock was only halted where the shield began, and the shield only covered Radiant and I. I looked frantically for Master, only to see him struggle with paralysis as he pointed the tip of his blade toward us. It was then at that moment, suddenly and without warning, Angelo's javelin pierced Master’s back and plunged through his chest. Anjelo released the weapon and took several steps back, and just stared coldly at us.

Master fell to his knees and coughed up blood, as pools of it splattered out from his wound. Radiant ran up to him, and from where I was standing he looked to be slouched over. They spoke to each other, I couldn't tell what the words were. Radiant then laid our Master down to the floor on his side. He seemed to wipe his eyes for a moment, then Radiant looked up at Anjelo and grasped his own gunblade. To this day, I've never seen Radiant so much as shout or raise his voice; but at that moment, he roared like a beast and bared his huge saber teeth at Anjelo. Soren took his place by Anjelo's side, and Radiant sprinted madly at the pair.

I lost notice of the ongoing battle, my focus on Master. I ran up to his body and saw the damage up close. It was bad. The palms of his hands were painted red, small red rivers ran down the sides of his mouth. I cried enough today, yet still the tears streamed down. I frantically tried to cover his wound without pulling the spear out, and I assured Master I would help him. The blood kept spilling out, and I was running out of options.

There was one thing I thought of trying, but like the idiot I am I thought I could pull it off. Like those heroes in those legends that perform amazing feats only at the most perilous times. And I was desperate. I reached my hands out toward Master, and tried my hardest to channel my body's aether toward him. I pushed and pushed and pushed.

“Cure!” I screamed. Nothing seemed to have changed, so I pushed my hands closer to his wound.

“Cure!” I shouted. “Cure, damn you! Cure!”

I pushed and held my breath, and I felt my face turn blue.

“Cure!!!” I slapped my cheeks out of frustration. “Just do a simple Cure!”

Nothing. Not an ounce of aetherflow. What did I expect?

“Useless…” I whispered under my breath. “…fucking useless. I can't save anyone. I never could.”

I felt a heavy hand placed on my shoulder. It was Master. Struggling to breathe, he looked at me and gave a small smile. I could feel my heart and my chest crumble to pieces.

“It’s not time to give up yet…” he whispered in a raspy voice. He took his arm off my shoulder and reached for his gunblade, shaking as he rose it toward me. “…you still need to help Radiant.”

My eyes were drawn to the shiny blue steel, my tears stopped and I grabbed hold of the hilt. In the palm of his same hand, he dropped a yellow crystal onto my lap. He coughed and gasped for air before speaking again.

“Don't try to be….what you aren't meant to be…” he heaved “…take my place. Be the protector…the chariot…that these people need.”

He was right. I was never meant to be a hunter. A killer. A healer. No…but there was something that I could do still. I wiped my tears and tried to stop my lips from trembling.

“A chariot?” I asked him.

He closed his eyes and smiled as he spoke his final words.

“Live on and protect… for those you have lost….and for those you can….yet save….”

His breath left his body, and his head dropped to the ground. He laid there lifeless with a sort of serenity to his face. I took his crystal and placed it in my pocket.

“Thank you…for everything”

With his words echoing in my mind, and his final command, I marched toward the battle between Radiant and Anjelo.

….now that I'm writing this…I realize…I left his corpse behind….

I just informed Radiant. He told me that's what he would have wanted us to do anyways, to protect ourselves and stick to the mission first and foremost. I can't help but feel uneasy about it. Master deserves a proper burial. Maybe…..tomorrow or the day after, I'll gather Radiant and the guys to do something for him…

Anyways…back to the story. I've got a new pot of ink. My hand hurts...but I must keep going. I need to document everything now that my memory is still fresh.

I saw Radiant and Anjelo doing battle…Radiant fiercely focused on him. I could tell he was letting his rage get to the better of him, swinging wildly whilst the unarmed Anjelo was just dodging his blows. It didn't occur to me until I realized: Soren was unaccounted for! I scanned the area for the damn elf, until I saw some sort of aether energy building up in the distance.

Not far behind Anjelo was Soren, using him as a human…ish…shield. Whilst Anjelo was busy distracting Radiant, Soren was conjuring another explosive spell. Yet again, I foresaw the attack. I needed to do something. I couldn't risk losing another friend on the battlefield.

I felt the master's crystal pulse. The move he did before, shielding us with light, was clear in my mind. The only problem…that move required some sort of aether to be channeled from the user.

But maybe…just maybe…I could channel it. With master's help from his crystal. I didn't have a choice, Soren was about to attack. And I had no time to think of anything else….so I sprinted toward Radiant, getting as close as possible.

"Radiant! Watch out!" I shouted. Radiant turned toward me, and his eyes widened when he saw me raise the blade toward the sky. He jumped back toward me, and that was when Soren waved his arms and released his spell. I had nothing else to trust but instinct, so I waved the gunblade in front of us both and pulled the trigger…

"Heart of Light!"

By some miracle, a wave of light washed over us. The fiery splash from Soren's spell disintegrated before us. I remember the look on Soren's face, he sucked his teeth and furrowed his brow so tightly that one of them started to twitch. Radiant's jaw dropped, as he looked around us.

"This looks…just like the master's…" He then turned to me, "How did you manage? Is that his blade?"

I looked up at him and silently nodded.

"Now is our chance. Look ahead, they're both stunned. And perfectly lined up. I have an idea."

Radiant lifted his own blade, pointed skyward. "Follow my lead, then pull the trigger when I say go!"

So I switched the blade to my left hand, and did the same as Radiant. Both of us, side by side, with blades pointed straight up.

“Now! Pull the trigger!”

And as soon as I did, a giant wave of pressure pushed downward on my arm, forcing me to brace my leg into the sand. I looked up and saw a pillar of light piercing from the tips of our blades, through the dust in the air and into the starry sky. The very wind in the air blew past, as if the gales were opening the path before us.

We aimed our attack, positioned to line up both of our enemies together. And then….

“Let’s finish this together!” Radiant and I shouted at the top of our lungs!

“Blasting Zone!”

We slammed our blades into the ground, the beam of light followed. The earth quaked as it touched the floor, and split the ground. The shockwave shot forward through our enemies, as I heard the sound of metal crunching and drowned out screaming. What followed was a bright flash of light, and left me blind for a few seconds.

The clouds of dust that blocked our view dissipated. All around us were our soldiers and prisoners of war, some of them stood at attention and turned toward us. The undead stood petrified, some of them fell to the ground. And before us was a burnt straight line drawn on the ground, running straight through Angelo’s body as it laid flat, his armor cracked and crumbled. And in the distance behind him, Soren sat on his ass, stunned at how close he was to succumbing to the same fate.

Now that the fighting came to a brief pause, and the air was clear enough for us to see the ocean, the first thing that came to mind was the opportunity to run.

Radiant took a deep breath, then shouted. “Chariots! Master gave us the order.” He looked directly at me. “Abandon the fight! Run toward freedom! Take our prisoners and liberate them!”

The soldiers around us roared and cheered.

My mind went blank. All I remember after that was jogging through the dry sand, tripping constantly as the grains crept into my clothes and boots. My arms were heavy, my eyes were

burning. But I kept moving, my eyes fixed on the back of that giant Hrothgar. Eventually I felt the cool breeze in the air, the smell of burning fire transformed into a salty smell. And before us were three giant wooden arks, with ramps propped down into the wet sand.

I then remember crawling on all fours, up the wet wooden floors, scraping my burned and bruised body against the splinters. And then once I felt myself on a leveled surface, I collapsed. I closed my eyes. I felt a stillness…followed by turbulence… and then a gentle rocking. Almost felt like I was crawling back into Ma's arms…after a long and horrible nightmare. I felt myself slip away…consciousness drifting off, and then I fell into a deep dark abyss of nothingness.

And well… I guess…..

I woke up here. In this bed. Radiant filled me in, saying I passed out as soon as we boarded.

I was asleep for a long time, but it feels like everything just happened.

Right now we're staying in a special cabin. The ships were pre arranged to sail us directly to Thavnair. I've never been on a boat before but….the rocking and swaying feels nice.

I think I'll just take…another nap….

15/8/1569 6ae

A lot has happened the past few days.

Radiant calls me a soldier now, after seeing me fight. He says when I get better, he wants to train me more with the gunblade.

We've got plenty of time, after all. Considering I decided not to make land at Thavnair.

Oh right, about that.

We’re going to drop off a ton of our men at the port, and from there they’ll be taking other ships off to other parts of the world.

This ship we’re on will dock for a few days, but then it’s off to an island called Vylbrand. Some place far, far to the west. So far away that empire has yet to reach it. And there, a large city by the sea called Limsa Lominsa. A place full of people and pirates coming and going from different places around the world.

Radiant said he’ll be heading there for his own personal reasons. I suppose I have nowhere else to go now, so I'll be following. He assures me that I can find a new start there and live my own life. Freedom.

Yesterday we held a candle vigil for Master. We said a few words here and there, and spoke about his life. He had a wife that he loved dearly, but she lost her life during the Bozja incident. Ever since then, he dedicated his life to saving the victims of the empire. Radiant knew him for much longer than I have….so the loss hit him the hardest.

As for his blade…Radiant told me to keep it. We noticed after that day, there was an aether infused cartridge loaded into its chamber. Which is weird, Master knew how to manipulate the aether fairly well. Radiant came to the conclusion that Master had planned to hand me the blade before we even had that battle and he made that cartridge especially for me. The protective barrier and light beam I was able to shoot back then…was all thanks to his planning.

I said a few prayers for Anjelo too. I know he was an asshole at times….but he really did care for me. He didn't deserve what Soren did to him. I thought all this time he and Soren were friends. But I guess there was a lot I didn't know.

One of the people we saved from Dalmasca was a fortune teller and astrologian. She offered a free reading for me, considering today was my namesday. She spoke very obscurely and said things that didn't make much sense to me, but she drew cards from a deck for me. Ironically..the first card she drew was a Chariot card. Then she drew a card of the Star. She said something about new beginnings, and running off to the rest of the world headfirst.

New beginnings….that’s not a bad idea. Radiant and I ended today by looking out toward the ocean and talking about what we’ll do. He mentioned to me about meeting the Roegadyn race that live in La Noscea. He admitted that he was named using the same conventions as the mountain Roegadyn that live in the north. It’s pretty cool, they name themselves after objects that represent themselves…like Tall Rock or Blazing Wind…..or Fat Arse…

He said that we'll be completely new in the land of Eorzea, and we'll have to form up identities to be recognized by the various faculties that govern it.

Hmm…having a cool Roegadyn name like RADIANT MOUNTAIN would be awesome….

And besides….I'm not the same frail Viera that hid in the forests and ran from conflict. I'm a warrior now, a protector of the weak! A chariot…like Master called me….

A chariot for the star….hmmm

"What do you think, Rem?" Radiant asks me. " A name like that sounds a bit extravagant but…I think it fits you"

Yeah…I think I'll stick with it.

Today, I turn 19 years old. My name is Star Chariot. And from now on, I fight to protect the ones I love. I fight to ferry the people to the freedom of the star!

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