

It Snows in Crownsreach, Too

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It Snows in Crownsreach, Too

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Summary

“So...” the hero swirls his mug in his hand, watching the fuschia liquid go along with the motion, “You want *me* to get *Drakath* to go out and have some Frostvale spirit?”

also: a deeper analysis on the works of Chaos and how it affected the hero after the devastating battle to save Lore

Notes

i can't believe this is like. the first ever male hero/drakath fic out there in the aqw tag i think. also hero is male here, sorry guys :(i just kinda feel more comfortable with writing male hero. dw guys, i'm gonna write a female hero/gravelyn some other time probably! anyway stan aqw

also a few more notes related to the story: the hero's appearance is entirely based on the Chaos Slayer Mage set! This is set some months after the Chaos Lords saga and here, the hero hasn't fully recovered from Chaorruption (this is why his look is based on Chaos Slayer Mage)

anyway that's all i hope ya'll enjoy!!

btw one last thing this isnt beta'd so oop :/

A crow sits atop the hero's windowsill with a piece of paper tied to its leg. The hero stares at it, and so it does the same, staring back at the hero. The hero approaches the bird and it doesn't shy away, it stays still as he unties the paper from its leg, and then almost immediately, it flies away.

The hero unrolls the tiny piece of paper, looking over the clean cursive, written in purple.

'Meet me at Yulgar's Inn - 7 PM. -Cemaros.'

Above the name is a neat little signature. The hero raises an eyebrow; what exactly would Cemaros want? Hell, he doesn't even know Cemaros that well, what would she even need from him? The hero glances at the wall clock - it's a mere few minutes from 7 PM. Cemaros does demand a lot, he says to himself. He slings his bag over his shoulder heads for the familiar inn, which is just a mere walk from his place.

The cobblestone street he walks is filled with all sorts of Frostvale ornaments - a pine tree stands at the center of Battleon Town, preparing to be dressed for the occasion. The snow is light, layers thin, and what accompanies the night sky are the warm, amber flames of the streetlamps. The kids have left the outdoors for the cozy warmth of their homes, and those who remain outside are couples and adults who are headed home. They adorn fur coats and other clothing to keep them warm.

The hero looks at his own hands, or what he'd call claws, and he frowns. For the first time in his life, he misses the sensation of feeling the cold of Frostvale setting upon them. He misses having to put on fashionable fur coats and whatnot. Now that the Chaos that flows through him has made him more beast than human, he no longer feels like a human does. It's been months, and in those months, only his sense of taste has come back to him.

That's better than not having any sense at all, though.

Finally, he reaches the all-too familiar inn, its doorway adorned and lit up by the warm fires of torches. A metal arc stands atop the doorway, reading 'Yulgar's Inn' - it's scratched up

from all the damage it's endured. The hero presses his hand against the old wood of the door and pushes it open, greeted by an all new, warmer atmosphere. Amber, lit up by torches, and the chatter of adults fill the room, as well as the smell of Moglinberry juice.

There, in the corner, he spots a familiar mess of purple and green. The hero spares her a glance for a second, then gets himself a mug of Moglinberry. He approaches her with a smile, "Anyone sitting here?"

"Very funny," she muses, "I invited you here. Take a seat."

The hero does just as told, getting himself comfortable with his seat, "Yep. Got your note."

Cemarus raises an eyebrow at the claws, the hair - the entire look the hero's sporting. She folds her arms over her chest, "The effects of becoming a Lord of Chaos haven't disappeared yet?"

"Not yet," the hero repeats, a hint of sadness in his tone, as he takes a sip of his drink, "Only my sense of taste has come back. I might be getting better, though!" There is a hint of hope in his voice now, as he points at his headpiece (more of a mutation), at the eye that's on it, specifically. "This thing won't open anymore - think it's dead."

"I see."

The hero leans his cheek on his hand, "Now, onto business, Ms. What'd you call me for?"

Cemarus sighs, as if having to prepare herself for a big speech. However, the words that come next are short, frank, simple. "I need help."

The hero raises an eyebrow, "...with?"

“My master,” her shoulders slump, showing her lack of hope for any sort of cheering up the former Champion of Chaos. The hero wants to chuckle, but seeing Cemaros’ dejection makes him hold it in. However, the snark doesn’t leave his voice, because this is *Drakath* they’re talking about! “What’s up with him *now* ? Planning an all out war against the Queen of Monsters or something?” he jokes.

“No, it’s just... saddening to see him so lifeless.”

‘Hasn’t Drakath always been lifeless and emo?’ the hero is about to mock, but again, Cemaros looks too dejected for him to continue, now.

“It’s Frostvale soon, and I want my master to at least have a little light in his life, you know? Crownsreach is a little on the bland side, and that might be rubbing off on him.”

“So...” the hero swirls his mug in his hand, watching the fuschia liquid go along with the motion, “You want *me* to get *Drakath* to go out and have some Frostvale spirit?”

Cemaros nods.

“You do know you could’ve asked the Spirit of Frostvale for help instead of me.”

“The Moglins at Frostvale are terrified of me! They won’t even tell me how to talk to her!” she reasons.

“They’re even more terrified of Drakath.”

Cemaros’ face drops. Then she looks up at the hero with puppy eyes, “Please...?”

“No. There is no way I am going to even go *near* Drakath.”

She persists. Every second the hero looks into her puppy eyes, the more his resistance falls, until he sighs deeply, and slams his hands on the table to get her to stop. “Fiiiiiine. I’m sorry I was mean to you about this and not accepting your request-” Cemaros doesn’t stop the puppy eyes. “Yes! Okay!” the hero raises his hands in surrender, “I’ll drag him out of his trash hole!”

“That wasn’t very nice,” Cemaros frowns.

“Sorry! It’s just hard to be nice about... *that* !”

The stony path the hero sets out is tainted with layers of white. The purple mountains are painted with caps of snow, and looking ahead, so is the infamous castle of Crownsreach, known to be the home of the most notorious villain on Lore. He sighs as he steps into the boundaries of Crownsreach, a puff of snow following his every breath. He travels on toward the lonely, howling castle of purple.

The entrance is lonely - bland, as Cemaros describes it. Unlike the rest of the buildings on Lore, this castle knows no Frostvale. Crownsreach is as plain as the hero last remembers it being - the only things that make it look fancy are the strange pools of green and the eyes that float above, acting as torches.

The hero continues on, the eyes following his very steps. The eyes, in place of doorknobs, asses the hero for a second, before closing and letting him in. Inside are more eyes, glowing green and staring at him. It feels a lot homier now that Drakath did a little bit of redesigning. Not the best, but definitely makes the castle look better. In the middle of the room, another fountain of green stands. The hero avoids it and heads for the big door in the middle to Drakath’s throne room.

Two Chaos Warriors stand in front of him, glaring down at him with their empty, glowing eyes. They raise their swords, barricading the door. However, a booming voice resonates through the halls, catching even the warriors by surprise.

The hero knows that voice anywhere.

“Let him through.”

The warriors follow, putting their swords down by their sides then going back to looking like statues. The hero does continue on, and he pushes past the iron doors into Drakath's homey throne room. There, Drakath sits on his throne, reading what seems to be a novel. He doesn't bother looking up at the hero.

“Been quite a while, don't you think?” the hero jokes, in hopes of starting a conversation.

“My life was rather alright without your visits,” and of course, their conversations always go down to being rooted to their rivalry. The hero laughs it off, “Oh, c'mon, Drakath. We both know we aren't really each other's enemies. Not for now, at least.”

Still, Drakath's eyes are glued to the pages of his book, “If you're thinking about forming an alliance with me, then perish the thought. I refuse to form any sort of agreement with the likes of you.”

“Way to set the mood,” the hero rolls his eyes, already getting a little irritated. Then, he's reminded of what he has to do, and he does his best to swallow his irritation. “Look, we can put aside our differences for now.”

Now Drakath's eyes are on him, but they're still uninterested, “What do you want?”

“Oh, c'mon, can't I just visit a friend?”

Drakath raises an eyebrow. He and the hero himself know he's lying. The hero knows it's obvious, so he shrugs and smiles at him sheepishly. “Well... Cemaros did ask me to sort of help you look a little more alive.”

“My looks are my business. I’m not participating in some silly makeover Cemaros asked you to do.”

“Ah- no, that’s not what I meant. I mean... she asked me to help you get into the Frostvale spirit!”

Drakath visibly grimaces, “Frostvale spirit...?”

“Yeah! Like, enjoy it!” the hero grins at him. However, Drakath straight out rejects him with a single “no”. The hero sighs exasperatedly and he rolls his eyes. He marches towards Drakath, “Well, if you won’t volunteer to, I guess I’ll *force* you to!” Drakath doesn’t move, still uninterested, but is taken by surprise when the hero grabs him by his wrist and pulls him off of his throne.

“What are you doing?!” Drakath does his best to squirm out of the hero’s grip, but given how he’s been stripped of all his power, he isn’t able to combat the hero’s immense strength. Drakath *promises* he’s way stronger than this! The hero continues to drag him out, grip tight on Drakath’s wrist, and he doesn’t look back while answering, “I’m getting you out of this trash can!”

“My home is *not* a trash can!”

“It is ‘cause it’s got you in it!”

“Ugh! Let go of me, fool!” Drakath tries pulling out of his grasp again, but to no avail. The hero’s been secretly training in between his hours of rest, after all. The hero marches down the trail with Drakath following, and then he opens his map, looking over the many places he can visit. Using a quick spell, he teleports both him and Drakath out of Crownsreach.

“This is how you intend us - no, *you* enjoy Frostvale?” Drakath stares down at the tiny huts and the moglins running frantically, trying to get as far away from him as possible. The

mayor himself declares everyone retreat into their homes, and soon all the moglin huts' doors are sealed shut. The hero scratches the back of his neck, "Well... not the reaction I expected, either."

"You're an idiot for thinking someone the likes of me *needs* this... *stupid* Frostvale!" Drakath finally pulls his wrist off of the hero, whose grip had weakened awhile ago. Drakath turns around in a fit of irritation, spreading his wings, gathering up a little storm behind each flap.

"WAIT!"

Drakath turns to glare at him. The hero sighs, surprisingly giving up so easily, "Alright, I know you don't like this. I don't either! But for *one* whole day, can we *please* try to get along?"

"Why would you want that?" Drakath scowls.

"Why would I want..." the hero thinks over it, then throws his hands up in exasperation, too tired to explain anything else, "I don't know! But I want everyone to enjoy Frostvale this year, I guess - even you deserve to enjoy it!"

Drakath's expression softens, just a little bit. His wings droop down and the tension leave his shoulders. He still looks angry, but at least he's not so on edge now. The hero sighs, at least succeeding in getting him to stay, "I'll take you somewhere else, alright? Just... let's just try to talk and get along like normal people for once."

"You and I both know we aren't normal, Hero."

"I-I know! Just... let's pretend!" the hero shouts - he doesn't intend to let out such an outburst, but it slipped. His voice reverberates throughout the snowy land, echoing back at him. He realizes how angry he must sound, so he clears his throat, lowering his volume. Drakath is quiet. "Let's just... yeah. You know what I mean already."

Drakath looks up at the empty sky and the snowflakes that float down quietly to the ground. The place is gray, entirely gray and lacking of life. All the leaves have fallen off the trees, and all the little animals that roam Greenguard West have fallen into hibernation. Drakath looks at the hero, "I thought your plan was to make me enjoy Frostvale."

"Yeah, and I *tried* to do it!" the hero still sounds furious, but he does his best to keep it in. "Just found out forcing you doesn't help the situation, I guess."

"Good, you've at least learned that."

The hero glares at him tiredly, but he doesn't say anything. Drakath follows the hero as he strolls down what once was a path all around Greenguard West, drinking in what's left of his surroundings. This time, Drakath brings up the conversation, staring at the hero's back, "I still sense the Chaos in you."

"Sure you do," the hero nods.

"I thought we were trying to talk normally?"

The hero groans, and he slaps his face repeatedly - Drakath raises an eyebrow, but he doesn't question that. The hero shakes his head with a chuckle, Drakath watches how the hero's shoulders move up and down to his laughter, "Yeah. I just - sorry about that. Guess this Chaos is making me less patient than I usually am."

Drakath then notices how the hero's claws haven't turned back into human hands, or how they don't even show signs of doing so. The hero seems to know he's staring, and consciously, he curls his hands into fists, "It just won't go away. It's been months."

"Your body must have already embraced the Chaos in your veins if your recovery is slow."

“Yeah, alright, but I want *fingers* !” the hero raises his hands up as if to inspect them, spreading his claws out, “Not *claws* ! The kids around Battleon are *terrified* of my claws!”

“Have you learned how to bend Chaos?” Drakath asks, now interested in the hero’s condition. The hero nods and he does a demonstration, holding out one of his claws. In his claw forms an unstable ball of Chaos, and it looks to be on the verge of bursting. Then, it reaches its limit, bursting into waves of purple and black. Drakath is by far amused by the show. The hero sighs and puts his hand down, “I don’t know what you mean by bending Chaos, but I can do bursts of them.”

“Chaos is fluid, Hero. I assumed you learned that during your time as a Lord of Chaos.”

“No, I was too busy being evil and insane to learn anything!” the hero shrugs. Then silence falls upon them, and only the crunching of snow underneath their boots can be heard. The hero then turns to him, “Hey. You’re the expert.”

“Do you think the rest of the Chaos inside of me is going to leave?”

Drakath doesn’t know how to answer. Upon entering the Chaos Realm, his own powers were stripped. The hero’s case is different, however - remains of Chaos still course through his veins. Drakath is unsure how that happened, but perhaps it’s just something the Eternal Dragon of Time can do. After all, the dragon is all-powerful.

“Recovery from Chaorruption is almost impossible. You’re the Eternal Dragon, however, so your body will erase it, soon. That is if you decide to erase it.”

“Of course! Why would I *not* try to get it out of me?” the hero groans. Drakath chuckles lowly, “But doesn’t it make you feel powerful?”

The hero rolls his eyes, “You’re doing that villain thing where you tempt me with power, huh?”

“As they do say, keep your friends close and your enemies even closer.”

The hero throws his hands up exasperatedly. “That doesn’t even have a relevance to our topic!”

Drakath chuckles, and for the first time, it’s honest. The smile on his face albeit small isn’t sinister or whatnot. It’s quiet, almost too quiet to be rendered inaudible, but the hero hears it loud and clear in his ears. He turns, “Did you just... laugh? Not in a villainy way?”

“No,” Drakath clears his throat loudly, “You’re hearing things, Hero.”

“Whatever, but I swear I heard that.”

Drakath crosses his arms over his chest stubbornly, testing the hero, “And what of it?”

Then the hero stops in his steps. Drakath pauses as well, raising an eyebrow, awaiting the hero’s answer. The hero shrugs simply, then he turns away from Drakath. His answer is quiet, but it’s honest. “Nothing, really. It just sounds nice when you stop being all emo.”

Drakath scowls at that - *him? Nice?* The hero must be dreaming. It’s too honest a reply for him to simply forget, though. The words, the hero’s tone, the exact way he whispers it into the winter weather won’t leave Drakath’s head as they continue walking aimlessly around the forest.

“Think we should go back?” the hero suggests. It catches Drakath by surprise, because isn’t it the hero who lead them here? Drakath shrugs, much to the hero’s dismay. Then he chuckles, “Just thinking it’s time I stop dragging you around if you aren’t even enjoying it.”

Something in the back of Drakath’s head wants to say that it’s the opposite. However, Drakath swallows that in and buries it farther in the back, and he agrees just like the asshole he is.

“Alright,” the hero sighs, the defeat dripping subtly from it. He unrolls his map, “I’ll give you a free teleport to Crownsreach as some sort of thanks for not taking the chance to kill me.”

Drakath once again sits upon his lonely throne, above the lonely mountains of Crownsreach. He thinks back on the exact words of his most hated person in the world; *‘But I want everyone to enjoy Frostvale this year, I guess - even you deserve to enjoy it!’*

He steps down from his throne, exiting the lonely throne room, past the guards. He pushes the iron doors to his castle open, and he’s greeted by the sun amidst the clouds that weep ice instead of raindrops. Drakath’s frown resides a little bit - perhaps going outside isn’t so bad. His eyes trail down to the snow that layers the ground beneath and notices it’s thinner than usual, noting that Frostvale is coming to a close.

The hero hasn’t come by ever since he dragged the ex-Champion of Chaos out of his hiding. Drakath would admit, he had at least expected the hero to keep up the effort of trying to throw him out of his home at least once a week, but the hero is the hero. The hero has other business to attend to, like training and saving the lives of thousands. Drakath should be the least of his worries.

Drakath turns to close himself off from the rest of Lore once more, but he stops when he hears the crunching of snow. He turns, and there stands the hero with a big box in hand, sealed by a neatly tied white ribbon atop.

The hero beams him a cheeky smile, “Hey.”

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