

aether to spare (Prompt 10 - Avail)

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by [unmended](#)

Summary

the warrior of light negotiates the level 80 living shadow ability after Fray is quiet for a time.
(FFXIVWrite2020)

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

At first you are floating along as if adrift at sea, slowing then to land softly on the fresh snow.

It disorients you, to land so suddenly, and you falter as you catch yourself, taking a couple of weary steps forward.

There's a fog that's settled in around you but you know where you are instantly:

This is Whitebrim... and you've lived this day before, many times.

They are already waiting for you – you can see them in the pavilion staring up at you with cold red eyes. They've no words to speak this time, no grand gestures nor speeches. Just a gauntleted hand reaching out to you, claymore in the other.

Whitebrim falls away, and the black rushes up around you.

You sink, and it feels heavy – *excruciatingly* so. Everything you are is a weight that pulls you down further below.

You try to avail yourself of your armor as you sink into the inky black. The plate grips to you as you fight desperately to untie the clasps. You struggle, but eventually you *give* in and *breathe* in the ink ...

And wake, with a start, in your quiet room in The Forgotten Knight.

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It seems that simply being close to the heart of where this started is enough to bring everything back into sharper focus, and you let out a shaky breath, wiping the cold sweat from your brow.

Sitting on the edge of your bed, you wait for the press of aether that follows with wakefulness, but it does not come. You wait and watch the light leaking in from the window shutter that never quite closes right.

That is what you like about this inn room – why you always ask that Gibrillont has his man hold this room in particular for you – it's just on the good side of shoddy, tucked away in the corner and only a bit unsightly.

It is early. Much earlier than you would like to be awake. You rise and pad over to the desk on bare feet to stare out the window.

Staring through you, eyes golden but for a moment, you can catch a glimpse of them if you watch close enough.

It always hits you harder when you have been away on the Source.

You look away, hit with an unbearable longing that *carves* into you, and the pain is almost immeasurable. Hand over your heart, you sag against the desk and call out to that pain.

Aye, I am still here.

You feel something akin to a hand on your shoulder, a soothing pat on your back.

You're so relieved you could cry, and choke back whatever you were about to say.

How could I leave you now after everything? – I love you most, heart of hearts.

A thrum of aether spills through your chest.

Though, Whitebrim - There are... things I wish I could do differently. Wish I could have shown you, differently.

The nightmare is not about us, you say, but about that fear consuming me whole. You tell Fray this in reassurance, but you're not sure who the reassurance is for, really.

A hum, a sigh.

Since Myste, the two of you have been...distant. You thought Fray buried deep. But this distance doesn't suit you very well.

It's that damned other Shard and you know it. A bitter taste in your mouth. ***I can't reach you there.***

Well that is certainly a change we'll need to make.

I need you. *I need you-*

You take a deep breath in and claw at that pain in your chest again and draw it forth, giving it form from your shared aether and the shadows cast in the dawn light, letting it loose.

Your shadow takes form in front of you.

A neat little trick, certainly. A voice hums from within, but they are pleased, you can tell. You hold the crystal close and bid them stay, for as long as they can, until your strength wanes.

Until you can call them again.

End Notes

i'm love fray and i'm sad

Thank you for reading my extremely self-indulgent ramblings

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