

Impossible Things

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Impossible Things

by [Kalia Prophet](#)

Summary

Some people have inescapable destinies. Anders and Hawke have no idea what plans have been laid for them. There is an intensity between them from the start, but a long road before they become something more. The focus here will be on building the relationships with Hawke and her companions. I chose to handle Anders and Justice more like a dissociative identity or multiple personality disorder to highlight the internal struggle (so Anders and Justice can talk in his head). I'm not much of a writer and I have no beta. Updates may be sporadic depending on time and life. Hawke is my own but the rest of the characters belong to Bioware I just felt the need to play with them.

Healer-Warden

Chapter Notes

Updates and edits thanks to anesor's input.

Darktown, nothing about it appealed to anyone. Dingy, dark, and the stench could choke a dragon. It reminded Hawke that there were worse places than Gamlin's. Most of the poor saps living here were Ferelden refugees or elves. Aveline, Carver, and Varric had accompanied her to find this Healer-Warden. Maybe he would be amiable. Hawke snorted to herself. Who was she kidding; so far nothing has gone smoothly! Carver shot her a look and rolled his eyes.

"Care to share," he asked with some sarcasm woven in that Hawke hadn't failed to miss?

"Nothing, I was just thinking how easy everything has been for us so far," she smirked and shrugged.

Carver just shook his head. Varric shrugged unconcerned he already figured out that she used humor to deflect. Aveline looked at her, but was content to ignore her comment.

After a few scuffles with the criminal element that had taken hold here they found their way to the clinic. Hawke stood staring at the large doors. She could feel his magic already. Cool tendrils of soothing, soft, and healing. She allowed herself to delve more deeply into the sense of his magic she felt the spirit that helped him heal pure idealistic compassion radiated in waves of soothing comfort. Then she felt a righteous sense of justice, a simmering rage, a desperate need to right wrongs. Hawke recoiled from the unexpected feelings that she could feel from beyond the door. Quickly she sorted through the feelings from the people beyond the door.

"The Healer-Warden is complicated," her interest was piqued.

She inhaled bracing for what could come and pushed the door open. Her eyes were drawn to the tall mage with the strawberry blond hair and the blue healing energy that oozed off of him. She watched him intently feeling his magic all around her. She was vaguely aware of the boy being healed and the parents anxiously waiting. The boy sat up and the parents looked so relieved and grateful. The father patted the Healer on the shoulder in thanks as they left. Hawke's eyes hadn't moved still fixated on the healer. He slumped slightly in exhaustion and then suddenly turned to face them taking a defensive posture.

“I have made this place a sanctum of healing and salvation! Why do you threaten it,” The healer’s voice had a duel tone and threatened as he asked?

She gestured for the others to back off. Aveline and Varric obeyed without question backing off to the door. Carver just moved closer and crossed his arms across his chest. Hawke sighed inwardly at her brother’s stubbornness. She quickly glanced around the room making sure they were alone.

“I have no desire to harm a spirit healer,” She spoke in a reassuring tone with a soft smile on her lips. She could feel his eyes on her, scrutiny, caution, and fear radiated off of him although his face remained implacable.

She wore a cotton dark burgundy tunic with deep purple and bright green embroidered trim. Over the tunic she donned perfectly fitted black leather armor adorned with stitched leaves of the same purple and green, her fingerless gloves and thigh high boots matched the leather armor. He could see several knives attached to her boots and belt. Her form fitting trousers were purple, but between the tunic and the boots he couldn’t see much of them. He could see two daggers strapped to her back, but all he could see was the handles.

“What is she playing at? She had brought two warriors and a dwarf with a very large crossbow and she wants me to relax. Not bloody likely,” Anders thought to himself.

Two of them backed off to the door, but the boy seemed to refuse to back off he even stiffened his posture. They weren’t Templars, mercenaries, maybe? Her voice conveyed a practiced calm that meant to sooth. Then her eyes lit up with a bright green glow from the fade as dozen multicolored sparks danced around her like butterflies before they dissipated harmlessly into the air. The boy beside her stiffened even more if that was even possible. Anders couldn’t take his eyes off of her.

“Not a rogue and not a circle mage,” He reassured himself. Her poise, focus, and control were well beyond most mages that he met. Anders knew that she meant to fully get his attention and she succeeded rather spectacularly.

“Tari,” the boy admonished!

Her eyes never left the healer. She watched his reactions play across his face as understanding and then resignation took hold. His amber eyes lingered on her then drifted to Carver and back to her.

“Carver, back off,” she waved him away her tone dismissive and warning at the same time!

“Come on Junior,” Varric beckoned him to the door. Carver reluctantly obeyed. Varric ushered him out of the door. Aveline followed.

“Now, where were we,” Hawke asked in a glib tone? “My name is Lenatari Hawke; my friends just call me Hawke. We came in search of a Grey Warden that might be able to help us with an expedition to the deep roads,” her voice business like and straight forward as she broached the subject.

“Did the Wardens send you to bring me back? I’m not going those bastards made me get rid of my cat! Poor Ser-Pounce-a-lot, he hated the deep roads,” he got agitated as he spoke.

Hawke smiled a crooked smile mirth crawled into her voice, “Wait, you had a cat named Ser-pounce-a-lot in the deep roads”?

“It was a gift, a noble beast, almost got ripped in half by a genlock once. He swatted the bugger on the nose, drew blood too. The blighted Wardens said he made me too soft. I had to give him to a friend in Amaranthine,” The Healer explained.

“So you came to Kirkwall to escape the Wardens,” Hawke asked?

“You say that like it’s a small thing. Yes, I came here because there is no Warden outpost, no darkspawn, and a whole host of refugees to blend in with, and some reasons of my own,” He explained.

“I always heard that joining the Wardens was for life,” Hawke stated.

“That’s only partly true. The hopelessly tainted by the darkspawn and plagued by nightmares of the archdemon parts don’t go away, but it turns out if you hide well you don’t have to wear the uniform or go to the parties,” the Healer’s response seemed more sarcastic than humorous.

Hawke schooled her expression, not sure what to make of the Healer. She watched the emotions play across his face as he thought about the deep roads.

He crossed his arms across his chest. “A favor for a favor, does that sound like a fair deal? You help me, I’ll help you” the Healer suggested.

“Let’s be more specific: I don’t do anything involving children or animals,” She smirked winking at him going for levity.

“I have a warden map of the depths in this area, but there is a price. I came to Kirkwall to aid a friend, a mage, a prisoner in the wretched gallows. The Templars learned of my plans to free him help me bring him safely past them and you shall have your maps,” the Healer offered.

He remained serious in spite of her attempt at humor. The dour subject seemed to preclude wit she almost felt bad for trying.

“Do you think the Templars suspect anything,” Hawke asked with some concern?

“I don’t really know. I have been exchanging notes with Karl through a maidservant in the gallows. Then the letters stopped coming,” He spoke softly.

“He is your friend, how do you wish to proceed,” Hawke asked with a sympathetic tone?

“I sent Karl a message to meet me in the Chantry tonight. Maker willing he’ll be there, alone, but if there are templars with him I swear I’ll free him from them whatever the cost,” the Healer had passion in his voice with this declaration.

“Of course, I can’t imagine having my freedom taken, I would help any mage be free,” she said reassuringly. Inwardly she cringed at the idea of being locked up just because of her magic. The wrongness of it ate at her.

“Thank you, I will meet you outside of the Chantry tonight,” the Healer said with hope in his voice. He looked her over again. The intensity of her piercing green eyes, her pale skin, short white wisps of hair framed her face, and she was petite. He towered over her. He extended his senses and felt no magic from her yet again. He found it unnerving to say the least.

She stared at him and grabbed his hand kissing the back of it as if she were a charming prince. “Ser mage, would you do me the pleasure of giving me a name which I can call you? Lest I should take to calling you ‘Sexy Healer’,” her green eyes lit with mischief as she charmed him.

His face reddened; she had caught him off guard. For a brief moment he remembered who he used to be and a smile slid over his face as he bowed. “My Lady, excuse my rudeness, my name is Anders,” his tone much lighter and more playful this time.

Justice grumbled inside his head, “I do not understand the need for this type of interaction”.

Anders sighed and all of the mirth left him as well as the butterflies in his stomach at his attraction to her. The smile disappeared as his demeanor stiffened. Justice’s admonishment had struck a chord. He wasn’t that man anymore, never again, lost forever to Justice and the cause that drove them both.

“I’ll see you tonight,” Hawke’s voice distracted as her head cocked slightly to the side. She looked him up and down appraising something silently before she turned and left.

“Anders, she can sense us. She is dangerous. I don’t like this woman,” Justice warned.

“Don’t be ridiculous,” Anders reproached.

“She is more powerful than she lets on and I know she saw me,” Justice complained.

Justice replayed the exchange for Anders as he had seen it. He could clearly see her connection to the fade. Then when she used her magic to make the butterfly like sparks, she lit up. The most beautiful white and green aura surrounded her, it almost blinded him.

Anders impetuously blurted, “That has to be the most beautiful thing I have ever seen”.

“I don’t trust her. She hides her magic and herself,” Justice never did pull punches.

“Justice we fight for mages; apostates hide because they can’t be free. She has agreed to help with Karl. I see a potential ally,” Anders reassured the spirit.

“You find her attractive. That is dangerous,” Justice admonished.

Anders let out a long sigh and stared at the door as she left.

Tranquility

Chapter Summary

My take on the Tranquility quest.

Chapter Notes

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

“So,” Varric questioned as she walked out of the clinic?

“He has agreed to help us if we help him,” Hawke stated simply.

“What have you agreed to,” Aveline queried?

“We are going to help him free a mage,” Hawke smiled.

“Tari, why do you always do this? How do you expect to remain free when you draw so much attention to yourself,” Carver began to argue?

“Junior, sometimes I think you really are dense,” Varric chuckled.

“Anyway, lets discuss this in the privacy of Varric’s room,” Hawke hissed. Carver crossed his arms glaring at his sister, but followed anyway.

As soon as they walked into Varric’s room Aveline started in on Hawke, “What exactly have you agreed to do”?

“He will give us maps of the deep roads in this area in exchange for helping extract his friend from the Gallows. His friend has agreed to meet him in the Chantry after dark tonight. All we have to do is escort them out,” Hawke smirked as she explained.

“You think it is going to be that easy,” Carver shook his head?

“Of course I don’t,” she laughed harshly, “nothing is ever that simple. It is the price of doing business with our Healer-Warden and I am willing to pay it”.

“And if I am not,” Carver crossed his arms?

“Then you don’t go on the job. It is that simple,” Hawke’s voice was sharp and her eyes narrowed at her brother as she answered.

“I don’t like it, but I will go with you if you need me,” Fenris offered.

Carver crossed his arms and scowled at being dismissed so easily. “Do you think I would allow my sister to do something so dangerous without me,” Carver interrupted glaring at Fenris?

Hawke rolled her eyes at him but otherwise ignored the outburst.

“Aveline, do you think you can make sure the patrol of guards is elsewhere while we get this done,” Hawke asked?

“I think I can manage that,” Aveline nodded.

“Isabela, you have been quiet,” Hawke’s eyes narrowed at her.

“I’m in,” she nodded.

“Varric, Isabela, Fenris, and I will go then,” Hawke nodded.

Carver protested, “I will go instead of Fenris”!

She looked at Fenris as he shrugged, “If you need me I’ll go but you know how I feel about this kind of thing”.

“Fine, Carver goes and Fenris stays. Are we all clear about what we are doing,” Hawke questioned?

“We dash in and rescue the mage,” Isabela quipped with a smirk on her face as she put her hand on her hip. Hawke nudged her with a smile.

“Be prepared for anything. The job sounds like a trap and I fully expect templars,” she advised.

When they arrived Anders appeared from the shadows. He had been waiting for them. Hawke gave him a slight reassuring smile with a tip of her head in his direction. He briefly eyed her companions; the boy and the dwarf had been with her at the clinic.

“I brought back up just in case. I would not see either of us lose our freedom. I would rather die than be caged or made tranquil,” Hawke whispered to him as she gently touched his arm in reassurance.

Justice flared for a brief moment at the contact. Hawke gave an uneasy smile holding eye contact looking past Anders and directly at Justice.

Justice growled in his head. “Stop it she is helping us,” Anders admonished!

Hawke looked around at everyone, "Are we all clear on what we are to do here"? She got nods of acknowledgement from her crew.

Her intense green eyes settled back on Anders. "We are ready when you are," she said with a nod.

The atmosphere in the Chantry felt wrong as they entered. They found Karl easily enough. The hair on the back of her neck rose as he spoke, his lack of emotion damning. They made him tranquil, this had become a nightmare. Hawke could feel the rage coming to the surface in Anders; his magic began to swirl around him. Templars appeared and that tipped the scales.

"NO", Anders fell to his knees! When he stood he seemed to have cracks in his skin; blue spirit energy seeped from him.

The duel voice made its appearance again, "You will never take another mage as you took him"! His eyes lit up glowing with the same blue energy.

"This certainly tops anything I might have expected," she groused internally.

Magic pooled around him strong, potent, and raw. Spirit fire engulfed his body. Unrestrained indignation turned violent magic on the templars with spectacular results. Hawke wanted to gawk at the display, but dealing with the templars seemed to be the more immediate necessity. She instinctively moved putting herself between the templars and the two other mages allowing the others focus on aggressive actions while she worked on protection and support, it really wasn't her forte. Ducking a templar's sword Hawke threw a barrier over Anders and Karl. She danced around the templar deftly, getting behind him with seemingly inhuman speed. Her daggers were drawn she charged them with lightening before stabbing the templar through a gap in his armor. The charge from her daggers arced across the metal armor as the templar fell to his knees; Hawke slit his throat insuring his death. Another templar locked on to her nicking her upper arm as she dodged using a weak force spell to throw him back landing him on his ass.

"Carver, keep them off of us," Hawke yelled over the fighting!

"Hey, shit face," Carver roared over the clanging of armor getting the rather gullible templar's attention.

As the templar that Hawke knocked down came to his senses, Varric pinned him with a shot allowing Isabela easy access to a deadly backstab. Anders took out three templars with one spell as Hawke renewed the barrier around Karl and him. Hawke scanned quickly for more movement seeing nothing aside from her companions. Anders seemed to return to his normal self.

Her companions exchanged glances. She warned them to silence with a threatening glare. Her little group had the good sense to keep quiet as Karl and Anders spoke sharing an intimate

moment. Karl begged for an end knowing that this reprieve from being tranquil wouldn't last. Anders looked at her and then back to Karl, the weight of their pain crushing her on the inside.

"Anders, you would want him to do the same for you," her eyes were glassy with unshed tears for this man that she didn't know.

Anders stabbed Karl in the chest before he slipped away. Karl smiled a small sad smile looking from Anders to Hawke and back again.

"Thank you, Anders," Karl whispered as he fell to his knees.

Anders caught him before he fell over. Silent tears streamed down Anders' face. Hawke unconsciously put her hand on Anders' shoulder.

Karl's eyes looked back at her softening as his life ebbed away, "So bright". "Intertwined, fate, its going away," he groaned, "stronger together," Karl drew a ragged breath focusing on Anders reaching up to touch his face.

Cradling Karl in his arms on the floor Anders watched his breathing slow, "Anders," Karl's voice so weak Anders barely heard, "trust...her".

Anders sobbed silently holding Karl's limp body.

Hawke steeled herself her voice barely a whisper in Anders' ear, "We need to go before more templars show up".

She squeezed his again shoulder causing him to look back at her. Justice stirred in him but didn't take over. He only showed Anders what she looked like through his eyes. She bled empathy in soothing blues and purples, it seeped out of her and wrapped around him completely enveloping them both. He closed his eyes briefly and nodded as he stood. He left without a word. Hawke's crew left quickly and dispersed having planned to meet back at The Hanged Man in the following afternoon to debrief. No one spoke on the way out even Carver managed to keep his mouth shut.

Carver looked at her as they walked into Gamlen's. Tari had been quiet the whole way home and it wasn't like her. He could see how red her eyes were from the tears that she had shed for a man that she didn't really know. It always baffled him that she could have the strength to do what needed to be done yet manage to carry on with her sensitivity. He felt conflicted. He felt for her, but she risked so much for others that it angered him. He wanted to protect her; she wouldn't have it though. He wanted to hide his sister away so no one could hurt her. He already lost Bethany and as much as Tari got on his nerves he couldn't bear to lose her too.

"Tari, are you going to be okay," Carver asked pulling her into a hug?

She nodded absently into his chest wincing at the cut on her shoulder.

“I need to talk to Anders tomorrow after our debriefing. I am sure he is shaken by this whole ordeal. I advised him to kill his friend,” She trailed off into silence.

Carver flared in anger, “You can’t be serious right now! He is an abomination! I won’t allow it”!

“Carver, please, it isn’t what you think,” she soothed.

His eyes narrowed at her and a scowl remained on his red face as he growled at her, “Don’t even try to tell me I misconstrued that”!

“Andraste’s knickers, Carver, you don’t know everything! You need to trust me on this,” Tari pleaded.

“And you do,” he snorted?

“Spirits are often single minded. You saw a spirit not a demon. Had it been a demon it would have consumed Anders and turned on us,” She explained with a calming whisper.

Her brother huffed to himself looking at her with concern. She had studied such things in great detail; while he was apprehensive he knew better than to argue with her.

“I am exhausted and have no energy to quarrel with you about this. Talk to me in the morning when you are clam and I am rested,” Tari sighed.

He nodded disappearing into his room. She sighed again ducking into her room. She quickly stripped her armor off and collapsed on the bed.

As slumber claimed Hawke she knew that she would need to seek answers in the fade. She shaped the fade in her dreams. She sought the serenity of her pool with the waterfall. Soft glowing green moss clung to the cliff face near the waterfall. Tall lush trees grew around the water’s edge. The trees bloomed with white flowers as did the glowing moss. Violets and bluebells littered the ground under the trees leaving a wash of blue, purple, yellow, and green in their wake. Fireflies danced all around adding to the soft evening glow of the moss. The moon shown full reflected in the water painting the rocks in a silver glow. The surface of the water was dotted with pink and white water lilies.

Hawke smiled to herself as she dipped her toes into the pool. The spray from the waterfall made a cool damp mist around her, but the water temperature matched her body temperature as she continued letting it wrap around her naked form. She relaxed in the water listening to the soft lapping of the water on the shore and the constant swoosh of the waterfall. Wisps began to lilt about playfully skipping along the surface of the water randomly illuminating the space as they flitted about. She smiled watching as they played in the space she created. Hawke’s spirit friends appeared as the tension left her.

She was no longer alone in her place of solace. Her fade companions appeared with her in the water. A spirit of empathy, a spirit of wisdom, and a spirit of protection now sat quiet and calm on the rocks in her pool letting the water swirl around them.

Empathy spoke first, “Feeling their pain touched you deeply”.

Tari nodded and wrapped her arms around herself as if she needed a hug. Empathy moved behind her and rubbed her shoulders.

“Karl wanted to die free I respect that. Anders felt so conflicted. They had been close at some point in their lives,” Tari spoke softly.

“Karl saw your light. He spoke of fate,” Wisdom looked at her pointedly.

“His message was rather cryptic and I believe intended for Anders,” Tari mused.

“Karl saw something deeper, but couldn’t explain,” Wisdom said simply.

“You protected them, Anders, his spirit, and Karl,” Protection reminded her

“I tend to do that. That is why you sought me out when I was so young,” she teased.

“Anders’ spirit is curious about your nature; he studies you,” Empathy revealed.

“The spirit scrutinizes me from behind Anders’ eyes. They share Anders’ flesh. I am unsure how that works,” Tari’s voice low with sadness.

“I have much to consider,” Tari sighed before diving under the water for a swim.

“So our Healer-Warden is an abomination,” Varric led the conversation.

“Not quite,” Hawke told him.

Carver scoffed, “You barely know him Tari; there is no need to make excuses for him”!

Now she was annoyed she had already explained this to Carver last night. Hawke’s lips became a straight line and her arms crossed over her chest. Varric watched Hawke’s body language become rigid as it did when she got angry.

“I will explain to everyone here what I explained to Carver last night. What you saw was a spirit not a demon. Were it a demon it would have consumed Anders and turned on us,” Hawke explained simply.

“Spirit or Demon, I don’t see the difference. The mage is possessed,” Fenris argued!

“Hawke has a point, I have never seen an abomination retain their humanity,” Isabela said.

“Hmmm, it would seem things aren’t as cut and dry as the Chantry has led us to believe,” Varric thought out loud.

“I don’t like it, Hawke,” Aveline stated.

“I respect your opinions, but I still choose to deal with him,” Hawke admitted.

“I will to go and talk to him. No matter how you look at it he lost Karl last night,” Hawke pointed out.

Varric and Isabela nodded in agreement. Aveline looked at Carver and shrugged, knowing that Hawke can take care of herself. Fenris looked aghast.

“You can’t be serious,” Fenris blurted!

“Let me check,” Hawke patted herself down then felt her face not quirking a smile as she did so, “Yes, quite serious, thank you,” she answered with a stern tone.

“Fenris,” She responded mocking his tone and posture!

Varric laughed at her impression of the elf. Fenris continued to scowl knowing that he would not win, but feeling the need to squabble anyway.

“Hawke, I’m serious, I am going with you,” Fenris growled!

“Fenris has a point, Tari,” Carver chimed in.

“Are you gentlemen concerned about Anders, the spirit, or my ability to take care of myself,” Hawke asked flippantly?

They exchanged glances but remained silent.

“I thought so,” Hawke responded with a lopsided smirk. “Is there any other business that we need to discuss now,” Hawke prompted?

She was met with head shakes and shrugs.

“Okay, I’m going. Carver I might be home for dinner or not so don’t worry if I am late,” Hawke told him vaguely as she pulled the hood of her cloak up.

Carver huffed and crossed his arms as she left, “Stubborn mage”.

Chapter End Notes

Hawke is a somniari – dreamer

Hurt, Loss, and Possession

Chapter Summary

Hawke talks to Anders after the incident in the chantry. Things get emotional for both of them.

Chapter Notes

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

Hawke stood outside the clinic doors. The lamps were lit so she knew he would be there. The doors seemed so imposing today. She tentatively placed her hand on the door pausing. Finally she pushed the door open and slipped inside the clinic. She observed Anders gently examine his patient asking questions about the nature of the injury. It would appear the child had a minor sprain from roughhousing with his brothers. Hawke smiled to herself, how many times had she done the same sparing with Carver? The boy eagerly took off as soon as Anders finished.

Anders looked at Hawke and became uneasy. She watched his eyes dart around the room.

“I came alone,” Hawke softly reassured him pulling her hood back.

She could feel the spirit stir under his skin.

“You saw what I did at the Chantry and you still came alone. Are you mad,” Anders asked with his brow furrowed?

“Perhaps, but I have done nothing to provoke a spirit. I am fairly sure that I have nothing to fear from you or your friend,” Hawke looked him in the eye confident in her assertion.

Anders flashed blue, but she wasn’t daunted. He seemed to be struggling internally. His eyes went far away and he stood silent for longer than would be considered normal.

“While she is correct I don’t like her knowing about us,” Justice grumbled.

“Is it so bad? Having one person in my life that has a chance of understanding me, understanding us, it seems too good to be true,” Anders confessed.

“Understanding or not we have a mission and that will always come first. She will distract you,” Justice chided.

Anders refocused on her and his shoulders slumped in resignation.

“Shouldn’t you be accusing me of being an abomination,” Anders questioned in a flat tone?

“If that would really make you happy I could,” Hawke smirked in spite of her serious tone, “but we both know that isn’t true”.

Just like that she accepted him. Anders felt relieved, but wondered about her sanity.

He couldn’t help but smile at her, “You are not what I expected”.

She shrugged and asked, “What exactly were you expecting”?

“A rogue, maybe a mercenary, but I certainly never thought you would be a mage,” He explained.

“I suppose I am a mercenary, but did my being a mage disappoint you,” She asked curiously?

“No, I am intrigued,” Anders confessed.

“May I sit,” Hawke gestured towards a chair near the fire?

Anders nodded his silent consent. Hawke unhooked the clasp on her cloak slipping it off of her shoulders laying it on the back of the chair before she sat. He pulled another chair out from behind a privacy curtain setting it next to the one she claimed. He sank into the chair staring at the fire.

“I don’t want to offer empty platitudes, but every time I think of something to say it sounds hollow. I am truly sorry for your loss and words can never really express that,” she murmured.

He continued to gaze at the fire not acknowledging that she spoke.

“I understand, more than you might know. I know loss and it is worse when you have a hand in it. You always feel guilty...Second guess yourself,” tears escaped her glazed eyes leaving trails down her face as she watched the flames dance.

Anders glanced in her direction then back at the fire, “I killed him. How am I to live with that,” grief laced his voice?

“The Templars killed him when they made him tranquil. You set him free,” Hawke corrected as her voice caught.

Her eyes drifted to Anders his weary face now tear streaked as well. Knowing she did the right thing advising Anders to kill Karl didn’t make her feel less guilty. It was Aveline all over again. Doing the right thing should never hurt this bad.

“He didn’t deserve that; being transferred here, or being made tranquil. Karl was a good man,” Anders wept.

Hawke reached out touching his arm to remind him he is not alone.

“It wasn’t even legal. He passed his harrowing; his skills spoke for themselves,” his voice cracked as another sob escaped.

Anders reached up smearing the tears across his face as he held his head in his hands. She allowed his sorrow and rage to wash over her. Hawke found the depth and intensity of Anders’ emotions somewhat overwhelming. Her chest felt tight and her breath short as she got up and stood in front of him. Anders must have sensed her because his eyes drifted up to her; the anguished look on his face broke something in her. Without a thought Hawke reached out to him offering a hug. He hesitated for a moment and then Anders wrapped his arms around her waist pulling her into his lap on the chair. Her arms encircled him just holding him. Anders rested his forehead on her shoulder; silent tears fell down his face as a glacial chill came to his hands. Anders’ grip on his magic relaxed in grief, causing him to wrap them in a shroud of frosty air. Her empathy created a sympathetic magic, natural, simple, and unconscious, allowing a soothing sapphire aura to envelop them. Feeling Anders’ body tremble with every sob that racked him caused tears to well up in her eyes. Hawke let Anders cry until he couldn’t cry anymore just holding him so he wouldn’t be alone.

He sucked in a shaky breath, “Maker, you must think I am pathetic,” he mumbled into her shoulder.

“Why would I do that,” Hawke’s voice little more than vibrations dancing on his skin?

“I barely know you yet, here I am sobbing like a lost child holding on to you as if my life depended on it,” she didn’t miss the quiver in Anders’ breath as he answered.

Leaning her head close to his ear she whispered, “Mourning someone you loved doesn’t make you pathetic. It makes you human”.

Slowly Anders lifted his head retracting his arms turning to search her face. He found no judgment there only compassion. Glowing green eyes, puffy and red stared back at him, unwavering, not daunted by him.

“Is she real or have I completely lost it,” he wondered?

Compassion’s soft voice answered, “Anders she is an empath it is a rare gift for a mortal, but I can assure you that she is quite real”.

Hawke reached up touching his stubbly face easing a stray tear away with her thumb.

He snapped out of his reverie sliding his hand over Hawke's holding her small hand to his face, "Thank you, I, I am, I don't deserve such kindness".

Hawke quirked an eyebrow at his statement, "Everyone deserves kindness, Anders," her mild rebuke soft on her lips.

"Kindness is difficult to quantify, sometimes kindness is holding someone while they cry and other times it is a merciful end to their life," Wisdom spoke in a measured voice from the fade.

Anders let his hand fall away from hers.

Hawke fidgeted on his leg, "I don't think this chair was designed for two".

"Stand up for a second," Anders suggested.

Hawke stood in front of him wondering what he had in mind. He shifted back in the chair repositioning so his back rested partially on the plush back of the chair and partially leaning on the padded arm. His left leg swung around through the opening below the arm rest and the other remained hanging over the front of the chair touching the floor.

"There, room for both of us," he gestured to the open space between his legs.

Hawke laughed nervously, "Or I can sit in the other chair," she pointed next to him.

"Oh, I suppose you could," he blushed at having not thought of that.

"Okay, I'll try it your way since you went through all of the trouble rearranging your rather long legs on my behalf," Hawke quipped sensing his need for proximity.

She hesitated trying to figure the best way to sit without making things awkward. Settling on sitting with her back against the other padded arm rest facing him, her hip grazed his thigh as her right leg tucked under her left leg. Her left leg hooked over the front of the chair allowing her foot to rest on the floor.

"Are you comfortable with this," her voice pitched in question?

"It works," he replied simply.

"You are Ferelden, how did you know Karl," Hawke's curiosity got the better of her?

Anders' amber eyes went far away as he thought of Karl, "He was an apprentice in the Ferelden circle when I arrived there".

“My father started in the Ferelden circle as well,” Hawke shared as she absently fidgeted with the edge of her glove.

“So your father escaped the circle as well,” Anders extrapolated based on what little she had shared.

“Well, yes, but he ended up here in Kirkwall before that happened,” Hawke divulged, “He met my mother here; when they ran they away together they went to Ferelden”.

“They don’t often transfer mages from Ferelden to Kirkwall, yet we are both connected to mages that were transferred. Why did they send your father,” Anders inquired his interest being piqued?

“Kinloch Hold had a rather large influx of new apprentices so they asked for volunteers to transfer to other circles. Ten of them were divided and sent to Hossberg, Montsimnard, Jainen, and Kirkwall. I believe my father was the only one sent to Kirkwall, but all of that happened before I was born so my knowledge is limited,” she enlightened Anders.

“So how did Karl end up here,” she broached the subject with trepidation in her voice?

Anders expression changed he became more guarded, “Karl and I became close over the years together at Kinloch. When the Templars discovered how close we were they transferred him here under the guise of Kirkwall requiring new talent”.

Hawke mulled his words over in her head searching the subtext, and then it dawned on her what he truly meant.

“You were lovers,” she drew the conclusion with almost imperceptible shock.

Anders winced in fear of her judgment, “Yes,” he managed to whisper.

He dared to meet her eyes and again he found acceptance, not judgment.

“Is that against the rules to have a lover,” she asked more curious than anything else?

“The circle does not tolerate fraternization,” he answered with a dull voice.

“So they expect to lock people up, cut them off from the outside world, and what? They won’t form bonds or attractions,” she shook her head in disbelief.

“It is only an issue if you get caught,” Anders’ tone had a bitter edge to it.

Hawke’s face betrayed her irritation at the notion.

“That is ridiculous,” she spouted!

The brilliant spark in her eyes did not escape his notice. He could feel Justice watching and found himself being thankful for his silence.

“Most people have discreet dalliances. It is usually nothing serious, just physical. Unfortunately I actually cared for Karl. I even stopped trying to escape while we were together,” Anders’ face wore a resigned expression of defeat as he explained.

“Why would caring for someone be unfortunate,” Hawke quirked an eyebrow her voice pitched slightly higher in question?

“It gives templars too much power over you,” his voice seemed so small and sad.

“Oh,” her short response came with a gloomy undertone.

Absentmindedly Anders fingers brushed back stray hairs that had fallen in his face tucking them behind his ear.

“We weren’t together for very long, but he was my first,” Anders revealed keeping his voice as even as he possibly could.

Pensively Hawke sat with Anders searching for answers in her head. It appeared as though she might say something, but her expression changed yet again.

Anders touched her hand bringing her back, “Hey, I didn’t mean to upset you”.

She blew out a breath, blowing her wispy hair out of her face.

“You didn’t, not really,” she stammered, “It’s just, I understand how you feel,” pausing to find the right words, “mages, we never experience normal”.

Anders’ eyes had intensity behind them as he began to stroke the back of her hand with his thumb tracing the leaf design on her glove.

“I had a boyfriend once in Lotharing, Sigmund. We were together for months and he never suspected I was a mage,” Hawke began with a shaky breath.

Her discomfort with the subject showed in her body language. Anders observed the stiffness in her movements along with her avoidance of eye contact.

“I thought he loved me, he told me so, many times,” the detachment in her voice caught him off guard.

“The first time we were together my magic reacted. With no way to hide; I decided to be honest with him,” Hawke continued failing to maintain the distance she tried to create.

“We talked as we both dressed, but,” she paused holding back tears, “his fear of what I could do overrode any feelings he might have had for me”.

Hawke’s glowing green eyes looked far away as she relived the events of her past in her head.

“He tried to convince me to turn myself in. I refused, he tried to grab me and I just reacted; I pushed him out of the hayloft,” the waver in Hawke’s voice caused Anders’ compassion

spirit to watch more intently from the fade.

“His family found him in their barn with his neck broken. Everyone assumed it had been an accident,” Hawke’s voice had an edge to it, “If he had turned me in,” her voice trailed off due to her emotions.

“I couldn’t allow it,” Hawke’s voice choked, “It wasn’t just about me. I had to protect my family. They would have discovered my father and my sister. In that moment I realized I could never be normal”.

Hawke still held Justice’s attention adding more fuel to the fire within Anders.

“I couldn’t afford to pursue relationships as a free mage. I also realized that my parents had one of the most impossible things I would ever see in my life,” Anders observed the heartbreaking resignation that set into her voice.

Anders still held her hand; he pulled her close wrapping his arms around her.

Tears ran down Hawke’s face soaking into Anders’ shirt, “I am a monster,” her soft voice barely audible speaking into his chest.

“You are not a monster,” he reassured her, “How could you possibly think that”?

Hawke pulled back to look him in the eye, “Anders, I killed Sigmund. The act was a selfish one”.

“You acted in self-defense to protect yourself and your family,” Anders voice became stern.

Her eyes remained locked on his, but something about the expression on his face compelled Hawke to remain silent.

“I am so sick of mages apologizing for being mages,” he grumbled, “in both of our situations no one would have died if mages weren’t feared and hunted like fugitives”.

Hawke laughed a bitterly, “Instead of marveling at the impossible things we can do people fear what we may do”.

Anders’ eyes flared blue, the binary voice spoke with sincerity, “This injustice is inflicted on all mages; we must rectify it”.

Hawke sat transfixed appraising Anders, “A Justice Spirit,” she intently searched his eyes, “Your spirit is a Justice Spirit,” Hawke realized whispering her revelation to them.

Chapter End Notes

I really hated that the game only acknowledged Anders' relationship with Karl if Hawke was male.

About A Mage

Chapter Summary

Questions, questions

Chapter Notes

Sorry this took me so long. I kept rewriting bits that I wasn't happy with. Life also got busy for me.

Hawke crept in the door to her uncle's house. She noticed her mother sitting by the fireplace working on a cross stitch. She assumed that Gamlen wasn't home since he hadn't verbally accosted her as soon as she walked in the door. Leandra paused looking up at her daughter. Her mother didn't miss the puffy red eyes or the exhausted slump of Tari's shoulders.

"Tari, are you okay? You look..." Leandra started.

"I'm fine," Lenatari's clipped response did little to assuage her mother.

She turned from her mother attempting to escape to her room.

"Why are you so upset," Leandra pried?

Halting dead in her tracks Tari pivoted towards her mother. Annoyance lit her eyes as she met Leandra's scrutinizing gaze.

"Discussing loss and hurt always puts me in a good mood, what can I say, mother," Hawke snarked at her mother!

Her mother brushed off the attitude, but didn't just leave things alone.

"Carver told me you were visiting a mage that runs a clinic in Dark Town; tell me you didn't go to Dark Town alone," Leandra nagged.

Hawke became more irritated with her mother. She took a deep breath reigning in her aggravation. Being so drained did little to keep her even.

"I did go alone. I really didn't want to agitate someone that is mourning the loss of a friend," Tari's voice had a hollow ring to it.

Leandra noticed how exhausted Tari was, but continued granting her no quarter. Tari always went out of her way to shield her mother from her daily occupational hazards. Gashes and bruises were common place, but she hid them or explained them away with vague excuses that Leandra desperately wanted to believe.

“Dark Town is dangerous, Tari,” her mother grumbled.

“So am I, what’s your point,” Tari shot back with irritation creeping into her voice?

“Tari,” Leandra scolded!

“I can take care of myself. Remember uncle Gamlen sold us into the service of smugglers so we could gain entry to Kirkwall. At this point most of the criminal organizations know who I am and steer clear of me based on my reputation,” she responded sharply, bitterness laced her voice.

“Charming, Tari, it’s a wonder that you aren’t married yet,” Leandra snapped in frustration rising to her daughter’s bait.

Tari crossed her arms and glared at her mother. As much as her mother wanted to pretend they were normal, Tari knew better. While she knew her mother always wanted her to be a proper sort it just never suited her to play along. Bethany had always been the proper lady, never Tari. Inwardly Tari knew she deserved her mother’s rebuke, but she just couldn’t bring herself to care as much as she should. The legacy of Amell nobility ended with her mother’s and uncle’s choices.

“I’m sorry I worried you,” Tari admitted reluctantly.

“I should know better. You are as stubborn as your father was,” Leandra sighed as she thought of the man she loved.

Tari unfastened her daggers sliding them off of her back.

“Tell me about this Healer in Dark Town,” Leandra prompted.

Tari opened the door to her room and laid the daggers on her bed before returning. She was in no mood for her mother’s questions, but tried to play along.

“What would you like to know,” Lenatari’s voice leery and tired?

“What is his name? Where is he from,” Tari’s mother grilled?

“His name is Anders and he is Ferelden,” Tari answered with nothing beyond mere facts.

“What does he look like,” Leandra asked hoping to get her daughter to elaborate on something?

Lenatari reached up and pinched the bridge of her nose, “I really don’t see how this is important”.

Tari began to pace in front of the fire between her mother's chair and the door to the next room. She hated it when her mother pried.

"Humor me," her mother instructed, "you tell me so little of your friends aside from Varric and Aveline".

An exasperated sigh escaped Tari before she continued in an effort to placate her mother, "Fine, he is tall maybe 6' 2" or 6' 3" with a lean build. He has longish strawberry blond hair that he keeps tied back, his skin is fair, eyes are amber, nose pointy, and face a bit scruffy. Will that suffice"?

Leandra chuckled at her daughter's annoyance.

"He sounds like he might be quite attractive," her mother goaded more to gauge the reaction.

"Mother, please," Tari began to rub her temples.

While she did find the other mage attractive Tari certainly was not ready to admit that to her mother or anyone else. She had shrugged off the attraction, attributing it to being happy at having another mage to speak with. When Bethany died she lost more than a sister or a friend she lost a fellow mage. Tari missed that understanding, the ability to speak of magic, and sharing about her spirit friends.

"How did you meet him if he lives in Dark Town," Leandra pressed with a curious note in her voice?

"Varric heard a rumor about a Ferelden Grey Warden and a Grey Warden would be useful for the deep roads expedition," Lenatari disclosed to her mother.

Leandra cringed inwardly. She had hoped that Lenatari would give up on this deep roads expedition. The deep roads meant darkspawn and she had already lost Bethany to them. Logically a Grey Warden would help their odds, but Leandra still hated the idea.

"So Varric put you up to this," her mother scowled?

Tari shrugged turning back towards her mother, "Varric had a rumor to go on, but nothing more. I went to Lirene; she knows what is going on with the Ferelden refugees".

Her mother nodded as she listened.

"Lirene regards Anders highly enough that she was tight lipped, even with me," Lenatari enlightened her mother.

“Why would she stick her neck out for a mage,” Leandra asked being unaccustomed to those willing to keep a mage’s secret?

Lenatari continued to explain, “Anders is a spirit healer and he has been treating the refugees free of charge. As a free mage he puts himself at great risk to help them”.

“So you found another mage and he is rather talented. Your father told me of mages in the circle; most lacked the temperament or talent required to be a spirit healer,” her mother mused out loud.

“He is exceptionally talented. Anders is one of those mages Ad’da would have described as having limitless potential as opposed to the poor wretches that get thrown in the circle that can barely light a fire,” Tari explained.

“What’s Carver’s problem with him,” Leandra needled?

Lenatari rolled her eyes and crossed her arms. Her demeanor hardened, Carver made her grieve Bethany’s loss more; she had always been a buffer between them.

“I really don’t want to talk about Carver’s problem with Anders right now,” Tari tried to dodge.

Her mother was not about to let her off so easily, “Does he have good reason”?

“Does he ever? When Carver found out Anders was a mage the first thing he did was grumble about ‘Another delicate mage flower’,” she revealed to her mother.

“I have to admit I often do not understand his attitude about mages given our family,” Tari’s mother said with sadness.

“Anders is a good man that has been through a lot, just as we have been through many trials to get here. I don’t know him well enough to say more and neither does Carver,” Tari defended the Healer cryptically to her mother.

A couple of days had passed since Hawke materialized into Anders’ life. She hadn’t come back to the clinic since talking to him about Karl. Part of him felt disappointed and another part relieved. Anders couldn’t get her out of his head, another free mage living in possibly the least mage friendly city in all of Thedas. He had been acutely aware of Justice’s scrutiny of Hawke. Justice being a spirit had a completely different perspective; he peered into souls, viewed intentions, and sensed moral fiber in ways that Anders couldn’t. Either way Justice was not inclined to share his thoughts on Hawke with Anders beyond his disliking the very idea of attraction.

Having finished cataloging ingredients for salves, teas, and medicines Anders scratched a list out on the paper. He shuffled through some drawers and cabinets taking note of food stocks scrawling a few more things onto the list. Now for the tough part, coin, he cracked the lid on

the donation box. There were a few trinkets, a child's toy, three silver coins, and two copper coins in the box. He might have to make time to go to the coast for herbs even if any shops had what he needed he wouldn't have the coin to purchase anything. Anders slid the list and coin into his pouch. He extinguished the lamps outside and locked up heading to Lirene's. At the very least he could get food from her she always made sure he ate.

As usual Lirene seemed overrun with refugees. Looking up she saw Anders and smiled at him. Waving her assistant over she gave instructions having Lilly take over for her.

Lirene made her way over to Anders, "What can I do for you," she continued to smile at him?

He sheepishly looked at his feet, "I need to get some basic food items. I have a little coin".

"You know that I will feed you free of charge. You take care of these people with little care for yourself; it is the least I can do," Lirene's voice sounded so grateful.

"Thank you," he responded softly.

"Calli, gather five days worth of food from the pantry for Anders," Lirene ordered.

"Yes, serah," Calli called out as she scurried off.

Lirene watched Lilly guide the new Ferelden family into the next room then turned her attention back to Anders.

"Is there anything else I can do for you," Lirene asked Anders?

"Well, actually, I was wondering about Hawke, do you know anything about her" Anders' tone hushed and unsure?

Lirene gazed at him appraising the nature of the question. The Healer seemed apprehensive.

"She's been through it like many of the Ferelden refugees. Her uncle sold her and her brother into the service of a smuggler to pay their entry into the city. Her uncle and mother used to be nobility here in Kirkwall, but when her grandparents died her uncle pissed away all of the money. They live at her uncle's place in low town. Honestly her uncle is a piece of nug shit," Lirene revealed.

Justice listened from the recesses of Anders' mind annoyed, but Anders could not determine the nature of his irritation. It could be his interest in Hawke or the uncle's behavior. Justice said nothing.

"Do you know anything else about her," Anders probed?

Two small children ran between them chasing each other causing Anders to step back slightly to avoid them. Lirene paused at the interruption grabbing the children by the backs of their tunics as they passed.

She bent down to their level to scold them, “Please don’t run in here it is too crowded. If you like, Calli can take you outside to run when she gets back”.

She looked at Anders apologetically before she continued.

“She finished paying her debt to the smuggler a few months ago and does freelance jobs now. Hawke supports her family with her income. I know she doesn’t have much, but she has always donated here to help the other refugees. I’ll take it she found you,” Lirene asked him?

“Uh, yes,” Anders answered rather ineloquently.

He fussed with the edge of his coat nervously then pretended to smooth out a wrinkle in an effort to cover the anxious behavior.

“Hawke came here a few days ago asking about a Ferelden Warden. I was reluctant to tell her of you, but one of the refugees spoke up. They know she helps out,” Lirene continued, “The following day she stopped by and asked some more questions about you. She told me she would pay for any food or supplies you need. I told her that we already feed you, but she insisted”.

Anders just stood astounded and a bit confused. Unaccustomed to kindness, Anders was at a loss. A mage just like him, she has just as much to lose if not more given her family, but here she sticks her neck out to help people anyway. Whatever forge she was cast from they must have broke the mold after her creation.

“Do you know where I can find her,” his query fell from his lips before he could catch himself?

“Her friend Varric, the dwarf, has a room at the Hanged Man. I know she spends time there,” Lirene told him.

Anders nodded, “Thank you, Lirene. You have been generous”.

Just then Calli returned handing him a basket with a cloth draped over it.

“Here you go serah,” Calli blurted before she darted off.

Lirene smiled at the Healer again, “Let me know if you need anything else. If I see Hawke I’ll send her to the clinic to check up on you”.

He nodded absently as he walked away.

Upon entering the clinic Anders put the basket on the table pulling the cloth off, sorting through the food so he could put things away. Dried meats, cheeses, nuts, dried fruit, bread, and a fruit jelly were among the food this time. At the bottom of the basket were two bundles of herbs elfroot and embrium. The herbs were dried with twine tied neatly holding them

together. The elfroot had a piece of paper wrapped around it under the twine. Anders slid the paper out from under the tie with care examining it. A note waited for him on the other side.

Anders,

I thought these might be useful to you as a healer. Embrium and elfroot are common but always necessary. I hope this is helpful.

--Hawke

A warmth radiated from within Anders as a genuine smile lit his face. He could use a friend and another mage would be far safer than anyone else in Kirkwall. Being a free mage was lonely; more so when you have a spirit wrapped up in you. No one understood mages nor did they have any reason to try.

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