

suffers an addled-brain or is overcome by her own ego. Either shall be her downfall.”

Many heads lightly bobbed in agreement.

Oran'dten asked, “How can she breathe knowing what she has done?” The attendant clutched the orange fabric at her stomach to think of it.

“Maybe she needs a little help,” Cirelle said, a faint smile upon her lips. The group went silent at the implication, but more than one pair of eyes revealed their agreement.

Garamunt said, “She presumes to be queen of this castle. Perhaps she feels herself master of all worlds?”

Cirelle sniffed. “She nearly destroyed them all, so she deserves to rule them? She cannot even control her own tongue.”

“She risks our realms, throws mud in the face of our traditions ...” Haaeth shook her head.

“Then *he* coddles her like a dozen-year-old princess raised to marriage.” Cirelle agreed. “She does not deserve this. She *will* get what she deserves.”

Garamunt smirked. “Did you hear? She makes demands of the C'rezhe himself. If I were to act that way to my superiors ...”

“He must be planning to use her as a pawn.” Ewarch rarely spoke, but his white hair and gray eyes matched his wisdom better than his age.

Haaeth said, “I wonder how useful she would be if she were kaeter'lyaar.”

The whole group went silent at the thought; more than one face greened at the mention. The kidnapping, rape, and forced marriage of unmarried aelves was a barbaric practice long abandoned among their own kind; it occurred during the early years of the Game among those with high ambition but little creativity. Though the Queen rarely sullied her hands with daily affairs, she put an immediate end to it once news reached her ears. They would not resort to behaving like *humans*.

Cirelle gestured to close the discussion and dismiss such thoughts. *Not even the Seal Breaker deserves that*, she expressed in sign.