

# **HARMONY IN AZEROTH**

Part Two of the Warcraft in Equestria trilogy

by

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## 1. GETTING SOME ANSWERS

The moon shone over the town as the stench of death hung in the air. On the ground, several ponies were gathering the corpses of fallen friends, relatives and neighbours.

But while the residents worked, six ponies stood by, keeping a vigilant watch on their fellows. It was thanks to them that the attack was thwarted, and the perpetrators defeated.

"Do you think those monsters will be back?" asked Fluttershy. She looked around as she spoke, as if expecting something to leap at her from the shadows.

"I doubt they'd come back, Fluttershy." replied Rainbow Dash. "Not after the beating we gave them."

Fluttershy seemed to relax at this, but she continued looking behind her. Meanwhile, Rarity took a handkerchief out of her saddlebag and wrapped it around her nose.

"Oh, dear me!" she whined. "The stench is just ghastly!" She paused for a moment. "But that doesn't mean I don't care about what those beastly creatures did to our poor little town."

"You don't have to explain yourself to us." said Twilight. She sighed. "I just hope Princess Celestia is all right."

Rarity hugged her friend. "She'll be fine, darling. She's a tough one, is Princess Celestia."

"But you saw what those ... ANIMALS ... did to her!" cried Twilight. "Her magic was useless against them!"

Rarity nodded. "Yes. I can't explain that." She said. "But thankfully the Elements of Harmony were able to defeat them."

"What I want to know is..." said Rainbow, "... what the hay happened to their bodies? They just ... vanished!"

"I can't explain that either, Rainbow Dash." Rarity sighed. "There are a lot of questions needing answered."

They stood in silence as the clean up continued around them. Across the square, ponies were laying flowers at a memorial stone. Ponies would come and read the inscription across the top, before dissolving into tears.

*In Loving Memory  
of the 147 ponies who perished  
in a sudden and unprovoked attack  
upon Ponyville on August 9th 2012.*

The inscription was simple, and appeared to have been hastily chiselled into the smooth stone.

Twilight sighed and turned away from the scene before her eyes. She looked towards the hospital, which was swarming with the Princess' Royal Guards.

"Rarity's right, Twilight." said Applejack, wrapping a hoof around her. "The Princess will get through this."

Twilight pulled away. "I need to see her." she said, and ran towards the hospital. The others quickly followed.

The guards heard the fast approaching hooves and immediately went into a defensive formation, creating a wall of spears.

"I am Twilight Sparkle, and I demand to see the Princess!" yelled Twilight as she skidded to a halt in front of the building. The guards lowered their weapons and one of them approached her.

"I'm sorry, but nopony is allowed to see the Princess." He took off his helmet. "Not even you, Twiley."

"Shining Armour!" Twilight hugged her brother. "Please, I need to speak to her."

Shining Armour sighed. "OK, Twiley. Since you and your friends defeated those ... things ... I'll see what I can do. Wait here." He put his helmet back on and entered the hospital.

"If anypony can get us in there, it's him." Twilight smiled.

"That may be true, Twilight." said Applejack. "But who's to say the Princess is even awake? You saw how much blood she lost when that bear-like thing bit her."

Twilight nodded slightly. "The doctors will have done their job by now." She said hopefully. "Regardless of how she is, I just want to see her."

The hospital door opened and Shining Armour walked out. He approached Twilight and the others.

"The Princess is awake." he said, prompting a squeal of delight from the six friends. "However, she only wants to see you, Twilight." He turned to the others. "I'm sure you understand."

"Oh, of course we do, Shining." Replied Rarity.

"Go on then, Twi. Git in there." Said Applejack, nudging Twilight with her hoof.

"Follow me, Twiley." Shining Armour said. "But I must warn that you won't like what you're about to see."

"I'll be the judge of that." Twilight replied, as she followed her brother through the guards and into the hospital.

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The hoofsteps of the two ponies was the only sound that could be heard in the empty hall. Guards saluted Shining Armour as he and Twilight passed by, a look of worry on the purple mare's face.

They came to a room at the far end of the hall. Shining Armour went to open it, before he stopped and looked at his sister.

"Remember, Twilight. The Princess will be in a bad way. Prepare yourself." he said matter of factly.

Twilight nodded. Using his magic, Shining Armour opened the door and the two ponies entered. A curtain in the middle of the room hid the bed, and the pony who occupied it.

"Your Highness," he said, "here is my sister, Twilight Sparkle. As per your instructions, she is here alone."

"Thank you, Shining Armour." replied Princess Celestia, her voice raspy and slow. "Please wait outside, I would like to speak to Twilight in private."

"As you command, Princess." Shining bowed and put a hoof on Twilight's shoulder. "Remember, be prepared." he whispered, and left the room, closing the door behind him.

"Princess?" Twilight asked warily.

"Yes, Twilight?" replied Celestia, her form still hidden by the curtain.

"I'm sorry for disturbing you like this." Twilight said, her voice quivering with emotion. "But I just wanted to see you."

A white glow surrounded the curtain, which then shot over to the side of the room, causing Twilight to gasp and duck.

"I wanted to see you too, Twilight." Said Celestia. "But not like this." her voice broke as she spoke.

Twilight looked up from the floor and gasped. Celestia's mane lay limp against her sides, her coat was splattered with blood, and she was wrapped in a silver blanket. Her horn had been re-attached, evidenced by the bandages around her head.

"I-I-I don't know what to say." stammered Twilight, as she nervously approached the broken Princess.

"You don't have to say anything, my dear student." replied Celestia, the faintest trace of a smile appearing on her face. "My wounds are grave, but they will heal."

Twilight smiled. "That's good to know." She said. "But how did you end up like this? I thought you were immortal."

"I don't know what kind of magic that creature was using," Celestia said, "but all I do know is that I have never come across anything like it before. That is why my attack failed."

Twilight's smile faded.

"I am normally able to absorb magic, and direct it back against my foe," Celestia continued, "but this was different. The creature was using the power of winter itself to assault me. Not even a unicorn is capable of that." She lowered her head, fighting the urge to weep.

"So that's why you were damaged." Twilight mused.

"Yes."

"But what about the other one? The one that turned into a bear?"

"Shape-shifting is also something ponies cannot comprehend." Celestia replied. "The ancient Canterlot texts are full of stories about ponies who tried, only to die in the most horrific ways."

Twilight grimaced.

"Whatever those creatures were, they came from a world where the laws of magic are very different to those here in Equestria." Celestia said flatly.

"What I still don't understand is how your attacks failed, yet the Elements of Harmony worked." Twilight said, scratching her head.

"Since I am in control of the sun, my magic is based on that. I can only assume that a similar school of magic exists in their world."

"I get it now." Said Twilight. "They were able to defend themselves against your magic because they've experienced something similar, but the Elements of Harmony worked because nothing like them exists where they come from."

"That's the general theory, anyway." Celestia smiled.

"But what if they come back?" Twilight said bluntly. "Now that they've seen what the Elements can do, they'll be able to defend themselves against them."

Celestia sighed and looked at the ceiling.

"I was hoping you wouldn't ask me that." she said glumly.

"Why?" Twilight was confused.

"Prior to their arrival, I sensed a strange magical anomaly coming from the Everfree Forest. I believe that's where they arrived. Therefore, it would be fairly simple for somepony to go back there and trace the origin of the spell they used to get here, and then duplicate it."

Twilight gasped. "What are you saying, Princess?"

Celestia looked Twilight in the eyes.

"I'm saying that we can follow them back to their world."

Twilight's face fell.

"But why? Why would you want to go to their world?!" she shouted.

"Because," Celestia said calmly, "if we went to their world, we could experience for ourselves the magic they use, and thus..."

Twilight interrupted her. "... work on a way to defend ourselves against it."

"Exactly." Celestia smiled. "However, I am in no condition to travel." She slowly stood up, her legs trembling under the strain. "Twilight, I must ask you and your friends to do this. For me. For Equestria."

Twilight straightened herself up and looked Celestia in the eyes.

"Tell me where they arrived, and we'll do the rest." she said.

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Twilight slowly exited the hospital, a nervous expression on her face. Her five friends were lying in a patch of shade across the road. As Twilight approached, Pinkie Pie saw her coming.

"Look! Twilight's back!" she said excitedly.

"Ugh, finally!" groaned Rainbow Dash.

Twilight approached her friends. They saw the look on her face and developed nervous looks of their own.

"What? What is it?" asked Applejack. "The Princess, she ain't d-"

"No, Princess Celestia is fine." Twilight said, cutting her off. "I need to talk to you all in private. Let's go back to the library."

The others nodded.

"What's going on, darling?" asked Rarity.

Twilight paused before letting out a deep sigh.

"Princess Celestia has a mission for us." she said.

"Sounds good to me." said Rainbow Dash.

Twilight laughed nervously.

"You probably won't be saying that once I've told you what the Princess wants us to do..."

## 2. A WHOLE NEW WORLD

"We have to do WHAT?!" the group of friends exclaimed in unison.

"You heard me." Twilight said sternly. "Princess Celestia wants to go to the world those creatures came from and learn about the magic they use, so we can defend ourselves against it."

"T-th-that sounds awfully dangerous." Fluttershy squeaked.

"No, it sounds suicidal!" Rainbow Dash retorted.

"I have to agree with Rainbow, I'm afraid." Rarity seemed rather shocked at saying those words.

"Yeah, me too, Twi." Said Applejack.

Twilight sighed. "Listen, girls. We are the ONLY ones who are capable of doing this. If we don't, those creatures will come back and attack us again." She slammed her hoof on the table. "And I will NOT be held responsible for the deaths of more innocent ponies! If we can learn their magic, we can save hundreds, if not thousands, of lives!"

The other five looked at Twilight in silence, shocked by her sudden and passionate outburst. Eventually, Applejack went over and joined Twilight.

"She's right, girls. We gotta do this! If those creatures do come back, I don't rightly fancy the idea of them attackin' mah family!"

Rainbow Dash soon joined Applejack. "Yeah, you're right Twilight. It wouldn't be very loyal of me if I just let those things walk all over us, right?"

Rarity joined Rainbow Dash. "I agree. What was I thinking? I couldn't bear the thought of any more harm coming to Ponyville."

Pinkie Pie soon joined Rarity. "No more Ponyville would mean no more parties! And that's no fun at all!"

The five friends looked across the room at Fluttershy, who was hiding behind her hooves.

"Come on, Fluttershy." said Rainbow Dash. "They might attack the animals the next time they come here."

Fluttershy's eyes flashed with anger and she joined her friends. "Not if I can help it!" she said loudly.

"OK, girls. There's no going back now." said Twilight, holding out a hoof. "We're in this together. For the Princess."

The other five each placed a hoof with Twilights.

"FOR THE PRINCESS!" they chorused.

"Better go and pack your saddlebags, girls." Said Twilight. "We're leaving in fifteen minutes."

Quick as a flash, the five ponies vacated the library, leaving Twilight to pack her bags. She looked at Spike, who was fast asleep in his basket, and smiled.

"At least you get to stay here." She said quietly.

She sighed softly.

"You're the lucky one."

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Several hours later, the six friends stood in a forest clearing.

"Is this the place?" asked Rainbow Dash.

Twilight took a map from her saddlebag and looked at it. She then looked at her surroundings before folding the map up and putting it gently back in its place.

"It is." She said with a smile.

"Finally." Rainbow Dash muttered.

Twilight's horn began to glow. "Stand back, girls." She said. Closing her eyes, she focused all her energy into the spell manifesting itself within her. A sudden flash sent her friends spilling onto the ground. They watched in shocked silence as a shimmering circle of light appeared in front of them.

Twilight's horn stopped glowing and she opened her eyes. She looked at the object in front of her.

"It's a portal." She said quietly.

The six of them gathered around it. Through the other side, they could see what looked like a wall. Behind it, buildings dominated the skyline.

"It's a city of some kind." said Twilight. "We'll start there."

She sighed. "Is everypony ready?"

The others nodded.

"OK then, follow me." Summoning all her courage, Twilight stepped through the portal, followed closely by the others.

The six of them found themselves in an arid landscape. They looked around at their surroundings in silence.

Behind them, the portal closed with a resounding *pop*.

"OK girls." Twilight gulped. "We're on our own."

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In another part of the landscape, two figures sat by a pool of water. One was female and the other was male.

"You're not still pissed at me over that pony thing, are you?" said the female.

The male snorted.

"Oh come on, Zorann!" the female yelled. "I paid your repair bills, I enchanted your equipment for free and I made you those new bags. What more do I have to do?!"

Zorann raised his hand, as if to silence her.

"I can't believe you lied about not having any runes." He said bitterly. "If you had just made a damn portal when I asked..."

"... we wouldn't have died." Interrupted the female. "Yes, I know. You've been telling me that every day for the last week. Hindsight is a wonderful thing, I see that now."

"Whatever, Luxxoria." Zorann sighed. "Come on, we've got to report for guard duty."

"Pfft. Guarding Razor Hill. What fun." Luxxoria said sarcastically. "Neither of us is a damn Orc, so remind me again why we have to do this?"

"Because your constant desire to improve your spells nearly killed the Warchief, you brain-dead elf!" Zorann roared.

"How was I supposed to know that my Improved Frostfire had more Fire than Frost?" Luxxoria sighed. "Besides, what was Garrosh even DOING in that outhouse?"

Zorann rolled his eyes and summoned his Mechano-Hog. Luxxoria jumped into the sidecar and the two of them set off for Razor Hill, an awkward silence between them.

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Twilight looked around at the seemingly unchanging landscape. All she could see was red sand and the occasional cactus.

"I think we're lost, girls." Came Rainbow Dash's voice. "In fact, I think we're just going around in circles."

Applejack sighed. "Instead of complainin', why don't y'all fly on up and see if you can find that city we're supposed to be in?"

Rainbow Dash sighed. "Fine." She said exasperatedly. She jumped up into the air and tried opening her wings, only to fall flat on her face with a dull thud.

"Ow!" she groaned. The others stopped walking and looked at her.

"Uhhh, Rainbow? Y'all OK?" asked Applejack, stifling a giggle.

Rainbow Dash glared at her. "I'm fine." She snapped, before trying to open her wings again, to no avail.

"What the hay? I can't fly!" she said, unable to hide her panic.

"Interesting." Said Twilight. "I need to document this." She opened her saddlebag and took out a notebook and quill.

"Document?" said Rainbow Dash, her voice raising. "You need to HELP ME!" Tears formed in her eyes.

Twilight didn't reply as she scribbled some notes into her journal.

## *Expedition to Unknown World*

### *DAY ONE*

*We arrived safely in the middle of what appears to be a desert. There is very little life around us. We saw a city through the portal, but are yet to locate it.*

*Rainbow Dash has noticed she is unable to use her wings. I assume it might have something to do with the high temperatures, combined with the dust storms we see every now and again.*

*If the rest of this world looks like this, I can see why those creatures wanted to go elsewhere.*

Twilight closed the journal and put the articles back in her saddlebag. She turned to Rainbow.

"It could be the heat and dust that's causing it, Rainbow. Remember, this world is very different from Equestria."

Rainbow Dash opened her mouth to speak, but was interrupted by the sounds of chattering.

Fluttershy's eyes widened with glee. "That sounds like a squirrel!" she said happily. "Wait here and I'll ask him for directions."

The others nodded as Fluttershy disappeared behind the cactus. They sat down, ready to wait when they heard a high-pitched scream. They shot upright to see Fluttershy running towards them.

Closely followed by the giant scorpion.

"WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?" Applejack shouted as the scorpion approached them.

"Who cares?" yelled Twilight. "RUN!"

The six friends ran away as fast as their hooves would carry them, the scorpion close behind, chattering angrily. Running behind a rock, Rarity saw something in the distance.

"I can see a cave!" she yelled.

"Everypony get inside, now!" Twilight ordered. The six of them dove into the cave as the scorpion appeared from behind the rock. Except now it wasn't alone. Three more scorpions had joined it.

"Oh, ponyfeathers." Applejack muttered.

"Shh! Be quiet, or they'll find us!" hissed Rainbow Dash.

The four scorpions began looking around the area, hissing and chattering to each other.

"They're ... communicating?" whispered Twilight. She quietly brought out her notebook and quill and began writing down what she was seeing.

One of the scorpions approached the cave and peered inside. Its razor sharp tail poised threateningly above it. Suddenly, it hissed and started jabbing randomly.

Fluttershy whimpered. The scorpion let out a shrill cry, attracting the attention of the others. Soon, all four were outside the cave, stabbing randomly into the darkness.

"This is it, girls." whispered Rarity. "I'm sorry we failed the Princess so soon."

The six friends came together in a group hug as the scorpions entered the cave. Closing their eyes, each pony prepared to accept their fate.

Suddenly, a roar echoed through the cave. The six opened their eyes in panic and looked around.

"Oh no, this cave has a bear in it!" Fluttershy cried.

Twilight poked her head out and looked towards the entrance. As she watched, she saw the scorpions turn around.

"Girls, look!" she said. "Someone is here to rescue us!"

The other five peered out in time to see two of the scorpions impaled by a sharp piece of ice. The other two hissed, as a brown cat leapt on them, swiping them with its claws. With a final shrill cry, the two scorpions fell to the ground.

"The scorpions are dead, girls." Twilight said with a sigh of relief. "We're going to be OK."

"Hello?" A voice called. "Is anyone in there?"

The six friends started walking towards the cave entrance, stepping over the corpses of the four scorpions.

"Thank you ever so much for rescuing us." Rarity called. "Those beastly creatures would have had us for dinner had you not come along and ... er, dealt with them."

All six ponies stepped out of the cave. In front of them, they could see their rescuers, who stood with their backs to them.

"Glad to see you're all OK." said a female voice. "You're lucky to be alive. Durotar scorpions never give up on chasing their prey."

Twilight smiled. "We would very much like to look upon the face of our saviours, so that we may thank you properly."

"Sounds fair." said a male voice.

The six friends fixed smiles upon their faces.

Smiles which quickly faded into anger as the two figures turned to face them.

### **3. MEETING THE HORDE**

"MURDERERS!" Twilight screamed. "OF ALL THE PEOPLE WHO COULD SAVE US, IT HAD TO BE YOU TWO!"

"And I'm beginning to wish we hadn't." Zorann snarled. "Let's just kill them. They're not wearing their fancy Elements, so this'll be an ideal chance at some revenge." He grinned wickedly.

Twilight gasped. "The elements ... I forgot to ask the Princess if we should bring them."

"Which brings me to the question, how did you get here?" Luxxoria asked with a raised eyebrow.

"We found the spot where you came into Equestria and I cast a spell which duplicated the one you used to get there. So we were able to use your portal to come here."

The two Horde exchanged a curious glance.

"Oh, I see." Zorann said. "You're here to spy on us."

"What? No!" Twilight protested. "We're here to study your use of magic, so that we can defend ourselves against it should you decide to come back!"

"Oh, don't worry. We're not going back." Luxxoria sighed.

"Well that's good." Said Twilight. "But another of your kind might come along. And I want to make sure we're ready for you."

Zorann laughed. "It's a good cover story, I'll give you that."

"DANGIT, WE AIN'T NO SPIES!" yelled Applejack.

"Enough of this." Zorann snarled, turning to Luxxoria. "Hold them."

Luxxoria nodded, and snapped her fingers.

"Hold us?" Asked Rarity. "What on Earth are you ta-"

Her words were cut off as she was suddenly frozen in a block of ice, much to the shock of the others.

"Rarity!" they shouted. They stood their ground as Luxxoria walked towards them.

"Looks like we're going to have to defend ourselves, girls!" said Rainbow Dash. "As soon as she gets close, let her have it!"

Twilight started charging a spell, aiming it towards Luxxoria. With a snap of her fingers, she was suddenly in the middle of the five friends. They gasped.

"FROST NOVA!" yelled Luxxoria. She grinned as a blast of ice wrapped itself around each pony's hooves.

"What in tarnation?" Applejack spluttered. "Ah can't move!"

"Me neither!" Fluttershy whimpered.

"Release us this instant!" Twilight demanded.

Luxxoria sighed. "Oh, do shut up." She said, as she snapped her fingers again, and yelled "RING OF FROST!"

A blue circle appeared around the six ponies. Each of them felt the air around them getting colder. As they struggled to free their hooves, a crackling noise froze them all solid.

"Nicely done." Zorann said, as he clapped his hands. "You stay here and keep an eye on them. I'm going to Razor Hill for a cart."

Luxxoria nodded. "What are we going to do with them?" she asked.

Zorann laughed.

"We're taking them to the Warchief."

\*\*\*

The room slowly came into focus as the six ponies rubbed their heads and groaned. Upon seeing each other, they tried a group hug, only to find that they were chained together.

"Where are we?" asked Fluttershy nervously. "What is this place?"

"You are in Orgrimmar, capital city of the Horde." replied a deep voice. "And you will remain here while I figure out what to do with all of you."

"Who's there?" Twilight demanded. "Show yourself!"

Heavy footsteps resonated throughout the room as a figure emerged from the shadows, his bulging muscles and brown skin forcing a small gasp from the six friends.

"I am Garrosh Hellscream." He said, "Warchief of the Horde." He cast a disapproving gaze upon his prisoners. "Now, tell me who you are, and why you were trespassing in my lands." He sat down on a large chair that closely resembled a throne.

"Two of your Horde came to our land a few days ago." Twilight said bitterly. "They attacked a defenceless town, and killed several of our friends and neighbours."

Garrosh waved his hand. "I already know of this attack. Now tell me why you are in my lands." He gazed at the six ponies.

"We are here to observe the ways your kind uses magic, so that we can learn how to defend ourselves against it." said Twilight nervously, avoiding Garrosh's eyes.

"Do not fret, little one." Said Garrosh dismissively. "The Horde may be seen as evil, but even we know the difference between innocents and enemies."

Twilight smiled and Garrosh clapped his hands together. "BRING IN THE COWARDS!" he roared.

An orc entered the room, pulling on another chain. Attached to it, Twilight recognised Zorann and Luxxoria.

With a grunt, the orc pulling the chain threw them to the floor in front of Garrosh.

"Warchief, I-" Luxxoria began.

"SILENCE!" Garrosh roared. "YOU WILL SPEAK ONLY WHEN I SAY SO, YOU DESPICABLE MONGREL!"

Luxxoria flinched and bowed her head.

"You two have brought shame upon the Horde with your actions." Garrosh grunted. "Just be thankful you're not going to end up like Overlord Krom'gar." Garrosh spat at the mention of the name.

Luxxoria and Zorann exchanged a worried glance.

"Instead of killing you, I will instead punish you in a way you never thought possible." A grin spread across Garrosh's face and he snapped his fingers.

With a click, the chains binding Twilight and her friends were removed, and they stood up, nursing their aching hooves.

"You two are going to teach these ponies what they want to know." Garrosh stated. "And I mean EVERYTHING!"

Zorann, Luxxoria and the six friends gasped in shock.

"Warchief, with all due respect, that is a bad idea." Luxxoria said timidly. "What makes you think they will accept our teachings after what we did?"

"Two reasons, elf." Garrosh hissed. "First, because I will simply kill you if you don't. Second, these ponies are now your superiors, and you will do as they command. DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?!" he roared, spittle flying in all directions.

Luxxoria shuddered. "Y-yes, Warchief! Crystal clear!"

Zorann raised a hand. "What is it?" Garrosh sighed.

"They say they are here to learn about our magic so they can defend themselves against it. But what if they try to use what they've learned against us?"

Garrosh brought his face close to Zorann's. The druid gulped.

"Then let them!" Garrosh roared, sending Zorann sprawling onto the floor. "And after what you did, I wouldn't blame them if they did try to kill you both!"

Garrosh laughed as he started walking out of the room. "You have a lot of work to do, so I suggest you begin!"

Garrosh left the room and stepped out into the streets of Orgrimmar. Another orc, clad in jet black armour, approached him and saluted.

"Gordul." he said gruffly, addressing the orc in front of him.

"Yes, Warchief?" Gordul replied. "How may I help you?"

"See to it that they get out of my city as quickly as possible." Garrosh replied. "Once they are far enough away, I want your assassins to kill them all. Understood?"

Gordul grinned. "It would be a pleasure, Warchief."

"This whole thing stinks of Alliance." Garrosh grunted, sniffing the air around him. "This seems like the sort of thing they would do."

Gordul nodded. "What of Zorann and Luxxoria?" he asked.

"They have let me down for the last time." Garrosh snarled, his face twisting into anger. "Kill them both."

Gordul saluted and disappeared into the shadows as Garrosh looked up at the sky.

"I see through your plan, Alliance filth." He said angrily. "And you will pay for your trespass against the Horde."

## 4. AMBUSH

As Zorann and Luxxoria trudged along the road, the six ponies they were leading stayed behind them, admiring the scenery.

"So, where are we now?" asked Twilight, readying her notepad and quill. "This place is nothing like Durotar."

Zorann sighed. "We're in Ashenvale now." he sighed. "And keep your voice down, lest we attract any unwanted attention."

"Unwanted attention?" Fluttershy chimed. "What possible attention could be unwanted in a place as beautiful as this?"

The answer came in the form of an arrow flying over the top of her head, embedding itself in a nearby tree. She squealed, and hid behind her hooves.

"What in tarnation was that?!" cried Applejack, as she and the other ponies ducked.

Luxxoria and Zorann looked around at the forest surrounding them. Taking a few steps forward, Zorann gasped and turned to his right.

"FAERIE FIRE!" he yelled.

"Damn!" said a voice. As if out of nowhere, another elf appeared. This one was different from Luxxoria, as her skin was purple.

"Night Elves!" Zorann called to Luxxoria. He immediately switched to his Cat Form and leapt on the elf, severing her throat with his claws. The blood sprayed across the clearing as the elf slumped to the ground with a look of shock on her face.

"FOR THE ALLIANCE!" Another voice called out. Suddenly, more elves appeared from the forest. Zorann turned to Fluttershy.

"You just HAD to open your mouth, didn't you?" he snarled. He turned to the approaching elves. "Come then, Alliance dogs!" he shouted. "I promise to grant you a merciful death!"

The group of elves let out a battle cry and charged towards the two Horde. They split into two groups, one heading for Zorann, the other heading for Luxxoria.

"Wait!" Twilight said. Her plea fell on deaf ears, as the two sides clashed with each other.

Luxxoria grinned and snapped her fingers. Almost instantly, the elves running at her were engulfed in flames. Screaming, they flailed around, trying desperately to extinguish themselves.

"Wait!" Twilight shouted again. Once again, her plea was unheard.

As the last elf fell at her feet, Luxxoria laughed dismissively and turned to look at Zorann.

The elves surrounded him, but their grins soon disappeared when he lashed out with his claws, slicing straight into their chests. They dropped onto the ground, twitching, as Zorann snorted.

"Pathetic weaklings." he said gruffly.

"I TOLD YOU TO WAIT!" Twilight yelled. "You heard what your Warchief said, we're in charge of you!"

Luxxoria saluted sarcastically. "Sorry, ma'am, but I wasn't about to let our enemy get one over on us."

"They're YOUR enemy, NOT ours!" Rainbow Dash said aggressively. "We could have talked to them!"

"Talked?!" Zorann shouted. "The Alliance care nothing for talking. Their sole purpose in life is to see the Horde wiped off the face of Azeroth. They will not rest until we are destroyed."

Twilight sighed. "Either way, I still want to try diplomacy. Perhaps they will listen to us, a new species."

Zorann and Luxxoria rolled their eyes.

"Very well then, Twilight." Said Luxxoria. "The next time we get ambushed, you can try talking to them. See how far it gets you." She turned her attention to the smouldering corpses and began searching their pockets.

"I guarantee you won't get very far." Zorann said, as he too began searching the bodies of the elves he'd killed.

Twilight and friends watched the two Horde with disgust.

"It's bad enough they kill indiscriminately." said Rarity, narrowing her eyes. "But to steal from the dead? Now that's just low."

"This is a whole new world, Rarity." Applejack replied. "Sure things are gonna be different here."

Rarity sighed as Zorann and Luxxoria came back.

"Did you get anything good, Lux?" Zorann asked.

"Just a few silver in total. Nothing major." Replied Luxxoria. "You?"

"Yeah, same here. Cheap bastards."

Twilight cleared her throat.

"If you two are quite finished sickening us, could you please tell us where we are going?"

"We're taking you to Moonglade." Zorann replied. "As a druid, that's where I did most of my training."

"So you're going to train us there?" Asked Fluttershy.

"Yes. Moonglade is a peaceful place, under the protection of the Cenarion Circle." Luxxoria said. "The Circle is made up of druids from both Alliance and Horde, meaning we won't run into any problems there."

"Good, because I don't want to see any more of THAT." Said Twilight, pointing at the dead elves.

Zorann sighed. "Come on, let's get going." He muttered.

The eight of them began walking in silence, Zorann and Luxxoria at the front of the group. As they walked, the six ponies began talking amongst themselves.

"I don't trust these guys." Rainbow Dash said bluntly. "They're probably gonna kill us the first chance they get, and claim to their leader those 'Alliance' did it."

"If they were going to do that," replied Rarity, "they would have killed us during that ghastly battle."

Rainbow Dash snorted. "Battle?" she cried. "That wasn't a battle, it was a massacre!"

Luxxoria sighed and stopped walking, turning to face Rainbow Dash, who flinched at the elf's eyes burning with anger.

"We did what we had to do." Luxxoria shouted. "Those Alliance dogs would have simply killed you if it wasn't for us."

"Why?!" cried Twilight. "We've done nothing to them!"

"You were with us, and you weren't in chains. That's reason enough for them to kill you." said Luxxoria. "They would have assumed you were on our side, rather than us technically being YOUR prisoners."

"Like we're ever gonna join your side." muttered Applejack.

Zorann sighed. "Look, once we get to Moonglade, we will teach you the spells we used against your town." he said heavily. "Once we're done, you'll all go home, and we will never see each other again."

"Sounds good to me." Applejack replied, glaring at the tauren with unblinking eyes.

An awkward silence followed, which was quickly broken by a loud grumbling noise.

"Oh, er. Excuse me." said Fluttershy, blushing deeply. "Might we stop for a rest?" she asked, putting on her best puppy dog eyes.

"We might as well." said Luxxoria. "Zorann and I need to discuss the route we're taking to get to Moonglade."

"Thank you." replied Fluttershy timidly. The six ponies sat down and opened their saddlebags. As they began eating, the two Horde began conversing in a language they weren't familiar with.

*"Are you sure they can't understand Orcish?"* asked Luxxoria.

*"Judging by the way they're staring at us, I think it's safe to assume they don't."* Zorann grinned.

*"Good. I'm beginning to wish I'd never learned the Common tongue."* Luxxoria spat. *"Anyway, what's the plan?"*

*"Well, we need to go through Felwood, there's no doubting that."* replied Zorann. *"However, Timbermaw Hold could be a problem."*

Luxxoria sighed. *"Ah, yes. The furbolg will certainly view these ponies with suspicion."* she said, turning to look at the six as they ate. *"However, I think that they'll listen to us. After all, we are considered Exalted amongst them."*

Zorann chuckled. *"So that's settled then. We'll go through Felwood and Timbermaw Hold."*

Luxxoria sighed. *"Why are we even doing this?"* she moaned. *"We could just kill them now and claim the Alliance did it!"*

Zorann slapped her. *"Are you out of your mind?!"* he snarled. *"Hellscream would find out for sure!"*

Luxxoria shook her head. *"Sorry, But you've got to admit that something smells fishy here."*

Zorann raised an eyebrow.

*"Think about it."* Luxxoria said, leaning in close. *"Why would GARROSH HELLSCREAM, the craziest orc we've ever met, suddenly care about the lives of these stupid ponies?"*

*"You saw what he did to Overlord Krom'gar after that mess in Stonetalon!"* Zorann hissed.

*"That was different."* Luxxoria replied. *"Garrosh KNEW those night elves were innocent. How can he say the same about that lot?"* She pointed at the ponies, prompting more stares.

Zorann shrugged.

*"Exactly."* Luxxoria said, throwing her arms into the air in exasperation. *"Mark my words, something is not right."*

A cough from behind them caught their attention. They turned to see Twilight standing there with a furrowed brow, the other five busy repacking their saddlebags.

"If you two are quite finished talking," she said bluntly, "then we need to find a place to rest for the night."

"Just rest here." Zorann snapped. "Now clear off, we're trying to have a private conversation here."

"Are you CRAZY?!" Twilight shouted. "It's dangerous out here! What if something finds us in the middle of the night? What if more of those elves come back?!"

Luxxoria sighed, while Zorann covered his face with a palm.

"Fine." he said flatly. "Splintertree Post is nearby. It has an inn. We'll go there and you can rest for the night."

"Thank you." Twilight said. "It's good you can see rea-"

Her words were cut off by low guttural laughter. Zorann and Luxxoria turned to face the sound as an orc stepped out of the shadows, clad in black armour.

"What the hell?" Zorann said.

The orc clapped his hands sarcastically.

"I saw the way you dealt with those filthy elves." he said, letting out a hearty chuckle. "Very well done." He pointed at Luxxoria. "Quite literally, in your case." he grinned.

"So you've been following us." Luxxoria said. "Making sure we don't kill the ponies?"

"Oh no." the orc replied. "Though I did overhear you discussing it."

Zorann and Luxxoria felt the ponies' eyes boring into the backs of their heads as they sighed.

"So why are you here, orc?" Zorann said, looking him in the eye.

"I'm actually here on a job." said the orc, cracking a smile.

"Well, don't let us stop you." said Twilight nervously. "You go do your ... er, 'job', and we'll head to Splintertree Post."

"I agree with Twilight." said Luxxoria, looking shocked. "If you don't mind me asking, who is the unfortunate soul you'll be reaping?"

The orc laughed. "Not one soul," he said, "but eight." He snapped his fingers.

"Your souls." The orc cackled, as more assassins stepped out from the trees.

## 5. BETRAYAL

"What the hell, Gordul?!" Luxxoria shouted, as she instinctively cast her Ice Barrier spell. "We're on your side!"

"Sorry, but we have our orders." Gordul replied, shrugging nonchalantly. "Now if you'd be so kind ... die."

With a roar, one of the assassins lunged at Luxxoria. Quick as a flash, she began casting a spell.

"SCORCH!" The assassin gasped in horror as he caught fire.

"KILL THEM ALL!" yelled Gordul.

Zorann shifted into his cat form and immediately clamped his jaws around an assassin's neck, breaking it with ease. He spat the limp corpse out and glared at Gordul.

"Two down already?" He laughed. "It would seem that the Shattered Hand is losing it's touch."

Two of the assassins approached the six ponies, who had huddled together in a group.

"Go on then, Twilight!" Luxxoria shouted. "Try using diplomacy!"

Twilight glared at the elf. "Fine!" she shouted back. With a flash, her horn lit up, and she fired two bolts of magic at the advancing assassins, blinding them.

As they flailed around, Rainbow Dash flew up and bucked one of them in the face, knocking him unconscious. The other one pulled his weapons out and began stabbing wildly, but tripped over Fluttershy, who was hiding behind her hooves.

"Oh, sorry!" She squeaked, not realising what she had done. The assassin landed on the ground, whereupon Rarity jumped on him.

"Ordinarily," she said, "I wouldn't resort to violence. But you..." She punched the assassin in the face. "... have left me with no choice!" She hit him again and he went limp.

"That's four, Gordul!" yelled Luxxoria. "Come on, surely you can do better than this!"

"Actually, I can." Said a voice behind her. Luxxoria screamed as the knife plunged into her back.

"Shh, it's all over now." Gordul whispered as he slit her throat. The elf gurgled as she slumped to the ground.

"Lux!" yelled Zorann. "You bastard, you'll pay for that!"

He charged at Gordul, knocking him off the elf's body. The two of them landed in a heap, Zorann on top. Roaring viciously, Zorann tore into Gordul's chest with his claws. The orc grunted in pain as the blows rained down on him. Then, his eyes rolled into the back of his head, and he went limp.

But Zorann, consumed by rage, continued to maul the body. Seizing the opportunity, the remaining assassins advanced on him.

Suddenly, they were enveloped in a purple aura. Gasping, they looked across to see Twilight with her eyes closed, a look of concentration on her face.

Rainbow Dash went over to Zorann and grabbed him.

"I think he's dead!" she yelled, her voice quavering with emotion. Panting, Zorann looked down at the mutilated body.

He got off the corpse and went over to the other assassins. With another roar, he swiped out at all three of them.

"You can put down them down now." he said, turning to Twilight, who opened one eye. Hesitantly, she stopped her spell. The four assassins landed in a heap.

"Are they...?" asked Fluttershy.

"Dead? Yes." Zorann sighed as he resumed his tauren form. He walked over to where Luxxoria lay motionless in the grass. The six ponies timidly approached him.

"I'm sorry about your friend." said Applejack.

"It's OK." Zorann said. "She's not dead."

"What?" the six ponies replied in unison. Zorann smiled.

"Not all of my abilities are centred around causing death and destruction, you know." He said. "I may specialise in Feral Combat, but that doesn't mean I can't heal people."

He closed his eyes and began chanting a spell over Luxxoria's body. A flash of white light illuminated the elf's corpse when he finished.

The six ponies looked at the body. Suddenly, its eyes opened, and they gasped, recoiling in terror.

Luxxoria sat up and winced as Zorann cast another spell on her. The wound on her back vanished as she looked around and blinked.

"I died, didn't I?" She asked after a while.

Zorann nodded. "Don't worry about Gordul." He said, pointing at the mangled corpse. "He's not going anywhere."

Luxxoria stood up and walked over to the first assassin she killed. Kneeling down, she began rifling through his pockets.

Twilight and the others groaned in disgust. "Stealing again?" asked Rainbow Dash.

"Not this time." Replied Luxxoria, as she pulled an envelope out of the orc's tunic. "I was looking for this."

"It's just an envelope." Twilight said.

"Yes, but it contains the orders Gordul spoke of." Said Luxxoria, as she tore the envelope open and removed the parchment within.

Casting her eyes over it, her eyes widened.

"Thrall's balls!" she shouted. "Everyone, listen to this!" Clearing her throat, she began reading the orders.

*Gordul,*

*As you know, Zorann and Luxxoria are taking those six ponies to Moonglade in order to train them in the ways of magic.*

*The Alliance are stupid if they think their spies can fool me. These ponies are no humans with very clever magical disguises.*

*Kill Zorann and Luxxoria as well. Those two idiots have failed me for the last time. That, and they openly admitted to attacking innocents. I will not tolerate another Krom'gar.*

*In short, I want them all killed. Bring me the heads of the elf and tauren. I will display them above Grommash Hold as a warning. Do whatever you want with the pony corpses.*

*You and your men are my best assassins, Gordul. I have every faith in you that you will not fail.*

*Lok'tar ogar, brother. And remember, my eyes are upon you.*

**GARROSH HELLSCREAM**

Luxxoria looked up from the parchment with fear in her eyes. "I don't believe it." She said softly. "The Horde has betrayed us."

"So what the hell do we do now?" snapped Zorann.

"Only one thing we can do." said Luxxoria. "We need to get to Moonglade and hope that the Cenarion Circle can help us."

"But it'll take days to get there on foot!" Zorann groaned. "I can't carry you AND these six on my back!"

Luxxoria thought for a moment before snapping her fingers.

"As a druid, you have a teleport to Moonglade spell, yes?" she asked Zorann.

"Of course." he replied. "But how does that help?"

"If you can teach me that spell, I will be able to open a portal there for all of us to use." Luxxoria beamed. "It will significantly reduce our journey time."

"... I don't know." Zorann hesitated. "Remember what happened the LAST time I helped you with a new portal spell?" He nodded towards Twilight and her friends.

"Right about now," said Applejack, "I'm willing to try anything."

"Me too." replied Rainbow Dash.

Rarity nodded, as did the others.

Zorann sighed.

"Fine. But if this gets us all killed, I'm blaming you." He said, pointing at Luxxoria. He leaned in close and whispered something in her ear.

"Got it." she said. "Stand back."

She began chanting, her hands swirling with balls of arcane energy. With a flash, a portal appeared in front of the group.

"D-d-did it work?" asked Fluttershy.

Zorann peered at the portal. A wide smile spread over his face.

"Yep, that's Moonglade all right." he patted Luxxoria on the back. "Nice one, Lux."

Luxxoria gave him a weak thumbs up. "Hurry up and use it." She muttered. "Casting that thing used all my mana."

"Gotcha!" said Rainbow Dash, zipping through the portal. The rest of the ponies followed.

As Zorann and Luxxoria prepared to step through the portal, they cast a final glance back at the dead assassins and sighed.

"Farewell, Horde." they said together, before removing their insignias and casting them onto the blood stained grass.

## 6. CHANGE OF PLANS

"That's quite a story." the elf said with a worried look.

"Yes, Mr. Starblaze. It is." Zorann replied with a heavy sigh. "The Warchief wants us dead, and Moonglade is the only safe place we could find."

"Please, there is no need for formality." laughed the elf. "You may all call me Dendrite."

"Thank you very much." Said Twilight, as she and the others unpacked their saddlebags.

"You may stay here for as long as you need, Zorann." Dendrite said reassuringly. "As one of our pupils, you are always welcome."

"Thank you, Dendrite." said Zorann, bowing slightly. "I will do what I can to help out around town."

Dendrite smiled and turned to Luxxoria.

"Normally, we don't allow users of arcane powers here." he said. "But since you are a friend of Zorann's, and because you helped them get here safely, you too are welcome to stay."

Luxxoria bowed. "Thank you." She said quietly.

Dendrite turned to Twilight and the others.

"You have all been through so much in your short time here." he said gently. "Please, rest. Tomorrow Zorann and Luxxoria will teach you all you need, and then we can work on sending you back to your own world."

The ponies smiled wearily as they snuggled into their sleeping bags with a contented sigh.

"I will go now." Dendrite said, turning to leave. "I shall see you all in the morning. Sleep well."

"Goodnight." said Zorann as Dendrite left the inn. He turned to the ponies. "Get a lot of rest." He said. "Because you've got a long day ahead of you."

Turning out the light, the room soon descended into a cacophony of different snores.

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"Gordul..." the voice was gentle. "Wake up, Gordul."

Gordul groaned, his eyes flickering open.

"Where am I?" he asked. He ran his hands over his body to find that it was intact. "I died. Is this the afterlife?"

"No, this is Orgrimmar." Replied Garrosh as he stepped into Gordul's field of vision. "I had you resurrected so you could do something for me."

"W-what?" asked Gordul, saluting briskly.

"YOU CAN EXPLAIN HOW THOSE TWO IDIOTS MANAGED TO ESCAPE WITH THOSE DAMNED ALLIANCE SPIES!" Garrosh roared, swinging his fist into the side of Gordul's head.

Gordul groaned as he felt his teeth breaking. He spat them onto the floor as he struggled to regain his composure.

"I succeeded in killing Luxxoria," he said, "but Zorann used his bear form to overpower me."

"THEN HE KILLED YOU, AND RESURRECTED THE MAGE!" Garrosh screamed, his usually brown face turning red.

"I-I'm sorry I let you down, Warchief." Gordul panted. "I will find them, and this time I will not fail."

"It's a bit late for that." Garrosh sighed. He held up two bloodstained insignias, emblazoned with the crest of the Horde.

"When we found you, we found these nearby." he said, throwing the insignias to Gordul. "There was also a high concentration of arcane energy in the air."

"What does that mean?" Gordul asked.

"It means that they were able to manufacture a portal!" Garrosh snapped. Gordul shook his head.

"But no such spell exists!" he cried. "The only spell like that is a teleport, and only Druids can cast it."

"Then it would seem Luxxoria's abilities are better than I thought." Replied Garrosh. "When they told me that story about attacking that pony town, I actually thought it was a load of crap. I thought they made up the whole thing to try and gain my favour."

Garrosh sighed again.

"And when they brought those ponies to me, I still refused to believe it. I had my suspicions that the Alliance were behind this, but seeing the evidence for myself has made me realise that they are actually innocent ... for once."

Gordul gasped.

"So you honestly believe that Luxxoria did in fact create a portal to another dimension?" Gordul asked, his nervous disposition gone.

Garrosh laughed. "Yes, it's amazing isn't it?" he grinned. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a parchment adorned with magical runes.

"What's that, Warchief?" asked Gordul.

"While Luxxoria was in custody, I had her bags searched. I believe this scroll," he waved it around, "to contain the spell she used to create her first portal."

Gordul's eyes widened and a fanged smile spread across his face. "You mean that's the portal to the ponies' home world?"

Garrosh returned the smile and nodded.

"I have a new mission for you, Gordul." he said. "One that will let you atone for your failure."

Gordul stood up and dropped to one knee.

"I will have my magi open, and maintain, this portal."

Gordul looked up. "Maintain the portal?" he asked. "I assume my mission is in this new world?"

Garrosh nodded. "Maintaining the portal will not only allow you to get back," he said, "but it will also allow for a constant flow of reinforcements, supplies and building materials."

"I-I don't understand." Gordul said, looking at the floor again.

"This Equestria, as it's called, will soon belong to the Horde." Garrosh cackled. "Your mission, Gordul, is to assassinate this 'Princess Celestia' Luxxoria and Zorann mentioned in their report. If they could best her, I'm sure you can as well."

Gordul stood up. "I will not fail you again, Warchief."

Garrosh smiled. "Good. Our invasion begins soon. Make sure you are ready, Gordul."

Gordul saluted again. "I will prepare immediately." he said, and quickly left the room.

As Gordul left, Garrosh let out a hearty guffaw.

"Soon, the citizens of Equestria will kneel before me." He said to himself. "And if they refuse, then they will see for themselves the full power of the Horde."

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As the sun rose over Moonglade, Twilight and her friends stretched themselves and yawned.

"Morning girls." said Fluttershy. "Such a beautiful morning."

"Well, we're still alive." said Rainbow Dash. "That's good."

"I told you already," said Zorann as he entered the room, "that you would be safe here."

"Well pardon me for still not trusting you." Rainbow Dash replied, her eyes narrowing into slits.

Zorann sighed and opened his mouth to speak when a small explosion rocked the inn, followed by shouting in Thalassian.

"Oh, no." He said. "What's she done now?" He rushed outside, followed by the six ponies, to find Luxxoria rifling through her bags, their contents scattered all over the immediate area.

"Er, Lux?" Zorann slowly approached the frazzled elf. Her gaze met his and he froze.

"Yes?" said Luxxoria, in a deliberately calm voice that caused Zorann's hair to stand on end.

"What are ... what are you doing?" Zorann timidly asked, almost sounding like Fluttershy.

"I appear to be missing a certain roll of parchment." Luxxoria replied, still using that calm voice.

"Was it important?" asked Twilight.

"Considering the fact that it had the spell I used to transport Zorann and I to your world on it, yes." Luxxoria replied.

Zorann groaned. "I thought you only had one copy of that?" he asked through gritted teeth.

"Well," Luxxoria's demeanour turned from one of anger to one of hesitation, "I enjoyed our journey to Equestria, so I made another copy. I was, er, hoping that you would be up for another trip."

The elf blushed and looked at the ground, avoiding the glares of Twilight and the others.

"So you could attack us again?" Twilight snarled.

Luxxoria didn't reply.

"We'd better find that parchment then." said Twilight. "Do you have any idea what could happen if it fell into the wrong hands?"

Zorann walked over to Luxxoria and grabbed her, shaking her viciously. "THINK, ELF!" he shouted in her face. "Where was the last place you remember seeing it?"

Luxxoria snapped her fingers and disappeared in a flash of light, reappearing a few feet away. She put a hand to her chin and was soon lost in thought.

Twilight turned to the others. "Everypony check around for any loose rolls of parchment." She said to them. "Maybe it's been blown away by the wind."

Just as the six were about to split up, Luxxoria snapped out of the trance she was in.

"Oh, felfire." she said slowly. "I think I know what happened to it."

"Oh, good." Zorann replied, looking around expectantly. "So, where did you leave it?"

"I didn't LEAVE it anywhere." Luxxoria said. "Remember when we were taken before Garrosh in Orgrimmar?"

Zorann nodded.

"Were your bags taken away to be searched?" Luxxoria said, raising an eyebrow.

"No, they stayed with me." Zorann replied. Suddenly, realisation dawned on him and he gasped. "Oh, crap."

"What?" asked Twilight nervously. "What's wrong?"

Luxxoria sighed and covered her face with her palm, but she didn't answer Twilight's question.

"WHAT IS IT?!" cried the purple unicorn, panic-stricken.

Luxxoria uncovered her face and looked into Twilight's eyes. "You said you were worried about the worst happening if that parchment fell into the wrong hands?"

Twilight nodded slowly.

"I think I can safely say..." Luxxoria paused, unable to finish.

"SAY WHAT?!" yelled Rainbow Dash.

"... that Garrosh has the parchment." Zorann finished.

The six ponies gasped.

"If that's true ... " Twilight began.

"... then Equestria is done for." Luxxoria replied.

Shaking profusely, the six friends came together for a group hug. Twilight looked up at the bright morning sky and shed a tear.

"Celestia help them."

## **7. BLOOD AND THUNDER - PART ONE**

Garrosh struggled to control his laughter as he watched the Forsaken magi opening the portal. Gordul stood at his side, his eyes fixed on the spot where the opening would appear. He felt a hand on his shoulder, and turned to see Garrosh looking at him.

"Remember, Gordul." the Warchief said sternly. "Should you fail in this mission, you die whether you return to me or not."

Gordul's eyes narrowed. "I will not fail you again, Warchief." he grunted as he gripped his daggers.

With an audible pop, the portal opened. Garrosh grinned, and turned to the massed ranks of grunts who stood nearby.

"SOLDIERS OF THE HORDE!" he yelled. The grunts stood at attention and cheered. Garrosh took a deep breath.

"Through this portal lies a world ripe for the taking! Untold riches await us, but first we must force out the current owners! As warriors of the Horde, it is your DUTY to crush these impudent whelps, and remove them from OUR lands!"

The cheering of the grunts intensified as Garrosh continued.

"With their most powerful warriors otherwise engaged, and their leader injured, you will find that their morale is low. Now is the time to strike! Show no fear, but above all else ... SHOW NO MERCY!"

The cheering turned into fanatical roaring as Garrosh threw his arms into the air.

"BLOOD AND THUNDER! VICTORY OR DEATH! FOR THE HORDE!"

"FOR THE HORDE!" the grunts replied in unison, and began their march into Equestria.

Garrosh cackled.

"Victory." he sniffed the air. "I can smell it already."

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Twilight and the others paced back and forth nervously, watched by Zorann, who was reclining under the shade of a tree. They all had one eye fixed on Luxxoria, who was standing in the grass waving her arms around.

"Has she been able to replicate the portal yet?" Twilight asked.

A small explosion, followed by a groan and thud, answered her question. Zorann sighed and stood up, looking over at where Luxxoria was now lying on the ground."

"No, she hasn't."

With a groan, Luxxoria stood up and dusted herself off. She looked at her hand, paused for a moment, and cheered. She ran back to the others, holding a roll of parchment aloft.

"I did it!" she chuckled. "This is the spell I used!"

Twilight and the others cheered.

"Finally!" cried Rainbow Dash. "We can get home, kick some Horde butt, and save Equestria!" She looked at Zorann and Luxxoria. "Er, no offence."

Zorann shrugged. "None taken," he said, "since we're technically not part of the Horde any more."

"Well?" Twilight looked at Luxxoria. "What are you waiting for? Open the portal!"

Luxxoria blinked. "But we haven't taught you anything about magic yet!" She cried. "You'll be killed!"

"Oh no we won't." Twilight said smugly. "Because YOU'RE COMING WITH US."

"WHAT?!" gasped the others in unison. Twilight turned to Zorann.

"After I saw you bring Luxxoria back from the dead, it got me thinking." she said. "You no doubt want revenge against Garrosh for what he's done, right?"

Zorann nodded.

"Good. We can use the Elements of Harmony to banish Garrosh and his army from Equestria." Twilight continued. "Once that's done, you can use your magic to resurrect all the ponies you killed."

"I can ... oh, no. Sorry, no can do." Zorann replied, shaking his head. "The resurrection spell only works within six minutes of a person dying. After that, their spirit goes to the afterlife."

Twilight nodded. "You're forgetting that the laws of magic are very different in Equestria." she said. "I'm fairly certain you could do it."

Zorann sighed. "I guess I could." he hung his head. "It's not like I have anything here worth sticking around for."

Luxxoria raised a hand. "Er, what about me?" she asked. "Am I included in this deal?"

"Of course you are." Twilight replied. "You're going to be teaching us your ways of magic."

Luxxoria smiled.

"So, are we in agreement?" Twilight held out a hoof.

"Yes." Zorann said, shaking it. "I will resurrect all of your fallen friends, in exchange for a new life."

"And I will teach you all about Azerothian magic, in exchange for the same." Luxxoria shook Twilight's outstretched hoof.

"Good." Twilight smiled. "Now, let's go save Equestria."

Luxxoria glanced at the parchment in her hand and read it. Putting it away, she began chanting. Soon, a portal appeared.

"Right, let's go." Twilight said. "On three. One ... two ... THREE!"

With a grunt, the entire group jumped into the portal, landing on the other side with a thud. Groaning, they slowly stood up.

"What the hell?" Zorann looked around. "Lux! This isn't Equestria!"

"What?" Luxxoria surveyed the area. "Then where the hell are we?"

"You're in Stormwind, Horde scum." Turning around, the group saw that the voice belonged to a man sitting on a huge throne, clad in heavy plate, holding a sword that matched him in height. Flanking him on either side were several guards, with anger etched upon each of their faces.

Twilight gingerly approached the man, he and his guards eyeing her every move with suspicion.

"Please," she said, "we are not here to cause trouble. If you will hear me out, I will explain everything."

The man continued to stare at her.

"Very well." he said, waving his hand. His guards lowered their weapons and returned to their posts.

"Thank you." Twilight breathed a sigh of relief. "Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Twilight Sparkle."

The man stood up. "It's a pleasure, Miss Sparkle. I am Varian Wrynn, king of Stormwind ... and leader of the Alliance.

"These are my friends." Twilight pointed at the other five ponies. "Applejack, Rarity, Pinkie Pie, Rainbow Dash and Fluttershy."

"So, what brings you to my city?" asked Varian.

"This mage was trying to create a portal to send us back to our own world," Twilight explained, "but she cast the wrong spell, and we ended up here."

Varian nodded. "Well, that explains the elf. Now, what about the druid?" he pointed at Zorann.

"It's a long story." Twilight said, rubbing the back of her head.

Varian laughed and sat down. "I have all the time in the world."

With a deep breath, Twilight launched into the story. She told Varian everything about the Horde attack on Ponyville, how she and her friends were able to recreate the portal spell they used, their meeting with Garrosh, the trip through Ashenvale, the night elf ambush, the Shattered Hand ambush, their short stay in Moonglade, all the way up to their arrival in Stormwind.

"... and you know the rest." she said, panting slightly. Varian shot a venomous glance at the two former Horde.

"At least now we know who slaughtered that patrol in Ashenvale." he said. He snapped his fingers. "Seize them!"

Zorann and Luxxoria grunted as they were wrestled to the floor. Zorann managed to throw a guard into the wall, but was soon brought down by a kick in the ribs.

"Cast them in irons and take them away!" Varian shouted. He turned to Twilight. "I will have my magi work on a way to get you home." he shook his head slowly. "But I'm afraid I cannot help you in your war against the Horde."

"I wasn't going to ask you for help." Twilight replied. She pointed at Zorann and Luxxoria. "Because they're going to."

Varian looked dumbstruck. "THEM?!" he shouted. "But you just told me they are responsible for this whole situation!"

Twilight nodded. "They are, yes. But they have agreed to undo the damage they have done. The druid will resurrect our fallen friends, while the mage will teach our unicorns about magic."

Varian stuttered. "You want their help?" he sighed. "Fine." he waved his hands dismissively. "Release them."

The chains came off with a click and landed on the floor with a dull thud. Luxxoria went over to Twilight.

"Er, thanks." she said sheepishly.

Twilight glared at her. "My pleasure," she said, "but make sure you cast the RIGHT spell this time."

Luxxoria nodded. "I know what I did wrong. I won't make that mistake twice."

Varian sighed. "Since you prefer the help of these animals, I no longer wish to tolerate the sight of you. You have fifteen minutes to get out of Stormwind, or I'll have you all imprisoned."

Luxxoria scoffed. "Fifteen minutes? I only need fifteen seconds." She began chanting a spell. Soon, another portal appeared with another audible pop.

"Well, what do you know?" she grinned. "It was only seven seconds I needed." She made a rude gesture at Varian, who growled.

"Hang on," said Twilight, "I want to make sure it's the right portal this time."

Luxxoria nodded. "Be my guest."

Walking over to the portal, Twilight peered at it. And screamed.

"Twi, what is it?" asked a concerned looking Applejack.

With a shaking hoof, Twilight pointed at the portal. Clearly visible on the other side of it was the unmistakable Ponyville skyline.

Engulfed in flames.

## **8. BLOOD AND THUNDER - PART TWO**

Garrosh stood on a hill, grinning fiercely as he watched his army storm Ponyville. The few Royal Guard who dared to defend the place fell like dominoes. All around, civilians were attempting to flee the carnage, only to be cut down by swords, arrows and magic.

Parents tried desperately to hide their children as the Horde ransacked the town. The sounds of screaming, clashing steel and sobbing were music to Garrosh's ears.

"FIRE THE CATAPULTS!" he yelled. "LEAVE NO BUILDING STANDING! LET THEM SEE THE FULL MIGHT OF THE HORDE!"

At this command, hundreds of flaming boulders were sent hurtling into the town, adding to the mayhem.

"Warchief!" a voice distracted Garrosh's attention.

"What is it, soldier?" Garrosh asked, not wanting to take his eyes off the battle.

"Enemy reinforcements have arrived at the train station." the soldier said. "Our scouts report seeing several unicorns and pegasi among their ranks."

Garrosh nodded. "Make those unicorns your priority target." he grunted. "And have the Bilgewater fliers take down the pegasi."

"At once, Warchief." The soldier saluted and departed. Garrosh turned to his catapult commander.

"Concentrate all fire on the train station!" he ordered. The commander swallowed nervously.

"We've already tried, Warchief." he said. "But we're out of range."

"WELL, GET IN RANGE THEN!" Garrosh roared. "Nothing will stop me taking this town, not even your incompetence!"

The commander whimpered and motioned for his men to pack up the catapults. As they did so, Garrosh turned his attention back to the town. In the distance, the Ponyville hospital was untouched by the ravages of war, several guards still stationed outside.

"It's all up to you, Gordul." he said to himself. "Do not fail me."

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Twilight and the others gazed in horror at the portal. On the other side, they could see the battle being raged in Ponyville.

"We ... we're too late!" cried Rarity. "Ponyville is doomed!"

Tears formed in each pony's eyes as they lowered their heads. Walking over to the portal, Luxxoria peered inside.

"I can see Garrosh!" she said. "You can use the Elements of Harmony to defeat him."

"I know that." said Twilight, wiping her eyes. "But-"

"But nothing!" Luxxoria interrupted. "Those Elements are your only hope, so use them!"

Twilight raised a hoof. "If you'll let me FINISH," she said sternly, "you'd know that the Elements of Harmony are kept in Canterlot. In a safe that only Princess Celestia can access."

Luxxoria's demeanour faded. "And she's still in hospital." she said sheepishly, avoiding Twilight's gaze.

"Exactly." replied the purple unicorn. "Without her, we can't get to the Elements. And without the Elements ... "

She began crying again. "... Ponyville, as well as all of Equestria, will fall before the Horde."

Varian slammed his fist into his throne, startling everyone nearby. He rose to his feet, his eyes burning with anger.

"NO." he said firmly. "I will not stand idly by while the Horde ravage a peaceful land." He turned to Twilight. "I will meet with the other leaders of the Alliance, and persuade them to lend assistance."

The six ponies stopped crying.

"You would do that?" asked Rarity.

"Yes." replied Varian. "Equestria and the Alliance are not so different. Your Elements of Harmony represent all that we fight to protect in our world."

Twilight smiled.

"The Alliance is loyal to the people of Azeroth. We are kind to our friends, we are generous to those less fortunate. We are always true to ourselves, and even in war, one must not forget how to laugh with one's friends." Varian explained.

"But where does Magic come into all of this?" asked Rarity.

"The Alliance has been using magic for decades." Varian replied. "Without it, we wouldn't be where we are today."

"But how will you convince the other leaders of the Alliance to go to war for a race you've never seen before?" asked Twilight.

"By telling them what I've just told you." Varian answered with a faint smile. "And once they've seen what the Horde has done to your town," he pointed at the portal, "it will make them all the more eager to assist you."

A smile spread across each of the pony's faces as they hugged Varian, who seemed surprised at first, but soon returned it.

"Thank you," whispered Twilight, "for everything."

"The Alliance looks after those in need." Varian whispered back. He broke off from the hug and turned to his guards. "Get a mage in here on the double!" he shouted. "I need to get to the other Alliance cities as soon as possible!"

Luxxoria coughed. "I can do that for y-"

"NO." Varian said, silencing her with a raised hand. "I don't need you to taxi me around."

Luxxoria sighed.

"I need you to open that portal wide enough to transport an army." Varian said, his voice a mix between resentment and kindness. "You are the only person capable of doing it."

Luxxoria nodded. "Yeah, OK. I'll do that. But I'm doing this for THEM," she pointed at Twilight and the others, "not you."

Varian grunted. "Of course."

Footsteps echoed throughout the room. "That'll be my mage." Varian said. "Get that portal sorted, now."

Luxxoria sighed as Varian turned to the source of the footsteps. His face lit up upon seeing who it was.

"Jaina?" he said with a smile. "What are you doing here?"

"I came here to warn you about a strange arcane energy coming from Orgrimmar," she said as she eyed the ponies, "but it looks like you know more about this whole thing than I do."

"I'll explain everything later." said Varian. More footsteps caught his attention and he turned to face the source. His face fell upon seeing the hooded figure before him.

"What is HE doing here?" he demanded, reaching for his sword.

"Varian, wait!" Jaina said. "He is here to help as well. Like me, he picked up on the unnatural arcane energy coming from Orgrimmar."

Luxxoria and Zorann approached the trio and dropped to one knee.

"This is our fault." said Zorann. "We have failed the Horde, and we have failed you."

Luxxoria nodded. "No, it's mostly my fault." she said softly. "I'm the one who created the portal to Equestria in the first place. I'm the one who attacked first. I'm the one who persuaded Zorann to join me, and I'm the one who weakened the Princess."

She stood up, tears flowing down her cheek.

"I should have shown restraint." she said between sobs. "But no, I had to let myself be caught up in trying to please that oaf Garrosh." She spat on the ground as Zorann stepped in front of her.

"No, it's my fault as well." he said. "I could have persuaded her not to cast the portal. Or I could have persuaded her not to attack those innocent ponies. Or I could have killed her myself."

"It sounds like you are both at fault." the third person said.

Zorann and Luxxoria nodded and stood up. Twilight rushed over.

"But they've promised they will make everything right!" she said quickly. "They've said they can make amends for what they did!"

The visitor nodded. "And do you believe them?"

Twilight thought for a moment, unable to speak. She trotted back to her friends and gathered them in a circle.

"Do we trust those two?" she asked quietly. "I know they're responsible for all of this, but..." she trailed off.

"I think they are showing genuine remorse for what they did." Rarity said, glancing over at the two. "They've gone to all this trouble after all, such as saving us from those assassins."

"Yeah," Applejack whispered, "and if Luxxoria had cast the proper spell, we wouldn't have the Alliance helpin' us out."

The others nodded.

"So, it's settled then?" Twilight asked. "We do trust them?"

There was a collective "Yes!" from the rest of the group, and Twilight went back over to Jaina, Varian and the unidentified visitor.

"Yes," she said loudly, "we do trust them."

The stranger nodded. "Very well." he said. "Their atonement is in your hooves, young one."

Luxxoria and Zorann both mouthed a thank you to Twilight. Varian coughed and turned to Jaina.

"Jaina, I need to visit the other Alliance cities. Can I trouble you for a portal to Ironforge?"

"Of course, Varian." Jaina replied as she cast the spell. The portal appeared in front of her. Varian turned to Luxxoria.

"I want that that portal to Equestria sorted by the time I get back." he said sternly, and stepped into Ironforge.

Luxxoria sighed and turned to the stranger.

"I swear I will make up for my mistakes." she said. "My friend and I no longer swear allegiance to Garrosh and his Horde."

The stranger nodded as Luxxoria continued.

"However, our allegiance to you remains unfathomable..."

Zorann joined her and they saluted briskly.

"... Warchief Thrall."

## **9. BLOOD AND THUNDER - PART THREE**

Varian paced back and forth as he finished addressing the group of people sitting at the table in front of him.

"... and that is the whole story, friends." he said gravely. "We cannot let the Horde sow their seeds of aggression in this peaceful world. We must defend those who cannot defend themselves."

The group nodded as Varian turned to one of his guards.

"Tell the others they can come in now." he said. The guard nodded and went over to the door. He opened it and motioned for those waiting outside to enter the room.

Twilight and the other ponies were first to enter. Closing the door behind them, they approached the table and bowed their heads.

"Allow me to introduce the other leaders of the Alliance." Varian said, indicating a human female. "You've already had the pleasure of meeting Jaina Proudmoore."

Twilight nodded as Varian moved down the table.

"This is Magni Bronzebeard, King of Ironforge. Tyrande Whisperwind, High Priestess of Elune and leader of Darnassus, Velen, leader of the draenei based at The Exodar and High Tinker Gelbin Mekkatorque, leader of the gnomes."

"It is a pleasure to meet you all." Twilight said. "I just wish it was under more pleasurable circumstances."

"Likewise, lass." said Magni. "We've come to a decision, and we're gonna help ye fight those Horde animals."

A wide smile spread across Twilight's face as her friends cheered.

"Really?!" she said ecstatically. "Oh, thank you! Thank you!"

"It's our pleasure." said Gelbin. "Garrosh and the Horde have gone too far this time, and they must answer for his crimes."

The door creaked open as Zorann and Luxxoria walked in. With the exception of Varian and Jaina, the leaders gasped in shock.

"What are THEY doing here?!" Magni shouted. He drew his axe and leapt onto the table. "Aren't they the ones who are responsible for this whole sorry state of affairs?!"

"Yes, but-" Varian began.

"I SHALL CUT YOU DOWN WHERE YOU STAND, HORDE FILTH!" Magni yelled, charging towards them. He brought his axe down towards Zorann. Suddenly, a clang resonated through the room. Magni turned to see that Varian had parried his blow.

"Please, old friend." he said pleadingly. "Let me explain."

Magni grunted and lowered his axe.

"All right then, lad." He said. "I'm listenin'."

"Yes, they are Horde." Varian began. "Yes, they are responsible for this whole mess. Garrosh told them to train these ponies in the art of magic, his reason being he didn't want a repeat of the incident in Stonetalon, with Overlord Krom'gar..."

Tyrande stifled a sob.

"... but when they were out of the city, he tried to have them all killed. He wanted the ponies dead because he thought they were spies, and he wanted these two dead because he thought they were a pair of incompetent buffoons."

Zorann and Luxxoria blushed.

"They fought off the assassins and made it to Moonglade. There, the mage discovered that the scroll she made with the portal spell on it was missing. That's when they realised that Garrosh had it, and they worked out his true intentions."

Luxxoria nodded.

"I tried casting the spell from memory," she said, "but that's when we ended up here. Thankfully, King Wrynn decided to let us live. I managed to remember the spell and cast it successfully, only to find that the Horde had launched their attack."

"And now," said Twilight, "they are destroying our homes and killing our friends and family. We have a weapon that can stop them, but we need to get our Princess to safety, as she is the only one who can access the vault said weapon is kept in."

"The time is now, friends." Varian said, slamming his fist into the table. "The Horde must answer for what they've done. We know what must be done, so are we going to do it?"

The room interrupted into cheering. Varian smiled.

"Prepare your troops immediately." he said. "Luxxoria here has the portal all ready to go. We move out in thirty minutes."

Tyrande gasped. "Thirty minutes?" she said, surprised. "That's not enough time to prepare my Sentinels."

"Then make it enough time." Varian snapped. "Every minute we spend preparing, the Horde advances further into Ponyville. If they get to the Equestrian Princess, all is lost."

Tyrande nodded. "I will double my efforts."

Varian returned the nod and went over to the window, taking a deep breath.

"Soldiers of Stormwind, hear the voice of your king!" he roared. The barracks below became silent. "By now, you will have seen the creatures roaming Stormwind. They have come under attack from the Horde, and they require our assistance."

The soldiers below began booing, shouts of "Horde scum!" and "Bastards!" clearly audible.

"The Alliance does not turn away those in need!" Varian yelled. "The time has come to drive the Horde from the land of our new allies. We march in thirty minutes, so make sure you are ready."

The soldiers murmured amongst themselves.

"This world, Equestria, stands for the same values that we do. We will help them defend themselves against Garrosh and his mindless followers, for that is the Alliance way."

The soldiers cheered.

"THE WORD OF THE DAY IS 'RETRIBUTION', AND WE SHALL BE THE ONES TO DELIVER IT!" Varian boomed. "FOR EQUESTRIA, AND FOR THE ALLIANCE! WE SHALL BE VICTORIOUS THIS DAY!"

The soldiers roared, chanting "For the Alliance!" over and over, as they rushed to gather their equipment. As Varian turned around, the sound of clapping filled the room.

"A fine speech, Varian." said Thrall as he entered the room.

Varian grunted a grudging "Thank you" as Thrall went over to Jaina.

"I see the other leaders have gone." he said.

"I opened portals back to their cities so they could gather their troops." Jaina explained. "I can't believe it has come to this, Thrall."

Thrall sighed. "Aye, Jaina. Garrosh has gone too far. I should never have made him Warchief."

"You had no choice, Thrall." Jaina said reassuringly. "You have a different destiny to fulfil."

Thrall nodded. "Mark my words, I will make Garrosh see the error of his ways." he fired off a bolt of lightning at the wall. "One way or another, he will answer for his crimes."

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The pegasus dropped to the ground, his blood flowing from the gash across his neck. His colleague tried to shout, but was silenced by a hand across his mouth, and a dagger in his back.

"Shh, shh, shh." The orc soothed as he gently lowered his victim to the ground. "It's all over now."

Removing his knife from the pony's back, the orc entered the door they had been guarding. Slipping into the shadows, he stealthily made his way down the corridor, the many guards inside oblivious to the danger he represented.

Reaching the room at the end of the hall, he paused, pondering his options. Suddenly, a cry went out.

"We have an intruder in the hospital!" yelled the voice. "All guards, spread out and search the area!"

The guards in the corridor immediately rushed off, weapons raised. Once out of sight, the orc smiled and came out of the shadows.

"Idiots." he grunted. "Thank you for making my job so much easier." He opened the door and tried stepping inside the room, only to be knocked on his back by an invisible force.

"What the-?" he stood up. In front of him was another pony.

"You seek to harm the Princess?" it asked. "Then you shall have to go through me first!"

The orc laughed.

"Pathetic creature. I am Gordul, leader of the Shattered Hand. You cannot hope to best me. I am the best assassin the Horde has to offer. Now step aside, or I will take great pleasure in killing you." he flashed a grin. "Slowly."

The pony smirked.

"And I am Shining Armour, Captain of the Equestrian Royal Guard. It is my sworn duty to guard Princess Celestia, and I will do so as long as I have breath in my lungs!" He yelled, his eyes burning fiercely. "As long as I live, this shield will hold, and you will not be able to get through."

Gordul grinned and unsheathed his weapons. With a puff of smoke, he was back in the shadows, his laughter echoing through the hall.

"We'll see about that."

## 10. BLOOD AND THUNDER - PART FOUR

Shining Armour looked around as he gingerly walked forwards, Gordul's mocking laughter ringing in his ears.

"Your pitiful race is doomed, you know." the orc cackled. "None may stand so boldly against the Horde and live."

"You only prevail because you are using cowardly tactics!" Shining Armour yelled. "Come out of the shadows and face me properly!"

Gordul grunted. "Very well."

With an ear-piercing yell, he lunged at Shining, bringing his daggers down towards the unicorn's head.

Hearing the yell, Shining cast a shield, causing Gordul to bounce off it and hit the ground with a dull thud.

"And you say I'm using cowardly tactics?" Gordul hissed. "You hypocrite, stop hiding behind your magic!"

Shining's eyes narrowed as he lowered his shield. Unsheathing his sword, he charged at Gordul, and the two locked blades.

The sounds of clashing steel and shouting soon filled the corridors.

Gordul opened his belt pouch and took a handful of dust from it, throwing it into Shining's eyes. The unicorn gasped, lowering his guard. Seizing his chance, Gordul kicked him in the ribs.

Spluttering, Shining went down. Using his magic, he cleansed his eyes of the dust and leapt to his hooves. Snarling, he unleashed a flurry of magic at Gordul.

Gordul groaned as the wave of magical energy struck him in the chest, throwing him down the corridor. Getting to his feet, he pulled a small package from his belt and threw it to the ground.

The room was soon filled with smoke as Gordul slipped back into the shadows. Shining Armour grabbed his weapon tightly in his magical grip, sweat pouring from his brow.

The sound of hoofsteps filled the room as the other guards came to see what was happening.

"The intruder is around here somewhere!" Shining yelled. "He's hiding in the shadows! Unicorns, light up the area!"

The unicorns nodded, and sent out a beam of light from their horns. The area was slowly illuminated, light piercing the dark corners of the hospital.

Gordul chuckled as he too was enveloped by the light. Standing behind Shining Armour, he grabbed the unicorn and held his daggers to him. One at his neck, the other at his horn.

The light faded as the unicorns stopped casting.

"I told you that nothing will stop me completing my mission!" Gordul snarled. "Your Princess *will* die this day, mark my words. Now, drop your weapons, or your Guard Captain dies!"

The guards hesitated, looking at Shining Armour.

"Do as he says!" he ordered. "Without me, the shield around the princess will fall."

The guards did as they were commanded, throwing their weapons into a pile. Gordul laughed.

"Good. Now, lower the shield." he said, pressing his dagger into Shining's neck. The unicorn groaned as blood was drawn.

"N-n-no." he stammered.

"Either do it willingly, or I will kill you!" Gordul snapped. "Either way, that shield is coming down, and your Princess is done for."

"Even injured, Princess Celestia is no match for you." Shining hissed. "Kill me if you will, but know that I will be your last vic-"

His words were cut short as Gordul drew the dagger across his throat. Blood gushed from the severed artery as the body slumped to the ground.

The guards gasped.

"KILL HIM!" yelled one. The guards scrambled for their weapons, but Gordul unleashed a flurry of knives at them. Each knife found a target, and soon the guards were nothing more than corpses.

Gordul turned as the shield dissipated with one final hum. He clapped his hands together and laughed.

"Excellent." He said. "I will soon kill the Princess, and Equestria will belong to the Ho-"

His sentence was cut short as he was tackled to the ground. Rolling over, he saw Luxxoria lying on top of him.

"Remember me?" she hissed. "Because I certainly remember you." She began channelling a spell.

"How did you get here?!" Gordul said.

"I made another portal." she said with a smug grin. "It's pretty easy when you get the hang of it."

Gordul's eyes widened as he saw her hands swirling with fire.

"Anyway, this is for killing me earlier, you bastard." Luxxoria whispered, bringing her face up to Gordul's.

Cackling, she unleashed the fireball into Gordul's face. The orc screamed as the flames seared his flesh. Within seconds, his arms fell limp at his sides.

Luxxoria stood up, panting heavily. Zorann came up to her side.

"Have fun?" he asked.

"Yeah, I can see why you went a bit crazy." Luxxoria replied. She looked at the dead guards. "Pity we're a bit late."

Zorann turned towards the door.

"You can come in now, girls." he called. "Be careful, it's a bit of a mess in here."

Fluttershy poked her head around the door and surveyed the scene in front of her. Letting out a horrified gasp, she pulled her head back and began sobbing.

Twilight cautiously entered the hallway, taking care not to step in the pools of blood which stained the area. Her eyes soon fell on a corpse, the sight of which caused her to scream.

"Twilight?" Ignoring the mess, her friends came charging in and stood by her side.

"What is it, darling?" Rarity asked, soothing the shaking unicorn.

Twilight pointed at Shining's corpse.

"Oh, no." Rarity sighed as Twilight buried her head in Fluttershy's mane, crying uncontrollably.

"She knows him?" Zorann asked, his eyes filled with concern.

"He ... He's ... He's my brother." Twilight said between sobs.

"I understand." Zorann said. Closing his eyes, he began chanting a spell. His hands swirling with green orbs of energy.

Finishing the spell, he raised his hands above his head.

There was silence. Twilight looked at Shining's body. And gasped.

Before her eyes, his wounds closed up and his eyes stirred. With an ecstatic cry, she leapt on him, wrapping herself around his neck.

"Waahhhh!" he cried. He looked down and saw Twilight hugging him. Behind him, the guards were standing up, looks of confusion etched on each of their faces.

"Twiley? Is that you?" he asked. His eyes suddenly widened in horror. "Oh no, you're dead as well?!"

"No, B.B.B.F.F. You're not dead." Twilight said. "Well, you were, but he managed to bring you back." She pointed at Zorann.

Shining quickly leapt to his hooves, pulling Twilight close.

"ARE YOU CRAZY?!" he yelled. "HE'S THE ONE WHO ATTACKED PONYVILLE!" He noticed Luxxoria standing next to him. "AND HER! IT'S THEIR FAULT THESE HORDE ARE HERE!"

"Please, Shiny." Twilight pleaded. "Let me explain."

Shining grunted. "Well, OK. I suppose I can give them a moment. After all," he pointed at Zorann, "he did bring me and my men back from the dead and she," he pointed at Luxxoria, "appears to have killed that assassin."

Luxxoria nodded, a smug grin on her face.

"OK, Twiley." Shining said. "Enlighten me."

## **11. BLOOD AND THUNDER - PART FIVE**

Shining Armour looked perplexed as Twilight finished her story. He glanced at Zorann and Luxxoria before speaking.

"So you're telling me that these two are no longer part of the Horde, that they're actually here to help us, and that you've managed to convince the Horde's most hated enemy to lend their assistance as well?"

Twilight nodded.

"That's the gist of it." she said with a smile.

Shining looked at his sister and grinned.

"OK, Twiley." he nodded. "If you trust them, I guess I do as well. Now come, we have to check on the Princess."

As the group approached the door, Shining stopped.

"I want to check something." He turned to Zorann and Luxxoria. "You two, go in first."

The two former Horde looked at each other.

"Er, no. I don't think so." said Luxxoria, shaking her head.

"Why not?" Asked Shining.

"Because the last time we were here, we nearly killed her." Zorann said bluntly. "We're the last two people she'd want to see."

"I'll go in first." Said Twilight. "I'll explain everything to the Princess. She'll listen to me."

Zorann and Luxxoria nodded eagerly as Twilight entered the room.

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"As much as I believe your story, Twilight Sparkle, I still have to say I am not happy about them being here." Celestia said, shooting venomous glances at Zorann and Luxxoria.

"They've gave me their word they will help fix this mess." Twilight said. "And they've saved our lives twice now, as well as brought my brother back from the dead!"

Celestia looked at Shining Armour, who smiled and saluted.

"As much as I appreciate that," Celestia said with a sigh, "we are still without an army."

"Begging your pardon, your Highness," said Luxxoria, "but we've brought one with us."

Celestia stared blankly at the elf, who made a beckoning motion with her finger.

"Follow me." she said with a smile.

Celestia got to her hooves, much steadier than before. Her mane was flowing of its own free will again, and she was beginning to look like her old self, much to Twilight's delight.

Exiting the hospital, Luxxoria stopped walking.

"I can see Garrosh." she said quietly. "Zorann, do you have Gordul's corpse? Because we need to get his attention."

"Are you insane?!" Shining hissed. "He'll simply send his troops to kill us all!"

"I have a surprise for him, don't you worry." Luxxoria smiled.

Zorann held Gordul's charred corpse aloft. Luxxoria nodded, and cupped her hands around her mouth.

"GARROSH HELLSCREAM!" she yelled. "HERE STANDS PRINCESS CELESTIA OF EQUESTRIA," Zorann threw the corpse to the ground, "ABOVE THE BROKEN BODY OF YOUR BEST ASSASSIN!"

Garrosh turned to face the source of the voice. His eyes narrowed when he saw Celestia, who returned his glare with one of her own.

"SO GORDUL HAS FAILED ME AGAIN, HAS HE?" Garrosh yelled back. "NO MATTER. YOU HAVE MADE A GRAVE MISTAKE IN REVEALING YOURSELF, PRINCESS." Garrosh drew his axe and began charging. "TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT YOUR LAND, BECAUSE IT WILL BE THE LAST THING YOU EVER SEE!"

With a roar, Garrosh leapt into the sky and brought his axe above his head. Bringing it down towards Celestia's head.

Suddenly, Garrosh was knocked onto his back by a blast of magic. He hid the ground with a grunt, rolling as he fell.

"What the-?" he snarled. He looked up to see Luxxoria standing next to a portal.

Through which Varian had stepped. He eyed Garrosh with disdain, drawing his sword.

"You want her blood, monster? Then you shall have to take mine first!" he snarled.

Garrosh roared and stood up.

"Foolish human!" he cackled. "You are stupid to think that you can best me AND my grunts."

Varian grinned and turned to Luxxoria, who nodded. Casting another spell, she widened the portal. Through it stepped Jaina, Magni, Gelbin, Tyrande and Velen.

"We're gonna have some fun with you, laddie." Magni said.

"WARRIORS OF THE HORDE!" Garrosh yelled. "ATTACK!"

As the grunts charged, the Alliance leaders went into a defensive stance, Varian swinging his sword around.

"FOR EQUESTRIA AND THE ALLIANCE!" he shouted.

An almighty roar filled the air as the Alliance leaders suddenly charged the Horde, followed closely by their own army pouring from the portal. Garrosh spluttered.

"IM-IMPOSSIBLE!" he roared, as the two armies clashed in a flurry of steel and magic.

Celestia and the other ponies looked on in horror as the carnage unfolded before them. In the skies above, the Bilgewater fighter pilots suddenly found themselves facing several of their Gnomeregan and Ironforge counterparts.

Hacking his way through the grunts, Varian's eyes were fixed on Garrosh. The orc leader saw his enemy approaching and readied himself for combat.

"THIS ENDS HERE, SCUM!" Varian roared.

Swinging wildly, Varian managed to bring his sword across Garrosh's chest. The orc grunted as the weapon bit into his skin.

Grabbing Varian, Garrosh headbutted him and threw him to the ground. He swung his axe above his head and brought it down. Varian parried most of the blow, but the blade of the axe caught him on the forehead.

Varian cried out as the blood poured from his head. He kicked Garrosh's legs out from under him and scrambled to his feet.

"It's over, Garrosh!" he shouted. "The Horde has lost. This land is not yours to conquer!"

Garrosh spat on the ground, his eyes meeting Varian's.

"No, human." He said. "It is NOT over. No matter what it takes, I will crush your army, and ravage this land."

Varian laughed.

"Look around you, Garrosh!" he held his arms out. "Your army is outnumbered and tired. They cannot fight for much longer."

"I WILL HAVE THIS LAND EVEN IF I HAVE TO ORDER THE FORSAKEN TO USE THE PLAGUE!" Garrosh roared. Varian's eyes widened in fear.

"You ... you wouldn't dare!" he stuttered.

Garrosh smirked.

"Wouldn't I?"

Suddenly, he raised his axe and brought it into Varian's back. The human screamed as he fell to the ground. Garrosh stepped over him, bringing the axe to his neck.

"It's over, human. I think I will order Sylvanas to plague this land. As far as I can see, there are no resources here that we can't get in Azeroth." he sighed and raised his axe.

"GARROSH!" the voice was loud and booming. Across the battlefield, the sounds of combat stopped as both Horde and Alliance looked to see the source of it.

"What have you done, Garrosh?" Thrall said, as he walked across the battlefield. "This is NOT the Horde way. Haven't you learned ANYTHING from Krom'gar's mistake?!"

Garrosh grunted as Thrall turned to the Horde soldiers.

"You have all brought shame upon yourselves, your families, and your ancestors." he said, shaking his head. "Look around you. These ponies only wish to be left in peace. Who are you to deny them that?"

The Horde soldiers lowered their heads. Several of them dropped their weapons.

"You have allowed yourselves to be caught up in Garrosh's lies." Thrall said. "He gave you hollow promises of honour and glory."

He shook his head.

"But where is the honour and glory in killing the innocent?"

The remaining soldiers threw down their weapons and dropped to their knees, several of them weeping.

"COWARDS!" Garrosh roared. "YOU SHALL NOT DENY ME MY VICTORY, THRALL!"

Garrosh swung his axe at Thrall, who didn't move an inch. As the weapon drew closer, he raised an arm, sending a stream of lightning down the weapon, and into Garrosh.

Garrosh shook violently as the lightning coursed through his body. He slumped to the ground twitching.

"No, Garrosh." Thrall said, as he stood over him. "I WILL deny you this victory, because it's not a victory. It's a disgrace."

Garrosh snarled.

"Your army has surrendered Garrosh, will you do the same?" Thrall held a hand out. Garrosh looked at it before roaring defiantly.

"NEVER!" he screamed, grabbing his weapon and charging towards Celestia. "I WILL END YOU, PRINCESS!"

Celestia stood motionless as Garrosh bore down on her, knocking aside anyone who tried to stop him, his axe raised.

Celestia closed her eyes, waiting for the blow to come.

A sudden blast of cold air snapped her eyes open again. Looking down, she saw Garrosh encased in a block of ice.

Celestia gasped as she saw Luxxoria standing at her side, arm outstretched, a torrent of frost swirling around her hand.

Zorann came up on her other side in his bear form.

"Your turn now, Z."

Celestia winced, remembering well what happened the last time she heard those words.

Zorann strolled over to Garrosh.

"I know you can hear me in there, Warchief." he spat. "I guess I should thank you." he looked at Luxxoria. "Actually, both of us should thank you."

A muffled groan came from the frozen Garrosh.

"You showed us that we were stupid to have followed you. You corrupted our minds with your vile propaganda, and made us forget who we really were."

He got up on his hind legs.

"We are good, honest people, who were caught up in your twisted web of lies and false promises! And now, we are going to make up for all of our mistakes, **STARTING WITH YOU!**"

With an almighty roar, Zorann smashed the block of ice. There was a collective gasp of horror as Garrosh's body was broken into several pieces.

A still silence followed. Varian stood up as Thrall cast a healing spell on him. He approached the pieces of Garrosh and slowly turned around to face his troops.

"It's over." he said, before throwing his arms into the air triumphantly. "IT IS OVER! Equestria is free!"

The Alliance soldiers began cheering as their Horde counterparts hung their heads in shame.

Celestia stepped forward.

"All Horde troops are to leave Equestria IMMEDIATELY." she shouted. "And I don't EVER want to see your kind here again."

Dejectedly, the surviving Horde gathered their weapons and walked back through their portal. After several minutes, the last grunt walked through, and the portal closed.

Varian and the other Alliance leaders approached Celestia and bowed deeply.

"Thank you," she said tearfully, "for everything."

Varian nodded.

"We shall gather our dead and wounded and leave you in peace." he said. "Unless of course..."

Celestia smiled. "I would welcome an allegiance between Equestria and the Alliance." she said.

"Then it is done." Varian replied. "I don't know if the Horde will return, but if they do..."

"... they'll have us ta deal with." Magni grinned.

The leaders bowed one last time before heading out onto the battlefield, where the rest of the soldiers were gathering the fallen.

"What happens now, Princess?" asked Twilight.

"We rebuild our country." Celestia said, turning to look her student in the eyes. "And we shall continue our peaceful lives, hopefully free of future aggression."

"No, Princess." Twilight said sheepishly. She pointed at Zorann, who was juggling pieces of Garrosh and Luxxoria, who was using her flame spells to melt the other pieces. "What about them?"

Celestia blinked.

"They will remain here so that they can uphold their promise." she said, watching the two former Horde laughing together.

"After that, I don't know what will happen to them."

## 12. MAKING AMENDS

"Are you sure this will work?" Twilight asked, raising an eyebrow.

"It worked on your brother and those other guards, didn't it?" Zorann smiled.

"Yes, but that was only six ponies." Twilight replied. "But this is all the ponies you killed AS WELL AS the ones who died during the Horde invasion."

Zorann shrugged. "And?"

"... it's a lot of ponies!" Twilight cried. "Nearly three hundred!"

"You let me worry about that." Zorann sighed. "Now hush, I need to concentrate, and you're putting me off."

Twilight sat down. Zorann turned away from her and closed his eyes. Soon, he was deep in concentration, his hands flowing with the same energy he used on Shining Armour.

"I don't think this is gonna work." Rainbow Dash whispered.

"We have to try!" Rarity hissed.

"I hope it does work!" Pinkie Pie chimed. "That way I can throw a huge 'Welcome Back From The Dead, We Beat The Horde' party!"

The others looked at her.

"What?" she asked quizzically.

"You never spoke the whole time we were in Azeroth," said Applejack, "but now you're actin' like you never left. What gives?"

"That place made me sad." Pinkie said quietly, her mane deflating slightly. "You can't enjoy yourself in a place like that."

The others wrapped her in a hug, bringing her mane back to its usual bounce.

A cough brought them back to the situation at hand.

"You were saying it wouldn't work?" Zorann said, a smug grin on his face. "Well I think you can eat those words."

Glancing behind him, the six mares gasped. Stumbling around in confusion were several ponies, who moments ago had been lying dead on the ground.

"I-I-I don't believe it!" Twilight stammered.

"Never underestimate the power of life." Zorann said. "Now, I believe that my part of the deal is done. Luxxoria has told me to tell you she's waiting for you at the library."

"Is she going to show us magic?" asked Rainbow Dash.

"Yes, she is." Zorann nodded. "And once she's done, we shall leave Equestria, and find a new place to call home."

"Garrosh is dead, why not rejoin the Horde?" asked Rarity.

"No." said Zorann, his eyes flashing with anger. "I'm done with the Horde. Baine Bloodhoof may be Warchief now, but the Horde will remain as bloodthirsty as ever."

Rarity smiled and placed a hoof gently on his hand.

"You don't have to demean yourself any longer." she said softly. "You have a right to live in peace, away from the horrors of war."

Zorann returned the smile.

"Come on," he said quickly, "Luxxoria is waiting for you."

As they stood up to leave, they paused to enjoy the scene in front of them as families and friends were reunited with each other.

"You did a good thing." Twilight said, nodding at Zorann.

"I know." he replied. "But I still need to apologise for killing them in the first place."

The seven of them walked away from the market and towards the library, where Luxxoria was waiting with folded arms and a stern look on her face.

"It's about damn time!" she yelled as they approached. "If I had been kept waiting any longer, you'd have to have resurrected ME after I died of boredom!"

Zorann laughed.

"Sorry," he said, "but we just had to watch the ponies being reunited with their loved ones. It felt good."

Luxxoria's face softened as she smiled.

"I'm sure it was." She looked at the six mares. "Now, are you ready to learn magic?"

"We sure are!" said Applejack.

"Very well then." Luxxoria replied with another smile. "In you go." She opened the door and waited for the ponies to trot inside before turning to Zorann.

"After this, where do we go from here?" she asked him.

He shrugged. "Honestly?"

Luxxoria nodded.

"... I don't want to go anywhere."

Luxxoria smiled and led her friend into the library, closing the door softly behind them.

**\*\*\* THE END \*\*\***

### **13. READER SUGGESTED CHAPTERS**

While I was posting this story on FIMFiction, several comments came up suggesting various ways I could take the story. I refused, but I'll admit that I did enjoy some of the ideas I saw.

Since I respect my readers, I will now put those ideas into practice. The following chapters are based on ideas I saw in the comments.

The following two ideas were suggested:

- Instead of Zorann and Luxxoria, another member of the Horde rescues the Mane Six from the scorpions. Then kills them.
- Garrosh orders the Forsaken to use the plague against Ponyville prior to his invasion.

So, without further ado, I present the Reader Suggested Chapters!

Chris Urquhart

Author.

## **13.1 AN END TO ALL THINGS**

*Suggested by Riordian*

"Face it, girls." Said Rainbow Dash. "We're lost."

The six ponies continued trudging through the harsh wasteland, the sun beating down on them relentlessly.

Twilight sighed.

"Let's take a break, girls." she said, opening her saddlebag and taking out a bottle of water.

A lone tree offered shade from the sunlight as the group dropped to the ground groaning. Rarity began massaging her hooves as Applejack used her hat to fan herself.

"If I was able to fly," muttered Rainbow Dash, "we'd have found a town or SOMETHING by now."

Twilight nodded.

"It is strange how you are unable to fly." she said, looking Rainbow Dash over.

"Yeah," Dash replied, "considering the fact those two who attacked Ponyville could fly. Hay, one of them turned himself into a DRAGON, for Pete's sake!"

Fluttershy squealed and hid behind her hooves.

"Sorry, Fluttershy!" Dash facehoofed, realising what she'd said.

"We just need to look around for any signs of civilisation." Rarity said. "Rainbow Dash, could you be a dear and climb that tree?"

"Why me?!" Dash groaned. "Why can't you do it?"

"Me?" Rarity gasped. "Climb a tree? No, no. I would get in such a mess. And besides, you're better at it than I am."

Dash grinned and Rarity knew she had said the right thing. It was always a good idea to appeal to Dash's ego.

"All right, Rarity." she said, puffing out her chest. "I'll have a look around for you."

Dash leapt into the tree, grabbing the lower branches. Grunting, she managed to get herself balanced precariously on it. Looking around, she sighed.

"I can't see anything!" she said glumly.

The others sighed.

"Wait!" Dash called. "There's someone coming!"

Twilight smiled.

"We'll ask them for directions. Rainbow, get their attention!"

Dash nodded and stuck her hooves in her mouth, letting forth a fantastically loud whistle. The figure in the distance looked around startled for a moment, before their eyes caught Dash in tree. Grinning, she waved her forelegs in the air. The figure immediately began sprinting towards her.

"OK, they've seen me!" Dash called to the others. "They're on their way ov- what the heck?!"

"What?" asked Applejack. "What's wrong?"

"They're gone!" Dash replied. "Vanished into thin air!"

She climbed out the tree and joined the others, a frown firmly etched on her face.

"I must have been hallucinating because of the heat." she said. "Sorry I got your hopes up gi-"

A dull thud interrupted her, and she fell to the ground.

"RAINBOW!" Applejack shouted. "Are y' OK?" she gently shook the unconscious Rainbow Dash. There was no response.

"What the hay is going on he-"

Now it was Applejack's turn to fall unconscious. As she did so, Rainbow Dash stirred and got to her hooves.

"W-w-what happened?" she groaned, before spotting Applejack.

"Applejack?!" she screamed. "What happened?! What's going on?!"

Twilight shrugged, unsure of how to respond.

A minute later, Applejack came around. Her eyes flickered open and she saw that Rainbow Dash had her in a tight hug.

"Uh, Rainbow?" she said. "Y' can put me down now."

Dash smiled upon hearing her friend's voice and let go of her vice-like grip. Dusting herself off, Applejack stood up.

"What in tarnation happened?" she asked. "All ah cin remember is goin' ta help Rainbow."

"Whatever happened to Rainbow happened to you as well." Twilight replied. "It was strange."

Applejack looked at her friends. "Has it happened to any of y'all?"

Twilight shook her head.

"No." she replied. "Whatever it was, it only seems to have af-"

Another dull thud and Twilight hit the ground.

Panic gripped the group as they crowded around their friend, hooves raised in all manner of martial arts techniques, ready to strike their mystery assailant.

"I don't know what in the Nether you things are," said a male voice, "but I like screwing with you."

"Show yourself, coward!" Rainbow Dash shouted.

On the ground, Twilight stirred to see her friends around her. She groaned and stood up, adopting her own defensive stance.

"Oh, I see my Sap has wore off." said the stranger. "But I'm not done with you yet."

There was a jingling sound, rather like coins.

"Thanks for the gold pieces." he laughed. "I've never pickpocketed so much money before."

Gasping, the ponies dug around in their respective saddlebags to find them all empty.

"Give us back our stuff you meanie!" yelled Pinkie Pie, her mane straightening out.

"Meanie?" the stranger said. "I'm a rogue! Being mean is what I do best!" he laughed again.

Without warning, Twilight fired a ball of light from her horn. It sailed through the air and burst into several beam. Each beam then fell to the sky with the force of a thousand suns.

"Ow! Hey, what the fel?!"

The stranger leapt around as his clothes caught fire, and he suddenly became aware of the six pairs of eyes staring at him.

"Damn." he groaned. "So you've found me, big deal."

"Let's get him, girls!" Rainbow Dash shouted.

"Yes, lets." Rarity grinned wickedly.

The six prepared to charge as the stranger took up a defensive position. Suddenly, he vanished from sight.

"Oh, ponyfeathers!" Applejack said. "Not again!"

A noise from behind them got them to turn around. Standing in front of them was the stranger.

"I don't think we've been formally introduced." he said. "My name is Sativan, and I shall be KILLING YOU TODAY."

Cackling wildly, he unleashed a flurry of daggers at the six ponies. They screamed as each of the weapons found a target.

Sativan grinned and began stepping through the shadows, reappearing behind a random pony, then driving both of his daggers into her back. Within seconds, the six of them lay in a pool of blood.

Sativan beamed as he surveyed his handiwork. He knelt down beside Applejack and took out a small knife. As he tried to bring the object into her still corpse, he snarled.

Putting the knife away with a look of anger on his face, he stood up and spat in the dust.

"All of that effort," he shouted, "AND I CAN'T EVEN SKIN THEM!"

He sighed and went to turn away, before stopping.

A huge grin spread across his face as he looked at the bodies.

"I wonder if the Forsaken would be interested in these?"

## **13.2 CLOUDS OVER PONYVILLE**

*Suggested by OnyxElite*

Garrosh stood by the newly opened portal, a glint in his eyes. Grinning wickedly, he turned to the woman standing next to him.

"As much as it infuriates me to say this," Garrosh said, narrowing his eyes slightly, "I need your help, Sylvanas."

Sylvanas smiled.

"And what can I do to serve the Horde today, Warchief?" she replied, offering a mock salute.

"Since I don't want to risk MY soldiers in this war, I've decided that I want to risk YOURS instead." Garrosh snarled.

Sylvanas sighed.

"Very well, Warchief." she said glumly. "The Forsaken shall lead the charge into this new world. On one condition."

Garrosh nodded, knowing what Sylvanas wanted.

"You may use the plague as you see fit."

Sylvanas looked shocked.

"You're letting us use the Plague?" she said, aghast. "But you berated me for weeks after I deployed it against Southshore!"

"That's because Southshore was an Alliance town, and attacking it gave them a reason to harass our operations in Hillsbrad." Garrosh replied. "Since they have no presence in this new world, we are free to use whatever methods we wish, without repercussions."

Sylvanas nodded.

"I shall have plague wagons brought in from The Undercity at once, Warchief." she said. "You shall have your plague."

Garrosh laughed as Sylvanas left to gather her forces. He looked into the portal, Ponyville clearly visible on the other side.

"Breathe the fresh air while you can, pitiful ponies." he muttered. "For soon, it will be nothing but ash ... and death."

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"Dark Lady," the Forsaken catapult commander saluted briskly as he addressed Sylvanas, "we are in range of the town. The plague canisters are ready, and we only await your command."

Sylvanas nodded and turned to Garrosh.

"Are you sure you want this, Hellscream?" she asked him.

Garrosh grunted.

"I'll take that as a 'yes'." She turned to the commander. "You may fire when ready."

The commander saluted again and turned to face Ponyville.

"READY!" he shouted, raising a skeletal arm into the air. Upon his command, the catapults were lowered, and a small barrel loaded.

"FIRE!" he shouted again, bringing his arm down in a forward motion. There were several twanging noises as the catapults fired, sending their noxious cargo towards Ponyville.

The ponies, too, heard the noise and cocked their heads skywards. Upon seeing the canisters, they panicked, running in all directions.

The canisters hit the ground and broke open, spewing a viscous green liquid across the area, and sending a similarly coloured cloud into the sky.

Ponies screamed in terror as the cloud overtook them. Some dropped to the ground writhing in agony as their internal organs began boiling.

For others, their skin began to dissolve before their eyes. Screeching in terror, they tried wiping the plague off with their hooves, only to tear chunks out of their own body.

Sylvanas watched with glee as the plague did its work. Garrosh looked on with a glazed look in his eye. Controlling the urge to vomit, he turned to Sylvanas.

"This is the same strain of plague that Putress deployed against our troops at the Wrathgate, isn't it?"

Sylvanas smiled.

"We made so much of it, it's taken longer than we thought to dilute it all." she said. "Just as well we didn't." She chuckled as she watched the carnage unfolding before her.

"I guess that traitor was good for something after all." Garrosh said, still feeling uneasy.

Sylvanas nodded.

"So Warchief, are you pleased with the results?" Sylvanas asked, her eyes glinting.

Garrosh grinned.

"Yes, I am." he replied. "I don't think these Equestrians will dare stand up to us now."

"They shall serve us instead." Sylvanas smiled.

"How can they serve us if they're all dead?" Garrosh snapped.

Sylvanas motioned behind her with her head. Turning around, Garrosh chuckled.

"Val'kyr." he muttered. "Of course."

### **13.3 SHINING BRIGHT**

*Suggested by Chasem121*

As the armies of the Alliance and Horde clashed, Shining Armour had a horrified expression on his face. As a soldier, he had experienced war first hand, but never before had he seen a battle fought with such ferocity and hatred.

Both sides seemed all too eager to damage the other, taking great pride in chopping off limbs and tormenting their wounded enemies.

Turning his gaze away from the battle, Shining's eyes focused upon his sister, who had her eyes shut firmly. Her hooves were firmly grasped around her ears, as she tried desperately to block out the sounds of carnage around her.

Looking towards Princess Celestia, Shining Armour saw that she was watching the battle with a look of indifference. Obviously, she had been around a lot longer than he had, so she no doubt has seen battles just like this, if not worse.

"You seem to have something on your mind, Shining Armour." Celestia said, fixing her gaze on him.

"I'm sorry, your Highness." Shining replied, bowing deeply. "It's just that ... I've never seen anything like this before."

Celestia nodded.

"I understand." she said softly.

"Pardon me for saying, Princess," Shining said hesitantly, "but I couldn't help but notice you don't seem phased by this."

Celestia sighed.

"I've seen this sort of thing before." she said. "Hundreds of years ago, during the Gryphon invasion."

Shining nodded.

"I see." he said. "I assume you don't want to talk about it, so I shall respect your wishes."

Celestia smiled.

"Thank you." she said quietly.

Shining looked down at his sister. Her eyes were shut tight, and she was crying. He wrapped his forehooves around her, squeezing her tight. She returned the hug, and her eyes shot open as the sounds of battle reached her now uncovered ears.

"Make it stop!" she pleaded.

She slowly turned to look at the scene and winced upon seeing the bodies. In the distance, she saw Zorann and Luxxoria fighting with their former allies, which bewildered the Alliance soldiers.

Twilight shut her eyes again. The tears continued to flow as Shining gazed out across the battlefield.

"Please, Shiny. Make them go away." Twilight begged.

Shining Armour looked down at his sister upon hearing her use his nickname. As he looked upon the shaking unicorn, he found himself thinking back to when she was a filly.

*"It's OK, Twiley. There's nothing here." he said softly.*

*"No!" came the small voice from under the covers. "I saw a monster! I know I did!"*

*Shining chuckled quietly as he walked around Twilight's room, opening drawers and cupboards.*

*'She isn't gonna come out of there unless I do something.' he thought. Suddenly, he had an idea.*

*He opened a cupboard and put on his best scary voice.*

*"Grrrr! I have been discovered!"*

*"Eek!" Twilight squealed. "Shiny, make it go away!"*

*"So you are the fiend who has been scaring my sister?" he said in his normal voice.*

*"Yes, I am!" he replied to himself in his new found monster voice. "What are you going to do about it?"*

*"I'll show you!" he shouted. Looking around, he found a pillow on the floor from where Twilight had thrown it. He picked it up and began punching it, while making pain noises.*

*"No! I am defeated!" Shining dropped the pillow as he made a groaning noise. "I shall never again scare little fillies!"*

*"See to it that you don't! Or you'll have me to deal with. NOW GO."*

*Shining trotted on the spot for a while before stopping.*

*"I defeated the monster, Twiley!" he said cheerfully. "Are you going to come out now?"*

*The covers shot off the bed as Twilight leapt on him, wrapping herself around his neck.*

*"Yayyy, Shiny! You're the best big brother ever!" she said as she hugged him. Shining returned the hug.*

*"And you're the best little sister ever." he said with a smile. "Come on, let's go get you something to drink."*

*Clutching his sister tightly, he left the room.*

Opening his eyes, Shining Armour smiled at the memory. As he looked over the battlefield, his eyes narrowed.

"JUST BECAUSE I PROTECTED MY SISTER FROM MONSTERS AS A FILLY," he shouted, causing everyone nearby to jump slightly, "DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE TO STOP PROTECTING HER AS AN ADULT."

His horn glowed, and soon he was enveloped in his trademark shield. He hoofed at the ground and snorted, hot air escaping from his nostrils.

"THE MONSTERS MAY BE DIFFERENT," he roared, "BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T DEFEAT YOU!"

Shining let out a battle cry as he charged onto the battlefield. The Horde soldiers turned to see him bearing down on them, and unleashed a torrent of magic and arrows towards him.

The arrows simply bounced off the shield, while the spells were deflected back to their casters. They screamed as their own spells slammed into them, searing their flesh or causing them to be frozen solid.

Shining continued his rampage, his eyes burning with rage. He bucked aside several Horde, his hooves connecting with their skulls with a sickening crack. As he advanced, he saw two figures duelling in the distance. One of them he knew as Varian.

He screamed with rage as he realised the other figure was Garrosh. Running as fast as his hooves would carry him, he used his shield as a battering ram, knocking the Warchief onto his side.

"What is this?!" Garrosh demanded. He saw the furious Shining standing before him, his shield still holding fast.

"Pitiful creature!" roared the orc. "I will teach you not to cross me!"

Garrosh jumped to his feet and brought his axe down with all his might onto the shield. He gasped as the weapon simply bounced off it. He then screamed as the force of the rebound caused the weapon to embed itself in his chest.

"How ... is this ... possible?" Garrosh rasped as he dropped to his knees. "My axe ... should be able ... to penetrate ... any shield known to orc-kind."

Shining let out a hollow laugh.

"This is one shield you orcs don't know about!" he snarled. "This shield was conjured by the power of love."

Garrosh laughed weakly.

"Yes, go ahead and laugh." Shining said spitefully. "The love I hold for Equestria, my fellow ponies, and my sister helped. I knew that you wouldn't be able to get through it..."

Shining brought his face close to Garrosh's.

"... because you don't know the MEANING of love."

Garrosh opened his mouth to reply, but instead let out a guttural groan as his body slumped forward onto the ground.

The surviving Horde immediately broke into a retreat, scrambling for their portal as fast as they could, while Twilight approached her brother nervously.

"Shiny?" she asked. The shield dissipated as Shining turned to face his sister.

"Twiley." he nodded and grinned.

Twilight hugged her brother.

"I knew I could count on you, B.B.B.F.F." she said softly.

"I love you, Twiley." Shining whispered. "I'll do anything to see you happy and safe."

"I guess congratulations are in order then." said Zorann, as he and Luxxoria nervously approached.

"Yeah, that was pretty cool." Luxxoria said with a small laugh.

Shining nodded and continued hugging his sister as the clean up operation began.

"Hey, Lux?" Zorann asked quietly.

Luxxoria sighed.

"Yeah, yeah. I know." she groaned.

Reaching into her bags, she took out some gold coins and pressed them into Zorann's hands.

"There's your twenty gold."