

## Revenge of the Dragonslayer Part 1

Talis sat in his lab unable to concentrate. Three sleepless days and nights were starting to have an effect on him. But he couldn't know sleep, not with that face looking at him every time he closed his eyes. Her cold and beautiful face that held those maniacal laughing eyes as she took his fire away from him, his FIRE! Talis was sick of being used, sick of being the victim. He needed to become more powerful than he had ever been before. But how to do it? He'd had the power of one of the Paragons in the palm of his hands. With that stripped from him all he had left was a few spells from Aria and the lessons of an Alchemical. Talis knew not why people referred to him as a powerful mage, he felt absolutely powerless. He was powerless to stop the Draco Disciples from murdering his mentor as he was powerless to defeat Lady Katherine Tso and her vile Gemstone of Souls. But God as his witness, he would never be powerless again. So he'd worked the last three days on the spells that Aria had left him before her leaving with the other Paragons; A lightning spell, a fog spell, and a spell to move silently. Talis had also been working on different ways to strengthen and master his seeing abilities. But deep down Talis knew the truth. He was going to have to go in search of more power, for he'd already expanded all his resources in London. He'd already told his wife of his leaving he'd just come down to his laboratory to gather his tomes and potions he'd need for the trip. As he packed the Saddle bag full of the supplies he needed to gather the information he needed to bring Tso down Talis had the distinct feeling something was wrong, that's when the vision flooded his mind.

A black cloaked mage was facing several Draco Disciples in the center of them was Lady Tso. Talis saw the mage's face and knew him as one of the Steadfast Magi. Caius Shadowsworn, One of the Guardians of the Egg. Before Caius was the Gem of Souls, the foul globe that took Talis' command over his element away.

"God's BLOOD," Talis exclaimed "She'll strip the elements right off of him!"

Invisible forces gathered in Talis as he gathered all the power he could into himself. "You'll not harm another you bitch!"

And with that Talis ran up from his lab and charged through his house only to be stopped by his wife who stood with crossed arms in the doorway knowing full well what it was that her husband was meaning to do. She'd seen vengeance fill his eyes for days just as she had seen sorrow fill his mind, plaguing his thoughts. Talis missed the magic of fire and he was taking its loss, as the Paragons had said, as if part of him died with it. She knew that if he left now it was to fight Draco Disciples, a fight he may not return from.

"We have children, Talis." She said in a desperate tone, her eyes pleading with his "Two beautiful daughters I have bore for you. Here you have a wife and a family. I beg you do not go."

"Please, move out of my way, dearest wife." Talis speak "One of the Steadfast Magi is in danger! And if I do not stop Tso-"

"I BEG you," she shouted desperately, sinking to her knees "sir, don't go after her. Do not waste your life, not for vengeance. You're too good and loving a man for that!"

"I must stop Tso." Talis stated flatly putting his hands on her shoulders "It is my responsibility to stop her."

"Who says?!" she yelled standing up defiantly

"Duty says! Tradition says!" Talis fired back

"To hell with tradition, I want you ALIVE!" She shouted back "You cannot stop her Talis. You have not the power to overcome that gem of hers, she'll kill you before you can even cast a

spell.”

“Then I’ll die on my feet.” Talis said quietly pushing his wife gently to the side “I took an oath long ago when I joined the Order of the Sun that I’ll love my brothers and sisters in arms as if they were my own kin. If Caius is about to be attacked by the woman who took my fire away, would you have me leave him to his fate?”

“I would have you live, husband” she said as she walked by him “ but I can see now you do not live, you study. You study and perfect and sacrifice yourself for your magic and now that part of it was stolen from you you’re just merely going to make the last sacrifice for it you can, yourself, without any consideration for the consequences.”

“Wife, I-” Talis began

“Anon, good husband.” She spoke with tears in her voice as well as in her eyes as she stalked away.

Talis continued out the door toward Glory feeling the harsh weight of guilt push against his heart. The pain his wife had dealt to his heart was worse than any curse that Tso could cast at him. But she didn’t understand, he had taken an oath. Every member of the Order of the Sun was more than a brother in arms that could be trusted to keep you alive; they were family member who could be trusted, without question, to help you no matter what. Talis wasn’t doing this over magic he was doing this out of love, of friendship and kinship. Something that no one outside the Order could truly understand, it was a bond of trust. Talis quickly mounted Glory and rode for Estate from his vision for love of Caius as brethren, brother in arms, and friend.

Talis arrived at the building from his vision and, pulling back on Glory’s reins he quickly entered and took fast to the stairs. He sensed dark magic as he climbed toward the door that he knew concealed Tso. His plan was flawless throw an acid vial at the Gem of Souls and once she was distracted and focused on the stone hit Tso with the pistol between the eyes.

But as Talis crossed the threshold into the room he wasn’t greeted by the sight his vision promised him, instead Talis was greeted by a beautiful woman with insane eyes standing over the young mage a woman he recognized, Maddy Vine. She was standing over the body of Caius Shadowsworn holding a Disciple dagger and a staff, blood pooled around him as he laid pale, still...dead.

“GET AWAY FROM HIM!” Talis cried rage bubbling at his lips as he extended his palm forward “Pulmaris!”

Maddy was flung from her feet as if hit some unseen force causing a scream to come out of the young woman.

“Iggy! Finally, Maddy was wondering you would show up! Maddy was waiting to play!” she exclaimed as she thrust her hand out at him releasing several darts in Talis’ direction.

Since when did I get the pet name Iggy? Talis thought to himself, then again, Maddy Vine was quite insane. Talis immediately spoke the words of magic required to bring up a barrier which the darts crashed into, uselessly. Talis immediately responded by drawing forth his pistol with fierce rage and aimed it at Maddy to finish this battle quickly. But as Talis’ finger gripped the trigger Maddy’s staff came up in blurring speed and knocked the pistol cleanly from Talis’ hands, much to the mage’s surprise.

“Enough!” Talis said “I’m tired THIS!” he cried look at Caius’ body “You Disciples kill and kill and kill till your appetite for blood is sated and believe you will get away with this?! NO MORE!”

“Iggy? You’re acting strange...where’s your fire?” Maddy asked as she saw objects begin to float around Talis

“Be gone!” Talis cried as if casting a spell. The floor in front of Talis erupted in splinters forming a Line to Maddy’s feet where it exploded in a violent blast jettisoning the madwoman from the window. Talis ran to the window to make sure the madwoman didn’t escape justice. But as Talis peered through the broken window all Talis saw below was the gathering of interested bystanders wonder what had caused the shattering noise and a noxious ripple that reeked of a familiar dark magic.

“Tso,” Talis stated coldly “Enjoy having your minion for now, I’ll settle my accounts with you soon enough, soon enough indeed.”

As Talis turned, his anger gave way to sadness and grief remembering what had been lost, a brother in arms and friend. Talis looked to see his body only to find a scroll next him where Maddy was flung from her feet out of the window. He picked the scroll and opened it to read it’s contents, hoping to figure out what it was that the Disciples wanted here and why they’d killed his friend.

The scroll read:

The Spirit stone is said to be the greatest boost to the magicks of Light. If I’m ever to destroy those fools of the Army of Light I must have it destroyed. Fear not my sweet Maddy, The Gem of Souls is up to such a task for it is stronger than the stone. The spirit stone isn’t as powerful as any of the 5 Gems of power but it does stand as the “key” to the seven scrolls of alchemy. We must make sure that none of the Order find this artifact as the fools believe this to be have been lost long ago in the battle with Simeon but the stone was merely returned to its resting location somewhere in London where it awaits its next master. If you cannot find the stone in time Maddy return to me straight away do NOT attempt to strike down the stone’s bearer yourself as they will become vastly powerful. Perhaps... perhaps only a little less powerful as a Guardian.

Talis looked at Caius’ body with lament. Caius inhaled a ragged breath. Talis’ eyes streamed with tears as he saw that his brethren was alive and Talis knew that he had to get his brother home and on his way to healing. For Talis Riverwind was about to find a way to gain his vengeance and like Aria had said, it’s all just another quest.