

## Chapter 615 Tour

“We can go if that’s okay,” Kyrian said after a while.

“Sure. Oh and feel free to stay here whenever and however long you want to. There are plenty of rooms below the armory, just change things around as you want. Or just sleep in my room when I’m not around.” she said.

“You’re very generous. I’ll get enough wealth to get my own secluded spot in these mountains. Higher up though, and not this close to the ocean. But for now I’ll take you up on that offer. Only because of the Vrayar. Can’t exactly just leave them in the wild or in Ravenhall,” he said.

“Yeah, level two hundred birds won’t be something the general public feels comfortable with,” Ilea said, displacing the two of them outside.

“Will I gain Space Magic resistance if you keep doing that?” Kyrian asked.

She smiled. “I’d think so, yes. But we can work on that at a later time,” she said and spread her wings, flying up and towards Ravenhall.

Kyrian followed, keeping up with her as she pushed for speed.

Ilea didn’t charge her wings yet, not about to become the one to be wrapped in a metal cocoon for the next long range flight.

“When I want to join you, should I just dissolve the mark?” Kyrian asked when they landed in a snow covered field near the city.

“That works, yes. I’ll get you afterwards,” Ilea said and blinked towards the gate.

The guards prepared their spells and weapons as they saw the use of teleportation but quickly relaxed when they recognized her. “Don’t scare us like that,” one of them said with a sigh.

“Glad to see you’re prepared at least,” Ilea mused, glancing at the disappearing barrier in front of her, seeing the various enchantments that lit up close to the wall. More guards already rushed to the gates, even two squads with various flying abilities. “Might have overdone it a little.”

Kyrian stepped away from her, his arms spread in a placating gesture.

“Lilith,” a grumpy guard said, the woman arriving with crossed arms. “Is there an emergency?”

“Not really,” Ilea said. “Just wanted to get here quickly.”

“I... see,” the woman said and glanced at Kyrian before she waved them inside. “Have a good stay.”

Ilea smiled at her and waved for Kyrian to follow. “Thanks!”

“She... didn’t even scream,” one of the guards whispered to another. “They won’t believe it.”

“That’s Lilith we’re talking about, even Murray won’t risk offending her,” another guard whispered before he received a glare from the aforementioned woman.

Kyrian looked around as he followed her. “New enchantments. Guards look different. And your alias isn’t just a joke anymore,” he said and snickered to himself.

“After the demons it was necessary,” Ilea said. “Claire improved them even more. They’re the Shadowguard, employed by the city itself and trained by Shadow instructors. And yes, it’s both a curse and blessing.”

“Lilith,” Kyrian mused. “Maybe I should take on a fancy new name too.”

“Sure, what about Iron man?” she suggested as they passed the second wall.

He shook his head. “No. Something a little more original.”

“What about Bluetail?” she asked.

“Not the worst idea,” Kyrian said, flinching when a passerby brushed against his arm.

The woman apologized, bowing before she moved on quickly, not to garner the Shadow’s ire.

“You alright?” Ilea asked. “We can fly the rest of the way if you want to.”

He nodded, floating up before she followed. “I’d prefer that,” he whispered.

They quickly reached Claire’s office, Ilea displacing them into the hallway before the administrator’s door.

“Come in,” her voice called out.

Kyrian tensed up a little when he heard the voice.

Ilea ignored it and went inside. “Hey Claire, got another guest today.”

“Who did you bring this t-” the woman started, dropping the pen in her hand when her eyes came to rest on the armored man. “Ky... rian,” she stammered out, nearly stumbling as she got up.

The man entered, closing the door behind him with floating steel. “Hey, Claire. You... look good,” he said and glanced at Ilea before he focused on the ground.

Ilea grinned, stepping aside as she watched the administrator walk up to the man before she hugged him, tears in her eyes. She opened a bottle of ale and sat down on one of the armchairs.

“You dumb, fucking, idiot,” Claire said before she let go of him. “Two years!”

“I’m sorry,” he said.

“Don’t apologize!” Claire said again. “Did you get Trian already?” she asked and looked at Ilea, summoning a small tube she put into an opening in the wall behind her desk, choosing a specific slot. She pushed the thing inside when she saw Ilea shaking her head. “Can I see your face?”

Kyrian obliged, revealing his visage, a slightly awkward smile on it.

“Don’t push him too hard, he was alone for two years,” Ilea said. “Sorry Kyrian, thought I’d say something before she starts dissecting you.”

Claire gave her an angry glare before she sat down on her chair. “I wasn’t about to do anything of the sort. Take a seat, grab a drink, or do you want something to eat instead?”

Trian burst into the office, fully armored with red lightning crackling around his body.

“Emergency?”

The woman just pointed at the now sitting man, his massive armor barely fitting into the chair.

Trian looked at the man, blinking a few times. They just stared at each other for a few seconds.  
“You survived?”

“Yes,” Kyrian said.

“Well done.”

“Thank you.”

“Seems like you’re the strongest now too,” Trian said.

“She’s stronger,” Kyrian said, pointing at the ale drinking Lilith.

Trian made his helmet vanish. “I didn’t count that monster,” he said and laughed.

“It’s wonderful that you’re back,” Claire said as she walked over. “We’ve got a lot of catching up to do,” she added with a smirk.

Kyrian glanced at Ilea with a pleading look in his eyes.

“You’re a big boy now, I’m sure you can protect yourself against a few lowly Shadows who haven’t even reached level three hundred,” Ilea said.

“Some people have responsibilities beyond punching monsters,” Trian said, shrugging slightly.

Claire didn’t even comment on it.

The vampyr sat down next to Kyrian. “And don’t worry about her. I’ll take the day off and show you around, how does that sound?”

“Sounds good,” Kyrian said.

“I do want to hear about your adventures. Knew you’d make it back eventually,” Trian said. “How was the trip back?”

“We used Ilea’s spell,” he said.

“How did you even find him?” Claire asked.

Ilea sipped on her ale. “Chris and Iana cracked the Taleen gates with the help of Meadow.”

The woman blinked a few times, starting to stutter out a few words.

“We’ll leave you two to it then, see you around, Ilea,” Trian said and nodded to Kyrian. “Come on, you’ll like the headquarters.”

“Hey I wanted to talk to him as well!” Claire said.

“I’m sure he’s got time. Do you have time?” Trian asked.

Kyrian shrugged. “A week, two maybe.”

“Perfect,” Trian said and walked out while waving.

“Two weeks, what then?” Claire asked but they were already gone.

Ilea focused on her ale when she noticed the woman’s attention shift back to her.

“And you. You just bring him here like that? Out of nowhere? No enemies following him? Is he okay? Where was he all that time? What did he do? How did he get to that level? I can’t even identify him. Is he stronger than you? What about the Taleen gates?” Claire shot out.

Ilea didn't say anything, just drinking her ale as she waited for the woman to clam down.

Claire flung the door shut and ran her hands through her hair before she sat down and summoned herself a drink, downed it, refilled it, and downed that one too. "Message received."

"Good. He was in a taleen dungeon far northeast, no I don't know where exactly. Bunch of really dangerous isles, his main option was fighting the creatures there. He's a bit above level four hundred, so quite dangerous. Got himself a few pets too but yeah, he'll need some time to readjust to people. I'm glad Trian seems so enthusiastic though," Ilea explained. "Oh and yes, the gates. They're working on it still. I don't think the Taleen network is safe to use at all, so don't get your hopes up. I'm sure they'll get a working prototype ready soon enough though."

"Fuck, I didn't plan for this to go so fast. Alright, no more sleep for the next two weeks," Claire said and summoned books and papers. "I'll talk to him later then," she said and looked up. "Thank you, for saving him."

"Man didn't need saving," Ilea said and got up, brushing off her armor. "He just needed a lift."

"Least you're useful for one thing," Claire said. "How are your dancing skills coming along?"

Ilea flinched. "Eh, not at all. Buuut, I'll work on it after reaching level five hundred and destroying all Taleen machines."

"Great. I'll have time for lessons in about two weeks, so don't rush," Claire said before opening a few books.

"Thanks for the confidence," Ilea said with a laugh. "Take care of him."

Claire glanced up. "I will. Thank you."

Ilea left, displacing herself through the city before she left through the gates. *Not even an hour*, she thought and flew to the prototype. "Couldn't resist, could they?" she murmured, seeing the changes the enchanters had done on this side of the gate. *They're monsters of their own*, she thought and stepped onto the platform, pouring in her mana before the spacial fabric was shifted around her.

"You're too early," Iana immediately said, the two of them working on the map.

"Apologies," Ilea said, watching Feyrair's dragon torso being flung against the cavern wall.

"*Your blood shall serve as a wonderful deterrent*," Meadow said. "*Ilea you're back. You seem better. I'm glad.*"

"*Got worried?*" she asked.

"Yes," Meadow replied.

She nodded to herself. "*Thanks. Sorry I left so quickly.*"

"*There is no need for apologies. A friend once left in a hurry and didn't come back for eight centuries. Not even a card*," Meadow said.

Ilea smiled. "*How do you even know what a card is?*"

*“I read. Maybe something you should try to learn too at one point or another. However, my analysis of your biological mass has left me wondering if there is any space left within your muscled skull for information storage,”* the tree said, once again flinging the regenerated dragonling against the wall, literally splattering him.

*“Tough wall,”* Ilea remarked, ignoring the comment about reading. She was surely too rich and famous to be lectured on her lacking education, especially coming from a talking tree.

*“Reinforced of course. That creature would burst through even steel without being damaged. More resilient than even you, but alas, it’s regeneration is lacking,”* Meadow said.

*“I’m Feyrair Kaa! Not some creature you found in the wild!”* the dragonling roared before being promptly splattered again.

*“I hope you’re not learning to like violence,”* Ilea said.

*“And here I thought you wished to spread your ideology,”* Meadow said.

*“Not to a level two thousand space magic tree,”* Ilea said.

*“I don’t normally enjoy it. You and this common monster are exceptions. So very durable,”* the Meadow mused.

*“Fey! Feel like doing something a little more productive?”* Ilea called out.

*“What could be more productive than facing this monster!”* Feyrair said.

*I’m beginning to understand how this imbecile was stuck below three hundred for so long. And he seemed so reasonable and smart back in Baralia.*

*“You’re not using mind magic on him, are you?”* Ilea asked.

*“I wish. He has his reasonable moments. It could just be the blood loss,”* Meadow replied.

*“How long do you need for the map?”* Ilea asked, glancing at Iana.

*“Half an hour or so,”* she said.

*“Can you help them out?”* Ilea asked.

*“I could, I understand what they’re trying to accomplish. Rudimentary but effective,”* Meadow replied.

Ilea walked over to the enchanters. *“Can the Meadow help quickly?”*

*“Of course,”* Iana said.

She watched as the small cube suddenly started floating, thousands of tiny enchantments lighting up and fading again in the span of a few seconds.

Iana smiled. *“And we’re done, here you go,”* she said and handed the modified key back to Ilea.

*“Thanks. Are you not mad that it didn’t help before?”* Ilea asked, whispering.

*“You know that I perceive everything for kilometers. I can hear your mind forming its tiny thoughts, your stomach digesting the liquid you drank earlier,”* some unimportant being said.

Ilea kept her voice low and leaned in. *“Could’ve saved you hours!”*

“It guides when guidance is required. It intervenes when necessary. The Meadow has not led us astray,” Iana said.

“It doesn’t like being called a god, just saying,” Ilea whispered.

Iana giggled. “Not a god, Ilea. A teacher. One with more knowledge and experience than anyone I know. It’s very humbling to work in its presence.”

“*See, some people actually possess manners in this wretched place,*” spoke the Meadow.

“*Eh,*” Ilea replied.

“*What’s that supposed to mean?*” the creature said.

“*Figure it out, thousand brain,*” Ilea replied and winked towards it. “Fey, Neiphato, come on, we’ve got birds to hunt.”

“He can’t possibly face them,” Feyrair said as he appeared close by.

Neiphato hissed.

“Finally growing a spine?” Fey asked, hissing back. “Good.”

Neiphato glanced at Ilea and rolled his eyes.

“Tree wreck your brain?” Ilea asked.

The dragonling smiled and cracked his neck. “More than once. Some damage is difficult to heal.”

Ilea nodded slowly. “Pride damage, I understand.”

“Not enough that two humans have a higher level than me and more Classes. Can’t even fight a monster tree,” he joked.

“Yeah, better to train first before we face the Meadow. Ready?” Ilea asked, opening the map to find a suitable Taleen dungeon. “Where are we exactly?”

Iana walked over and pointed at empty space between a few glowing dots. “Here.”

“Perfect. Thanks and good luck on your projects. Wonderful work so far,” Ilea said.

The enchantress bowed. “We’ll do our best. Now go hunt your birds.”

“We will,” Ilea said. “Meadow, a lift?”

“*As you wish,*” the ancient being replied.

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“Northern Bluetails, you’re nearly as crazy as Ilea,” Trian said.

The man led Kyrian to the outer walls again. It still felt overwhelming, all the people, the magic in the air, the smells, the sights, the noise. His last evolutions had changed up some skills. They had proven invaluable of course but he just wasn't used to this.

"Are you okay? Anything I can do to help?" Trian asked.

*Too easy to read, even with my helmet on*, Kyrian thought. "Can we fly? The city is... a lot to take in."

"Can also run along the rooftops, might be a good way to slowly get used to it," Trian suggested.

Kyrian nodded, following the mage who appeared on a nearby house. "Won't the guards interfere?"

"And here I'd thought living in the wilderness would make one care less about authority," Trian joked.

"I just don't want to make trouble for you," Kyrian said.

"Don't worry. A Shadow wouldn't have had a problem doing this already, but we're not exactly just random Shadows anymore, you included," the man said.

A squad of Shadowguards rushed towards them in that moment, stopping at a reasonable distance. "Important business?" one of them asked, looking between Trian and Kyrian.

"Yes," Trian said.

"Understood. A good day to you, Head Administrator," the man said, the squad leaving a moment later.

Kyrian glanced over, seeing the proud grin on Trian's face. "I thought Claire had that title now."

"She has the city. I have the Sentinels," Trian said.

"Ah," Kyrian nodded, taking a deep breath as he tried to focus his senses. He had to hear every little noise in the past years, had to feel every bit of magic, see every movement. This really would take some time to get used to.

"There's a little less going on inside," Trian said and pointed at a building ahead.

It didn't seem particularly impressive. As they got closer, Kyrian realized that he couldn't pierce through the walls. One of very few enchantments he had seen so far that prevented such. Claire's office had one, and the walls of course.

"Welcome to the Medic Sentinel Corps," Trian said as he opened the door. "Ah and don't mind Aki, he's got the body of a Taleen Centurion now."

"He... what?" Kyrian asked. "Ilea's... dagger?"

"The same," Trian said with a laugh.

All the sounds and smells were cut off when the door closed shut, enchantments snapping back into place.

He breathed out, relaxing a little as he instead looked at the floors below, the people sleeping, training, and eating. Still plenty of noise but more manageable.

"Let's go to my office," Trian said and walked towards the large spiral stairwell leading down at the other side of the hall.

Kyrian followed, looking at the paintings in the entrance hall, seeing both depictions of monsters and various landscapes. Nobody manned the reception but a small enchanted bell sat on the counter.

“Few visitors,” Trian said.

“The door is shut,” Kyrian remarked, having seen the enchantments and locks.

“Helps with having too many visitors,” Trian said and laughed again.

A group of armored healers and mages walked towards them, all slightly above level two hundred.

*Shadows?* Kyrian wondered, the group each greeting Trian and looking at Kyrian with curious eyes.

“Who’s that?” one of them whispered very quietly a little farther up.

Another one shushed him immediately and looked at Kyrian through the walls now in the way.

“Apologies, sir.”

“No worries,” Kyrian replied, not looking at him, seeing three of them perk up, the one who had asked the initial question wincing.

“No wonder you’re having issues in the city, with that hearing,” Trian said and held open a thick wooden door.

“You heard them too?” Kyrian asked, walking into the large office.

“No. But I saw the curious looks. And I know my students,” he said and closed the door. “Tea?”