

Chapter 42

Neiko plummeted into unknown darkness and slid in an abyssal joyride. Suddenly the ride stopped, and she toppled on a floor, rolled, and collided with a wall. She then heard Quickstrike hit the floor just a few feet away. “Neiko, are you here?” he asked.

“Yeah, what a rush,” she replied.

“Where are we anyway?”

“I dunno.”

“Turn on the light, will ya? I can’t see a thing.”

“Sure thing, just as soon as I can find my flashlight,” she said as she groped in her backpack. Neiko found it and turned it on. The wall behind her was a low platform and she used it to hoist herself; her fingers brushed something hard and dry. “Man, what stinks?” she said as she turned around and was face to face with a skeleton; she jumped.

“What or who is that?”

“It’s Rumi, and Xerxes is right beside him,” she said as she read the names engraved in the stone and filled with golds and jewels, “We found their tomb!”

The two just lay there in their garb and they had their swords and shields placed on them just like the others. Neiko whipped her flashlight in the tomb and she found a passageway. She found a torch on the wall. She got it down, dug out the matches, lit it, and put the flashlight and matches back into her backpack. With her newfound and better light, she explored the walls of the tomb. She found pictures that showed the life of the two, but in the midst of the pictures was a picture of a shadowy form. She walked over to it to get a better look and Quickstrike followed her. “What on earth is that?” he asked.

She examined it closely, and saw the familiar shape; the red eyes came out of the figure’s terrible stance. “It’s the Dark Pharaoh. So this is what people saw, and you can tell it’s Ramses. See, you can tell. Paint black on his armor and what do you see?”

Quickstrike looked at it as he rubbed his head. “I believe you’re right, and I wonder if he used to wear black instead of chrome.”

Neiko rubbed her chin. “No, it doesn’t look like it. Genghis Khan said that he has the ability to change his form, and he said that guy saw a form that was dark even though light shined on it; metal emits light, so he doesn’t have a different suit. Let’s go on shall we?” The two turned, left the tomb, and walked down the hall. The hall walls were barren with a musty smell of a cave after years and years of closure. There was a room to their right, and there was a glitter. They looked into the room and there lay the treasure of the Pharaohs. Gold, silver, jewels, crowns, and countless rings, earrings, and necklaces littered the floor. The two friends gazed at it, then they turned and left to explore the rest of the hall. They then walked into another room, but this time it was a dead end. There was a great stone desk with a shelf just overhead that was carved into the stone. A large chair was pushed underneath, and a small candle lay on the desk. Neiko picked up the candle and lit it with the torch, placed the candle on the desk, and handed the torch to Quickstrike. One solitaire book lay in the desk covered with dust and cobwebs. She scraped off the webs and opened the book. It was written in the ancient language that was just like Greyhawk. Neiko was able to read it, but she had to read it aloud to Quickstrike.

“This is a record of my findings on the roads I have traveled to find out all of the mysteries of Sisper-Bijou... —Rumi.” Neiko read aloud. “This is it! Let’s see what he found out.” She flipped through the pages and skimmed looking for anything they didn’t know.

“Found anything new?”

“Oh yeah! Let’s see, The Dark Pharaoh engages war against the mortal beings but not against God. Spiritual warfare is only for Satan, and we all know Satan wants to do in Yahweh. Ramses is smart in not trying to overthrow Great Spirit because he knows he can’t, and it’s not possible to invade heaven while God’s around, and that’s always.”

“So we know that he wants to rule all mortal beings, but until when?” Neiko read on. “Till the coming of Christ and only Yahweh knows when that is, and it also records there was a Bible written by Great Spirit himself for this universe. No one has ever found it; the Bible is taught by mouth, and Great Spirit has guided other men to write copies, but the original is lost. Ramses wishes to dominate both universes, but Yahweh has stopped him.”

“Does it say anything about his strengths and weaknesses?”

Neiko flipped the page. “He is not as powerful as Yahweh, and that means he is not all knowing, all powerful, or everywhere at once like Great Spirit is. He *does* have the ability to see into the future, go anywhere he desires, and all the other stuff we know already. His power at full strength is one thousand times weaker than God, but that is way too much power for a mortal to handle, and we can’t imagine Great Spirit at full strength. I bet The Great Spirit is not even trying at that measurement in this book. It also says that the Dark Pharaoh also possessed a large purple sphere called the Dark Pharaoh’s Eye or the heart of Sisper-Bijou. It has a picture of it, and it is the Eye of Osiris; now we know he lost it and why he is so anxious to get it back.”

“So, you’re saying that we are trying to take something that is his? Have you found anything about what will happen to someone who marries him?”

Neiko flipped. “Here it is,” she said and started reading and her mouth fell open. “Oh gosh.”

“Is it bad?”

“Oh yeah—listen. Anyone wed to Sisper-Bijou will encounter the worst bondage ever known. When the vows are said and sealed with the kiss, her fate is sealed with it. She becomes immortal, and she will possess powers similar to his, but she cannot use her powers against him and is subject to him. He will isolate her from everyone, and she will remain with him in his kingdom till the end of time. Yikes, my idea would have been to marry him and give him a taste of his own medicine, but it wouldn’t even faze him. Oh, it also says that they will be linked in heart, mind, and soul. She will not be able to hide. Parts of their spirits will go into each other, and he can find her wherever she goes. Also, she is bound to him in death. If someone finds a way to kill him, then she will die with him.”

“Man, Lydia’s in bad trouble.”

“Not really, there is someone in worse shape, if he ever finds someone who fits this criteria.”

“What are you talking about?”

“There are two love stages. Level one is the least severe and Lydia’s life is an example. Level two has never been reached, and it is dangerous. Level two is known

when Ramses shows extremely irritable behavior to anyone else, and if the girl's name is mentioned or if any of his behaviors concerning her is spoken of, he gets paranoid, and he may even kill someone. He is also extremely secretive about it; he may even dream about her so much, he may be in La La Land so much he may forget he's even alive. If there is someone he loved in the level one and finds a level two, then the level one may even face death because he will turn on her and the love he felt will turn to hate. There will be only one person that will ever encounter level two, which is true love, but this will destroy the beloved's life because he will stop at nothing till she is his completely."

"Whoa! That is really bad, and has he ever found a love like that?"

"Hmm," she said as she turned the page. "In fact, he has. Oh no, it's somebody from Earth! Let's see, it says he loved her from the day he saw her when he was only three days old—however long ago that was. He looked into the window of the future, but she could not be reached, so he had to find another, but no one knows her name. She's probably dead by now, if not, I hope it's not anyone I know. If she was ever reached, then Lydia would be in big trouble and may even end up dead. If this person got married, then her husband's dead meat, but we still don't know how old he is, and we could figure how long he's dreamed about her."

"We still don't know where he came from, and how did he acquire that much power, and where do we look to find someone to face him?"

"Beats me, and that's all, but that helps a whole lot! Wait, what's this?" she said as she found something protruding out of the back. She pulled it out, and it was a map. Many strange landforms were on it and a mean looking idol. The names were written in some strange language. Neiko examined it carefully. "I know this! Me and Monchiska wrote in these symbols all the time in coded messages to hide important info from Crackedskulls, and these are Ancient Greek letters. I have a decoder in the front of one of my logbooks that I brought that has all of our secret coded Intel in it. This right here in big letters looks like the name of the place," she said as she pulled out the book and turned to the front. Each letter had its capital, lowercase, and English equivalent. The title was Εραμθηγιν. "I'll decode and see what I get—it may not work, and it may not say anything at all." She jotted each letter down on a blank sheet and it read Eramthgin. "Wait, 'eramthgin' is Greyhawk that simply means 'nightmare'. I wonder what this place is. I'll decode a few more and see what kind of place this is." She looked to the idol and it read ζυλ-Καρ Ιδολ, and it decoded to Vul-Kar Idol. Other names were: Μουνταινσ οφ Μαλιχε, Λακε οφ Λαχιωιουσνεσσ, ανδ ζολχανο οφ ζενγεανχε. These were decoded as: Mountains of Malice, Lake of Lasciviousness, and Volcano of Vengeance.

"What names! That place is a nightmare! The name is the only thing that's not in English. Who writes in that crazy stuff, and is that place real? What does it have to do with Ramses because it's in that journal, and where did he find something like that?"

"All he says about it is that he found it in Eht Dnalsi in a historian's shop, and he bought it. It seems no one has been able to read the names. I think he assumed it has something to do with him, but no one is sure. It looks like a place he would hide out at. There is said to be some secret caves in the ruins of Shadazar, so let's see if there is a secret lever or something in here."

"What are those books up there?" asked Quickstrike as he looked at the shelf.

“It’s the Twelve Volumes of Pharaoh Black Magic! I gotta take a look, then let’s snoop around, and see if we can find those caves. I think they will have more of the answers we’re looking for,” Neiko said as she took down Volume Six; the books were also written in the ancient language that she read aloud. “Time travel,” she said and turned the page. “Fireball. Wow! I gotta see volume twelve. “Transfer spell, and specialty crystal—I wonder what that means? Let’s look and see if there’s a secret passage in here. Once I find everything, I’m gonna record them in this blank logbook.

“Why won’t you take everything with you?”

“I don’t want Ramses to destroy the evidence or find these books—remember we heard that he was looking for these. I’ll only take this map just to be safe, and I want to do some more research on it.”

“You must make sure he never finds out where you found everything because he will finish what the Marauders started and maybe loot the treasure. Who knows, he may even find what’s left of Shadazar; that is, if we find it.”

“I agree, and I won’t record where I found it just in case he ever finds this book. Let’s go ahead and look around, and let’s be careful. I don’t want to fall into the dark again.”

The two looked around the room carefully for quite a while but found nothing. While Neiko was thinking as she walked around. She stubbed her toe on something. “Wo! What in the—” she bent down and looked at a box that was partly buried. “Help me dig this up.”

“What is it?”

“Some box,” she said as they started to dig it up in the soft, dusty dirt.

After she dug it up, she used her tomahawk to break the lock. She opened it and found a sticklike object and an armband. The stick-like object was open at both ends and it had gold engravings on it. It was made of black onyx, and had a large ruby on the side. The armband had three jewels on top, a diamond, a ruby, and an emerald.

“What’s this?” asked Quickstrike handing her a piece of paper and a belt. The belt was thin with a buckle depicting an eagle with red eyes carrying a skull with long, curved fangs. The eagle was gold, and the skull was jade with ruby eyes. The belt was black leather with gold designs, and it had a hilt for the strange object. Neiko slipped it on with a perfect fit, then took the paper from Quickstrike.

“This says this stick is a lightning sword, a magical armband, and the belt is magic too. It also says what they do, but Rumi hasn’t been able to activate the lightning sword. These are Dark Pharaoh weapons, and I bet Platinum Puss is missing these.”

“What do they do?”

“The sword has blades made of lightning coming out of these holes, and it also throws lightning bolts. The armband has magic stones. The diamond throws ice; the ruby fire and the emerald controls water and air; no one knows what the belt does, but it carries the lightning sword. I wonder how this sword works,” Neiko said as she tried different techniques but no avail. Then she accidentally moved the ruby upward, and the blades shot out of both sides. She tested it by spinning it, and she found it was an easy one to fight with. Suddenly, she pressed the ruby, a bolt shot out, hit the box, and turn it into splinters. She hit the wall with the blade, and it cut a chunk out with the greatest of ease. Neiko moved the ruby back, and the blades went back in.

“Wow! I bet that will come in handy, and you can fight with DP weapons. Neiko, you’re amazing!”

“Not really—it seemed natural and just came to me—I don’t know how. I like it so much that I think I’ll keep it. Finders keepers; losers weepers. I wonder what other weapons he has,” she said as she put it in the hilt, strapped on the belt, and put on the armlet.

“Well, we found Dark Pharaoh weapons but no secret passage.”
“Hmm,” she said then she looked under the shelf where the volumes were. “I think I found something,” she said as she pressed the button, and the desk moved then there was a secret passage. Neiko grabbed the torch and walked into the passage, and she was blinded by a reflection of light.