

Victory at Cholomay

The Healing Mother and the heroes gathered in the Great Hall of the Henshu Monastery with various masters of the Secret Light.

Yenzah, a Vandarian Warrior, sat next to the Healing Mother at the great wooden table, made from the pine of fallen trees in the Vanishing Forest.

“My good heroes,” the Healing Mother stood up to face those gathered there. “I am most pleased to introduce our latest hero—Yenzah. He is a Vandarian Warrior and most welcome at our table.”

Yenzah, sitting at her right, bowed his head in acknowledgement.

“This afternoon, my dear heroes,” the Queen continued, “we must come up with a plan on how to defend the Northern Kingdom but at the same time we have to keep searching for the next Lantern. This is the only way to ultimately defeat the growing forces of monsters spreading far and wide in the land. Yenzah—”

At that moment, a messenger came into the Great Hall, bowed, and brought a sealed scroll to Yenzah. Yenzah opened it, read it silently, and put it aside with a sigh. All eyes were on the tall brown-haired Vandarian with his wings folded and tucked away and his amber brown eyes set with golden lights looking troubled and sad.

“Yenzah, what has happened?” asked the Healing Mother, her brow crinkling the slightest bit in concern.

Yenzah stood up, towering above the Queen and his wings still tucked behind him but the power and strength made each hero’s blood run cold in fear and yet a deep joy bubbled up from deep inside at the same time.

With him on their side, they would do well! Unknowingly, they all held their breath.

“Queen Amaterian, Heroes of Lanofeh—I just received a message from one of my personal acolytes. An open declaration of war has been issued by the high heretic priest who is leading the corruption and the conversion of the people of Lanofeh. Their wicked goal is to get the Lanofehans to welcome and embrace the monsters and become monsters themselves.

“Queen Amaterien, your task—your great call at this time—is to answer this call against the forces of darkness! How will you answer?”

Yenzah sat down. Every hero at the table exhaled with a collective gasp, awaiting the answer of the Healing Mother.

“Yes, Yenzah, I will answer the call! My esteemed heroes, will you accompany me in this great task?”

The Healing Mother looked over the heroes gathered there in the Great Hall. They bowed one by one, emboldened and encouraged by the presence of the Vandarian Warrior. The Healing Mother then lifted her eyes up to Yenzah. Yenzah bowed to the Queen. “It is settled,” he said.

“Good! Now Yenzah, will you join us in a feast to celebrate Suzaro?”

“I would be delighted to, Queen Amaterien.”

“Then all my heroes—my good Yenzah included—let us go forth and celebrate Suzaro!”

The heroes, Yenzah, and the Healing Mother all stood and the servants of the Great Hall came and with great bustle, readied the room for the celebration. The Great Hall filled with new guests and the joy of Suzaro filled the room as the festivities began.

Later that night, the Healing Mother was greeted by one of the new guests, Malalm Ormanjer, a rebel leader against the monsters.

“Your Majesty,” he said, “I had the great misfortune of once being the best friend of Gradval Kumoriuss. As I’m sure you know, he has become one of the head priests of the heretic leaders of the shadow horde.”

“Yes,” answered the Healing Mother, “I have heard that and I have also heard great things about you, Malalm Ormanjer..” She nodded her head slightly as a sign of great respect.

“Queen Amaterien—or as they call you Healing Mother in this land—I respectfully request that you give me the honor to defeat my nemesis in battle if the opportunity arises. It is the only way to cleanse my unfortunate friendship with this person.”

“So granted,” said the Healing Mother. “We leave at first light tomorrow.”

“I shall be ready.”

The festivities soon ended and all the heroes, the Queen, and Malalm Ormanjer left early to make ready their packs and to get some rest before the journey in the morning. The Queen had arranged for her Quarter Master to have all the provisions and mounts at the ready at first light.

They gathered in the morning and left just as the sun was peaking out from the horizon in the East. Malalm led the way to a field outside of the middle of the Northern Kingdom, just North East of Hendirth, a small trade town called Tholomay.

“This, Healing Mother, is the best defensible place to fight our enemy and my trusted scouts who are rangers tell me that it is here they will attack.”

The Healing Mother readied her forces. The heroes waited.

So the battle began. The monsters and the heretic priests attacked, led by a snarling Gradval Kumoriuss. Malalm and the heroes and Amaterien pushed them back, defending the small village Tholomay against the enemy assault.

But just as victory looked like it would be within their grasp, Kumoriuss summoned another horde. This happened three more times until Ormanjer, the Queen, and Yenzah led a charge with a battle cry and blue pure light cascaded from Amaterien's staff, piercing the eyes of the monsters and priests. They turned and fled.

Ormanjer caught his nemesis as he fled and they fought fiercely with swords flashing in the sky like silver. After Graval attempted a failed thrust to Ormanjer's

side, the rebel leader with a triumphant yell plunged his sword deep into the belly of the heretic leader.

The enemy defeated, the Heroes and Amaterien shouted in triumph! Then they all entered Tholomay where the crowds of villagers cheered and danced and praised Suzaro.

That evening, the Healing Mother, the Heroes, Yenzah, and Ormanjer gathered at the palace to celebrate, hosted by the village master, Rendelth.

“Tonight,” Rendelth said while holding up his glass of special-brewed Hendirth wine brewed from the Hannel berries of the Boarspine Mountains, “we celebrate our victory and give thanks to Suzaro. And thanks to Queen Amaterien, her heroes, the valiant Ormanjer, and our eminent Vandarian Yenzah!”

“In thanks to Suzaro for giving us the victory!” cried Amaterien, and held her glass of wine to her lips, sipping daintily at the fruity dark blue liquid.

“The victory of Suzaro!” Everyone cheered and drank from their glass, joy lighting their faces.

After the feast, Yenzah, seated at the grand table with the Queen, waved his hand in the air. All eyes suddenly turned on him, fascinated.

A lantern appeared before Amaterien.

“Only those who are leaders who follow with pure intentions are able to find the lantern and only then will the lantern be able to be given to them. Therefore Queen Amaterien of Kapacé and Healing Mother of the Henshu Monastery of Lanofeh, I give to you the lantern and its sacred scroll.”

Yenzah then reached into the lantern and brought out a scroll. Flecked with gold, the paper dazzled the eyes. The onlookers were forced to look away. Only the Queen could gaze at it and not shield her eyes. Yenzah also gazed at it steadily, waiting for her to read it.

“This is what the Word of Suzaro says. Good people of Lanofeh, hearken and put these words into practice and you shall have joy always and forever, no matter what foe may come against you or in the midst of any hardship you might face.”

She read the scroll and the feast gatherers listened solemnly and with joy rising in their hearts and minds.