

The Legend of Greywinds – Book 5

Storms of Assiral

Chapter 1 – Leaving Zaria

“Jeti, I must tell you that I have no idea where we are going. I only know that with us going to Assiral, Fiera will be forced to go to Edana in my stead. Does that not make sense? Is she not more capable of flying on the back of her beast? Do you think she will be angry with me?”

Jeti snorted, stopping Jada in her tracks.

“What a silly question. Of course, Fiera will be angry. It matters not. She and Carena are the Chosen Ones and I will not allow them to take unreasonable risks. I love them too much.”

Jada and Jeti resumed their trek along the road leading away from the Valley of the Moons and the Festival of Peace. Although she was frightened by the thought of the unknown that lay ahead for them both, she knew that this was the right thing to do. Besides, she had Jeti by her side—a powerful Spirit Warrior. Arial and Garam had recently witnessed Jeti’s power. Jada hoped they would be able to convince Fiera, Carena, and Lexa that she was in good hands.

Suddenly the fear of the Assiral Plains sent a cold chill through her body. The hair on her neck, arms, and legs stood on end. She was scared. There was no doubt about that. She prayed silently to the grey winds for guidance and protection. A light wind at her back urged her on. As she walked, she began to sing and dance to keep her mind on something positive.

Jada had no idea what she was walking into that evening. The one thing she did know deep within her soul was that this was where she was supposed to be. And having Jeti by her side was immensely comforting.

She questioned Jeti for hours as they traversed the open meadow beyond the valley. The night sky was bright, yet there was little sound as they travelled. Most Zarians were still at the Festival of Peace. Jada was pleased. She knew the silence of this night gave her an advantage. It would truly make it more difficult for Fiera and Rayn to locate her and Jeti. Jada and her companion had devised various plans of action should the sound of a galloping horse or the flapping of dragon wings fill the air around them.

“Do you know where the City of Peace lies in the Plains?” asked the Echo.

Jeti shook his head. He spoke the language of the Cheveyo, a language that only a handful of Zarians and this Echo could understand.

Jada laughed. “You silly unicorn,” she answered. She wrapped her arms around his neck and gave a loving hug. “Will you stay with me forever? From where do those images on your wings come? What else can you do?”

These questions sparked a rather long conversation between these two. Hours passed as Jada hungered for more details and Jeti did his best to fill her needs. The moons were falling from above. As Jada glanced up into the sky, the sight of Arianrhod brought a tear to her eyes as she pondered the loss of Naia. Oddly enough, at that same moment, she witnessed what appeared to be a red orb jutting from the reddish moon, bobbing about for just a moment against the black canopy of night then returning to its home.

“I love you too, Naia,” shouted the Listener. She knew her little friend was in a very good place. That made Jada’s heart sing, which in turn made her think of dancing. She simply stopped right there and pulled out her scarf. She would do the Tari right here, right now, in honor of her friend Naia, the water sprite.

Jeti stood by and watched—this Echo’s performance always impressed those fortunate enough to witness her in action. When she had accomplished her task, she made her way to Jeti. He bowed to her. She curtsied back, then carefully folded her scarf and placed it back in one of the pockets of her blue robe. They walked for another hour or so. The moons were oftentimes out of view now as they hid behind thickets of faes. Once the duo ventured away from a thicket, the red- and blue-hazed moons appeared again; each time a little closer to respite as the light from the first sun overshadowed them as it forced its way into the new dawn.

“Jeti, I am in need of rest,” she remarked as she moved ahead of the unicorn. “It has been a long night. We need a place where I can be confident that Fiera will not find us. I am a bit bewildered that she has not attempted a search as of yet. Is it possible that they do not know I am gone? Was my letter unclear? Do they not care whether I am gone?”

Jeti, with head bent and horn at Jada’s backside, pushed her off balance making her stumble and stop asking questions. Then he snorted loudly.

“What are you doing?” asked the Listener with the slightest bit of irritation in her voice. She listened as Jeti spoke in her mind.

“Alright, alright. I will concede that these questions are ridiculous under the circumstances. My letter was very clear. It has been what, nearly eight or so hours since we left? They must know I am gone by now. Carena, Lexa, Arial, and Garam all love me and surely care about me. And although I seem to irritate Fiera at times—alright, a lot—I really believe I am starting to grow on her. Perhaps they have confidence in me after all and realize I am really the best one to travel to Assiral. Yes, that must be it! They believe in me!”

Jeti simply let Jada converse with herself as he led the way to a cave-like opening in a small hill hidden by a thicket of small faes and butterfly bushes. As they approached, the butterflies all flew from their branches and lined up on either side of Jeti as he led Jada closer to the opening. They were showing respect.

Jada was so preoccupied with her internal conversation that she nearly missed this stunning display of beauty and reverence. As soon as her mind took a break from the quest, she was able to be in the moment, a moment that touched her heart.

She followed her friend into the cave. It was opulent in a simple sort of way. The walls were covered in mother of pearl. Lightning bugs rested inside peridot sconces on the walls.

An emerald table stood near the most inner wall of this cave. On it sat bowls made of sapphire, ruby decanters, and large garnet chargers. Small piles of various gems were strewn around the perimeter of this place.

“Jeti, who lives here?” Jada waited for his response. “Heming. Is he a dwarf?” Again, she waited for her answer. “He is Nabbit’s brother? How exciting! Is he nearby? I would so love to meet him.” The Cheveyo’s answer was brief. “Of course, how silly of me. He too is at the Festival of Peace. Perhaps another time.”

Jeti motioned to a place a bit recessed into one of the walls. She would sleep there without interruption and would definitely be hidden from anyone’s view.

Jada thanked her friend and within moments of resting her head on a tuft of grass, she was asleep.