

One

They didn't want to be there. The trip was long and slow, given her condition, and it really would have been better to stay at home. But, what with times as tight as they were, they had to go where the work was. Her water broke on the dirt road outside an inn. The man went to the innkeeper and requested a birth room. The innkeeper sneered at his few coppers and told him to move along. From the back of the inn came a stentorian voice.

“This birth will be of significance!”

The innkeeper turned his head to see who spoke. In the corner sat an old man wearing a long blue robe. The innkeeper quickly shouted to his help, “Setup the birthing room!” He didn't know if the seer was right, but if he was, the birth would make him rich.

The man ushered his wife into the inn and then into the birthing room. It had seen its share of births, but was reasonably clean and comfortable. Her labor was mercifully short and a boy was born to the couple. The father held his son up for the workers to see.

“Wait!” cried the seer. “There is another!”

The mother went into an additional labor and another son was born.

“Twins!” shouted the father.

The innkeeper smiled. Even if they turned out not to be something special, the mere fact that twins had been born there meant notoriety and more business for his inn. The seer got up and walked over to inspect the twins.

“This one,” he said as he pointed to the second born, “reeks of magic and will be a great warlock!” He looked at the older baby. “This one has no magic in him! He will be a working man like his father. They must be named!”

“We thought there was a single child. For the oldest, we give his father's name Morgan,”

said the mother, weakly. The father nodded in agreement.

“Well chosen!” said the seer. “And the younger?”

The couple whispered to each other for a few minutes.

“For the next, we give the name Robin,” stated the father, as he looked at the seer for approval.

“Excellent choice! He will be bright and shining!” agreed the seer, who then returned to his table in the back.

The innkeeper left and brought the seer another mug of warm mead to thank him for his service. The father walked back to the seer’s table and handed the seer one of his precious coppers.

“Thank you, m’Lord, for your intervention.”

The old seer looked up at the father and handed him his mead.

“Drink up; you’re going to need it.”

The father looked at the seer quizzically.

“Your oldest will be easy to raise and he’ll be a fisher, like you. The youngest, on the other hand, will need to be enrolled at a training academy when he is five years old. Between now and then, he will be a handful and will cause chaos in your household with his untrained magic.”

“What can we do?” the father asked.

“You can try to raise him yourselves or you can give him to a master mage to raise.”

“My wife would never agree to that!”

“None of them do, at first.”

“Would you be the mage?”

“Ha! I am merely a seer. You would have to travel to the Capitol to find a master.”

“Then it is good fortune that we are headed there. If we cannot raise him, we will be in a place with masters.”

“Take care, if you decide to place your son. Many masters are masters in name only and would exploit him. You will need to find a true master mage! If it comes to it, try to find old Gwydion, if he still lives, or Keara the witch. Stay away from Elymas and his followers!”

“Thank you, m’Lord.”

On the second day after the birth, the couple took up their sons and continued down the dirt road toward Aka, the Capitol of the second kingdom. The innkeeper placed a plaque out front of the inn which stated: Krueger’s Inn, the birthplace of the twins Morgan and Robin. His inn became a popular rest stop for hopeful parents.

Two

As the couple entered the city of Aka, they veered toward the harbor. Morgan, the father, made sure his sons were seen as they walked by the quay where the fishermen were unloading their catches. One of the boat masters looked him over, then noticed the twins.

“Hey you,” the boat master shouted, “Are you a fisherman?”

Morgan walked over to the boat. “Aye,” he said, “Are you this ships master?”

“Indeed. I am Raia and this is the Amerlin. Do you need a berth? I can use a fair hand.”

“I am Morgan and this is my wife Gwyn and our sons, Morgan and Robin. I am looking for a berth and accommodations for my family in port.”

The boat master looked closely at Morgan. He could see that he was an experienced fisherman by the calluses on his hands and the sunburnt look about his eyes. Then he looked at the mother and her children. “Twins?” he asked.

“Yes, born less than a fortnight ago.”

“I see. I have a place for you and the missus and children can stay at the Nydia Inn. I’ll front you the first week so you can get settled. Is it an agreement?”

“Yes,” said Morgan. The men shook hands and Raia escorted them to the Nydia, pleased with his luck at having a father of twins aboard.

The innkeeper at the Nydia was happy to show them a third floor room. It was small, but no smaller than they were used to. An old crib was brought up for the babies and worn, but clean, linen was placed on the bed. The couple dropped their packs and thanked the innkeeper and the boat master.

Raia spoke, “We sail at midnight, be aboard before then. Tonight we fish for squid!”

The master and the innkeeper left the couple alone in their room. Gwyn opened her

blouse and began to feed the babies.

“Oof,” she said, and pulled Robin off of her right teat. Her right breast was noticeably larger than the other. She switched the babies feeding positions and began again.

“Ow!” Once again, she pulled off Robin. Now her left breast was much larger than the right. She sighed and put him on again.

“Morgan, is this going to happen every time?” Gwyn gave her husband an exasperated look.

“I believe it might,” said Morgan. “The seer warned me of magic mischief with the little one.”

“Well it would have been nice to warn me! I’ll have to alternate him so I don’t become all stretched out. What else may we expect?”

“The seer wasn’t specific. He simply said that magical infants can be hard to raise because they cannot control their magic.”

Gwyn’s left breast was now twice the size of her right breast. She switched them back again and her left breast began to shrink.

Gwyn looked at Morgan and said, “I’m going to need some brandy.”

Morgan looked at Gwyn puzzled.

“Not for me, for my nipples! A little brandy will help the babies sleep and deaden the nipple pain.”

Morgan walked downstairs to the hall and bought a copper’s worth of cheap brandy. When he returned, Gwyn stuck her finger into the bottle and wiped it on her nipples. She placed the babies back on her teats. Baby Morgan sucked greedily, as usual. Baby Robin tasted the nipple, made a face, and then proceeded to suckle. Gwyn tasted her finger. “Sugar! The little shit

has turned it into sugar!” Morgan tasted the brandy. It was as sweet as honey. He heard a disturbance erupting two floors below them. Apparently, Robin had turned all of the alcohol in the inn to sugar water.

Fortunately, no one knew the cause, yet. Morgan and Gwyn looked at each other and then Robin. And so it went. Each day they would try to raise their baby and each day there was an unforeseen incident. When Robin developed diaper rash, pustules broke out at the inn, resembling the pox. When Robin began teething, everyone in the quarter began drooling uncontrollably. The seer was right. It did not take them long to realize that they were out of their league with Robin, so Morgan began a hunt for a master mage each day after he returned from fishing.