

Tarenthis's New Beginning

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A short story about how my NElfie Priest came to be an Undead Priest, poor boy...

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1 - One-Shot

“Yeah, I did a good job on yeh, even if I do says so myself.”

The guttural male voice cut through the nightmares brought Tarenthis to his senses. He jerked upright into a sitting position, barely hearing the ominous creaks his body seemed to be making. “What?” His voice felt rough. “Who are you?” And, with dawning realisation, “...where am I?”

“Took ages t' get t' bloatin' out though. Messy stuff, messy stuff.” The owner of the voice gave no impression of having heard the elf's voice. “But yehs did turn out right.”

Torn between frightened and nonplussed, his eyes apparently failing to adjust to the darkness, Tarenthis tried again. “Where am I?”

There was a rustling somewhere to his left. He whipped his head around, his hair slapping the side of his face, in an attempt to glimpse who might be there. The world remained resolutely dark. There was a pause then the owner of the voice softly spoke, “eh, so yeh awake, are yeh?”

“You were just speaking to me...” His voice trembled slightly. Dear Elune, all those battles he had prevailed in, and here he was about to cry like some mere child!

“Nah. Talkin' at yeh. Tsk, yeh shouldn't be sat yet. No mind. 'Ere, let me help you with that.”

“Help me with wh...” The blackness abruptly lifted and the Priest found himself facing the most grotesque visage he had ever encountered. It smiled. Unable to contain his fear any longer, Tarenthis began to scream.

After a few moments of watching the Priest's hysterics, the ghastly being reached out and awkwardly patted his shoulder. “Ey, it ain't all bad. Yeh turned out better than Puddles. And that's an achievement. Anyways, yeh carry on like that and yeh'll damage yeh 'cords.”

“Wh...what?” Much to his embarrassment, his voice hitched as he spoke. “Pu...ddles?” He wiped his eyes with the back of his hand and stared with a mixture of horror and disgust at the discoloured fluid left on his skin afterwards.

“Those're expensive 'cords too,” the figure grumbled, then pointed a finger - no, a claw? - at something over Tarenthis's shoulder. A note of pride crept into its voice as it spoke, “he's an 'andsome fine devil, ain't he?”

The Priest craned his head around to see what was being pointed at, his curiosity momentarily overriding his fears, then he choked.

`Puddles' certainly had the appearance of the devil, but `handsome' was obviously a subjective term. The creature glared up at Tarenthis with malevolent red eyes, then stretched out three wildly different front legs in an apparently relaxed manner as the Night Elf began to retch. Finally, apparently becoming bored with the lack of appreciation of its audience, Puddles struggled to its feet and lolloped to the opposite corner of the room, the two human arms attached to each side of its chest groping along the floor as it went. As it moved, unidentified fluid oozed from some indiscernible orifice, leaving a small, wet trail behind it.

“If... if that is your... previous achievement, then...” Realisation hit him like a sledgehammer and he looked back around slowly, “then what do I look like...?”

The face of the figure in front of him split into what could only loosely be termed a grin. The morbid expression struck terror into Tarenthis's heart. “Yeh're even better.” Seeing the Priest's mouth open, probably for another bout of hysteria, it added hurriedly, “ere, take a look.”

Tarenthis took the cracked and dirty red hand mirror that was thrust at him - the only splash of colour in the room aside from Puddles' eyes - and apprehensively stared at his reflection.

He jaw fell agape as he stared at the fractured image before him, then panic ripped through him as he noticed for the first time his own talon-like fingers, the mottled bare skin of his wrists and arms and, as his gaze fell lower, his elbows and knees.

The resurrectionist's attempts to head off his hysteria failed miserably.

In his terror, he wasn't expecting the being in front of him to grab the front of his hair and slap him roughly across the face. “Snap outta it! Like I said, those best quality 'cords, you ain't gonna damage 'em now!”

Tarenthis stared in numb shock at the deathly pale face in the mirror, sickly yellow liquid leaking from his tear ducts. “I'm Scourge, I'm Scourge... I'm everything I hate...” His voice sounded tiny and exhausted in the dark room.

The face of the resurrectionist contorted in anger, becoming yet more ugly than before. “Yeh'll say no such thing, 'less yeh want me t' slap yeh so hard yeh head falls off, *then* we'll see how yeh manage! Yeh Forsaken. Forsaken by yeh people, forsaken by Elune - though yeh be the weirdest elf I seen yet - but not forsaken by Sylvanas. She needs yeh, like she needs me and everyone else 'ere in Deathknell.”

“Elune would not forsake me!” He cried hotly. “She loves her people! This is just a bad dream!”

This wild proclamation was met with yet another stinging slap across the cheek. “Yeh felt that didn't yeh? And yeh're still 'ere. Yeh beloved goddess has forsaken yeh and everyone else.”

“She's there, I know it! She'll protect me!”

The resurrectionist sighed and sat heavily on a roughly made stool. "Oh I daresay she'll still grant yeh yer spells, maybe even get yeh outta trouble if it's convenient enough for 'er. But don't be mistaken, she don't care. Yeh're a follower, yeh're power, but yeh're not important enough to 'er. Plenty more fish in the Veiled Sea."

Staring down at his knees, considering the bones showing awfully through the holes in his dry skin, the Priest murmured "I want to go home..."

"This is yeh home now lad," the grey-skinned resurrectionist said, ignoring the Priest shaking his head so violently his hair fell across his face. His own protruding pale blue eyes had taken on a faraway look. "This is t' only home we have." A short sharp shriek from Tarenthis brought the undead man back to the present. He glanced up at the ex-Night Elf, whose hand was pressed tightly to the side of his head and snapped, now evidently irate, "yeh're not gonna start screamin' again, are yeh? What's wrong *now*?"

His left hand crept to the other side of his head, and Tarenthis whispered, "you stole my ears."

The resurrectionist stared at the Priest for a moment in complete consternation, then laughed loud and genuinely. "What? Why? What'd I do with bat-ears like yers? No use nor decoration, those things! I don't want 'em. 'S'why yeh're t' oddest elf I ever seen though. Elf with no ears! Yeh're sure yeh didn't misplace 'em?"

"Ears aren't something you..." His voice trailed off as memories crashed haphazardly to the forefront of his mind: knives, ears, green skin, pain and more blood than he could ever remember seeing before. "No..."

"So yeh *did* misplace 'em!" The resurrectionist grinned triumphantly and horribly.

Tarenthis had no answer.