

Xaltor's Glory and Honor

An interloper wrote about chaotic power: "This inherent problem with the Thayan government has proved to be its weak point again and again. Because there is no one in charge of everything, no one responsible for making it all work, the various factions in Thay end up spending more time battling one another than carrying out their plans for world domination. This has been a saving grace for the rest of Toril. Should a single zulkir ever manage to take full control of the nation, the rest of the world is in for a rough ride (FR Unapproachable East, page 164)."

The country of Thay, once a large portion of the Mulhorandi Empire, extends from the borders of Thesk and Aglarond in the west to the Sunrise Mountains in the east (Forgotten Realms Unapproachable East, page 148). Eight Zulkirs (one for each school of magic) rule the land, which consists of eleven regions called Tharchs. Of the Tharchions who are appointed, only one is not evil. He reigns over the desolate area of Thazalhar; the smallest of the tharchs outside of the islands of Alao (FRCS, page 157). This Tharchion has then appointed local bureaucrats called Autharchs, of which any of the middle class may aspire to. You are the son of one such Mulan noble.

Mulan blood runs deep in most Red Wizards. Not so much for you, as your mother was a slave from the north whom you never knew. It's rumored that her skin was as white as alabaster, and her hair yellow like the sun. Father must have

paid a great price for such a healthy breeding stock.

Raised in the city of Thazalhar, your blond hair was hidden by shaving your head bald as is custom for most prominent young nobles. More correctly, this is custom for most of the middle class; slaves are forbidden to cut their hair, and all power resides in the Red Wizards. Thus it was made popular by Thayans trying to mimic their venerated wizards, right down to the tattoo that adorns the top of your head. It is normally very intimidating. Now that your hair has grown and you have bangs, it is nearly unnoticeable. Your blue eyes however, make you stand out. Which makes you popular with the ladies (don't think I haven't noticed). It's probably how you got your name. Xalt in Mulhorandi means cobalt. Your normally light skin can be changed by the summer into a bronze instead of the sallow skin normally seen on the rest of us Thayans. Your large frame and height can be masked by loose fitting clothes and walking hunched. You, unlike your brothers and sisters, show absolutely no magical talent. We've always suspected you're a bastard (in more ways than one), but fear father more than any Zulkir. This is partly why you are being groomed to become a Thayan Knight (Complete Warrior, page 85), the protector of us Red Mages (and mostly why I haven't already cut out your heart). Don't let it go to your head, but what you lack in magic, you more than make up for with sword and shield. It's been (reluctantly) said that those whom do not run away from your dreadful wrath in abject fear risk complete humiliation. You pluck the spear from their hands as you

sweep their feet from beneath them. Then graciously pause the fight, pull them up from the dirt, hand back their weapon, and yell in their face, "Give me a challenge so I can kill you fairly!" Many of your opponents don't know whether to laugh or cry. Because you are, all the while, showing your infuriatingly gleaming white teeth. And the bigger the crowd the wider the smile. Gloryhound... your ego will be the death of you. Pray there are no female bards in that new city of yours. Oh I forgot, you don't worship any of the deities. You may wish to pay homage to one soon, as it may be the only chance to save that thick head of yours.

You were born to a strict but caring, and over protective father; your childhood was shielded from the many horrors of an intrinsically evil society. Although you have seen persons killed, even publically tortured, you trust in your nation's laws. Father said they should not have been wearing a red robe in the first place. But you and I know that every corrupt authority figure carries an extra red robe in case talking doesn't get them what they want.

While you are not fully aware of what father does for a living, you know he is very high up in the hierarchy. The Red Wizard I work for (and who secretly sponsors father), has eaten dinner with us a few times. Although, he would never say he is anything but a lowly merchant, father is in truth a Khazark. This is equal to an Autharch, but holds more power and esteem as the position can only be held by a Red Wizard. He

is sending you to a city where an enclave is being established. Here you will perfect your fighting skills and report back any information you can about the goings on of this enclave. This is both to prove your patriotism and help insure that the enclave prospers. After all, Thay is no longer considered the evil place that wants to conquer the world. We are now respected creators of the most highly sought after magic items in all of the world.

I tried to remain detached, but I have indulged myself (and you) long enough. This will be the last time you hear from me, as I have my own nefarious plans to make. Destroy this letter once you've read it. Do NOT ask any questions (especially you being a bastard (We both know it's self evident)). There is no signature; no one will believe that I would waste my time on the likes of you. It might be prudent to keep your nationality hidden like your tattoo for the time being. At least until we have a semi-permanent foothold in that foreign cesspool.

Be successful brother and try not to die. To the glory of Thay and the honor of it's knight.