

Chronicles of Mardoun

Chapter 2 - The Dream

“The Eternals can look forward in time, but there are gaps and sometimes the multiverse can remove those gaps” – Cleric Ojetin

The dream was always the same and she knew she was dreaming. Kittara found herself as Mardoun in a battle so long ago that every mention of it was from the forbidden times and even Chlo had no records. As one of The Damned she had access to the Temple Of The Flame and to the forbidden books from older times of the Multiverse. There was no big bang, the Multiverse always was and according to the Eternals like Sikush always would be. The Multiverse had bubbles which were created, expanded and then shrank back to nothing. These were the universes where stars formed and world existed with life on them, in rare cases intelligent life. How many bubbles ? Chlo had once told her more than there were grains of sand in the great desert of Mendera. Then there were alternate dimensions and beyond those alternate realities. She had visited a few, but always felt uncomfortable. Worlds with no night, where you could see thousands of miles with no horizon always made her long for home.

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The Menderan’s measured times by ages of The Temple. Sikush decide when a new age was due and one had been called for 523 million years time. This was almost tomorrow to The Damned and Kittara was actually worried if she could complete all the tasks she had to complete before it arrived. Each age of The Temple was about 800 billion Menderan Years and they were now in the 14th age of The Temple. Kittara was born in the 3rd Age and Alyz was older than her having been initiated in the 2nd Age. The 1st Age had started after the last great switch in the Multiverse and everything before that was forbidden knowledge.

Occasionally after truly unimaginable periods of time the Multiverse stops opening new bubbles and eventually only a few remain. The Eternals have the power to keep open a few and Mendera was in such a bubble that had been kept open through countless switches. After nearly all the bubbles were closed The Multiverse would begin opening new ones and the great cycle would begin again.

Very little intelligent life survived a switch and the clerics considered all knowledge of previous switches forbidden knowledge. Why forbidden ? She’d once spent several days with the oldest and wisest of the clerics listening to him explain that the Multiverse needed to reset so progress could happen.

“If nothing ended, then there would be no progress and if we hang onto the knowledge of past times we won’t strive to learn about our own.”

“But we, The Damned don’t die, are we doomed not to progress ?”, she had asked.

“The Guard evolve by taking on new members, and in that way you will evolve”, he had said.

Even after many sessions with the wisest clerics of The Flame she still preferred the answer she got from Sikush.

“It is forbidden because that is how it’s been forever, and you don’t mess with something that’s worked that long”.

Yet in The Temple of The Flame in Mendera were books which told of past times and powers that existed before The Damned had become the guardians of The Temple and the Empire. Who had written these books she had no idea and to enter The Temple meant instant death for anyone but clerics and The Damned, but Sikush had never tried to stop her reading the forbidden books. One book from the archives written on metal so old even Chlo couldn’t date it

spoke of Mardoun who had fought with the Holy Warriors to protect the gateway and imprison the one who now was kept prisoner beneath the Temple Of The Flame. It was nearly a million years after she first read the book before Sikush told her she was the soul, the spirit of Mardoun.

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In the dream she was at Gateway on the lowest level of the last reality that even Holy Warriors could survive in. There was no humidity, no oxygen, and the temperature was hotter than an oven. Nothing except an army protected by The Eternals could survive, yet coming towards them hundreds of miles away was a moving mass of creatures.

Part insect, part mollusc and red in colour the creatures of chaos moved forward. There was no horizon here and no night or day, the light came from a constant red glow that seemed to come off the baked barren rocks themselves. Yet in the distance millions of creatures could be seen picking their way over the broken landscape. Some seemed to move on a great mass of tentacles and others on hundreds of legs.

She looked to either side and saw the Holy Warriors spread out to either side, thousands of them in a long line going into the distance on either side. Not The Damned but the previous warriors used by The Chalné way back through the switches until the amount of time becomes almost meaningless. The Chalné means The Eternal in the old language of a long dead race from the forbidden times and he has had many types of warriors to defend whatever empire then existed.

She as Mardoun held up her hand and her fingers glowed and a ball of pure white light grew and then hurtled off in the direction of the creatures. It hit the front row and instantly many hundred thousand of them crumbled to dust. Then the world seemed to go crazy. Thousands of miles away great fissures opened in the ground and huge creatures crawled out in their hundreds, then thousands, then millions. The whole landscape was alive and on either side she knew The Holy Warriors were sending off every offensive spell they had. No one seemed to worry about the proximity of the damage they caused and she felt herself scorched by massive heat and then frozen to near absolute zero, then a huge explosion would rock the ground below her. The creatures died in their millions yet kept coming and then in the far distance the ground shifted and from it came crawling chaos. She couldn't bear to look but neither could she look away as the formless impossible crawling chaos forced itself into existence.

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Then as always she woke. Not sweating or in a panic, she'd had the dream far too often and it was of a time long gone and forgotten. Besides they had the formless chaos safely sealed away for all time under The Temple of the Flame.