

Pangea

Heart To Heart

Sidebar

In Dwarven culture, mental health struggles is seen as a sign of weakness. At least historically. In recent centuries, the stigma surrounding mental health issues has lessened, resulting in more dwarves being open about their emotions and thoughts.

Eryk, on his knees in a torrent of tears and wails, weakly grasps at Allura's arm. "I'm so... I'm so..."

Allura, with tears of her own forming in the corners of her eyes, takes hold of Eryk. "Sir Eryk, I harbor no ill will towards you. The events of my death were outside your control. You have nothing to apologize for, my friend."

"It was my hand... The dagger, it..." Eryk sobs against Allura's shoulder, his massive form nearly bowling the pair over. "I should have stopped it..."

"You did everything you could, Eryk. It was I that stepped in front of the blade to prevent that foul creature from gaining freedom. Had I not done so, I might not have died from the blade in my chest, but perhaps of the magics that monster possesses. If anyone is to blame, it is him for making such a weapon."

In between cries as he bears his soul, Eryk nods. "You really aren't mad?"

Allura smiles softly, comfortingly, at her friend. "Of course not. Nothing that happened there was your fault. Please, with my blessing, do not denigrate yourself."

"But you almost died when we first got there too. What about that?" Eryk wipes his tears, ever so slowly regaining his composure.

"Another trap set by the Archlich. His disdain for elves is apparent. Were it not for his evil, no harm would have befallen any of us, that much I assure you. Now, are you well enough to stand, Sir Eryk?"

Eryk pauses, still on his knees. "I think I'd like to sit here another minute."

Allura nods, lowering herself to a seated position in front of Eryk. "Then I shall wait with you."

Back at the camp, while Vik pours over his tome and the items the group took from Halafalala's vault, Omara is pacing back and forth. The young woman's mind is darkened by all that has happened in the few short days since leaving Reaper's Rest. All the harm and pain that has welcomed the group all too eagerly, and all because of her.

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“Vik?” Omara asks with grave hesitation. “Do you think I’m a bad person?”

Vik looks up from his work with a start, letting out a single, nervous chuckle. “You can’t be serious.”

“I am. Do you think I’m a bad person?” Omara sits next to Vik, her knees to her chest. “Think of everything that has happened. All because of me.”

Vik adjusts his glasses, inhaling deeply. “No, you are not a bad person. You are not a good person either. You are a person that sometimes does good and sometimes does bad. Which is to say, you are the same as every other person on the planet.” Vik gingerly places a hand on Omara’s shoulder. “You are also my friend, so for all the mistakes you will make in your life, I will continue to forgive you. That’s part of what being friends means.

Omara offers a weak smile, thinking back to all the times she got Vik in trouble. “I never apologized for getting you grounded the first time we explored the Cur ruins near home. Or for when we tipped Farmer Ben’s cows. Or the time I took you to the windmill and your belt got caught on the blades. Or the-.”

“All is forgiven, Omara.” Vik takes his hand back, sighing. “Honestly, those were some of the best times of my life. I’m... I’m worried about what going to university will mean. For me. For us.”

Omara looks up from her hands at Vik. For a moment, she searches his face for a deeper meaning. “You’ll still come home for breaks and stuff. Right? I mean, who in their right mind would miss the New Year festival in Reaper’s Rest?”

Vik nods. “I bet Independence City has nothing that compares to Mama Jules’ pumpkin pie.”

The pair laughs together for a moment. Then, a solemn silence falls over the field once more.

“I’m gonna miss you,” Omara says, looking off in the distance.

“And I you.” Vik falls quiet once more.

A moment of silence passes before Eryk and Allura return, taking seats around the empty firepit. For a time, everyone stares at the place void of light or heat, as if some part of them had burned away in the hours since the flames last roared.

“So...” Eryk mumbles. “Any luck with the stuff?”

Vik shakes his head clear of any lingering thoughts, nodding as he looks around the group. “Actually, yes. I found out some very helpful things. And I think we will all be rather surprised.”



STONEHART

IRON SEA

THE RIFT

MT.
STORMBREAK

REAPER'S
REST

AGEA

DRIFT SEA

GREENWOOD

PANGEAN OCEAN

