

Ash and Sooth

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RUHE, THE ORACLE is quietly studying a tattered, old book at a podium, her back against a window. She tenses up, lifting her gaze from the page. She shuts the book and stares off into the distance in front of her.

RUHE

You know, I can see you.

A FIGURE flinches behind her, from underneath the curtains hung by the window.

FIGURE

(stammering)

How? What the hell?

The figure walks out from the curtains, hesitating to step into the moonlight. He takes the leap, playing it off by raising his hands in the air and smiling sheepishly.

She finally turns around, silently staring at him. Scanning him up and down, she chuckles to herself as she realizes who he is. SAMIR, THE THIEF shrinks into his cape.

SAMIR

(nervously)

Can you please stop looking at me like that?

RUHE

Like what?

SAMIR

Looking at me with those...those weird blue and judgemental eyes...I feel like that's punishment enough.

RUHE

Is there something wrong with having blue eyes?

SAMIR

No,

(sigh)

no.

(muttering)

They're perfect. I just take it that you won't believe me if I said I got lost, right?

RUHE

Correct.

She says nothing else, gently swinging her arms wrapped around an ancient book with a mysterious rune. He waits for her to say more, until he realizes she's still carefully studying him.

SAMIR

Are you...not gonna ask me what I'm doing here?

RUHE

I already know what you're doing here.

SAMIR

Are you gonna call the guards on me?

RUHE

I've got a better idea. I'm willing to cut a deal with you. Care to listen?

He falls silent for a second, crossing his arms. He huffs in defeat.

SAMIR

I'm all ears.

RUHE

Well, you're in luck. If the legends are what brought you here, I'm sorry to say, this book is useless without me. I'm the only one that can read it.

Samir's face drops.

RUHE

(cont.)

I don't know exactly what you want with it, but I really, really need to get out of here. Let's just say...we have a common enemy, and they didn't exactly invite me to tea. If you can help me leave this place, I'll find a way to double whatever you thought this was going to get you.

Samir shifts his weight, tilting his head.

SAMIR

And how are you gonna do that?

RUHE
(hesitant)
I'll...get back to you on that.

Though, I imagine you'd prefer that
over whatever the
(loudly)
guards are gonna do to you once they
find out a *thief* broke in here.

Samir waves his hands to quiet her down.

SAMIR
Alright, alright. Keep it down!

He waits and listens to see if anyone heard them. As silence
fills the room, he sighs in relief.

SAMIR
Fine. I had an escape route planned
out. It wasn't meant for two people,
but...where's the fun in following
plans?