**Chapter 4 Flee**

I jumped up and screamed attack as three hulking figures climbed down to our little balcony. Lionshire rolled out of bed, waking instantly. He fired a lightning bolt that bounced off some magic shield and deflected, striking me. My right side was burned and my lungs had trouble taking in air. The pain was pushing me into unconsciousness. I fell backward unable to control my body. I focused inward and managed to cast my healing spell, draining my magic pool. I healed enough to breathe easier but the pain was still a solid 11. My vision was clear enough to see Lionshire defending against two invaders wielding dual short swords and a very large mage casting arcane bolts and shielding his fellow infiltrators. The mage had his back to me and my spear was still in my hand. The wrappings on the spear head had mostly disintegrated. I stood quickly and lunged forward using my legs to drive the spear into the big mage’s back…but his back armor blocked the spear but it slide up to the back of his neck and it entered his neck and came out the other side.

Yes! A kill. But the orc mage just turned around calmly and the spear ripped out of my hands. The room went still and everyone looked at me. In the pause I noticed Lionshire looked terrible. Blood was streaming down the orcs neck as he stared at me and all I could say was, “That looks painful.” I was thinking well it had been a good second life. Then the mage collapsed like a puppeteer cutting his strings and Lionshire blew one of the dual wielders into a wall with a lightning strike. The last attacker stood and a fourth dropped onto the balcony. Lionshire yelled at me to get to the stairs but thinking myself all heroic I tried to get my spear. As I was trying to pull the spear out the balcony attacker came at me. Two quick sword slashes and I was down again. My thigh and right shoulder had two gaping wounds. Well at least it was a shoulder wound instead of my head after I had made a bad dodge. I must have passed out because my next memory with Lionshire using healing poultices on my wounds. As soon as I came to he said to heal myself. He needed to go help elsewhere.

I used my training to speed up my magic pool recovery and was able to cast after 5 hours, this was good as it usually took almost 7 hours to regenerate enough magic. It was hard lying there, listening to the sounds of battle. I did think of what I would do when I could finally move. Hide, fight, wait. My attempts to be a hero so far had failed miserably. I did roll over enough to take in the dead infiltrator faces. Two orcs, one human and one half orc. They all had bad ass black leather armor. The human was about my size.

Casting the healing I was healed enough to stand and move around very gingerly. I was going to need at least another cast of the healing spell, probably two. At the balcony I looked down and saw an army of tens of thousands attacking. The defense looked strong and holding. I decided to toss the bodies off the balcony. I moved the long sword, four short swords, 9 daggers all with sheaths to my pocket space. All had magic runes on them so they were magical. Two mini crossbows with probable poison bolts as well moved to my storage. Only 9 bolts though. What else could I salvage? The human male’s leather armor would fit me. The guy was fried and had oozed over the armor a bit. It was also rune scribed…all the armors were inscribed. I spent an hour getting the armors off all four and moved them to my storage. I moved their hip pouches and small back packs as well to storage without looking at them. I took two necklaces, six rings, two nose rings, a bracelet, and four pairs of boots in storage. The mostly naked orcs offered me nothing else of value. One by one I dragged them over the balcony making sure they were not going to hit anything on the way down. I then worked slowly cleaning up the blood and gore. My body ached and I just needed something to do. When I finished I fell asleep.

It was near dusk when I woke. The battle still raged below. At the balcony I watched the orcs test the walls over and over again. The orcs had lots of mages. Chariots pulled by massive horned beasts. Giants throwing boulders. Our defense was holding but we definitely had weak mage support. Their attacks last night had been a success apparently. I was starting to get scared because it looked like the horde was playing with us below. I was close to having enough magic to cast again. Where was Lionshire? Our mages were mostly casting fire spells, no lightning I could see below. I waited and half an hour then cast healing again.

Still not 100% but good enough to pull a bow string. I had almost 250 arrows and it was time to use them. I fired one every minute or so at targets I could never hit. Chariot drivers, giants, leaders, mages, and charging groups. I always got my arrows into a mass of troops but never hit my intended target that I could see. Arms exhausted with my arrows as well I sat on the bed. I focused again on refilling my magic pool. The sun set and the attacks intensified below based on the increased volume. At the balcony it was obvious the fort was going to fall.

For the umpteenth I thought about running. Lionshire had told me to run. I couldn’t help in the defense, well I had killed the mage shadow assassin and probably killed 50 or more with arrows from my balcony so I had done enough. Right? The guilt of my conscious kept telling me to go to the walls below and die with everyone else. The wards on the wall had been shattered in secret which allowed the attacks on the war mages and they targeted their rooms as well…so we had also been betrayed…even more of a reason to run. Ok I had convinced myself. Time to run. I descended the stairs in my scribe’s garb.

As I went down I found bodies. Defenders and infiltrators. I added some more magic blades from the orcs, two long swords, six daggers and three hand axes. I grabbed five belts with the attached pouches as well, another 7 rings and two necklaces. That was the quick and dirty looting, any more would take too much time. As I got close to the top of the walls I turned off to the side stairway that led to a small exit gate to the stream I had bathed in a few weeks ago. There were no guards, no one to stop me. At the gate door I raised the bar and swung it open. It was dark so I went with thermal vison and moved along the stream to the supply road. The road was lined with tents and injured men getting treatment and food. The battle sounds were muffled here. I had no weapons and walked normally. I was finally questioned by two guards at a command tent asking me where I was going. I told them I was a scribe and my master told me to retreat. The wrong thing to say. An officer erupted from the tent and began questioning me. He inspected my hands which thankfully were not callused like a soldier but had some torn skin from all the bow firing I had done. I still had some minor injuries and told him I survived the assassination attempt on the war mage I was a scribe for. He asked me directly if I could fight with bow or sword. I told him I helped make arrows for a few hours avoiding the question. I was bailed by a large explosion on the top of the wall. You could see bodies flying over the wall into the night. The commander ran to his tent for weapons and took his guards and all the men he could round up to reinforce. Well damn how did an explosion happen at that height. I think I saw a silhouette of a dragon...probably a wyvern if scouting reports were accurate. I moved away from the fortification.

Left alone I went further and found a supply cart for the incoming soldiers that had a little bit of everything. I pulled out my backpack from my space. Then I moved 10 lbs of jerky, 5 lbs salted bacon, 1 lb salt, 10 lbs of hard cheese, a large bag of onions, a large bag of potatoes, 6 loaves of hard rye bread, a small cask of butter, 10 lbs flour, 60 eggs, a cooking pot, three bowls, three spoons, flint/steel, dry shavings, two heavy bed rolls, a two person tarp tent, 6 water skins, 20 candles, and 6 torches to my pocket space. I had to load a few things into my backpack as everything was just not going to fit. I put the camping gear in there and would carry those items and decided to drop the torches and candles after all I had my thermal vision.

Even though soldiers and camp attendants saw me I was not hindered. It helped that most of the items went secretly to my pocket space. The last thing I pulled out was a heavy rain coat, more like a duster. It was a little big but should be ok for me. As I walked groups of soldiers rushed past. Mounted knights, peasant spearmen, archers, and infantry swordsmen. I walked a little faster and just to prove how bad a day it was the morning brought cold rain. I walked a long time, eating jerky and cheese and casting my vitality spell to keep my pace.

When I had space I moved items to the dimensional space to make my pack lighter. The space was just over a cubic meter and I could cram things in there maximizing space. The leather armor and weapons were taking up most of the space but I decided to keep them for their value. I hoped to sell them and pass along the funds to my family.

I was over 300 miles from Rimeborn which should be almost due north. The Kingdom was going to be in for a world of hurt if the orcs spread from the passes. My goal was to get to my family. The next day I hit a town. Everyone was scared and peasants were already leaving in a train of carts north toward the capital. I joined them. I couldn’t cast my vitality spell anymore because I had almost no body fat from my multiple castings. My wounds at least were healed and my overall health was good.