

Harold the Ardently Knight of Battynannas: Part 2

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"Hey buddy, you made bail." The tone of the officer's voice was both commanding and demeaning.

Harold sat up in his cell. Stripped of his weapons, armor and boots, the back of his leg throbbed in pain. Why was he still alive? The Mage Knights had thrown him in their dungeon and then proceeded to ask him all sorts of questions. Had he visited the apothecary recently? Was he under the influence of any potions? What exactly was he doing at the Chamber Book and News that day? Did he know what year it was? Harold's memory was failing him and he could not answer their questions, nor did he feel compelled to comply with this riffraff. His expectations for whipping and torture ran high. Yet, there came none. These men were inexperienced and lacked discipline in their skills to do what was necessary. Harold rose his head to answer the Guard.

"What is bail?" he said.

"Yea, you know, you get to go home now. Someone saw fit to put up the money to release your crazy ass back into population. If I had it my way, you wouldn't see the light of day ever again. What you did back there at the book store was an act of pure madness, but the law is what it is. You are free to go."

Harold stood up as the heavy iron bars retracted into the wall. The urge to kill the Guard would have to be suppressed. If they were going to let him walk out of here, he thought it best to play their game. The Guard motioned him out of his cell, he stepped into the long bright corridor. Gate after gate slid open and shut behind him. The sunset beamed through the glass doors of the Fortress. No draw bridge? No moat? They were much weaker than he thought, but he knew they had powerful spells at their disposal. He limped out the front door into a world of advanced magic and machinery. This was not his world, he was somewhere else, in time maybe, or the heavens above. Maybe he was dead and just did not know it yet.

"You must be Harold?" A voice addressed him but he could not detect the source, he looked around trying to take in the new environment. Someone took hold of his hand.

"My name is Reggie Vaginstinehold but you can call me Reg. I'm the reason you're out of there." Harold looked at the short pudgy balding figure shaking his hand. He obliged and firmly gripped back, nodding.

"Thank you Sir Reg. I was informed you paid a great sum of gold to free me from the Mage Knight prison."

"Wow, they were not kidding. You are either the real deal, or batshit insane," Reg said.

"Batshit?" Harold looked confused and overwhelmed by what Sir Reg had said.

"Never mind. They are only going to let you stay out here if I keep you in my custody, so listen to me, I want to help. Now I arranged to have your release not made public but it is just a matter of time before the press mob gets here. We need to go."

Harold didn't even notice the crowd of people gathering around him. Faces frozen agape with awe was something he was used to. Many peasants would stare with jealous beggar eyes as he rode passed mounted on horse into their village. Sir Reg tugged at his canvas tunic but Harold ignored him.

"What of my horse, weapons, and armor?" Harold wasn't leaving without his effects.

"Your horse is being stabled at the local animal shelter and the Police are still going through all your belongings to sort out the evidence. We need to leave, now." Reg pushed up his glasses and adjusted his brown sport coat to look more authoritative and

commanding, he doubt it had the desired effect on Harold.

"Very well, but so help any man who lay a non-gentle hand on my horse."

Reg turned to head to the parking lot and Harold followed. Reg's shadow was consumed by the solar eclipse of Harold behind him. The man was a massive force to be reckoned with and Reg wondered how to keep him under control. It took a few minutes for Reg to convince Harold that his Honda Civic was not powered by magic. Conveying to Harold that the car was a man made mechanical device and required no horse to pull but had the power of 150 horses seemed easy enough. Maybe Harold would make it here after all. Reg fired up the engine and put the car in gear, Harold's eyes widened as he braced himself for the journey.

Harold held onto his seat with white knuckles as they accelerated to speeds he had never experienced. The motion made his head spin and he evacuated the contents of his stomach in a violent torrent of oral ejection out the window of Reg's Civic. They both watched as the newly pink and brown painted Miata passed them in haste, and flipped them off. Harold returned the friendly gesture.

"Ah, they were good sports to oblige us with a wave after that

mess," Harold said, holding the side of the door. Reg looked puzzled and a smile crept across his face. This guy has been in a hole with history books his whole life, or he really is a medieval knight.

"I told my Editor you were the real deal. No one can be this crazy without some serious wiring issues upstairs."

"Is the Editor your king Sir Reg?" Harold asked.

"He is my boss, and in this world they are as good as royalty. Here we are."

The car skidded to a halt outside Reg's two bedroom house on the east side of town. Harold climbed out of the window and landed with the three point stance of a lineman on the soft grass.

"Up the stairs there, its number 111," Reg said.

"Is this your village? The Village of 111?" Harold was like an infant in this world, Reg would have to get used to him not understanding how things worked. He would have to teach him things like you would a child, maybe even train him to use a toilet. Reg shuttered at the thought and hoped Harold would be intuitive enough to figure that one out on his own.

"No, not the village of 111. 111 is the number of my house there. The small blue one with the chipped white trim, follow me, I'll show you where you will be sleeping tonight. You must be tired."

"Yes of course. A good rest would do me well. I was not able to rest under watch of the Mage Knights for fear they slit my throat in sleep," Harold responded and followed Reg into the house.

Reg was a neat sort of man. Everything had its place. There was no clutter anywhere except for tomorrow's edition of the Daily Newspaper spread out on the heavy oak kitchen table. A picture of Harold on the ground surrounded by Police was on the front page, Reg quickly scooped it up while Harold was feeling the plush upholstery of the couch.

"Go ahead Harold, please, sit," Reg broke Harold's fascination with the couch and motioned him to sit down.

"My Lord, heaven would be made of such thrones as this wouldn't it Sir Reg?"

"Heaven? Harold you are not dead, you are very much alive."

Reg said.

"Well that will take some convincing on your part Sir Reg. I'm aware of the tricks the Devil would have you play on me. For even in heaven his evil influence can manifest itself."

"Lay down and sleep Harold, we will sort this out in the morning. At the least, I'll fetch your horse and put it in the back yard." Reg wanted to make Harold as comfortable as possible.

"Excellent Sir Reg, thank you for your assistance. I'm also going to insist we arrange payment for your services here. I owe you a great debt, but I warn you to not cross me. I sleep with my eyes open and my senses increased ten fold. If you try to subdue me or harm me, you will regret it," Reg could see the truth in Harold's eyes.

"Of course Harold. You are no good to me if you are harmed and not able to talk. Sleep well." Reg's response to the threat fell on deaf ears, or were they listening? Harold started snoring loudly on the couch, his eyes still open looking at Reg. He decided to leave the room to figure out a plan for tomorrow. How was he going to get Harold to talk about where he came from or why he was here? This was the big break in his journalism career he had been waiting for. He

spent his entire savings on the hottest story straight from the source, this needed to pay off big time.