

Of Fire and Sunlight Chapter 2

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Lyle learns more about his new friend, and also learns of a terrifying monster that has escaped within the swamp.

Published on
Booksie

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It was the next morning, and as he began rising from the foggy hold of sleep, Lyle nearly rolled off his tree branch. The strange girl had woken up a while ago, and upon seeing his waking, tossed his old leather boots at him. "Come on, up and at em!" She was nearly dressed and in the morning light, he finally got a good look at her. She had sky blue eyes, fair skin, and surprisingly red hair, which she was just putting up into a messy bun. She wore a red and gray shirt, much like a corset, that had gold embroidering. She also wore a small pair of black shorts, striped gray-and-black stocking and boots up to her knees. She had gauze bandages wrapped around her left arm, from fingertips to her shoulder. He couldn't help but wonder it was there for. "Its rude to stare", she spoke flatly. He blushed slightly and said with indignation, "No! its- itsâ not like that!" She gave him a "oh uh huh. Okay. SURE it isn't" look. "Where did you get that stuff anyway?", he stammered obviously changing the subject, "There's no houses around hereâ !" She looked at him and replied "Oh I uhâ !. OH! I keep a chest! Over there!" She pointed behind the tall tree and sure enough, he saw a large chest. Hopping down from his perch, Lyle Walked up to it. He was about to open it, out of pure curiosity, when her hand grabbed his wrist. She had a very strong grip and he looked up at her, worried. She smiled and said "I wouldn't go through a woman's items. It isn't very nice." Lyle backed off, and she looked toward the sky. "If you expect to get to the next town by tomorrow, you should get back. I said I'd escort you, and I shall. These swamps are dangerous if you do not know the way."

They began walking, and It wasn't long before the demons slain from last night were replaced. Nobody knows where they come from, but without fail they come back a few hours after you kill them. She sighed, "I was afraid of thatâ !" Lyle looked at her just in time to catch her glance to her tree. "Mind taking care of that?" she spoke, scaring him out of whatever thoughts he had. Lyle drew his sword and in a few minutes, had taken care of the demons around them. As they walked, Lyle following this strange girl, the silence between them was unbearable. Lyle finally spoke, "So, uh, what- no I mean- where are you from? Like, your blood? No..no wait i mean....like...heritage" She gave him a strange look. "I am from Mabaya. And you?" Lyle had heard of Mabaya before, it was a land very far east, and he had even met some Mabayans. They were all very kind people, but did like keeping to themselves. He supposed that explained her living in a swamp. Her race, however, did not explain her appearance, as Mabayans usually had VERY light blue hair and pink or light red eyes. They were not a common race, but there were enough. "Me?", Lyle echoed, "Oh, I am merely Reglandan. Nothing special, I'm native." He said the last words with a smile, and she whipped around and looked him up and down. It was true, like most of the kingdom he had pale violet eyes and blonde hair. He kept his a little on the long side compared to most, seeing as Reglandan men were usually knights and cut their hair short. He wore a faded blue tunic with a leather belt and multiple pouches. He looked like a normal hero would. She turned around again without a word, leaving him puzzled. They continued walking, only stopping when they ate small snacks, consisting of berries and fruits. They reached the outskirts of the town when she stopped suddenly. He nearly crashed into her and asked what was wrong. She looked at him, nervous, and said, "This is as far as I can take you. I'm not exactlyâ !.. welcome. Anyway, It was nice meeting you Lyle!" He looked at her in shock. "You cant justâ ! GO. I-I meanâ !.. Noâ ! Never mind." Lyle knew they didn't exactly know each other, but for some reason he wanted to stay. He walked a few steps forward and was about to say something, when he was interrupted by a blood curdling scream. The both looked on and saw several people fleeing past the entrance to the swamp, followed by demons. The inn Keeper saw the two of them and ran up to Lyle. She either did not see, or did not want to see the girl. "Hero boy! You must run! Disaster comes this way!" She continued running, leaving Lyle to wonder what was happening. He turned toward the girl, only to find her missing. "Hey! Where did you---" he called out only stopped by a man stepping by his side. This man was rather old, and looked Lyle over. "Sir, what is happening?!" "Young hero.." the old man puffed, "This swamp holds terrifying monsters. The seven great bishops placed talismans in the temple here to seal in the devils, sacrificing one of their own to the evil. One of these monsters escaped long ago, but he caused no immediate trouble, so he was forgotten. Not only has he now awakened his cell mate, he must also be the one" the man took a very deep, raspy breath, " who has caused so much turmoil

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throughout all of Regland." Lyle stood silently, processing all of the words said to him. He spoke in a near whisper, "How do I defeat this beast?". The old man sighed and replied, "That is for you to figure out." The man left. Lyle, confused and shocked, began walking absently to the far end of the swamp.

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