

Sven Popović - Ema Brkljača, Ivana Gadža, Luka Malnar, Antea Maričić, Petra Meštrović,
Gabriela Židov

The Little One and the Leviathan

The Blue Street owed its name to the sapphire fumes of opium and calm-fruit coming out of the pipes of glass hookahs. The buildings were colourful and winding, and everybody seemed to be high or drunk. Or both. Violence was almost unheard of, as the guilds of thieves kept a close eye on everything, well aware that blood would only draw in the city guard, giving the trade council the reason to jump up on their feet and begin preaching about the decay of civil virtue, of which Silktown, of course, had none.

“Does Oak know we’re leaving?”

“Only Crow and Blackbird know,” he smirked.

“So, it’s only a matter of time when all the crew, together every drunkard in the docks, finds out.”

“Don’t you trust our brothers?”

“Crow I trust, I trust Blackbird too, but I trust his love for mead more.”

“Who taught you to be so vicious?”

“Why, you, of course.”

“You couldn’t have learned anything nice from me, could you?” Needle looked at her with a hint of gentleness and curiosity. “Only the bad stuff?”

“Like what?”

“Like how to sing.”

“I’ve never heard you sing.”

“I sing when I’m happy.”

“Which means you’re never happy.”

“Or that I’m simply not happy with you around.”

They stopped at the inn; its façade, once garishly yellow perhaps, now resembled the colour of worn-out parchment. It was one of the rare quiet places on the Blue Street. Above the door swung a gilded figure of a bird, whose species could only be distinguished by the rickety sign that said The Golden Parrot. Two drunkards, arm in arm, staggered out and bumped into Needle. One of them opened his mouth to blurt out an excuse, but the other one just dragged him away. Arrow giggled.

“The Golden Parrot...”

“The drinks are on you. You do understand that?”

“As always.”

“So?” Arrow crossed her arms. “Are you gonna tell me what’s inside?”

Needle winked at her. „Only the possibility of getting our hands on the map of the Shattered Isles,” he said and entered.



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