

Varus silently walked through the slopes of a desert. The sun had reached its apex and began to set, its heat burning his ivory skin. A scrawny, young man had told him in the morning beforehand that the region he was going into was the Sai-Kahleek, a death zone for any traveller. Varus snuffed the warning initially. He contemplated shooting the man for his arrogance, only to be held back by Valmar and Kai screaming in his mind. He couldn't afford to lose control.

*The Sai-Kahleek is a place not even I dare enter.* Valmar's voice reverberated through his head. Varus scoffed at the comment. "I thought mortals craved the thrill of the hunt. Were you two not 'beast hunters' while you still had bodies?"

*Hunters we were. But the rumours of the monsters of the Sai-Khaleek are something else. Hundreds have journeyed through, but only dozens have come through unscathed.* This voice was softer, lighter. Kai. Varus raised an eyebrow at the declaration. Thinking back to the time when the Darkin first emerged into Runeterra and the host of powerful magic that invited them in. It appears that his race was not the only one to enter the mortals' world after all.

While he walked, the ground slowly shifted. The earth turned jagged & rocky as the softness of the sand wilted away in the breeze. As Varus drew closer, he came across a cragged ruin, a twisted series of tunnels tracing through it. The air smelled unnatural. A stench of magic even he was unfamiliar with. It felt new, ravenous. Varus gripped his bow and trudged into the abyssal path.

"Nothing will stop me from finding her."

After a couple of hours, Varus ducked and weaved through the sharp formations. Several times he had witnessed a small light in them, almost pulsing with life with an unnatural glow. *What is this place? Valmar. No beast that we have hunted ever had a nest such as this.* Varus continued forwards. The silence had kept him tense and ready, waiting for an attack at any time. His legs and arms began to tremor as he walked. While Varus himself was calm, it appeared the others who he shared his new body with couldn't control their fear. At any other time he would have gladly welcomed their terror, but he needed to stay alert. "Calm yourselves!" he hissed! "This is not the time to quake like new-borns!"

A low, guttural sound silenced all three of them. Quickly, Varus drew his bow in the direction of the sound. Red energy formed at his fingertips as he prepared to shoot, drawing out the arrow. A small, pale creature was easing out of one of the glowing inlets. Using a pair of large forearms, it dropped to the ground and dragged itself towards the fading sunlight. Its white body glistened as it used a series of smaller legs along its lower half to balance itself as it pulled with its forearms. Small crackles of energy radiated around its body before it slowly took on a shade of violet, its soft skin being replaced with hardened plates as it stayed in the harsh glow. Varus grimaced, recognizing the process and fired the arrow. Before the creature could finish the transformation, the arrow sliced through the last of the exposed patch of white skin of the beast, obliterating it as it cried out.

*W-what was that thing?* Kai's voice trembled. "Beings from beyond your world." Varus responded. "They invade other realms to satisfy their never-ending hunger, consuming everything in sight. If they have started to tear their way into here, then I must hasten my journey."

*How could such a beast exist? How can they continue to exist!?* Valmar exclaimed.

"You plot and fight against each other, trying to dominate with greed and war! Ever ignorant of them! Your world will be ravaged from their appetite" Varus pointed a finger at the creature, its last twitches of life leaving as it rapidly crumbled to dust. "By the time you realize its threat, it'll be too late. This region is just a taste of what will happen if they spread."

As Varus neared the end of the path, he heard a shrill cry nearby. The surrounding rocks and crags started screeching in return. Varus hastily looked around, raising his bow again and opening his mouth. "A nest unchecked like this will quickly devour everything around it. Soon, they'll move ever outwards. They will consume your world and still they will hunger."

Varus barely had time to react before the earth cracked open before him and a large creature propelled itself into the air. He fired two shots through its underbelly, quickly sidestepping as it dropped. The ground underneath him split, revealing a tooth-filled maw. Varus leapt back and fired another red bolt through its jaw. He quickly fired again to his right as another creature bounded towards him, piercing its neck. It tumbled and fell, skidding to a stop a mere footstep away. He shoved ever forwards towards the exit of the ruin, leaping and firing at the building horde, slaying dozens of them in a frenzy of arrows. Dashing into the sunlight, the creatures stopped following him. Momentarily dazed, they screeched and they fell backwards, the harsh light burning their soft skin.

Before he could pause, a distant rumbling alerted him and he spun to look behind him. The entire region seemed to breathe as the cries echoed louder. As the last of the sunlight dipped below the ruin, the entire region glowed vividly with a purple haze. A new cry drowned out the others. Varus felt the power of it. Though he was certain he could take the beast, he had more important priorities. Turning towards the dying light, he sprinted, stressing his new body to its limit, keeping himself in the sunlight.

Pushing forwards, one thought ran through Varus' mind.

*I will find you, sister, before this world is consumed.*