

A Dream too Heroic
(The Hero of Korvalin)

written by

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EPISODE VI

DAN

Hi, Terry.

TERRY

Come on, get started.

DAN

What, no small talk today?

TERRY

We can talk once you finish the story.

DAN

Wait two seconds, let me get ready.

TERRY

Hurry up.

DAN

Ok. Let's begin. Our hero had been on quite the journey. She started out in a small tavern and found a quest. Determined to meet the king, she tried to complete the quest but failed. After discovering her horse wasn't all it seemed, the hero went to find the rest of a legendary adventuring group. Once the group was assembled, they went back and stole the magical chalice from the dragon. The hero then went to present the artifact to the king, but much to her surprise, the rest of the group attacked the lord ruler. The hero then stopped them, but is now questioning her decision.

HERO

Get it together, you're just heading to the dungeon to talk. You're not betraying anyone.

DUNGEON MASTER

Halt! Who goes there?

HERO

Hello, good sir. It is I, the newest addition to the King's guard.

DUNGEON MASTER

I heard about you, well met. What can I do for you?

HERO

I'm here to interrogate the prisoners.

DUNGEON MASTER

Ah, of course, right this way.

Sound of walking.

DUNGEON MASTER (CONT'D)

This is their cell.

HERO

They're all in the same one?

DUNGEON MASTER

Worried are you? You shouldn't be. A strong antimagic field has been placed around the area. They can't do anything but talk your ear off.

HERO

Perfect, you may leave us.

DUNGEON MASTER

Of course, call if you need me.

Sound of walking away.

GABRAURRE

You came?

HAREEL

It actually worked.

HERO

How did you message me if there's an antimagic field?

DIRZAW

It took everything I had and some ethically questionable decision-making. I exploited a small gap in the security, but I don't think I could do it again.

GABRAURRE

You don't need to. She can just let us out.

HERO
I'm not letting you out.

GABRAURRE
Why not?

HAREEL
The king got to her, that's why.
We're too late.

HERO
You used me and then attacked my
king. Why should I let you out?

HAREEL
Your king? What has he ever done
for you?

HERO
He's the king.

HAREEL
So?

HERO
He runs the country and keeps us
safe.

HAREEL
You keep telling yourself that.
This is a waste of time. She won't
let us out.

GABRAURRE
I wouldn't be so sure. Why else
would she have come here?

HERO
I came here because I owe it to
Roshe. Where ...?

GABRAURRE
At the back of the cell.

ROSHE
Aaaaaaah!

HERO
What's happening?

HAREEL
That's the work of your king.

DIRZAW

The antimagic is messing things up,
making Roshe shapeshift without
control.

HERO

That's horrible.

DIRZAW

You can stop it by letting us out.

HERO

I can't do that.

GABRAURRE

Oh, come on.

HERO

But maybe I can hear you out.

GABRAURRE

That's a start. What do you want to
know?

HERO

All of it. I want to know how it
came to this.

GABRAURRE

I suppose we need to start at the
beginning, when this group was
formed.

HERO

Roshe told me about this. There
were five of you...

GABRAURRE

Then they didn't tell you the
truth. There were six of us. The
six most amazing adventurers you're
likely to meet. We saved the world
more times than I can count.

HERO

Who are the other two?

GABRAURRE

Tefih and a young prince named
Stomern.

HERO

Why haven't I met them yet?

GABRAURRE

You haven't met Tefih, but you met Stomern.

HERO

I think I would remember meeting a prince.

GABRAURRE

You met him today, although he's no longer a prince.

HERO

Are you telling me the king was part of your group?

GABRAURRE

Yes.

HERO

Then why...?

GABRAURRE

Are we fighting? It all comes back to the last adventure we had. We heard of this cult with a magical chalice. They were planning on resurrecting a demon with it.

HERO

You don't mean the chalice we retrieved do you?

GABRAURRE

Are you going to keep interrupting?

HERO

No, sorry.

GABRAURRE

I hate people who keep interrupting stories.

Sound goes away.

TERRY

Wait a minute, is that a dig at me?

DAN

Yes. Now stop proving my point.

TERRY

Sorry.

DAN

As I was saying...

GABRAURRE

We found the cult's hideout. We had the upper hand in the ensuing battle. But some cultists tried to escape with the chalice. Stomern and Tefih ran after them.

HERO

What happened?

GABRAURRE

You're going to keep interrupting me no matter what, aren't you?

HERO

Most likely.

GABRAURRE

Unbelievable. To answer your question: We don't know. All we know is that when we got there. Stomern was standing still, holding the artifact, surrounded by bodies, including Tefih's.

HAREEL

He murdered her.

GABRAURRE

We don't know that.

HAREEL

Why are you still defending him?

GABRAURRE

I'm not. But we don't know for sure what happened in that room. Maybe the cultists got to her. Maybe the demon was summoned. Who knows.

HAREEL

He did it. The only thing I don't know is what he did. Because when I got there, it was too late to heal her or bring her back.

GABRAURRE

In any case, what happened next is not up for debate. We headed back to the castle diatrught but victorious. The king greeted us.

(MORE)

GABRAURRE (CONT'D)

The old king, that is. He threw a celebration, not that many of us felt like celebrating. The next morning, we woke up, and one of the servants had gone missing.

HERO

What happened?

GABRAURRE

At the time, we had no idea. But over the next few weeks, more and more people started disappearing around the city. Eventually, after a long investigation, the king grew suspicious of his own son. He went to confront him, and the next day, when we arrived in the king's chambers, Stomern was there. He told us that his father had unfortunately passed away in the night, making him the new king.

HERO

He killed his own father?

GABRAURRE

That's what we assumed, but without proof, we could hardly accuse him. Instead, we broke into the prince's chambers that night. And what we saw still haunts me to this day.

HERO

What did you see?

HAREEL

Blood. A lot of it. There were sigils drawn throughout the room, and the chalice was filled to the rim with it.

HERO

What was he doing?

GABRAURRE

No idea. But he found out about the break-in and sent his guards. We tried to explain the situation, but they wouldn't listen. We didn't know it then, but he used blood magic to bind their will to his. I suspect he is planning the same for you tomorrow.

HERO

You can't be serious.

GABRAURRE

Oh, I am.

HERO

What happened next?

GABRAURRE

We took the chalice and fled.

HERO

How did it end up with the goblins?

GABRAURRE

We wanted to keep it secret, keep it safe. So we gave it to a dragon and told him to take it far away without telling us where, in case the Stomern caught us.

HERO

Wait, you know the dragon we stole it from.

GABRAURRE

Why do you think we avoided hurting anyone?

HERO

What did you do next?

GABRAURRE

We went our separate ways for ten years. We wanted to stay clear of the new King, and we had lost the taste of adventure. However, we promised that should the day come when we could do something about it, we would get back together and make one last stand.

HERO

So that's why you were all over the place.

GABRAURRE

I went to the library to study and find a solution in books.

DIRZAW

I went to the woods because I
didn't care to see other people
after what happened.

GABRAURRE

Roshe travelled all over the world
trying to find solutions.

HERO

What about...?

HAREEL

Me? I became a pit fighter.

HERO

Why?

HAREEL

Because I wanted to feel pain.

HERO

Because you blame yourself for what
happened?

HAREEL

No. Because the pain is all I have.
If I lose that, then she's really
gone.

HERO

You have to let her go.

HAREEL

What gives you any right to say
what I should do?

HERO

She's gone.

HAREEL

No, she isn't.

HERO

I thought you couldn't bring her
back.

HAREEL

I couldn't do it back then. But the
whole reason we came back together
is because Roshe heard a tale of a
ritual using the chalice that could
bring her back.

(MORE)

HAREEL (CONT'D)

The one problem was that we didn't know where it had gone. But somehow, Stomern finally found out where it was and set up this ridiculous quest. Which, in turn, let us know where it was hidden. All we needed to do was go and get it.

HERO

So, that's why you joined my quest.

HAREEL

It certainly wasn't to make you a knight, although we did need you to think that. The ritual requires the blood of the killer, so we needed to get close to Stomern, and you were the perfect way to do that.

HERO

So you used me.

HAREEL

And I would do it again in a heartbeat. But now you have the chance to do something meaningful with your life.

GABRAURRE

What my tactless friend means is that you have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do some real good. You just have to let us out.

HERO

How do I know you're telling the truth?

HAREEL

Seriously?

GABRAURRE

I know it's a lot to take in.

HERO

It's your word against the king's, and he just made me a knight. Why would I throw that away?

GABRAURRE

Think of more than yourself for once. So what if your dream won't work out?

(MORE)

GABRAURRE (CONT'D)

Big deal, a lot of people don't get what they dream of. You have a chance to make a real difference now. Isn't that more important?

HERO

I...

GABRAURRE

Before you answer, why did you even want to become a knight in the first place?

HERO

To help people.

GABRAURRE

Well, look at your friend on the floor right over there.

ROSHE

Aaaaaaah!

GABRAURRE

You would definitely be helping Roshe if you let us out.

HERO

What makes you think I care?

GABRAURRE

Pretend all you want, but I saw how you got along while we travelled. The late-night talks at camp, the way Roshe let you ride on horseback. Not many are allowed to do that. You may have felt betrayed, but I'll let you know that Roshe was the one person who thought we should tell you.

HERO

Then why...?

HAREEL

Because we said not to.

DIRZAW

I said I moved to the woods because I didn't feel like seeing other people, and do you know why?

HERO

Because you don't like other people?

DIRZAW

That's not why. The real reason is because I didn't want to lose anyone else I cared about. But getting the group back together made me realize I was wrong. Isn't the goal in life to form connections with other people? Isn't it more important to find people you enjoy spending time with than chasing this dream you thought would make you happy? You have someone who actually cares for you, but they won't be around much longer, the way things are going. So do it for them.

HERO

Ok. But I don't have the keys.

GABRAURRE

Just break the lock.

The clang of metal on metal.

DUNGEON MASTER

What's going on over there?

HERO

Oh, perfect, can you give me the keys to open this cell?

DUNGEON MASTER

I can't do that.

HERO

Yes, you can. It's an order from your king.

DUNGEON MASTER

No, it's not.

HERO

Yes, it is.

DUNGEON MASTER

Guards!

Sound of running.

HERO
Where do you think you're going?

GABRAURRE
Leave him. Just let us out before
more guards show up.

The clanging resumes.

HERO
It's not opening.

DIRZAW
Find the object disrupting my magic
and I'll get us out!

HERO
How do I do that?

DIRZAW
Find a big arcane ball and smash
it!

HAREEL
Hurry up!

HERO
Found it!

DIRZAW
Smash it!

Glass smashes.

HERO
Did it work?

DIRZAW
Oh, it worked. I can already feel
my power coming back to me.

HERO
What do we do now?

HAREEL
We take down the king.

GABRAURRE
Now we get out of here.

HAREEL (CONT'D)
Get out of here? Are you crazy?
We're so close. We have to take him
down.

GABRAURRE

Not like this. We're not strong enough right now.

HAREEL

You can flee, but I'm not running. Not again.

GABRAURRE

This isn't what Tefih would want!

HAREEL

You don't get to play that card!

GABRAURRE

It's true. There's no point in throwing your life away. It won't bring her back.

HERO

How are we getting out of here?

DIRZAW

I got my magic back. I can teleport us. But we'd better hurry up, I hear them coming.

HAREEL

We can't leave the chalice with Stomern, who knows what he'll do. It's too powerful to leave with a madman.

HERO

Then I'll stay behind.

GABRAURRE

What? No! He'll kill you.

HERO

I can just pretend I got tricked.

GABRAURRE

It's too dangerous.

HAREEL

I should be the one sacrificing myself.

HERO

I'm the only one with a chance of pulling this off. You said it before, I have the chance to do something meaningful.

(MORE)

HERO (CONT'D)

I can still be the hero I always dreamed I would be.

DIRZAW

We also told you to value your friends. When Roshe wakes up, what will we say?

HERO

That, thanks to you guys, I actually feel heroic. I hope I'll make you all proud. But first, you all need to survive. Now go!

GABRAURRE

Don't die before we can come back.

HERO

I'll try not to.

HAREEL

You're braver than I gave you credit for.

HERO

Thanks.

HAREEL

Stay alive.

DIRZAW

Roshe was right to bet on you.

Magical sound of teleportation.

DUNGEON MASTER

Where are the prisoners?

HERO

They tricked and got away!

CAPTAIN

What do you mean they tricked you?

HERO

The witch, she got in my head and made me let them out. I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to.

CAPTAIN

Save your excuses for the king. He'll decide your fate.

The sound of walking.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

My king, the treacherous retch who freed your prisoners is here.

KING

I promote you to my personal guard, and this is how you repay me?

HERO

I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to.

KING

I should have known that someone like you couldn't be trusted.

HERO

My king, I beg forgiveness. They tricked me. I didn't want to let them go.

KING

Tricked you, did they? And how did that happen?

HERO

Well, you see your majesty...

KING

Before you begin, be very careful what you say. You don't want to lie to me. Your very life might depend on it.

HERO

Understood.

KING

Now I ask you again, how did they trick you?

HERO

Well, it all started when I found a flyer in a tavern...

KING

What does that have to do with our current predicament?

HERO

I promise it all ties together.

KING

You better not bore me.

HERO

(gulps)

I'll keep it short. I found about the quest and tried to complete it alone but failed. The shapeshifter, who was pretending to be my horse, saved me and suggested trying again, but this time along with his old crew.

KING

So that's how you met them.

HERO

I was told they were great heroes who saved the world.

KING

And you never wondered about their motives for helping?

HERO

I'm ashamed to admit, I did not. I thought they saw something in me and wanted to help.

KING

You're a naïve fool. And to think I almost made you one of my guards. Continue your story.

HERO

With their help, we got the chalice. While we were making our way here, they told me I should deliver it on my own. That's what I thought I was doing. I truly didn't know they had followed me.

KING

Of course, you didn't. That would have required you to think.

HERO

Once the issue in the throne room was taken care of, I went to my chambers, and there I heard the witch's voice which force...

(choking)

KING

Interesting. That's the first lie you tried to tell.

(MORE)

KING (CONT'D)

I thought I made it clear that I abhor liars. Choose your next words very carefully.

HERO

I'm so sorry, please forgive me. The witch did make contact in my mind, but she didn't force me to go to the dungeon. She convinced me.

KING

And what did she say to convince you?

HERO

That I was in danger.

KING

From what?

HERO

From you.

KING

And you believed her?

HERO

Not completely, but I thought it wouldn't hurt to hear her out.

KING

You were mistaken.

HERO

Once I got to the dungeon, they told me the tale of the chalice. How you used to be part of their group. But one of your friends died when you stopped the cult.

KING

I can see you holding something back. What else did they say?

HERO

That you went mad and killed a lot of people, including your father.

KING

All true, I'm afraid.

HERO

Why?

KING

Do you really think you're in a position to question me?

HERO

No.

KING

Keep going.

HERO

They told me the antimagic field was causing Roshe pain, so I destroyed it.

KING

And why didn't you flee with them?

HERO

Because I wanted to fulfill my dream.

KING

Ah, yes, your dream of becoming a knight. That was your dream, correct?

HERO

Yes.

Clapping.

KING

Bravo. Bravo. An extraordinary performance.

HERO

You're not angry that I let them go?

KING

I'm furious. But that's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about how you weaved that story. You didn't lie and told just the right amount of truth to make it seem like you didn't mean to betray me.

(beat)

Unfortunately for you, I see through your façade.

HERO

(gulps)

KING

Nothing to say for yourself. I think I will still allow you to join my guard.

HERO

Really?

KING

After all, you will make excellent bait. And once I'm done with you, you won't be able to refuse my commands. Let's get this ceremony started. Guards bring him to me.

HERO

NO! No! No.

KING

How did you think this would end? You were doomed the moment you betrayed me. There's no use resisting. I would tell you this won't hurt, but we both know how much I despise lies. Hold him still.

The sound of a dragon's roar is heard in the distance.

KING (CONT'D)

What was that?

SOLDIER

My king, we are under attack. A dragon showed up at the head of a goblin army.

KING

Come here.

SOLDIER

Shouldn't I go deal with them, your majesty?

KING

Not. It's a distraction. They will be coming for me. I thought I would have more time. No matter, let's get the ritual started.

A sword swishes through the air.

SOLDIER
(gurgles)

HERO
You're mad! You just killed your
own soldier!

KING
I need his blood. Don't worry,
you'll be next.

The doors burst open.

ROSHE
Leave her alone!

KING
Ah, you're all here, perfect.

GABRAURRE
It's over, let the kid go.

KING
Oh, I don't think so. In fact, lay
down your weapons, unless you want
me to kill him right now.

HERO
You really think they'll do it.
They don't care about me. It's more
important for them to stop you.

HAREEL
Shit! I can't do it. Take my sword.

KING
Tie them up and keep a close eye on
the witch.

ROSHE
Let her go.

KING
I don't think so. I will keep her
as an insurance policy. But for
now, I need to get back to my
ritual.

DIRZAW
Now.

KING
Ahhh! What was that?

GOBLIN 1

Surprise.

GOBLIN 2

You don't need to say it. He was already surprised.

KING

Goblins! Where did you come from?

DIRZAW

I knew you would make sure that the whole group was here. So, I thought I would turn a few goblins invisible.

The sound of fighting.

KING

No! AH!

HERO

It's over. You won't hurt anyone else ever again.

KING

NO! NO! NO!

HAREEL

Tell your soldiers to stand down.

KING

They will fight to the death.

HAREEL

They can't win.

KING

It doesn't matter.

HERO

Don't kill them, he wants their blood for his ritual.

DIRZAW

Arkamanika.

Magical sound.

HERO

How long can you keep them frozen?

DIRZAW

Long enough.

HERO
Even the king?

DIRZAW
As long as we hurry.

HERO
What are you going to do?

HAREEL
What I should have done a long time ago.

HERO
Don't kill him.

HAREEL
Why not? He deserves it!

HERO
What good would killing do? Hasn't there been enough bloodshed already?
Killing him won't bring her back.

HAREEL
Actually, it just might. The real reason we wanted to sneak in with the chalice is because according to lengend you can bring someone back to life using the chalice and the killer's blood.

HERO
His blood, you don't have to kill him for that.

HAREEL
But it would be poetic.

HERO
Don't let him make you a monster.

HAREEL
Fine, just some of his blood.

HERO
Thank you.

HAREEL
Do your thing, wizard.

DIRZAW
 Are they all tied up? Once I start
 casting the spell, they will
 unfreeze.

GABRAURRE
 It's done.

DIRZAW
 Klamantrala.

Magical sound.

HAREEL
 Why didn't it work?

HERO
 Maybe it just takes a while.

DIRZAW
 No, it should have been
 instantaneous.

KING
 (laughs)

HAREEL
 I guess we have to kill him after
 all.

KING
 It won't help because I didn't kill
 her.

HAREEL
 Liar!

HERO
 He may be a monster, but he hates
 liars.

HAREEL
 Then what happened that day?

KING
 The cult succeeded. The demon was
 summoned.

HAREEL
 Then why did none of us see it?

KING

Because I banished it, but not before it killed Tefih and took her soul.

HAREEL

No.

KING

Why do you think your healing didn't work? Once it took her soul, there was nothing left to bring back.

HAREEL

Why didn't you say anything?

KING

I had a plan to bring her back, but I knew you wouldn't approve.

HAREEL

All the murders, you're trying to free the demon!

KING

Everything I did, I did for her.

HAREEL

You don't get to justify what you did.

KING

That's why I didn't tell any of you. But I would have succeeded without your meddling. She could be here right now.

HAREEL

At what cost? She wouldn't have wanted it to happen like that.

KING

Don't tell me what she would have wanted!

HAREEL

You're a monster.

KING

I don't care what you call me. You should have let me bring her back.

HAREEL

You would disgust her. We're done here.

HERO

What do we do with him?

DIRZAW

Let me use some of his blood.

HAREEL

It won't work.

DIRZAW

Not for that.

HAREEL

For what then?

DIRZAW

To break his hold on these men.
Uratanku.

Magical sound.

DIRZAW (CONT'D)

There it's done.

CAPTAIN

What have I done?

HERO

Are you ok?

CAPTAIN

I can see clearly now, I disgust myself.

HERO

It wasn't your fault.

CAPTAIN

Tell that to everyone I killed.

HERO

I don't think there's anything I can say that would make it better. But maybe you can start making amends by arresting the king.

CAPTAIN

And then what? Are you coming to rule us?

HERO

Me?

(laughs)

That would be a terrible idea.

CAPTAIN

Who's going to rule us then?

HERO

Let the people decide. They deserve a chance to choose.

CAPTAIN

And what will you do?

HAREEL

We'll find another way to bring Tefih back.

GABRAURRE

There isn't one.

HAREEL

How do you know?

GABRAURRE

It's time to let her go.

HAREEL

I can't.

ROSHE

We should have been there for each other a long time ago, but we're here now, and we need to let her go.

HAREEL

I don't know how. I love her.

DIRZAW

We all do. But this isn't what she would want for us. We keep her memory alive by doing what she would have wanted, and that means living our lives. She'll always be in our hearts.

HAREEL

I don't want to.

GABRAURRE

I know, mon ami. But we'll be here to help each other.

DIRZAW

Time to go.

HERO

I guess that's goodbye then.

ROSHE

You're not getting away from us
that easily.

HERO

This seemed like a family moment.
And you guys barely know me.

ROSHE

Nonsense, you're part of the group
now.

HERO

You mean it?

GABRAURRE

Of course we do!

HERO

Really? Even you two?

DIRZAW

Even us.

HAREEL

Welcome to the dysfunctional
family.

HERO

I've never had a group of friends
before. This is a dream come true.

ROSHE

Come on, Vorasi. Adventure awaits.

HERO

Where are we going?

ROSHE

Wherever we feel like.

Sound fades away.

DAN

The end. What did you think?

(beat)

Terry? Are you ok?

TERRY

Give me a second to process.

DAN

Are you done processing? Did you like it?

TERRY

You could say that. I want to hear more about these characters. I want to know what they do next.

DAN

I like to think they open a tavern in a small town and leave the dangerous adventures to other people.

TERRY

I like that.

DAN

Anyway, do you think it will make a good book?

TERRY

I don't know, for some reason, I can imagine it as a podcast.

DAN

Huh, really? I had never thought of that.

FADE OUT.