

Dahveed and Jonathan Return to Gibeah after the Covenant.

The sun was low when we arrived at the town gates. Neither of us had said anything on the way back. I noticed people's glances lingered on us a little longer than normal, but I doubt anyone figured out why beyond the fact that fully fastened cloaks seemed excessive.

Sahrah Michal crossed the common court as we turned into the fortress gate, and she changed directions to meet us, a slight frown on her face. I slowed a little.

"Don't you dare," Jonathan said softly.

"And if she notices I'm preceding you, what will she think?"

"My little sister probably knows more than either of us thinks she does. Don't worry about it."

"You didn't get anything," Michal said, disappointed, as she gave Jonathan a brief embrace of welcome. She backed into me accidentally, and I steadied her a moment. "Didn't you see any deer at all?"

"One, Sahrah," I said. "But it surprised us and got away."

She turned to me, eyebrows raised. "A hill man surprised by a deer?"

The hassar chuckled. "He's trying to be tactful. I couldn't even notch an arrow. Dahveed could have taken a shot, but didn't. And that was the last deer we saw for the day."

Her eyes traveled from me to her brother and back again. "You make it sound like a very uneventful day. Come in, Immi has been asking after you and it's time to get ready to eat."

"As you wish, little sister," Jonathan said, putting his arm around her shoulders and turning her toward the private courtyard.

Smiling at how quickly Jonathan had forgotten that he was not supposed to precede me, I went with them into the private court. Ahiam waited for me in our room, and when he took off my cloak, he sucked in his breath and stared.

I hung the bow and quiver on a peg, stripped off the sword and dagger and handed them to him. The Habiru took them without taking his eyes from me.

"We'll need to find someplace to keep those and this," I said quietly, taking off the sar's meil.

"Yes, geber. If I may ask, what happened?"

"The hassar acknowledged me as Mashiah."

"Are you sure you can trust him, Dahveed?"

"We cut a covenant in Yahweh's name, and you know how highly the hassar guards his honor."

"King Shaul's oldest son is quite a surprising man," Ahiam commented.

"He is. Tell no one of this, Ahiam. Not even Ethan."

"Yes, geber."

I stared out the small window, the enormity of what I had done finally settling in my thoughts. "We will be traveling tonight, Ahiam."

"I'll be ready."