

Chapter 6

The Power of the Moon

Only a few days were left on their journey to Valinndor, the city of the Elves. They had to rest more often because of Caitlin, who wasn't used to such long and arduous journeys.

They stopped by the river Orin, the largest river in Sillwith, at twilight. It divided the Imani territories from the Valinndor forests and the west of Sillwith from the east.

Elesar chose a clearing near a grove for their resting place.

"We shall sleep here. I'll light a fire. Lauren, scout around," he said.

"I would prefer being on the other side of the river," Lauren added.

"I would too, but the bridge is half a day's ride from here. Caitlin cannot keep up with our rhythm. We shall wait 'til morning and then continue."

"I am sorry for slowing you down," Caitlin said tiredly, hardly waiting to get off the unicorn. She was not used to endless riding.

"We are also in need of rest," Bravecat comforted her. He jerked his shoulder and threw their prisoner off of his back. He yelped and crouched in the grass. He looked unprotected and harmless. He hadn't spoken a word the whole way.

"I don't see why we don't go along the road? It's straight, has no obstacles and we would surely travel more quickly by it," Caitlin complained.

"We wouldn't be quicker. True that there are no visible obstacles, but the forest paths hold less bandits," Lauren answered.

"I didn't know. Are bandits lurking every step of the way?"

"Almost every," Elesar said, "That's why it is better to travel in the forest. Less danger and we travel more quickly because of the energy."

"Energy?" the surprises just kept coming.

"Yes, energy," Lauren repeated, "Elves and some Half-Elves are stronger in nature, especially in forests, because they draw energy from it. Especially druids. Without nature energy they wouldn't be able to use their powers. Few Elves live in cities."

"Why don't you show her your druid powers?" Elesar suggested, "Night has not yet fallen and we have time 'til morning."

"Very gladly. Come, Caitlin," Lauren said and took her downstream to the nearby forest. She was pleased she would be able to impress someone with her craft.

"Stay in sight," Elesar warned, smiling, "They made friends quickly."

"It seems both Caitlin and Lauren finally have a friend they didn't have for a long time," Bravecat noted.

"True. We were always travelling and she never had a chance to make a friend, and Caitlin never moved from the castle. I thought the age difference would be a problem, but it seems they have paid it no heed.

"Elesar the Great saves people and makes them happy once again," Bravecat trifled.

"Very funny, Bravecat," Elesar turned to him, "How is out companion?" he asked, gesturing towards the Reptilian. He was leaning against a lonely tree in the meadow, hands tied behind his back.

"He still hasn't come round completely. He was unconscious for a while. What did you hit him with?"

"The wall. That is, he hit himself. I just helped him with my elbow."

"Violent man! You must learn to control your rage," Bravecat trifled again.

"There is no time you are not ready to crack a joke," Elesar told him, grateful to have a companion with such unshakeable spirit.

"What is life without jokes?"

"Good question," Elesar smiled fleetingly, and then added, "His partners were Orcs. I think they belonged to Kodran."

"Kodran's Orcs? Hm...That means that Kodran has discovered your plans of an alliance, probably from the spies in Kiroshan and hired a Reptilian tracker to find and kill us."

"Hired? No, I wouldn't say that. It is not his style. He has sooner forced him to this in some way."

"And where can you find Reptilians..."

"In the Swamp," Elesar filled in.

"Is it possible Kodran managed to reach the Swamp in such a short time? What use does he have for muddy land of an unbearable smell?" Bravecat wondered.

"A great one. That area is ideal to organize a large army. The kingdoms of Men are far and Gateway is near. You know as well that the Orcs fled to the north and east. Kodran must be gathering them again. I wouldn't be surprised if he tried to enslave the Reptilians. Especially if the stories about them are true."

"You mean the ones about the secret castle of the Reptilians at Lake Mystos?"

"Indeed."

No one could say with any certainty how much truth there was in a story that stretched far into the past. The Reptilian king of Mystos wanted to unite his people, but ages of being divided made that impossible. Apart from being scattered all across the Swamp, many were even farther and unreachable: they had become slaves.

"I am not sure, Bravecat. They are only stories."

"Are not! 's the truth! We'll rise up and not one of yer will ever take advantage o' us again!" a voice behind their backs said. It was the Reptilian.

"Look who is awake. And quite lively!" Bravecat said, watching the Reptilian try to free itself.

"Why don't yer jus' kill me! 'Stead I'm tied up like livestock!" the Reptilian yelled. The rope around his wrists was lightly secured, but not enough for him to free himself.

"Hey! What is it with the yelling?!" Bravecat growled. He didn't like it when someone raised their voice.

"We could kill you," Elesar said coldly and approached the Reptilian. The Reptilian backed off in fear.

"You gave us the right to. Did you not attack us?! And in our sleep! And self-defence justifies murder, does it not?!"

"Kill me then! What're ya waitin' fer?" his voice became quieter. His adversary was right, "I ain't gonna be your slave! I'd rather die!"

"Calm yourself! No one here needs a slave," to his surprise, Elesar's voice became friendly once more, "I only seek information."

"Oh. Then why's I tied up?" the Reptilian countered.

"Because you tried to kill us, remember?" Elesar continued.

"Oh, right! I whacked my head good an' proper, I needed a bit to connect the dots. Y'know, fer an Elf you can sure pack a punch. I thought yer were weak buggers. Seems I was wrong," he admitted.

"Firstly, I am a Half-Elf, not and Elf. Secondly, tell me what you know of Kodran! Where is he?" Elesar commanded in a threatening tone.

"alf-Elf, eh? Wowee! A half-breed. You don't see those every day," the Reptilian said almost cheerfully, trying to hide his fear.

"Answer the question!" the Half-Elf commanded in such a tone the Reptilian's heart almost stopped.

"Good one! I tell ya wha' I know and then ya kill me."

"The kid is a brave one, somewhat," Bravecat concluded.

Seeing that the Reptilian would not give in, Elesar changed his tactic, "All right. You tell me everything you know about Kodran and I will let you go!"

The Reptilian stared into his eyes and burst into laughter, "Ha! Yer a funny man-elf. Ya know I don't trust yer and neither do ya trust me."

Elesar took out his dagger and slowly approached the Reptilian. He closed his eyes and completely stilled. He felt mortally afraid, but showed only perfect calm. This was the least he could afford himself in that moment; he didn't see any other way out. But instead of feeling the cold blade under his chin, the pressure of the rope against his wrists weakened. He realized his hands were free, so he opened his eyes. He quickly jumped backwards, ready for an attack. Elesar calmly put the dagger back into its sheathe.

"What'chya do tha' fer? Either yer very clever or thick as a post," he asked in disbelief.

"I freed you as a sign of trust. I will trust you and I suggest you trust me as well."

"But yer don't know me! Why would ya trust me?" he wondered.

"We sometimes have to take that risk, and that is what I am doing. Let me introduce myself. I am Elesar a Half-Elf from Valinndor. This is my companion and dear friend Bravecat, from the northern lands"

"Greetings!" Bravecat said, watching with interest the changes happening before his eyes. It wasn't the first time that Elesar had acted in an unexpected way.

The Reptilian didn't move from where Elesar had freed him. He gaze carefully darted from Elesar to Bravecat. He still wasn't certain if he could trust Elesar. Nothing was happening that would indicate danger. The great cat looked like it was enjoying itself and the Half-Elf was watching him expectantly.

He relented in the end.

"Righ', fine. The name's Quickfoot, from the great Swamp."

"Pleased to meet you, Quickfoot. Now that we have gotten this out of the way, could you tell us why you're working for Kodran?" Bravecat asked.

Quickfoot lowered his head and said quietly, "Fer freedom."

"Freedom?!" Bravecat looked at him in disbelief. The answer didn't seem logical to him.

"Bravecat, let him speak," Elesar retorted.

"Maybe yer fancy warm-blooded types aren't aware, but we cold-blooded Reptilians ain't born free for years! Most slave away fer cruel masters. We ain't nothin' but primitive livestock that's 'unted an' turned inta slaves fer 'em. The males get the hard work or if they're lucky, get ta hunt. The females are cooks an' slaves. We're expendable, see? Can't stay young, strong an' healthy forever, so when we're no use fer 'em no more, they kill us. I almost got tha' same deal. I was carryin' wood, when I broke me arm. Weren't no use ta them anymore. I heard the master tell 'is wife they'd kill me. Well, I said to meself, I ain't stickin' around fer that! I ran like me head were on fire and came to some property or other. There was a few Orcs there so I thought I'd loose 'em easy as you please and hide away in the house somewhere. Got it wrong, though. Looks like them Orcs killed and robbed the owner.

After tha' some dark bloke got himself a whol herd of them Orcs. I wanted to run when it was dark, but they caught me. They'da killed me if some spy hadn't come along. He tells this tale about some Kiroshan princess 'eading to Adazar and tha' you were lookin' to find some allies wit' the mages. They tell me: either they kill me or I kill ya,"

Quickfoot admitted and took a deep breath. He was embarrassed to admit it, "I wanted ter be free more than anythin', so I got ter work. To make sure I done a good job, he sent two Orcs after me. Reptilians're good trackers, so I didn' have no problem trackin' ya down. I weren't so keen on the killin ya part, but I wanted me freedom. Nothin' personal."

"I understand," Bravecat admitted in a mild tone, "I have yet to meet someone who didn't value freedom highly. I too was a prisoner once, until a Troll freed me."

"Why didn'cha say so? Ya saw trolls?! 've always wanted ta meet 'em! They say they look jus' like Reptilians, only without tha tails!"

"I wouldn't agree," Elesar interrupted, "The old laws of Sillwith say I have the right to kill those who attack me..." he said quietly, "but since he attacked me to get his freedom, I cannot hold it against him. Quickfoot, I free you and let you go where you will."

Quickfoot stared at Elesar. What was this Half-Elf letting him go? When he had freed his hands, the thought it was just a cruel game and that he would be killed in the end. But he was wrong. He'd never lived to see anyone have any understanding for his needs, like freedom was something Reptilians could not understand.

"I...I...dunno wha' ter say. They sent me ta kill ya and yer lettin' me go?"

"Every person has a right to freedom and no one should withhold that from them. We were all born free. And so we should live."

"Yer sure we ain't related? I think tha sam," a wide smile appeared on Quickfoot's face, "Fer that, I'll walk by yer side fer gratitude an' respect as long as ya want me. If yer fine with it, I'd be me honour ta join ya on yer mission, boss," Quickfoot stood in front of Elesar and bowed deeply.

"Easy, Quickfoot," Elesar calmed him, "I have nothing against this, but you have forgotten about the girls. They are equal members of the group and to them you are still a threat."

"Oh righ'. I fergot 'bout 'em. Where are they?"

"Downstream in the nearby forest. Lauren is showing Caitlin her powers," Bravecat answered and stopped. Had he just answered the Reptilian as though they were old friends? Clearly, Elesar's influence on him and trust in the unknown Reptilian were very strong. Until a few minutes ago, he was their enemy and now he was raring to join them.

"Righ'. An' which is which? Wait, lemme guess. Lauren's tha Elf an' Caitlin tha Man?"

"That's right," Elesar said.

"Ha! What a guess!"

"Don't let them see you. They might think you freed yourself and are trying to escape. They might be dangerous. When they come back, I will tell them the news," Elesar warned him.

"No problem. Though, what's fer eatin'? I'm hungry! If ya ain't caught anythin' yet, I'll do it! I'm a hunter after all. And I can swim righ' quick so I'll catch us some fish ter feed us all," Quickfoot generously offered.

"Well then, Quickfoot, catch us out supper!" Bravecat told him.

"No problem! Be back in a jiffy," the Reptilian ran to the river and jumped in it.

"That is one odd Reptilian," Elesar said with a smile.

"I don't know. Perhaps it's all an act. Was it wise to free him?" Bravecat said suspiciously. He still wasn't sure whether that had made the right decision. Elesar had somehow relented far too quickly.

"My instinct tells me he is a good soul that had found itself in the wrong place at the wrong time. And we know my instincts are impeccable," Elesar looked at Bravecat over his shoulder.

"I cannot complain about anything there," Bravecat admitted.

"I am convinced the girls will accept him as well, especially for his forthrightness."

"I'm certain they will," Bravecat said and sprawled onto the grass.

*

Downstream, Lauren was explaining her powers to Caitlin. She was listening to her intently, absorbing her every word. She was back in her castle, in the king's gardens where she listened to the lectures of her teachers and mentors. She had to listen about kingly behaviour and rule. That had never interested her overmuch. She would always let her thoughts wander away from Kiroshan and wonder what was out there. Now, she was, finally, away from Kiroshan and Lauren was telling her about things she had never even dreamed of.

"So your powers are stronger in the forest than in a house, castle or city like Calmera," Caitlin concluded.

"Correct. More energy is released in nature."

"Is that energy visible and tangible?"

"Not to a mortal's eyes. We druids can see it. It looks like a glowing green river that flows between the earth, water and sky. It is not tangible, but we can feel it flow through us. We call it the Force of nature," Lauren lightly ran her arm through the air. At least, that's what Caitlin saw. In truth, she had touched a river of energy flowing over her head.

"Lauren, tell me what it's like being a druid. It seems very exciting, being able to control that energy. We Men are so boring," Caitlin sighed.

"Druids are actually Wood Elves who have dedicated themselves more to magic. We respect forest creatures and nature, and we use plants and natural elements to help others. But magic is our first priority. They sometimes call us healers and woodland mages. We take energy from nature and turn it into magic. It is mainly about control over the four elements of nature: water, air, earth and fire. The strongest druids can cause floods and storms, wake volcanoes or even summon lightning. But for that you would need to control an enormous amount of Force."

"How do you direct it then? Shouldn't you have some wand?"

"No, only mages use those. We do not need any such tools. We use our hands. Some druids use staffs, but that is only for decoration. They wish to make a greater impression,"

Lauren said and remembered Omar. The head druid of Valinndor was always strutting about with a staff carved from oak and etched with symbols and bird feathers.

"Can the Force be harmful to druids?" Caitlin wanted to know everything.

"No. Nature is our friend and so is her Force. There are no negative effects, unless you bite off more than you can chew. Then your head can hurt the whole day," Lauren joked, "If you take too much, the process might reverse and drain all of your energy. Then you are as tired as though you had ran the whole day."

"Can you use the Force to defend from attackers?"

"Of course you can."

"Then why do you need a bow and arrows?"

"Elesar wants me to hone both my skills: archery and magic. He does not think it is wise to let everyone know I can do magic, so my bow and arrows serve as a decoy."

"Wise. And what forms of magic do you know?" Caitlin asked, curious. She had avoided that question from the very beginning, but now it felt like the time had come to ask.

"I thought you would ask that!" said Lauren, though she was willing to show what she knew as well.

She drew closer to the river and extended a hand towards the water and the other to the air. Caitlin avidly watched her every move. A part of the river lifted like a waterfall, extended over Lauren all the way to Caitlin and created a watery ceiling above her. Caitlin was awed. She was under water, completely dry.

"Wondrous!" she cried out.

A moment later, Lauren returned the water to the river and it continued flowing like nothing had happened.

"What do you think?" asked Lauren, though she had no need to ask the question. Caitlin's expression said everything.

"Perfect!" Caitlin managed. She was enchanted.

"I know, but I prefer this," Lauren waved her cloak around herself and faded from view.

"How did you...?! Lauren, where are you? How did you do that? Lauren?"

"Is it not good?" Lauren's voice was behind Caitlin.

"Yes, but where are you?" Caitlin looked about herself, but there was no trace of Lauren, "What did you do?"

"I'm right beside you," she said and revealed herself the same way she had disappeared.

"Unbelievable!" Caitlin said.

"It is my favourite magic. Melding with nature. Similar to invisibility with the mages. Very effective with Men, but I still don't know how 'nighters' see me..."

"Nighters?"

"Night Elves. We call them nighters because they are creatures of the night."

"Do they have some special ability to see you?"

"I am not certain. They can see in the dark as well as they can during the day, but I do not understand how they could see an invisible druid. I know Elesar and my sisters discover me every time I spy on them. It is as though my magic has no affect on them. Even Elesar can see me, though he is only a half-nighter," Lauren admitted.

"Wait, both of your sisters are nighters, and you're a druid?"

"Yes, our mother was a nighter and our father a druid," Lauren stopped for a moment. She had only been a year old when her mother had died.

"Perhaps they can see you because they are part druid," Caitlin thought out loud.

"No, it is not that. With Elves who have different parents, there are no mixes who inherit some abilities from one parent and some from the other. They will either take after their father or their mother."

"How is Elesar a Half-Elf then?" Caitlin had so many questions.

"He is the son of a Man and an Elf. Men have strong genes which they pass to their offspring," Lauren stopped again and looked at the sky, "While we're on him, tonight will be a full moon. I wish to show you something," her face lit up.

"What?" Caitlin said curiously, "Lauren?"

But Lauren did not answer her, but headed back to the others.

*

Around the lightly burning fire, Elesar and Bravecat sat and talked. Elesar, leaning against Bravecat's back, was cleaning his dagger.

"Elesar, where's the Reptilian?! Has he escaped?" Lauren said warily as they approached.

Before he could answer, Quickfoot appeared behind her, proudly carrying his catch.

"Yer mean me?"

Lauren looked behind and not thinking, pushed Quickfoot away. Doing so, she stumbled over a bucket of water that was in her way. A stream of water streaked over to the Reptilian and he flew into the air with it like he was a leaf. He fell next to Bravecat with a thud.

"Lauren! Calm yourself!" Bravecat growled.

"Ugh! That hurt! Yer sure yer Lauren?" Quickfoot asked her, watching her while dangling upside down over Bravecat's back. Elesar helped him right himself.

"Elesar! Why is he free?!" Lauren said angrily in a commanding voice.

"Because I released him. His name is Quickfoot," the Half-Elf calmly answered.

"Why?!"

"I assessed that there is more reason for that than to keep him as a prisoner."

Lauren's anger and fear disappeared. She'd forgotten for a moment who the leader was.

"I have heard his story and his choice seemed sound. I cannot resent what he did for his freedom. In return, he has offered us his companionship to Adazar. I told him he could only join us if you two forgive him for the night he attacked you," Elesar finished and then looked first at the girls and then at Quickfoot.

They were both silent. Then Caitlin spoke to Quickfoot:

"My father taught me that people can change, and I've found that to be true as well. If Elesar vouches for you, then I accept it as well. Hello. I'm Caitlin!" she politely held out her hand.

"Pleased ter meet ya, sweet Caitlin. I'm Quickfoot. Sorry fer smacking ya so roughly like that," Quickfoot took her hand.

"I think I hit you," Caitlin answered.

"Aw, hell! Don't matter who hit who!" Quickfoot said quickly. Everyone but Lauren laughed at this.

Elesar was still watching her. She was still uncomfortable with Quickfoot being set free.

"The fact that Elesar released you and trusts you after such a short time does not mean I do. Watch yourself, Reptilian. One wrong move and may my arrow swiftly find your heart!" she threatened.

"Lauren!" Elesar warned her, but Quickfoot wasn't affected by her resistance.

"Then I ain't walkin' in front o' ya," he joked, making Caitlin laugh.

"Good, now that we have settled this, it is time for supper," Elesar said, "Thanks to Quickfoot, there is enough fish here for all."

"Eh, boss, t'were the least I could do fer all ya. Yer know I'll be eternally grateful ta ya."

"Quickfoot, there is no need to call me boss. Elesar will do."

"Alright, boss. Whatever ya say!" Quickfoot retorted, making everyone smile again. Even Lauren's face held a glimmer of a smile at that.

*

After dinner, the company quickly fell asleep. Around midnight, Lauren woke Caitlin and whispered that they should go to Elesar. Caitlin tiredly opened her eyes and looked around. Bravecat and Quickfoot here sleeping, but Elesar's bed was empty. She remembered Lauren had wanted to show her something about Elesar. She got up immediately and followed the Elf. She made them invisible with magic and they made their way to Elesar. Soundlessly, they crept up to a small hill leaned against a fallen log.

Elesar was sitting on a rock not far from them and looking up at the full moon. He was stripped to his waist, hands held in prayer.

Caitlin didn't understand what Lauren wanted to show her until the moment Elesar lifted his hands to the sky. From him, a blue, almost invisible light began to rise toward the moon. It looked like he was connected to it. White spiral waves passed through the beam and it got lighter and lighter, but only to those close enough to see it.

"It happens every full moon," Lauren said quietly, "It is the time when a nighter more than a century old receive strength from the moon. I first heard of this from Fiona, but it was some time before I witnessed this amazing moment myself. It is a sacred ritual of the nighters and they jealously guard it from the other races. It is said they connect minds in this moment."

"Amazing! It is the most beautiful sight I have ever seen!" Caitlin was enraptured.

"Wait until you see Valinndor during the full moon. Every nighter gathers at St. Itar lake for a sacred ritual..."

While they were whispering and marvelling at the sight, they did not notice Quickfoot sneaking up on them.

"What're ye watchin'?" he asked them, at which Caitlin screamed in fright. Lauren could not stop her own scream in time. They both jumped and looked around.

"Quickfoot!" Lauren yelled, keeping her tone quiet. She quickly realized they'd been discovered and lay down on the ground, stopping her invisibility magic, "Have you lost your wits? Why have you sneaked up on us like that? Hold on, how did you see us?"

"I hear ye. Reptilians got very good hearin'. What'cha spyin' on the boss fer?" Quickfoot peeked from the log and looked at Elesar, "Leave 'im alone. Can't yer see he's meditatin'? Leastways, that's what it looks like. What's that blue stuff comin' from 'im?"

"Lauren says that's how he communicates with other nighters... Night Elves, that is," Caitlin answered.

"Nighters? Righ'. And why's ya spyin' on 'im?" Quickfoot continued.

"No evil intent was behind it. We merely wished to witness this magical sight. Look at that wondrous light! You should witness this when there are more of them," Lauren said.

"I'm surprised he hadn't heard us when we screamed," Caitlin said looking at Lauren.

"I did not scream! I heard Quickfoot approach us," the Elf said defensively. She felt herself blush, but the darkness hid her secret.

"Yeah righ'. You screamed louder than Caitlin here," Quickfoot smiled.

"That is not true!" Lauren raised her voice and speared Quickfoot with a glance.

"Shhh! Elesar will hear us," Caitlin scolded them.

"Ye think he might?" Quickfoot asked.

"Yes, I can hear you loud and clear," Elesar said suddenly. He had stopped his ritual, opened his eyes and turned to the others. His eyes were glowing from the moonlight.

"Elesar! I...thought...I wanted to...Good night!" Lauren stuttered and ran to her bedroll.

Also caught out, Caitlin straightened, waved to Elesar, smiled and ran after Lauren. Only Quickfoot remained undisturbed by Elesar's words. He stood up and approached him.

"Boss, I was jus' seein' what the girls were doin'. Didn't mean ter interrupt yer at all. You go ahead and stare at the sky some more, or whatever ye were doin'."

"Thank you, Quickfoot, but I have finished," Elesar smiled. He hadn't met someone so direct and amusing in a long time.

"Yer really heard everythin' we was talkin' 'bout from way over there?"

"Yes. My Elf hearing allows me to hear things I sometimes wish I hadn't."

"Yer think yer can hear too much? I got good ears on me, but I don't think I hear too much. I always miss somethin'. What else can yer do?" Quickfoot was interested. Elesar accepted the question.

"I can see to a great distance and can see just as well during the night as I can during the day."

"Well, would yer look at that! I ain't able ter do that. But I can hear and breathe under water. Though there ain't nothin' but fish to listen to under water, so it's good fer bugger all," Quickfoot admitted and scratched his head. His scales reflected light like mirrors. And his big ears, more like fins, were constantly moving about listening to his surroundings.

"Do not underestimate your gifts. Everyone is gifted with a useful talent."

"Aw shucks, boss! No one's praised me as much as yer!"

"Quickfoot, Elesar will do," the Half-Elf smiled and clasped him on the shoulder in a friendly gesture.

"Beggin' yer pardon. Slipped my mind, boss. Oh, there I go again," he hissed and caught his forked tongue.

"Ha ha! You are one odd Reptilian. Let's get some rest. We have a long road ahead of us."

"How much longer to these wizard types then?"

"Quite a while. A few weeks. But before that, we are heading to Valinndor. I must meet with the Council and inform them of the coming war," Elesar answered.

"Yer meetin' the Council? Yer one of the council members?"

"No, I am the lord of Valinndor," Elesar answered.

"Whaaa?! Yer lord over all o' Valinndor? And here's me callin' ya boss! Fergive me, emperor, fer my stupidity," Quickfoot exclaimed and fell prostrate before him.

"Quickfoot! Get up. For you, I am merely Elesar."

Quickfoot looked up and stared at Elesar with his wide, colourful eyes:

"Yer forgive me?"

"Only if you stop referring to me in such a manner. We are equals. We walk the same path and breathe the same air."

"Thanks, boss!" Quickfoot happily stood up and Elesar laughed heartily.

"Oh, but it is difficult to stick something into your head, ha ha!"

"Stick what?!" Quickfoot said, confused.

End of Chapter 06