

THE HOST RETURNS

Written by

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Based on a scene from the novel
Worldheart Epic Volume I:
Seventh Imperium

The Host Returns

INT. MAQ'S KITCHEN - DAY

KAYLA is sitting at a large wooden table. Suddenly, she senses a presence in the house not far behind her. She grabs her diary and prepares to bolt out of the house, but first she turns to look. Her skin crawls and her spine tingles. A large, dark, shaggy form standing in the shadows of the other room, booms in a strong, gruff voice

MAQ

Well, good afternoon ta you,
lassie. I trust you had a good
night's sleep, and made yourselves
comfortable in ma home.

KAYLA

(gasps)
Mr. Maq!

The shaggy, barrel-chested man took a step forward and out of the shadows. He spoke again and his voice was still loud and growly.

MAQ

(loud and growly)
Ach! Ah can see that Ah frightened
ya, and Ah do apologize, my dear
young lady. It's in ma nature ta
sneak around strangers, ya see. Do
please sit back down. I've got much
ta ask ya.

Kayla, still unsure, sits slowly back down at the table. Maq moves around the table to a place opposite her, pulls out a chair and sits down, back to the door, fragments of dirt and moss falling from his beard to the tabletop.

MAQ (CONT'D)

(smiling)
Now then, please tell me how ya
feel today, and did your ride go
well enough last night?

KAYLA

(relaxes a little)
Well, sir, I don't think either
Annabelle or I remember much about
the ride; we were so sleepy. But
we're very grateful for your help
last night.

(MORE)

KAYLA (CONT'D)

I don't think we'd be alive today
if you hadn't stopped that horrible
Sergeant when you did.

Maq casually swats at the air, sending more debris onto the
table top

MAQ

Ach, 'twas nothin'. Ah've dealt
with the army in the past a number
o' times, and they're not so bold
when they face me instead of a
couple of wee little girls.

Kayla's eyes narrow slightly. Maq catches it.

MAQ (CONT'D)

Hmm. Did I say 'little girls'? I
meant ta say, young ladies.

Kayla manages a smile and relaxes a bit more.

KAYLA

We slept very well last night. In
fact, we slept-in this morning. And
I hope you don't mind, sir, but we
ate some of your food..

ANNABELLE bursts noisily through the front door holding two
eggs in her skirt.

ANNABELLE

Look, Kaylie! I found some more..

The eggs drop to the floor making a wet splattering sound.
Annabelle points nervously at the dark, rough form sitting
across from her friend.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

(stammers)

W-What's that, Kaylie?

Annabelle stares, horrified, as the dreadful form turns in
the chair and faces her. It smiles and slaps its hands on its
knees.

MAQ

(booming growl)

Well! Do you mean ta say that
you've already forgotten little ol'
me?

Annabelle steps back. Her jaw drops.

MAQ (CONT'D)

(alarmed)

No, lassie! Dunna wet on ma floor.
The mess with the eggs is bad
enough.

(soft)

Ahhh, there, see? A'm ne talkin'
loud, now. Will that help?"

Annabelle blushed and closed her mouth.

ANNABELLE

Oh, it's you, Mr. Kag Monster.

Annabelle holds her head up high, trys to regain some
dignity.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

Yes, sir. That's much better. Thank
you.

MAQ

Ah! Good, then. I'll try harder ta
not frighten ya again.

Maq holds his arms out and looks himself over.

MAQ (CONT'D)

Well, Ah do look a frightful mess,
don't I? And Ah dunna need these
Kag clothes any more today. So, if
you two will excuse me, Ah'll go
and get cleaned up for ma guests.

Maq turns and disappears into the bathroom. From offscreen,
we hear water running and some faint humming and singing.

Annabelle quickly rounds the table and sits in the chair next
to Kayla. Did he hurt you Kaylie?

KAYLA

No, of course not. I mean, he saved
us from the soldiers last night,
didn't he? And he's allowed us to
rest here, so I don't think he
means to hurt us. But he's just so
scary!

ANNABELLE

(wrings her hands,
concerned)

I don't want to stay here.

(MORE)

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

Why don't we just quietly leave while he's bathing? Let's go back to the Underground House. . .like. . .you. . .promised.

KAYLA

(sighs)

Yes, I promised. You don't have to keep beating me with it. But I haven't asked our 'host' my questions yet. I've got to find out if this place is the Western Outpost, and if it is, then find out what it has to do with my mother.

Annabelle brushes at the debris on the table, sending some of it to the floor.

ANNABELLE

Well, while you're asking your questions, why not ask Mr. Monster where he's been all night. Out scaring the life out of people before eating them, no doubt.

Offscreen, the bath sounds and singing stop. Annabelle grabs Kayla and anxiously pleads,

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

Oh, Kaylie, I wish we'd left like I asked.

KAYLA

As I asked, Bel. It's as I asked.
(touches Annabelle's arm)
Please be patient. When I've learned what I came here for, we can go.

ANNABELLE

(grins mischievously)

What's wrong with 'like I asked'?