

The rest of the afternoon was spent walking in and out of the square's many resourceful shops through the many crowds of people. This disguises really did help with making us blend in and this made the errand quick. By dusk we only had one more thing to find.

"A round purple amethyst." I read on the list. Even after finding everything else, there wasn't really much sign that we would find that in the village. "We've walked through all the square and no jewelry store has those." Len said in a stern voice. He was probably just as frustrated as I was, but I could tell that he just wanted to go back to the centre. At night the forest became more dangerous, and it was a lot more difficult to find the passageway to the entrance. "Well, my dear brother," I said yawning. "You don't have to worry in the slightest, because I know where to find one." "And where exactly is that?" he replied, a hint of challenge in his mellow voice. "The oak. With a few words we could easily get it." "Well, ok but we have to hurry or else we'll get a lecture out of Kyra." "There's a shortcut right near there, and besides Kyra is probably going to be a lot more upset if we don't show up with everything on the list."

With this, he finally seemed convinced, so we left the square and went into the forest where we eventually came to find a large, old, oak tree. The sun was almost all the way down, and the night air was cool. Turning the palm of his hand up, and a small yellow flame sprang from it. This gave the forest some light and helped me see the trunk of the tree better. The edges of the bark had been scratched, probably by the many animals that passed through, and at the very middle, I found an oval shaped carving. Rumor had it that a very greedy peasant had hidden all his gems in the tree trunk. I'd found it before, when I was lost, but I thought it might

serve better in another time, so using my water, I'd used a lock spell to keep them stuck in there. I tried to find the words in my memory.

"Et aperire revelare" I said. Small drops then formed around the oval and slowly, the piece of wood fell to the ground, revealing a small hole where the gems were.

"I don't believe you've ever told me about this?" said Len, examining the gems.

"Just a little childhood secret. Here, look, there we have it." I said showing him the shiny purple stone. "The edges aren't really round, but that can be fixed, meanwhile we should go back to the centre."

"Yes, I think this will be good. Now let's go, or else we can expect Kyra to deprive us of our lunch tomorrow." Len says as he makes his way around the tree. Dragging around a thin string of water, I make my own oval shape in the wood. "Ac sepelire." I say and the piece of bark becomes part of the tree again, hiding the rest of the gems in the wood. Len followed behind me as we made our way through the trees and we soon arrived at the eastern entrance of the centre while the sun set behind the enormous mountains.

The steel gates were barely visible in the night time, and these made the building seem even more transparent. The centre was designed in quite an interesting way, so that any ally to the king would not be able to enter. Half of it underground, the other encased in glass above the surface. This only served as an illusion though because no one could really see what was going on inside, except those that were already inside. The main reason it was built was for the

organization to be able to have a secure place to train newcomers and hide from the king who feared upon our kind, yet lusted for our powers and abilities.

Len and I walked over to the entrance door using special keys on our pendants to open it. Once inside, we noticed that the only light coming into the hallways was from some windows. We took off our capes and immediately went off into the meeting room in the upper wing, knowing that we would soon be late. We both brought along the few bags we had collected of items at the square and made it just on time.

Standing there in the very bright room, I sat on the table and eyed the amethyst that was in my hand. There was something strange about each of the objects we'd gathered today, but I figured the amethyst was what made me the most suspicious about what we were doing. Most of the things we'd brought back were ancient books or herbs and I had a feeling that something must be hidden in the books.

I shook my head. The day had been long and tiring, and all my body asked for was sleep. I couldn't think straight, so I decided to let my train of thought wonder a bit. I looked at Len who was sitting in one of transparent colored chairs. He was observing one of the books. His face seemed to search for something, as if he was trying to piece a puzzle together. I thought that maybe he was trying to use deductive reasoning like he usually did, to see how the book connected to all the rest.

"Read anything interesting?" I ask him from behind the chair. He turns to me and I see that he has dark shadows under his eyes. We were both tired from the day, but he seemed to be exhausted for some other reason, not only just going from shop to shop in the square.

“Quite a lot actually. I’m surprised you weren’t interested in looking over any of these.” He laughs. “Slacker.” It took a little bit of effort not to take the book from his hands, hit him on the head with it, and read it.