*[letter from Ëlinyr to her friend Katerina, who she had fallen out of touch with after the Kishari civil war]*

Katerina,

Gods, it is good to hear from you! I’d been worried about you, especially considering I hadn’t heard from you since you had escaped to the Sapphire City with some of the rare texts from the Royal Academy’s library. When the texts were returned, yet you were still missing, and the letters I sent had been returned as undeliverable, I had feared something untoward had happened. Thank you so much for leaving word with Moira, and telling me where I can find you - when I have the time, I would love to meet up and hear about your adventures over the past three years, but for now, this letter will have to suffice when it comes to catching up on my end of things.

I myself have been rather busy since the war, and a lot of things have happened - rather than bounce around and tell you of all the exciting things first, I’ll attempt to tell everything in order. (Even though there have been some very exciting things happening as of late.)

About five or six months after the war, the Royal Academy began the process of reopening, and I ended up reopening my coffee shop to help fuel the scholars in their efforts to re-catalog all the texts that had been moved to safety during the civil war. (I also did my fair share of helping reshelve books - after all, you know how much time I’ve spent there! I know the library quite well, and was happy to help return the books to their homes.) It was good to spend some time in the Academy. I had missed it, especially after the war. At that point, I was splitting my time between the Diamond City and Kishar - Alair and I decided to live up there after the war, but I still kept my rooms over the shop so I had a place to stay whenever I was in Kishar for an extended amount of time. I’m quite glad I kept those rooms instead of renting them out, because they came in very handy not long after I opened up the shop for business again.

I don’t suppose you remember Ithuryn, do you? The thinblooded sun elf who was in a number of our magical theory classes that I was rather enamored with? The one who mysteriously disappeared, and whose disappearance sent me into a deep depression for a while?

Well, it turns out he was, in fact, still alive. I found this out one afternoon when he made his way to Lin’s Study and I happened to be there, and he recognized the sound of my voice. Oh gods, Katerina, I can’t fully describe how it felt to see him there after all those years, to hear his voice once again. Not only was he alive, but he still had feelings for me, as I did for him (and still very much do). On top of all of that, it turned out he also knew Alair - they were friends when they were children! The world is indeed small at times, isn’t it? Anyhow, his disappearance resulted from his plans to find the Night Market - he wanted to become a strong fighter like his mother, and they gave him that strength, but at the price of being captured as a slave and being made to fight in the pits in the Onyx City. He was able to escape during the turmoil surrounding the War of Flame and the Kishari civil war, and eventually found his way to my cafe.

Anyhow, I offered Ithuryn the rooms above my shop so he had a place to stay, and he took up residence there for a time in exchange for helping out at the shop, specifically with the book-selling side of the business. (You have no idea how lovely it is to have someone helping out there. Moira is much better at reading the books; less so at helping me find rare ones.)

About a year or so after the civil war, I learned about a new academy opening up in the Diamond City, the Academy of Innovation. Curious to learn more, I spoke with Jaya Sato, the head of the Academy of Innovation, and told them of my experience with the Royal Academy both as a scholar and as an instructor. They asked me to join the faculty as an Assistant Professor, which is quite exciting. I admit, I am fond of the fact that their admission criteria focus on merit and ability as opposed to status and rank; it seems that this is a school for those who truly want to learn. I feel as if I’ve found my scholarly home in the Academy of Innovation.

Alair has been keeping himself busy as well - he came up with the idea to start a newspaper of sorts for the Diamond City as a way to share information with the city’s citizens. He worked with a few others from the Liminal Circle to gather everything needed to get started. I never realized just how much goes into publishing a newspaper, but now I know all the intimate details, from acquiring a printing press to sourcing paper and even determining distribution points for the daily newspapers. I think I’ll stick to teaching and researching, myself.

I haven’t spent all of my time buried in my studies. Ithuryn and I spent a lot of time getting to know each other again, and learning about what the other had been up to over the past twenty years. I also spent quite a lot of time with both Alair and Ithuryn together, and oh, the three of us together have such a lovely relationship dynamic. They both know how to make me smile, and both take care of me in their own unique ways. However, with Alair and I spending increasingly more time here in the Diamond City, me with my teaching and Alair with his work on the Diamond City newspaper, we didn’t get to spend much time with Ithuryn down in Kishar. We remedied the situation by asking Ithuryn to move in with us, which he did.

Which brings us up to the present, for the most part - me teaching classes and running Lin’s Study, Alair working on the Diamond City newspaper, and Ithuryn helping me out with the bookselling part of the shop. The three of us have been living together for nearly a year now, and I can’t remember a time where I’ve ever been happier. Things are just so wonderful between the three of us, so natural.

So much so that a couple of weeks ago, I actually asked Ithuryn for his hand in marriage.

Yes, I actually did the asking! And he accepted! I never in a million years dreamed that I would ever be brave enough to ask someone to marry me. You remember how shy Ithuryn was, though - I knew I was going to have to be the one who asked. I also never dreamed I'd be in a situation where I would be married to two wonderful men, but here we are, the three of us planning a wedding together. Alair saw how very fond I am of Ithuryn, and when I asked him if he would be amenable to me marrying both of them, he said yes.

Having both of them in my life is incredible and wonderful beyond words. As you know, I can’t imagine my life without Alair, and was overjoyed when he asked me to marry him before the fight with the Flamelord - it gave me something to fight for, to live for. And with Ithuryn, well, I actually *have* lived without Ithuryn - and you remember what I was like after his disappearance. I don’t want to go through that again. I love them both dearly, and for us to all be together for the rest of our lives… it’s a dream come true.

Anyhow, I shall stop with the romantic mush and save that for Alair and Ithuryn instead. I do hope you are well, and I should be down in Kishar again within the next few weeks to stop in at Lin’s Study and see how things are going there and would be very happy to see you. If you find yourself in the Diamond City before then, please feel free to come visit - I have sorely missed you, my friend, and cannot wait to tell you more of my life over these past three years.

Sincerely,

Ëlinyr

P.S. I also have a wedding invitation for you! I do hope you'll be able to attend.