
Ordrids are fond of the moon. Irion gazed upon her, the great beacon of his House. He'd thought he'd heard her call his name as he stumbled through the graves. Blossoming on the vines that grew on elder headstones, Orphedilias opened to vector in the gentle light. Poets and ninnies like Belot would have stopped to ogle at their shape perhaps.

He came to the graveyard's center, the Maedraderium. Irion halted and stood before the new obelisk. Black and gold, jutting out of a cluster of pediment tombs, this robust monument to his great-uncle now towered. His Virulence had worked in startling mystery at times, not issuing an immediate and savage revenge on the House of Rogaire was chief among Irion's confusions.

But now this. Of all the places to be buried.

The common man was at best a two-legged dog, and Maecidion had willed his obelisk in a graveyard hardly good enough for such a dog's dead fleas. What unfathomable nonsense! He could have been exalted a mile high; future generations of Ordrids and wide-eyed gawkers would have been straining their necks.

The prattling on about the Maedraderium being City Cemetery's wealthy centerpiece meant little to Irion. Most still just called this island of stones, more a small city of venerated dead, "Laughter's Lot." If it had any meaning at all, Irion guessed it derived from the morticians, mirthfully swelling the lot as their coffers filled.

Irion held in his hand a bottle of that corn liquor, Spiritual Oppressor. He took another pull. "I am sorry, dearest Lord," Irion said, "but I cannot see to it. See to it that I leave your wishes untouched." And why shouldn't he feel this way? The very man whose will he was rebelling against had once made such bold moves in his own time. Would he—could he—at least appreciate Irion's ambitions, providing the impetus to be so bold? The reading now three days old, it troubled Irion no less.

Swaying, emptied bottle in hand, he arched his back and stuck out his chest.

He hadn't come to talk to an obelisk; just a thoughtful gesture along the way. Irion tossed the Spiritual Oppressor and continued to a hamlet on the edge of the graves.