

Quentyn Dragonsblood's Fear

Fear is a very useful emotion for a monster slayer. It heightens our reflexes gives us that extra strength when our life is in danger. It makes us cautious so we can avoid unnecessary risk. A fearless slayer tends to be dead slayer. My friend Quentyn Dragonsblood is the exception to that rule.

This morning when we were doing a patrol we came across a Hilderage. I don't think any description I give can do any justice to how positively terrifying it is. I will try anyways. It's the size of an apartment complex. It has the legs of spider, the tail of a scorpion, the neck of a snake, its skin as tough as dragon and covered in spikes, a hundred eyes looking on from every direction, its only weakness a red spot with a radius of five centimeters on its belly. The most fearsome thing about the Hilderage is the speed and viciousness with which it attacks. It takes at least twenty experienced hunters to even hope they might succeed at slaying the beast.

When we encountered the Hilderage we were underground there was absolutely no need to engage the beast in combat. This however meant nothing to Quentyn. The moment he saw the monstrosity he had a wild glint in his eyes and grin that stretched from ear to ear, he ran up the stairs to face the beast. "What the hell are doing you Quentyn? That's a Hilderage! The most fearsome monster known to man. To fight it would be suicide!"

"Don't worry man I'll take care of this." With that he stepped outside. I reluctantly followed behind.

Quentyn Dragonblood ran towards the beast armed with only a rapier and a pistol. The Hilderage neck extended forward its mouth open and fangs exposed. I cast a shield to deflect the venom. Quentyn leaped forward landing on its head. He stabbed his rapier through its eye. Leaving his sword behind, he dashed under the beast belly. While running and without taking a moment to aim he shot at its weak spot. I then cast a spell of acceleration to get him out from under the Hildrage belly before it crashed to the ground.

“Well Eric that was a refreshing warm up this morning.” "He had slain a Hildrage; he hadn't even broken a sweat, and he'd done it like it was the easiest thing in the world"

“You’re a lunatic” I told him “An absolute lunatic”

We arrived at School at 10 am. By noon everyone had heard that Quentyn had slain a Hilderage. We had sparring practice today. I absolutely hated sparring practice. My bout lasted about minute before I completely and utterly trounced. “The only reason you haven’t failed or died yet is because Quentyn is your partner.” said Rick.

I would say that this sort of comment was unusual but it wasn’t. I knew that my Quentyn partner meant forever being in his shadow and I was okay with that I as figured he was probably the best partner to have if I wanted to not die.

During lunch time the PA box announced “Quentyn Dragonsblood please head down to the principal’s office.” I could not help but let out a smirk. I had lost count of the number of times the principal has summoned Quentyn to berate him for being reckless. I bit down on my steak and cheese sandwich and waited for my friend to come back and tell me all about it. When Quentyn came back he had an odd expression on his face. His eyes were wide, his face pale. Something had manage to scare the fearless Quentyn Dragonsblood.

He goes up to me. "Eric, I need your help."

"What happened? Is anyone dead? What's the problem?" My mind is racing- what could possibly scare someone who fights before breakfast? Whatever it is, it has to be bad; I brace myself to hear the bad news.

“What? No one’s dead. I need to get an 80 on the math exam.”

“Wait that it? Are you telling me that mighty Quentyn Dragonsblood slayer of the Hilderage is afraid of an exam?”

“This isn’t just any exam- it’s a math exam. Listen! If I don’t succeed, I will lose my scholarship and I will drop out of the academy. I won’t get certified as a Slayer.”

“Math’s not that hard- I can teach you”

“You’re crazy. Math is crazy. The way an equation turns into something else is like magic- it just transform right before your eyes.”

“Quentyn were mages we already know how to use magic. It’s not that hard.”

“Well it’s like black magic, a dark and evil not meant for humans.”

“Quentyn we also took black magic course some of those spell are essential for subduing monsters.”

“Will you help me?”

“Yes, but still how can be scared of math when you’re not scared of gigantic monsters out to kill you?”

He shrugged. “I don’t know. Death’s just kind of unavoidable. It will happen eventually you just don’t know when and where. Doing math on the other hand is to be faced with the possibility that we might be stupid. That we are not that smart, that we’re not special. Killing monsters is easy. It’s all straightforward- you just dodge the sharp bits and shoot them where it hurts. Math is being faced with uncertainty.”

“I afraid you have it all upside down. Math is logical, straightforward and certain. You always know what you’re doing with math. However monster killing that’s uncertain- you never know if today is going to be the day you die. Enough discussion! Let’s get some studying done.”

While I wasn’t much help to my partner for slaying monsters. I could always be counted on for slaying, the things that are truly terrifying in life: math problems.