

Pialle Fou Tavacerou Ilsea

~ Ne Peuei Ovrea ~

Let me first say that this is by far the most important of legends, as it concerns the development of Godhood and the birth of the Ovru. Although it is intended less as a literal retelling and more as a spiritual recount of this important event in our history, it does hold more than a little bit of historical truth, even though the true nature of the conflict is long since lost to us. It is said that there was once a Princess in the Eastern Kingdom, beautiful beyond compare. In these days, the Pantheon of the Four was the religion, and the priests had shaken with terror upon the day of her birth, for it was prophesied that the love of the royal child would overturn the order of the heavens and change the balance of the Pantheon.

The priests, fearing apocalypse, advised her father that she could not be allowed to take a lover, for it would be to invite disaster. Heeding their counsel, her father the King devised a cunning method of isolating his daughter from the men of the village. He had his priests open the vault of the temple where the archaic and violent Elemental artifacts were kept, relics of the time before the order of the Pantheon. From their arcane power, the priests fashioned for the princess a tiara of rare beauty and elegance, with a fearsome charm upon it. Once the princess donned the tiara, her touch was death to any man, freezing him at once with the raw elemental power of winter. The villagers and the courtesans alike grew fearful of her power, speaking in hushed whispers of an icy princess with the scent of death on her lips. The princess became withdrawn, wandering the tower or the palace gardens, mourning her touch that killed the delicate blooms by the pathways.

These events would not go unheeded in the Pantheon. During the day, the courtiers talking in the sunshine about the tiara alerted the keen ears of Apollus to the prophesied end of balance, and lovers pitying her by moonlight brought the doom to the alert mind of Lunaris. Both saw the same opportunity in the chaos ahead, the ability to sway the aeons-old feud between the Sonoï to their advantage. Both Soreveu knew that the way to advance their power was by championing a lover for the cursed princess, one who could withstand her touch.

~ The Gift of Apollus ~

Apollus acted swiftly, before Lunaris and her subtle devices were likely to be ready. He chose as his champion a young man from a nearby artisan town, the son of a bricklayer. His name was Pejout, an aspiring painter and potter who tired of life in his town. As the youth was walking in a field, Apollus came to him in the form of a golden bird, with plumage of the brightest fire and light. Dazzled, the youth cried out, shielding his eyes. The Lord of Day told the young man to heed his words well, for he would make Pejout the greatest hero the world had ever known. He spoke of a princess beautiful beyond compare and deadly to touch, and of an artifact that would give any man the power to resist that curse.

Sudden as he had come, Apollus was gone, leaving the boy dazzled in the field. As his eyes cleared, Pejout saw a smoldering in the grass. Approaching, he saw two gauntlets and a coiled whip, red and hot as if from the very bowels of the earth. Apollus, binding the old Elemental

magic into these ordinary items, had given the mortal boy power enough to resist the curse of the princess. As the dazzled youth slipped his hands into the gauntlets, a warmth and a spirit flowed from them into his body, giving him energy and a drive such as he had only known at his best moments before this day. As his smoldering hand closed around the whip, it wrapped around him like a tendril of flame, giving him confidence and passion. With his gifts in hand, Pejout remembered the princess in the high city. He turned from his village with nothing but a smile and began down the road.

~ The Message of Lunaris ~

Some hours later, as the gentle kiss of night stole over the kingdom, a youth named Tavato slipped into a troubled sleep. A flash of light seemed to burst inside his head as he slept, replaced by the most complete darkness he had ever felt. A soft voice echoed out of the darkened corners of his mind, telling him of a princess with an aura of death, of power that would be his to allow him immunity to the that fell touch. The darkness lifted as swiftly as it had fallen, and the youth bolted from bed. To his surprise, the first rays of moonlight fell on a dazzling icy whip and two matched gauntlets of purest frozen Elemental power.

As he picked the gauntlets up and slid them over his hands, the boy felt a sense of utter cool peace steal into him, soothing his fears. As he hefted the whip, turning it in the moon's glow, it curled around his body, filling him with serene confidence. Quietly, leaving frost-spidered footsteps over the floor of his hovel, he gathered some small things and set out in search of the princess in the high city, the stars and the wind leading his way over the country to his destined love.

~ The Conflict of Mortals ~

As the two youths neared the city, the priests sensed impending doom. They hurried to wake the King, telling him of the ruin of his kingdom, for they were wise in the thoughts of the gods and suspected a plot by the Soreveu to turn the prophecy to their advantage. The King readied his guards throughout the day as the youths neared, telling them to slay any man who tried to enter into the palace, no matter who it may be. Tavato, being closer than Pejout to the high city, arrived at the outer walls a short time before his rival, although neither man knew of the other's existence. As night fell upon the city again, the champion of Lunaris stole into the courtyard of the castle. Using darkness as his ally, he walked around and past the guards, following the gentle breeze to the tower where the cursed princess spent her days. Quietly, he moved beside the princess, who was fast asleep on her bed. Taking her hand in his gauntleted one, he pressed it to his own cheek. Instantly, he felt the power of her tiara rushing into him, but the onslaught that would have frozen him instead became as a cool wind through his body - the gauntlets made him immune. The princess awoke with a start, jerking her hand back to her side in terror. Her eyes widened as she saw this strange man who did not die at her touch, who looked at her with a look of profound peace. Tavato explained himself, telling the girl of his dream and his home. As they talked, the princess became enamored of this man who could be with her and not die. In her desperation and need for human contact, she took him to her bed. In their moment of love, their combined elemental accouterments washed a cool power over them, making their bodies as ice.

As they lay together, the sun's first rays struck the wall of the city, illuminating Pejout dashing for the castle. The guards, better suited for daylight, saw Pejout running at them and called the alarm. The lovers in the tower looked out in confusion to see the champion of day rush headlong into the guards, immolating them with a burst of fire from his hands. Dashing into the castle, Pejout knocked aside or killed anyone who stood in his path to the tower as Tavato attempted to brace the door against the mad charge of his rival. Despite his efforts, the fiery youth swept aside the wooden door in a cloud of cinders and stopped to stare at the couple made of ice.

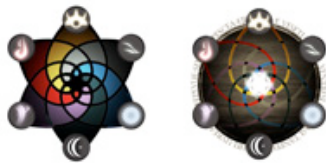
Tavato stood between Pejout and the icy princess, the scent of burned human flesh sickening him as it wafted off the bloodstained fiery gauntlets. It only took a second for the enraged Pejout to see the reality of the situation, and that he had been beaten. With a shout of rage, he charged at Tavato, taking him by surprise and knocking him aside. He loomed over the terrified princess, grabbing her by the arm to take him with her, but he stopped short as his hand came away holding her arm. The princess gave a cry of agony in the presence of the fiery attacker, the heat melting and distorting her icy beauty. Enraged at himself and the trickery that brought him to this place, Pejout ran from the palace, setting the city alight on his way out.

Some time later, Tavato awoke in a puddle of water, a shattered tiara twinkling weakly on the moist floor. Horrified, he ran out of the tower only to be confronted with the destruction his fiery opposite had left in his wake, with infernal carnage on all sides. Sickened and torn with sorrow, Tavato sat in the ruined city for a very long time, his icy body hunched in pain. An age passed, and the city crumbled into ruin around him, the people long having left that cursed place. Finally, one calm night, he stood up and wordlessly walked to the mountains, where he passed from all memory.

~ The Advent of Gods ~

As the ages progressed, the two failed champions wandered the earth, giving seed to legends of a bright spirit and a sorrowful giant that roamed the world looking for an unknown balm for their wounds. Apollus and Lunaris saw the sorrow of the two wanderers and took pity upon them. Each gathering their remaining stock of the Old Elements, they bestowed a greater power upon the two, giving them immortality and sway over the cycle of the seasons, ending their days of wandering. As they ascended, each renounced his mortal life and name. Pejout chose to be called Vulcagni, Tavato named himself Phrigustus. Each retreated to a separate part of the Pantheon, their powers still not soothing the pain inside.

Today, many have forgotten that the two Ovrui were once mortals, but even so they honor their tradition. Parents who wish their children to be artisans as the god Vulcagni once was name their children Pejo or Peyo, although most do not know why that name is significant. The Holy word asking for forgiveness is derived from 'Tavato', in honor of his tortured cries asking his love for forgiveness at his failure to protect her. It is still a tradition in some cultures to give tiaras to young women, and some even remember the legend of the Ice Princess, but much of the truth passes into history, as truth tends to do.



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