

Dusk and Dawn on the Doorstep of the House of Pain

by Joe Nobel

It is dawn. Liith emerges from the House of Pain. A hooded acolyte, robed in grey, watches as my love runs to my waiting skimmer. Only when I close its glass dome does the attendant lock the arched wooden door to the outside world.

“Are you alright?” I want to ask, but say nothing as I watch Liith’s tall figure slip into the passenger seat. Questions like: “Why are you doing this to yourself?” rage through my head, but if I ask, I will start an argument that will degenerate into a fight by the time we get to our spire.

I lift the skimmer off the ground and head south. The House of Pain occupies an entire block of Darmatown; the only block with all four streets paved. With its fortress-like brick walls looming three stories high, it is impossible to tell where the buildings end and the courtyards begin. I know there is a

garden in the south end, because there is a passion tree peeking from the other side of the wall. Other than that, I know nothing about the place; Liith is sworn to secrecy and won't talk about what happens there. "I made your favorite, Taash Paraar," I say.

I get a look, perhaps of anticipation, at the mention of the Taash Paraar. A comfort food, a childhood favorite, a taste from faraway home. Until I can understand why my Liith submits to the House of Pain every night, I'll have to be content with offering these fleeting slices of joy.

"I cannot eat today," Liith says to me.

I wait for an explanation.

"Tomorrow night's instruction will involve being probed."

Paraar does not keep; I might as well throw it away since I won't eat it with hungry eyes watching.

"You eat it."

I'm sure that's a response to my look of disappointment. I wonder if Liith knows it's not over the food.

We ride in silence the rest of the way. Hester is rising ahead of us, taking up a full third of the southern sky. The first of the two suns, Bion Ta'ar is just above the horizon, with Bion Ba'ta not far behind.

"The Ky birds will be migrating soon," I say just to fill the silence.

Liith looks at me and nods.

Only on Hester and Drav, two worlds locked in orbits so close they share one atmosphere could birds have evolved that migrate between planets. I look up, mesmerized at Hester and think depressing thoughts of how we're stuck on Drav. Although we're doing better than others, with a spire of our own,

we'll never get off this world. We just defer to the flock of offworld tourists during migration week.

Liith strokes my arm. I just look over and smile as I drive.

"It alright," I'm told. "This is what I want."

"But –" Again I stop myself, dare not bring up the touchy questions.

"I can drop out any time if it becomes more than I can take."

"As long as you're happy doing this, I'll be happy for you," I say after a while.

The road is now rural. Darmatown is long behind us. As I emerge from a stand of trees, I see an atmospheric rocketing towards us in the middle of the road. I swerve to the side, but the skimmer can't react fast enough. I scream as it approaches like a bullet. Then at the last possible moment it lifts to the sky, shaking our tiny skimmer in its turbulent wake.

"Damn form-3's!" I yell. "They think they own the place because of their gene set."

"Actually, I know who that is," Liith says calmly. "An instructor from the House. Just toying with me."

Only then do I notice Liith's control; not moving or even tensing a muscle while the atmospheric raced towards us; and now, with a calm voice explaining who it was. Had something like this happened last year, Liith would have been left trembling and screaming.

"Thank you for explaining," I say, trying to emulate Liith's inner peace, yet hating the methods used to achieve it.

We arrive at our spire without further incident, and I garage the skimmer in its base. I help Liith out, careful of where I touch; knowing all too well about the bruises left from the night's tortures.

"Can you make it up on your own?" I ask.

"Carry me," comes the answer.

It must have been an exhausting night.

Liith climbs into my arms and grabs hold around my neck. I grip the cable-pull with one hand, and hold onto my charge with the other. I notice again how light the body I hold is. Liith has lost 7 kams since entering the training program. Now slim and svelte like never before; delicately attractive, in fact; but at what cost? Wrapping my arm around the cable, I give it a yank. The spring on top releases, and we catapult upwards along the inner core. Liith clutches tight; it's a chance for us to touch. As the spring exhausts itself and the cable slows to a stop we arrive at the nest. I step off onto the wooden platform, completing our journey.

Liith steps down from my arms and thanks me. I get a kiss. We then hold each other. I embrace too tight, awakening a sting from one of the night's tortures. Liith winces but says, "It's okay."

"Take a shower and get some sleep," I say. I can't help but notice the bags around those once-bright green eyes.

"Okay." The answer is quick.

We had planned to make love today, but I see the exhaustion and I haven't the heart to insist. The training last night must have been particularly grueling. And tonight, Liith would have to endure that probing, as they call it. I imagine what it really would be: being taken anally all night, all to build up tolerance, in preparation for those marathon orgies.

I watch Liith sleep. Gazing at the smile of contentment, I back out. I throw the carefully prepared Taash Paraar in the recyclotron, then spend the day hooked into the net, working. I still have to support the two of us, and for nearly a year there has been the added expense of Liith's tuition.

It's noon, and it is midday-dark because of Hester's occlusion of the suns. Liith stirs. And calls to me. I unhook my mind from the net, having accomplished a shift's work in these morning hours. I

could only be effective by pushing thoughts of Liith's plight out of my mind.

I sit on the pod next to the stretching and yawning body. I look upon the beautiful tangles of blue-blond hair covering the pillow.

“Are you in the mood?” I ask.

“Yara, we’ve been over this before: as a trainee, I am under instruction from the House to always accept the advances of my mate. That’s you, dear.” I feel hands caress my back. “Be a worthy Master to me. That’s all I’ve ever asked of you.”

In an attempt to comply and fill the part, I climb on the bed and cast the sheets aside. I climb on top of Liith, who is now waiting with legs parted. I look upon the once immaculately tender flesh that now is crisscrossed with marks from the various implements. I look upon nipples pierced with rings. Each time I see them, I imagine my Liith being led like a cow, pulled from one pain station to the next.

Eyes look up at me, waiting for me to make the first move.

I freeze.

“You never were assertive.” The words cut like a rusted blade plunged into my heart.

Still on top, I grab frail arms and pin them above a surprised head, on top of that hair of sky-blue.

Liith struggles under me. I know I must be causing pain, yet I force myself to go on, if that is what’s required of me.

Our sexes touch.

Uninterested organs refuse to cooperate. There is no union. This is not love making. This is keeping an appointment.

“It’s no good,” I say. “How can I hold you against me when even touching you hurts.”

“Look at me! Every one of these marks hurt, yet each was given with loving care. Yara, you never could give me what I needed!” Liith rolls away and climbs out of the pod on the other side. “I have been assigned homework.”

“Homework?” Liith is with them 14 hours a day, and still they assign homework. As winter progresses, hours between dusk and dawn grow, and so do the number of hours at the House.

“I must write the Twelve Tenets of Submission five hundred times.”

I leave. The household chores have fallen to me lately. I program the autons to clean the nest, then I set about calibrating the growth of the spire: a task long neglected. Then, I lay out clothes for Liith. Evocative and revealing garments, rife with leather and chain are what the House prefers. By the time we have to leave, I am ready, and so is Liith's homework.

I drive us back to Darmatown, back to the House of Pain. I park in a spot opposite that ominous front door. The suns are just touching the horizon. There are still a few minutes before dusk, but Liith hates to wait until the last moment. I get a kiss and a promise that things will be better, and that one day I'll understand. I watch as my beloved runs across the plaza and up the steps to the wooden door. Three other trainees arrive at the same time, an Origiform female, a Newform quasimale, and an unsexed Disgendered. The four of them hug, then pass through the doors hand in hand.

I do not leave. I stay to watch that arched wooden doorway as the remaining trainees enter. Two more Disgendered, a Newform truefemale, then a 'form-2 Hermaphrodite. That last one is a rare creature indeed, as Hyperforms-2's only come in female unless, of course, gended in utero like this one. I wonder if all 17 sexes are represented among the class of trainees.

Then after the last of the suns set and the sky grows ferociously purple, one last figure runs up the steps and pounds at the door; it's a female, either Origiform or Newtated, too dark to be sure. I hear

cries of urgent apology slowly fade into the bricks as that hapless creature is led into the dungeons beneath the House of Pain.

I do not leave even after the door slams with the last of the trainees inside. This wouldn't be the first night I spend staring at that door from within the skimmer, and probably not the last. A few locals pass, coming from work or bringing home groceries, shunning the House on their way. Other than these occasional townsfolk, there is no activity until dawn. That's when the trainees are released back to their lives. I'm sure the acolytes know I'm here all night. They may even be keeping a log of my habits. They admire loyalty, I hear.

I'm awakened by Liith banging on the skimmer's dome. I snap awake and slide the top open. It is dawn again.

"Have you been here all night?"

"No, I arrived a little early and I guess I dozed off," I lie. I notice Liith sits slowly and purposefully. I remembered the night's lesson.

"Are you hurt?"

"Yes, quite," is the answer, "but it's a good hurt."

And the routine repeats night after night. At dusk I'm left alone as Liith disappears behind the brick walls, and at dawn I'm rejoined again. There are no weekends. No holidays. Liith loses more kams, genitals are pierced, and hair style is changed. The first year's training is coming to an end.

"There will be a week-long orgy of pain to commemorate the End of Year and advancement to the next."

"I see."

The orgy will coincide with the Ky birds' return from Hester. Among the tourists flocking to

Drav is a contingent of Masters of Pain, not here for this feat of nature, coming rather to assist in that dark commencement ceremony.

“Many of the trainees will sell themselves into slavery after they graduate,” I am told. “They should get used to these round the clock orgies.”

I wonder then, if this is Liith’s ticket off Drav: submitting to slavery in order to be taken to more exotic worlds. But that’s not Liith, my mate, We’ve worked hard, together, to afford a spire of our own.

“Will you attend the second year of training?” I ask, knowing full well that four years are required to graduate.

“I’ve come so far,” is the answer. “I don’t want to abandon my journey now.”

I lose Liith to their orgy for more than a week. After the festivities end, the trainees stay locked inside for another three days to recuperate. Liith and a few others are kept even longer.

I wait patiently at first, then with worried knots in my stomach, camped out on the doorstep of the House of Pain. Then on that fourth day, Liith emerges with a glowing smile. Glad to see me, we embrace. I ask, and Liith removes the tunic. There isn’t a single mark to be seen. That could only mean the flesh had been regrown in a med-tank — a drastic procedure reserved for the worst kinds of scarring.

“I am yours now for the summer.” I get a kiss. “I will make it up to you, I promise. I have learned how to make you so happy.”

“But then, on the second of Tembr, you go back,” I lament.

“Don’t think ahead, my love; just let me be yours until then. Use me as you want.”

Liith tries to be patient with me, but ultimately, I am not satisfying. The words “Use me as you



want” haunt me whenever we are intimate. I’m afraid of causing pain; and even when I try, my efforts fall pitifully short of the mark. It is late in the month of Aanth, and Tembr is approaching; the fact that I am not a Master frustrates my Liith. We no longer attempt making love.

On the first of Tembr, I catch Liith masturbating while self inflicting a caning. I watch with perverse fascination as one crisscrossing mark after another is added by Liith's own hand. All the while, fingers of the other hand touch and caress the flesh of the sex. Slowly at first, then with a fever I have seldom seen. A back arched, lips pursed, a breathe held, a cry stifled: this is orgasm. The cane falls from between quivering fingers as Liith's body spasms uncontrollably.

I back around the corner before I am noticed. I lean against the wall and pant, as if I too had just come. I find myself reaching between my own legs, feeling the illicit tingle of excitement. I wonder about my own arousal. Why do I feel this way? What makes me lose my composure? Is it the thrill of watching Liith come? Or suffer? Or is it a morbid curiosity about how pain causes such rapture?

I have to find out. I slide down the cable to the base of the spire and back the skimmer out. I drive to Darmatown, to the House of Pain. My head spins; what am I doing, I ask myself as I ascend the steps. I bang on the door then wait on that accursed doorstep. A grey-robed acolyte opens the peephole and stares at me. I can only see the small, round pair of amber eyes belonging to that Disgendered creature staring back at me.

“I am Yara, Liith’s mate.”

“I know who you are,” comes the answer. The peephole slams shut.

For a moment I think I’ve been brushed off. Then the door creaks open far enough to let me through. The passage leading to the heart of the building is made of the same slabs as the outside walls. The corridor is lit sparsely with oil torches.

“I’m here because —”

“I know exactly why you’re here.”

I don’t even know why I’m here.

“We’ve been expecting you,” the acolyte says, leading me ever deeper inside.

Thank you for reading. I hope you enjoyed my story.

Don't distribute this pdf. It remains copyrighted material.  
Instead, refer anyone interested to [www.joenobel.com](http://www.joenobel.com) to download for themselves, thanks.

Please consider leaving a tip either through PayPal or Bitcoin.



Send a donation via PayPal at:  
<https://www.paypal.me/JoeNobel>

Learn about creating your Paypal account at:  
<https://www.paypal.com/us/webapps/mpp/account-setup>



Send a donation via Bitcoin.  
Start by scanning this QC code into your phone's bitcoin wallet.



Go to [www.joenobel.com/bitcoin.html](http://www.joenobel.com/bitcoin.html) to learn about Bitcoins and setting up your own wallet.

1HPr8VJy2XidCWqfbKck9seT9cG6BoHDz8

Be well, Joe

© 2017, [joenobel.com](http://joenobel.com)