

“Some People Call This Wisdom”

by F.R. Southerland

[#Fictober18 \(October 2018\) writing challenge](#)

Day 14: “Some people call this wisdom”

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She stood silent, watching and waiting. Her father had told her not to move from this spot, and Kat had taken the words to heart. The wind whipped her hair into her eyes. She ignored the sting of it and blinked to clear her vision.

The spot where Dylan vanished remained empty, the hollow between the jagged outcropping and the sand below dark with shadows—but not their brand of shadows. Kat would’ve sensed it if they were. She kept her gaze trained there all the same. When he returned, that was where he’d appear. It was where he’d appeared each and every time—briefly, bloodied—before jumping back into the darkness. He was gone a little less each time and she hoped that this time would be the very last he’d make the round trip.

There was movement in the shadows and they turned darker. She let out a breath and finally moved. She headed down the incline, bracing her feet when the rock slipped under her shoes. By the time she made it down to the outcropping, Dylan had arrived.

The shadows retreated, taking their unnatural chill with it. He lifted his head to the sun, taking in a deep breath, enjoying the warmth of it. The blood on his face and clothes was still wet and sticky. Hearing the crunch of rock under boot, he looked down at his daughter.

“Well, m’tthinkin’ explorin’ the city’s outta the question.” A hand smeared down his front, pressing the blood-slickened fabric to his chest.

“I tried to tell you that. The Sarbor don’ like outsiders.” Her words were flat. He’d tried so many times. Most creatures would relent after several intrusions, but not these demons. Clearly, they’d been far too annoyed with Dylan to even consider giving in. Violence—and a lot of it, she judged from the bloodied state of him—was their go-to method in dealing with intruders anyway.

“S’alright, Kit-Kat. We’ll work around it. ‘Sides, some people call this wisdom—knowin’ when to back off.” It was less a matter of wisdom and more a matter of self-preservation. After they’d killed him the sixth time, he was running out of energy to regenerate so quickly, so often. He needed a pick-me-up—a soul or three to restore the lost power. And then—maybe—he’d try to gain access to this so called ‘golden city’ again.

Or, maybe they’d find a new area to explore—one that was a little less stabby-stabby.

“C’mon. We got the rest o’ this place to look at.” He pivoted on his heel and began to walk. The shadows trailed after him.

Kat just stared at her father. It sounded more like he was giving up but she wasn't in the mood to suffer whatever he'd suffered anyway. She didn't argue. Wordlessly, she trailed behind him. There had to be something better around here anyway. A golden city couldn't be all that great.