THE GALATHAREON

REBORN IN FIRE

BOOK I

~STEVEN M. HALL~

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Daegomar



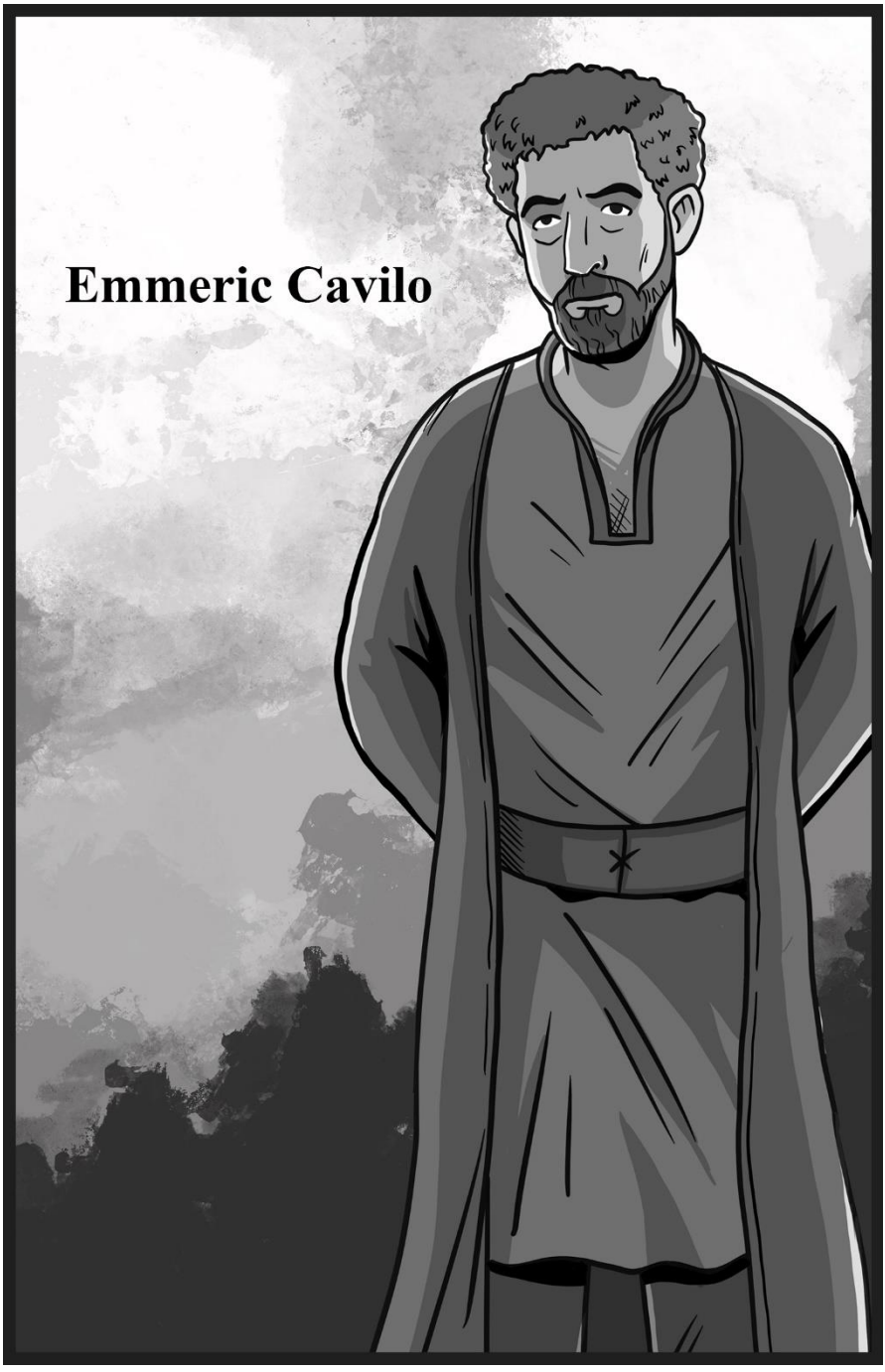


Galathar



Vaelem


Mountains of Harlink
Harlink
Casgaard
Freng Deep
Lourna
Illhelm
Jheng
Gullisville
Serena
Parth
Gragrock
Olga Creek
Capithorn
Gooseby
Wolfsbaar
Rocky Coast
Osgar
Pailin
Telliner
Terran
Zandar Sea
Shrenfall
Perreira
Yarik
No Man's Land
Kilu
Amber
Kiskor
Endor
Shaelin
Julan
Nigh
Gilver
Hollandria
Richmond
Great Forest of Zilthra
Bennon
Zilthra
Alinor
Chilger
Urbek
Quern
Hunm
Tunril
Wraith Caves


Emmeric Cavilo

Prologue

Chased from Refuge

I

The ocean was extremely furious; the small boat, fitted with a small wooden shelter opposite the worn helm, staggered amidst the waves, gruelling its way through the fierce tendrils of the vast sea. The drastic foaming waves crashed against the slimy moss-covered wooden panels that wrapped around the beaten vessel. The small boat carried a man, who was also the unfortunate captain, and his wife. Their attire was just as tired as they were, they wore rags for clothes, they couldn't afford proper tunics and sequined dresses, they weren't particularly poor but they weren't rich either. Emmeric Cavilo was struggling to control the vessel as it fought against the tides.

'We should be coming up to Galathar soon, my love!' He struggled as he furiously battled with the helm, locking his arms back and forth; trying to look at his wife from the corner of his eye, while simultaneously trying not to take his full attention off the way ahead, 'It's but a barren land, we will be safe there for a while!'.

The sails were almost tearing from the mast amidst the wind.

His wife lay sprawled under the poorly made shelter opposite the helm and was trying to hold onto whatever she could. She was heavily pregnant. It was not easy to grip onto the slippery wood, but she succeeded somehow. Her worn fingernails were practically burrowed into the wooden planks, splintering painfully into her fingertips. She had faith in her husband's sailing abilities, her blue eyes locked onto his every move as he guided them through the uneasy temperament of the way ahead.

'Emmeric, how much farther? I'm starting to feel like this baby wants to get out!' Her voice broke over the sounds of the waves taking revenge on the boat for entering its domain.

'Soon my love, it's coming up to three days now. We are sure to come across the shores soon. The sun is beaming through the clouds in the distance. The ocean will calm!' His reassurance wasn't enough for Loren, who looked blanched and uncomfortable. The waves soon began to calm as

the sun crept through the grey clouds. A thick light beam, out of nowhere, blasted onto the sea ahead. Lucky, Emmeric thought.

'Aha! There you fuckin' are! It's about time we saw the sun. Oh, how I've missed your existence!' He exclaimed as his eyes gazed upon land in the distance, the small island was blanketed by fog.

Loren, in her soaked and ragged dress, stood up from her uncomfortable disposition to marvel at the distant land, she could hear the sounds of the gulls squawking close-by. She let out a happy whimper and gently held onto the side of Emmeric, clutching his waist. His ragged shirt felt soft between her fingers, the fibres were prickly yet oddly satisfying. They both laughed with happiness. The sea had calmed dramatically, the foam suddenly eased against the wooden vessel.

Emmeric pulled the almost torn sails in so that the boat could gently come to a stop against the glistening sandy shores.

II

The land was vast, mostly mountains and forests. It looked like there used to be a shanty village a mile from the coast - apart from that the island appeared to be unclaimed.

'How are your feet, my love? We can maybe stay in one of these rugged abandoned huts for the time being. If the Lord is wise, he'll grant us a child before the food runs out and we can head to Daegomar, just a few days west of here.' Emmeric said while he was trying to support Loren through the overgrown thistles and bushes - her feet were bruised and bloody, so were his. Though the sand was brittle it was also accompanied by shards of broken glass and wood, the odd strand of seaweed was the only thing that felt delightful against their skin.

She responded with an uncomfortable grunt.

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'Here, go inside, sit down.' They approached the small village, mainly small wooden huts and palisades, which appeared as though they had been dormant for centuries. The huts were bent out of shape by the extensive damage of the large tree roots breaking free from the soil.

'How did you know about this place?' Loren asked as she found a comfortable looking corner and sat on the earthy floor, legs spread and hands resting on her bump. The walk from the boat had surely tired her out; she eased out a quick breath of air. The straw on the floor felt like a thousand needles, but somehow gave a comfortable feeling. Anything was comfortable when you're not rocking from side to side in a boat.

‘I was born here, me and my brother. My parents were fleeing from Daegomar because my pa got in debt over some silly bollocks with the High Council. Not too sure what it was all about. That’s when they decided to start a new life in Vaelem. What good that turned out to be.’ He put down his wicker bags into the corner beside Loren and gently touched her stomach to feel the life that was inside of her, he smiled. ‘Just like what is happening now… it was a five-day journey from Daegomar to Vaelem, so they stopped here, Galathar. This is where we were born, and then we left a couple of days later and headed to Vaelem. Port of Herald, to be exact.’ They both smiled and their foreheads met as he knelt to match her eye level.

The sun was fleeting.

‘Don’t mention your brother! He is not family! When our baby is born, they’ll be bought into a world of peace!’ Loren said as she pulled away from Emmeric. His head was soft, but it was time for her to sleep.

‘As peaceful as it can be.’ He smiled.

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Emmeric, almost half asleep, was playing with the length of his unkempt brown beard, Loren was fast asleep. Her snoring was ragged but gentle. They had managed to find some long grass to use for bedding; it was far comfier than the straw which had been abandoned on the floor. The wooden walls of the hut creaked and hissed in the gentle wind. The moon was approaching, pushing the sun beyond the horizon; it was still mildly light outside. The temperature started to diminish, and they had no thick blankets with the use of keeping them warm. They didn’t think to build a fire, they were too tired, but Emmeric jolted from his half slumber to realise they needed one before nightfall.

‘My love, wake up. I need to go looking for some wood for the night’ He said as he tumbled forward from his resting position.

‘What have you done to your beard?’ She chuckled as her eyes slowly opened.

‘Plaited it. Like all brave men. Does it suit me?’ Emmeric showcased the badly woven ponytail erupting from his chin.

‘Yes…’ She giggled, ‘Put a baby inside of me right now you sexy man!’ She sarcastically remarked, they both chuckled. He was not sexy, far from it.

The wood was easy to find in the dark, most of it was found from broken trees which had clearly been shattered by lightning. He managed to find enough to last them a couple of days.

Lighting the fire was more of a challenge than they thought it would be, but the darkness persuaded them to keep trying.

After an hour or so of sitting in the darkness, they managed to get a small light using some dried weeds they had found nearby. The small light turned into a flame, eventually it lit the small hut perfectly, spitting out embers as it thrived.

III

The night was long, and Loren woke up at the crack of dawn in pain, the baby was due soon. The sweat poured from her pale face and onto the, already ruined, white dress. Her face was bright red; she felt the hot flush devour her skin.

The sun began to rise, yet it was still cold, and the morning dew was beginning to settle. The undergrowth of the trees glistened with the soft wetness from the air. Berries among the trees were displayed brightly as the sun exposed them to the light.

The air began to whistle in the cracks of the hut, once again.

'Emmeric. Something is happening, I think…' Her breathing became ragged as she clutched her lower back in pain, 'I think this baby is coming!' She groaned as she took an upright position in the makeshift bed.

Emmeric, in the split of a second, rushed to her side.

'Okay, okay. We prepared for this, okay?' He reassured her as he turned to his wicker bag and pulled out some large sheets of thin cloth. Some were stained, some were patterned. He spread them on the floor and draped a few across Loren's legs.

She felt a great deal of pressure as her body tightened and she felt the need to push.

She screamed hysterically.

The birds whipped from their trees and into the sky.

'Fuck! This was a bad idea, Emmeric!'

'Keep pushing my love, you're doing great - just keep pushing!'

She had not intended to be pushing a baby out in the morning, on an abandoned island, she thought there would be more time. She felt uncomfortable, rushed, but she continued. She screamed again, the high pitch squeal pierced Emmeric's ears; she gripped his hands so tight she almost broke his fingers. Emmeric, by her open legs, prepared to receive the child as it was coming out, head first. The bodily fluids spilled onto the floor as the strenuous screams shattered the surrounding forest.

'It's a boy!' He declared with excitement. He pulled the boy from beneath the cloth and held him softly. The baby roared into the world, stretching.

Loren, exhausted, let out a sigh of relief and whimpered with joy.