

# A STUDY IN HAPHAZARD MAGIC

1.04 | THE LITTLE BAD

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FADE IN:

**EXT. BEARPORT CBD - AFTERNOON**

ASHER and LINK stand in the street, leaning against the side of a building and doing their best to look inconspicuous.

ASHER

I didn't think hunting down supposedly 'evil' sorcerers would be so...

LINK

Tedious?

ASHER

Boring. Straight up boring. I should have brought something to read.

LINK

Me too. I'm still trying to get this work, life, magic balance down.

ASHER

At least you aren't also juggling a girlfriend on top of that.

Link chuckles.

LINK

She still asking questions?

ASHER

Not at the moment, but I can tell she's just biding her time.

LINK

Why don't you just tell her?

ASHER

Miles said I shouldn't. Not unless I was able to guarantee she wouldn't say anything and I was willing to get her involved in all of this.

LINK

I'm guessing trusting her isn't the issue?

ASHER

Got it in one.

(CONTINUED)

LINK

Well, if you want my opinion-

ASHER

(interrupting)

Hold on, is that the guy we're looking for?

Across the street a man steps out of the main doors of a hotel. This is PIERCE. He wears a charcoal business suit and dark crimson shirt.

Link fishes his phone from his pocket and holds it up for Asher to see too.

ON PHONE: A slightly blurry picture but it's unmistakably Pierce.

Asher looks back to the man across the street.

ASHER

Yeah, that's him alright.

Pierce glances up and down the street but sees nothing alarming. After another quick look behind him he heads up the street.

Link and Asher watch him go.

LINK

I'll call Evie. Keep an eye on him.

Link taps a couple of times on his phone screen then holds it up to his ear.

LINK (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Evie, hey. Tell Miles he's left the hotel.

ASHER

Turning down Swan Street.

LINK

(into phone)

Did you hear that?

(beat)

Yeah, Swan Street.

Link taps Asher's arm and nods towards the street Pierce disappeared down. They begin to follow.

**EXT. BEARPORT CBD - ELSEWHERE - CONTINUOUS**

MILES and EVIE are at a bus stop.

Miles sits on the bench, a newspaper held up in front of his face. Evie stands next to him, leaning against the bus sign pole with her phone pressed to her ear.

MILES

Tell them to follow. At a  
*distance.*

EVIE

(into phone)

Miles says keep following, and  
don't let him see you.

(beat)

We'll keep you updated.

Evie finishes the call and slips her phone into her pocket.

EVIE

Swan is a couple of blocks over  
from here. Are you sure he'll  
come this way?

MILES

I have an inkling of where he's  
going. Besides, Asher and Link  
have eyes on him.

EVIE

For now.

MILES

Careful, your lack of team faith  
is showing.

EVIE

I'm joking!

(beat)

Mostly.

Evie gives the street a cursory glance. There are plenty of people around, Evie and Miles don't stand out.

A CHIME. Evie pulls her phone back out and glances at the screen.

EVIE (CONT'D)

They lost him.

MILES

I take it back. You were entirely  
correct in your assumptions.

Luckily for us our target has  
just turned on to our street.

(CONTINUED)

Evie's eyes scan the street again, this time she spots Pierce. He walks unhurried along the opposite side of the road.

Miles folds his newspaper and leaves it on the bench as he stands. He walks down the street with Evie following close behind. Miles' eyes are on Pierce as they walk.

**EXT. BEARPORT CBD - ALLEY WAY - CONTINUOUS**

Pierce turns into an alleyway with a number of small stores and a surprisingly homey looking cafe lining the otherwise dingy walkway.

He makes his way to the very end of the alley and stops.

In front of Pierce is a metal door. There is a window next to the door protected by metal bars. A lit neon sign in the window proclaims 'OPEN', a smaller faded sign below that boasts some Chinese characters and the words 'Xiulan's Special Wares'.

Pierce takes a look back the way he came before pushing the door open and stepping inside.

Evie and Miles peer around the corner of the alley.

EVIE

You knew he was coming here?

MILES

An educated guess.

(beat)

I think it's time we confronted  
Mr. Pierce about what exactly  
he's up to in our fine city.

Miles leads the way down the alley to Xiulan's Special Wares and holds the door open for Evie.

**INT. XIULAN'S SPECIAL WARES - CONTINUOUS**

The store Evie and Miles step into can barely be called such.

The room is dark, the yellowing curtain on the window lets in little natural light and the dim bare lightbulb on the ceiling does little to help.

Curls of smokey incense rise from a burner on the counter, making the entire room slightly hazy.

The door shuts behind the pair and Miles approaches the desk.

EVIE  
(quietly)  
Where'd he go?

MILES  
Let's find out.

Miles rings the bell sitting on the counter.

For moment nothing happens, then the sound of someone grumbling in Chinese from a room out back.

The owner of the voice eventually appears, pushing through a beaded curtain separating the back room from the front.

XIULAN is a short, old, and wrinkled Chinese woman. She takes one look at Miles and snorts. When she speaks it's with a heavy accent.

XIULAN  
You again.

MILES  
Always the warmest of welcomes.

Xiulan ignores him and nods towards Evie.

XIULAN  
Who this?

MILES  
A new protege of mine.

Xiulan laughs out loud this time.

XIULAN  
Always the funny jokes you have.

MILES  
I'm not joking, but I have the feeling you already know that.

She just smiles up at Miles.

XIULAN  
Maybe yes, maybe no.

EVIE  
We're actually looking for someone.

Xiulan turns her gaze to Evie.

XIULAN  
Someone? No. I help with somethings.

MILES

But we need help with some-one.  
We just saw him come in here and  
thought it would be nice to have  
a little chat.

Xiulan turns back to Miles, frowning.

XIULAN

This neutral ground. No trouble  
here.

MILES

No trouble, just a chat.

XIULAN

Ha! More jokes.

MILES

Can we at least have a look in  
your back room?

Xiulan grins up at him.

XIULAN

You can try.  
(beat)  
Best wait outside for 'chat'.

Miles sighs and gestures Evie back towards the door.

MILES

Thank you, Xiulan, you've been  
just as much help as always.  
Evelyn, after you.

XIULAN

I hope long time before next  
seeing you.

MILES

You and me both, Xiulan. You and  
me both.

Miles and Evie exit the store, Xiulan watching them go  
with a serene smile.

**EXT. BEARPORT CBD - REDWOOD STREET PARK - LATE AFTERNOON**

Late afternoon sun filters down through the trees onto  
Link and Asher. They sit on a park bench, waiting.

Link looks up, noticing two people approaching - Miles and  
Evie.

(CONTINUED)

LINK

No luck?

EVIE

He slipped by us.

ASHER

What do you mean?

EVIE

Miles got told off by a little  
old Chinese lady.

MILES

Yeah, that little Chinese lady is  
a lot older and a lot more  
powerful than you think.

EVIE

And she did *not* like you.

MILES

Regardless, Pierce slipped our  
net. He either left well after  
we did or snuck out a back door.  
My money's on the latter.

ASHER

So if we've lost him, now what?

MILES

We go home, start again tomorrow.

LINK

Won't he know we're on to him  
now?

MILES

Quite probably, so we'll have to  
work smarter and harder. We can  
discuss that tomorrow however,  
for now, homeward bound.

With a theatric wave of his arm, Miles turns on his heel  
to start back the way he came. Evie goes next, with Asher  
and Link following at the rear of their small group.

**EXT. DOWNTOWN BEARPORT - CLOTHING BUILDING - EVENING**

Miles, Evie, Asher and Link walk down the street in front  
of the Clothing Building.

ASHER

It feels really anti-climatic  
taking the bus back from our evil  
sorcerer hunt.

EVIE

What are we supposed to do? Drive  
in city peak hour? There's a  
reason I ride a bike.

LINK

Surely there's a way to teleport  
using magic?

The three turn their attention to Miles, expectant.

MILES

You can, but it's not worth the  
magical fatigue.

EVIE

Where's the fun in that.

The group passes Notable Novels' storefront and turn down  
the alley.

MILES

It's all about balance.

They reach the side door. Miles presses his hand to it,  
unlocking the door with a short burst of dark purple  
energy.

MILES (CONT'D)

Trust me when I say you'll be  
glad of magical limits when you  
have to duel with another  
sorcerer.

Miles steps inside the building, Asher following. Link  
steps aside, holding the door for Evie to enter first.

**INT. CLOTHING BUILDING - GROUND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS**

Evie steps inside the building to join Asher and Miles.

Link has just moved inside to join her when there is a  
burst of YELLOW ENERGY-

Link is sent flying forwards with a started yell. The  
force sends him straight into Evie and the pair collide  
with the ground.

Miles turns sharply on his heel and pulls Asher slightly  
behind him.

Pierce stands in the doorway, silhouetted by the outside  
light, his hand raised.

PIERCE

And I thought it was going to be  
hard to get in here.

MILES

Don't congratulate yourself yet.

PIERCE

You're right, there'll be plenty  
of time for that later.

MILES

I must admit that was smart back  
at Xiulan's.

PIERCE

And I must admit I wasn't  
expecting you to have one  
student, let alone three. How  
greedy, leaving none of these  
young magic users for the rest of  
us.

In Pierce's hand a ball of yellow magical energy appears.  
It crackles and spits like a small ball of condensed  
lightning.

PIERCE (CONT'D)

I wonder if you've had the chance  
to teach them anything  
worthwhile?

Pierce sends the ball of energy towards Evie and Link, who  
are only just untangling themselves.

Evie raises her hand just in time and the ball  
disintegrates against her purple defence.

She yelps loudly, pulling her hand back protectively  
against her chest.

PIERCE (CONT'D)

Not too ba-

He is cut off when he has to deflect Miles' purple energy  
ball.

Miles throws another energy ball at Pierce, keeping him on  
the defence.

MILES

Asher, help your friends.

Asher nods, hurrying over to Link and Evie while Miles  
engages Pierce. He gets there in time to help Link get  
Evie to her feet.

ASHER

You guys okay?

LINK

I am.

Link's gaze shifts to the hand Evie still cradles against her chest.

EVIE

It's fine. Just smarts a little.

A loud BANG has them all turning to watch Miles and Pierce.

The pair are locked in a fast and furious magical fight.

Balls of magical energy fly back and fourth, attacks punctuated with telekinetic hits and bursts of fire.

EVIE (CONT'D)

We've gotta help!

LINK

We'll just get in the way and you already hurt yourself. Not to mention we can't fight like that.

Link gestures helplessly towards Miles and Pierce.

Pierce shoots both hands out towards Miles. The resulting burst of yellow energy is enough to send Miles backwards and to the floor.

Pierce steps in to attack while Miles is down-

A ring of GREEN FIRE erupts suddenly around him, stopping Pierce in his tracks.

Pierce glances to the three proteges. Asher has his hand held out, eyes narrowed in concentration.

Pierce snarls.

PIERCE

You should have left this to the professionals.

A slice of his hand sends a sharp line of yellow energy at Asher.

The green flames drop as Asher moves to deflect the attack. He's not fast enough-

But Evie is.

She steps in front of Asher, meeting the energy with a slice of her own hand.

The two magic forces meet in a BURST OF WHITE.

(CONTINUED)

Evie stumbles backwards, Asher quick to grab and steady her. The green flames completely die.

Pierce moves to make another attack but Evie's HELMET flies at him though the air. It bounces solidly off Pierce's head.

This gives Miles the moment he needs to lunge at Pierce. He has a ball of energy in hand that he forces into Pierce's chest.

Pierce shudders, then drops to the floor all at once.

There is a beat of silence, then everyone lets out a breath.

Miles brushes off his trench coat.

MILES

Well, that could have gone better.

(beat)

Good job with the helmet, Link.

LINK

Thanks.

Evie glances at the body of the fallen sorcerer.

EVIE

Did you kill him?

MILES

No, he's not dead. Look, he's breathing.

Sure enough Pierce's chest is rising and falling with even breaths.

ASHER

Then what now?

MILES

Now I question this scum before sending him off to the Guild. They can deal with him. Probably won't do much because he's just a low level sorcerer but what can you do?

LINK

(unbelieving)

He was a low level sorcerer?

MILES

Oh yes, he's nowhere near the worst you will face.

EVIE

And I thought we did a good job.

MILES

Oh, you did. Next time you'll  
just have to make sure you do  
better.

**BLACKOUT.**

**END OF EPISODE**