

# And nothing else matters

## Tandrak/Hale anniversary

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Insects were chirping in the bushes beside the street. It was another warm evening in Altador. Garven Hale was wandering up and down the place before the team quarters and didn't stop until he saw the Darigan Gelert approaching him.

"Ye know ye're a bit late?"

"Yeah, sorry", Tandrak apologized, "Met Layton on my way and he was concerned about me going for a walk all alone. Since that ... well, incident with Terr it sometimes seems as if he wants to pack in me in cotton and put me in a cage. I think he was relieved after he heard I would be with you all the time."

On the roads they took there were just a few people but still enough to get seen.

"He just wants to be sure ye're alright like I'm also worried 'bout yer well-being sometimes", Hale said loud trying to drown a bunch of screaming fan girls. At least they just screamed and didn't follow them.

"It's nice from him but at times it gets a bit too much. Sometimes I just want to forget about everything and don't want to be remembered anymore."

One more reason to love Hale. In the past week he just had been there for Tandrak in a silent way. He never had been a pirate of too many words but in the last few days he mainly left the talk to Tandrak and if he said something he avoided Terr or what had happened a week ago at any costs.

Suddenly he felt the need to grab Hale's hand, to walk through the streets of Altador hand in hand with him, but he fought it back. People could have seen them and he also wasn't sure if the pirate was too fond of such romantic gestures.

"Where are we going", he asked when he noticed that they were passing one of the North gates and now continued their walk outside of Altador. During the past few minutes he had been too busy with his own thoughts to take a look at their way and just went wherever Hale wanted to. In six Cup years he barely had seen the land around Altador, mainly just knew the street where they always were entering and leaving the city. Right now he found himself in a light wood. Something was glittering in the distance.

"Ye'll see", was the Bori's short answer.

After a few minutes the trees got less and now they had a perfect view over the glittering ocean. To the west a small village was seen – the harbour of Altador. A little ship with the Krawk Island flag – rather a pirate sailing boat than a pirate ship – was lying at anchor very close to the beach.

"We never dock at any harbour unless 'tis on our own island", Hale said, "Just not the

scurvy pirate style to berth at official places. Besides too many fans would await us there. 'tis a calm place that's why I wanted to come here with ye. I don't think ye've already seen too much of the ocean."

From the Citadel Tandrak might have had a good overview of the ocean and Meridell's coasts but he had never been to an Altadorian beach, especially not whilst the sunset. For a few seconds they were just standing there at the edge of the wood. Tandrak had closed his eyes, felt warm sunshine and a cooling breeze on his skin.

"Never thought you would have such a romantic touch", he quietly said after a while.

"Well, thought ye'd like it and 'tis also a good place to relax and get yer mind off after all that ... that stress lately."

For a second the incident had been floating through the air but Tandrak tried to push it out of his mind again, didn't want it to destroy the moment.

"Yeah, it's beautiful", he just said, "Have you been here often?"

"From time to time during the first two Cups before I really learned to know ye. Then I found a way to relax that was more fun." A little smile wandered over his face. "So, uhm, should we just stay here or go down to the beach?"

"I somehow feel like jumping into the water. Not for swimming, just to get off the heat of the day."

Hale made a gesture to the ocean. "Well, the seven seas be yours."

"But I don't have any swimming trunks with me."

"Me neither. Never had them. Either I went swimming in underwear or fully clothed – the last mainly when I managed to fall into the water. It also feels a bit nasty when you try to swim fully clothed."

"Alright", the Darigan Gelert smirked then shouted, "Last one in water is a Faerie Yooyu", and started running. He already took his shirt off while sprinting, only stopped to get rid of his trousers, threw both cloth parts in the sand, ran into the ocean and let himself fall into the cold water. It was stinging on his heated skin and for a second the chill was taking his breath away. Although it was pleasing to have the hotness gone it was nothing he could stand for too long. He just had stood up when Hale suddenly was right in front of him and tackled him back into the water. Tandrak broke through the surface again, quickly shook his head to get rid of the water and tried swimming movements to get the coldness out of his limbs. Only a few seconds and he already was shivering. Hale surfaced beside him and laughed.

"Phew, just what I needed right now. And I also don't care if I'm a Faerie Yooyu or not."

He didn't seem to notice the coldness at all.

"It's a bit chilly in here, isn't it?" Tandrak asked.

"Oh well, ye'll get used to it if ye're living on a little island or on board of a ship. Have ye never wondered why I can hold a Snow Yooyu in my arms for a longer time although 'tis known to freeze yer muscles?" He swam closer and dragged Tandrak in his arms. "But ye shouldn't stay in here for too long if ye're not trained for it. Ye're already shivering a bit too much."

After the cool water the Altadorian heat felt like a cosy blanket on a winter's day. The two were lying on the beach side by side enjoying the last bit of sun.

"Ye know what day it is today?" Hale asked all out of sudden.

"The twenty-first day in the month of relaxing. I wonder why it's called like that because I can't remember I ever felt too relaxed during that month. Why do you ask?"

"Let yer mind go back in time till the second Cup. Lock it in a storage room together

with the mind of a certain pirate, who is time travelling the same time. We're both hidin' away from a bunch of fan girls. The first time we ... I ..."

"The first time you sexually harassed me?" Tandrak suggested and chuckled.

It was the second time within just a few days that he was reminded of the storage room but this time it was by Hale, this time he liked his memories.

"Aye", the Bori slowly answered, his head still stuck in past memories, "Never thought that with a few waves of pleasure I could start a tsunami. This would be our fifth Cup together. 'n our fourth year."

*So close, no matter how far  
Couldn't be much more from the heart  
Forever trusting who we are  
and nothing else matters*

He rolled on his side, now looked into Tandrak's eyes. "Have I ever told ye that ...." He paused but it didn't look as if he was afraid of the words he wanted to say, more like he was searching for a better translation from his mother tongue into common Neopian language. "Ever told ye how much I love ye?" He placed a quick but gentle kiss on Tandrak's lips.

*Never opened myself this way  
Life is ours, we live it our way  
All these words I don't just say  
and nothing else matters*

"Why so romantic today", the Gelert asked with a little smile. He still was a little bit surprised that Hale remembered their first time of fun together and attached so much importance to it. It was a beginning after all but to Tandrak it never was important when it started. That it still went on was all that mattered.

"Because it's some kind of anniversary. The longest relationship I ever had and I also don't wanna end it too fast."

*Trust I seek and I find in you  
Every day for us something new  
Open mind for a different view  
and nothing else matters*

The Bori gave him another kiss but longer this time, more passionate. They were lying on an open beach, not too far from a village and a few farm houses, any stroller could have seen them but somehow not even Tandrak cared anymore.

*never cared for what they say  
never cared for games they play  
never cared for what they do  
never cared for what they know  
and I know*

Hale was the one breaking their kiss but only to slowly move down Tandrak's jaw and neck, sucked the spot between neck and shoulder then continued his way down to the

chest. Tandrak groaned softly. The whole time he had kept his eyes shut, just wanted to concentrate on what he felt, on those waves of pleasure that were shooting through his body. The pirate came to a stop at the waistband of Tandrak's pants, took his time to slide them down. Those few seconds pause from Hale's touches and kisses nearly drove the Draconian insane and he tried to pull his lover down again. But Hale dripped his head back down on Tandrak's chest instead accompanied by the Gelert's disappointed moan. He left a trail of kisses down to Tandrak's nether regions. There he took hold of his length with one hand, placed a little kiss on the tip before he began to suck on it. The same time he had to use his strength to hold the Draconian's pelvis still. As soon as he had felt the hot warm mouth sliding down his length Tandrak's body had started jerking uncontrollably. He dug the fingers of one hand into the fur on the back of Hale's head, with the other hand he tried to find hold in the sand. The surges of pleasure grew higher until he rode the crest of the largest wave and with a strangled cry he came.

For a short time Tandrak was just lying there panting heavily. When he was able to open his eyes again he directly looked into Hale's eyes. The pirate Bori was still kneeling beside him with a weak smile on his face breathing nearly as heavy as Tandrak. His gaze wandered down to the large bump in Hale's pants.

He forced himself up again, knelt in front of his lover, slipped a hand into his pants and grasped his length bringing a shudder of relief from Hale.

"Shaye ... please ..."

"Easy, I'll get you there."

Tandrak's hand moved strongly on Hale, wanted to make the other feel as great as he had felt before. He bit Hale's right ear causing him to hiss in pleasure then their lips met again for another longing kiss. That was too much for Hale and he came. His groan was choked down in Tandrak's mouth.

Exhausted and panting heavily they sank back into the sand. For the next few minutes they remained just lying in each others arms.

Then Hale noticed that Tandrak was shivering.

"Hey, 's everything alright?"

"Yeah, just a bit cold."

The sun already had fully disappeared and the beach now only was lit a bit by a half moon and a few stars.

"And I don't think I would ever be able to move again", Tandrak continued.

Hale pulled him even closer and rubbed his back. "Hm, don't think we could stay on the beach the whole time. But after we also are a bit too weak to walk back I'd suggest we stay on the ship over night."

Tandrak slightly nodded but he didn't move an inch.

"C'mon, Shaye, it's not that far. Just a few meters."

The Gelert groaned but still got up. Hale already had collected their clothes. They had to wade through the water a bit but not too far - the ship was really close to the beach - climbed up a rope-ladder and went to Hale's cabin. The bunk was small but they just cuddled up tightly. Nearly immediately Tandrak slept in. Hale watched him for a few more seconds then he whispered "Love ye, Shaye" gave him a kiss on the forehead and drifted into sleep as well.