

Rowan Stellaris

Background:

Rowan was born in the forest, under the careful watch of his family of travelers. They weren't outcasts, per se, but they were strange enough that they didn't stay in cities for long. They were nomads of the spoken word, and when they did make it to cities, their group would fluctuate, dropping their numbers quite low, or growing until it pushed the limits of their meager meals. It became apparent very early that Rowan was a little special however, even among the ragtag group of nomads. His mother had joined them in the previous city, heavily pregnant with Rowan, and had given birth the first day on the road. Overnight she disappeared, leaving Rowan to be raised by the nomads. He was a quiet child, often keeping to himself, but bright and cheerful when spoken to, and rarely sought out the company of other children, and instead wandering into the medical tents to watch the adults work, and eventually to nap. It was rumored that he was a changeling, but more as a joke than an accusation, since his mother was never around to pass that judgement. He would often wander around camp in a sort of daze, humming to himself.

It revealed itself quite early, around the age of 7, that he had a penchant for healing magic; one day while in one of his rare games with the other children in camp, his surrogate brother, Holly had fallen and scraped his knee, and began to cry loudly. Immediately, Rowan stood and went over, and told him to wait. He rushed over to the medical tent and got herbs that he had seen the adults use, and put them on scrape. His eyes glazed over and he murmured some words that the children had never heard before, and abruptly, the scrape was completely healed. However, as this was Rowan's first run-in with his own magic, he passed out immediately afterwards, thankfully falling onto the soft forest floor, in a flowerbed that hadn't seemed to be there before. After that, the adults slowly taught him more and more healing magic, and giving him more knowledge about the plants and wildlife around him. They gave him more responsibility which he took with the grace only a child given purpose could have, when he wasn't sleeping.

When he was 11, the camp underwent an attack. Goblin riders had ridden by, seeking easy victims after a long bout of little prey. The children of the camp were ordered to stay in the middle while the adults defended the camp. Having slept through the memo, Rowan awoke to the sounds of battle, and in an uncharacteristic burst of vitality, leapt to awareness. He grabbed a quarterstaff, and, to the eyes of the adults, appeared on the battlefield. His adoptive father, head of the medical tent saw him face off before a goblin rider, but before he could call out to him, he saw Rowan change. He gripped his short staff across his body, and grew short fur like that of the wolves that the camp had seen passing by, just days before. His ears had grown pointed, and his teeth had grown and sharpened, and his slight form had bulked, however, the transformation stopped there. It was at that moment that the healer knew that he was not a changeling, but a child of the shifter race. They would go on to fight together during this defense, and drive off the goblin riders along with the rest of the camp. Once the fight was over, his shifted form quickly reverted, but he would from then on not only gain training in healing but in fighting as well, though his preference for healing was apparent.

As he grew, he quickly became a staple of the community, healing those who needed it, and hunting with his wolf-like senses, preferring to use his shifter gifts for the good of the community rather than to fight. Later on, he was a key part of the defense when a city of a king who had a prejudice against their way of life, calling them not only grifters, but a plague that took from the people who had rightfully

earned their way, beggars, and sent after them a sizeable party to wipe them out. He stood fast against this invasion at the age of 20, and used his healing knowledge afterwards to tend to the survivors. He had become a trustworthy young man, if a bit airheaded at times. He seemed to have retained his knowledge, but when he wasn't tending to people or fighting for their survival, he would simply wander off. His family would find him increasingly far away, first a couple hours of travel out, progressing to almost a week out, and whenever they found him, they found him sleeping with some animal near him, the plants curling around his fingers or sinking into the roots of a tree, ivy around his chest, as if he'd been there for years. He would always appear when they needed him however, and he was still a pillar of the community, having protected them for over a decade ever since his first shifting at 11, and his first healing at 7. He would bring people in each new city to their fold, through his gently and easygoing ways.

One day, his father disappeared. It was rumored that he was looking for a place where he could heal more people, to help all those who he could, some place called Revelations Hospital. Rowan was set with a sense of loss, but his duties to the village came first, though he became even more tired in his down time, sleeping more, and talking less.

Eventually, he would find that his dreams took on a new quality. They became dreams of the fey, and they would visit him in his sleep. They would offer him food and drink, and they would have him travel miles through the woods in their merry parade, and he would know how he had ended up miles from his family, awakening with a crown of flowers that he had received in his dreams, with the warmth of a summer bonfire even in the winter. He would eventually learn how to bring things from his dreams back with him, occasionally bringing food and other trinkets with him, potions and small weapons, grasped in his hands. The fey would teach him how to do this, and to bring the power of the summer court with him, but always for a price, that they never told him; he would find the boundary between the waking world and the summer court of dreams thinner and thinner.

One day, his brother Holly despite being a healthy and strong young man now of 19 suddenly contracted a disease that none of them had ever seen. It looked as if vines of dark ivy had taken over his body. He had hidden it from them for weeks, and by now, it was beginning to creep around his neck. They suspected that it was the work of a curse, but in the next town, they went to the local priest, and were informed that it was not the work of a curse, but rather a cancer, infused with the wild magic that he'd been somehow exposed to. The cancer's composition was indistinguishable scientifically from his own body. The priest was however able to use some minor healing magic to slow the growth of the cancer, but projected that the young man wouldn't live to see 30. This was a major blow to Rowan, though he didn't show it at the time. He would be struck with a new motivation: he would cure his younger brother. He would disappear for weeks at a time, and show up in the same way he would in the past, covered in vines and ivy, each time with new knowledge, and finally he caught wind of the elusive place that his father had disappeared to, the place that could cure his brother: Revelations Hospital. Hope surged through the sleepy young man, and he would strike out in search of someone who could help his family.

Along the way, he would meet a young party of adventurers. And here, this ceases to be a story of just Rowan, but the party with which he would grow to be friends with.

Appearance:

Rowan is a young man of 22, with unblemished dark skin. His eyes are golden, touched by the fey, allowing his passage into their summer courts. He is around 5'9". He has dreads that he holds back with a bandana, serving to keep them out of his face while he works with patients, but they sometimes make their way into rough braids. He is well built, and has defined muscles, but the slight bulk of someone who knows what they're about, and they're not just about looks.

In his shifter appearance, his hair takes on a more wild appearance, growing slightly around his neck.