

Assistant on the Road
PROLOGUE

written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. VICTORIAN VILLA - GARDEN - MORNING

An apple tree at the edge of a cliff, watches over a town. Birds chirping. Winds subtly howling.

Sounds of feet stepping on pebbles, followed by a melodic whistling. COSMO walks into the scene, towards the apple tree.

Messy, light brown hair. Somewhat oversized brown jacket, white quarter-zipped jumper, dark khaki trousers and a wooden basket in his hand. Cosmo slowly rubs his eyes.

Leaves the basket on the ground and starts picking apples. Without looking at the basket, he throws the apples into it successfully.

YIDREI (O.S.)
(shouting from afar)
Cosmo!

Cosmo flinches and sends the apple he had in his hand down the cliff. Slaps his forehead multiple times. Grabs the basket and starts running.

INT. FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Cosmo puts the basket on the counter and picks up two apples. Washes them before carefully cutting them into thin slices. Puts the slices on a plate and places it onto the breakfast tray. Cheesy omelette, milk, a couple of green olives, a slice of cornbread and freshly picked apples. Cosmo grabs the tray and starts walking.

MASTER BEDROOM

With her short, pixie-cut white hair, YIDREI lies in her bed, looking out the window. A couple of quiet coughs. She takes a deep breath and ends up coughing one more time towards the bed tray.

Cosmo walks into the room.

COSMO
Top of the morning you to you, me lady.

Cosmo says smiling.

YIDREI

And the rest of the day to you,
darling. Bit late today, aren't
you?

She doesn't actually care, and Cosmo's aware of it, but that doesn't stop him from feeling bad. He drops his head down and starts walking towards the bed. As Yidrei watches Cosmo, she can't help but smile.

Cosmo stands next to her, ready to serve her breakfast.

COSMO

May I?

YIDREI

You may not.

She points at the tray.

YIDREI (CONT'D)

I coughed all over the tray, honey.
Would you please wipe it first?

Cosmo nods. Without putting the breakfast tray on the chest of drawers nearby, he reaches into his jacket's pocket and brings out a linen napkin. Carefully wipes every inch of the bed tray while balancing the other tray in his hand. Yidrei covers her face, protecting herself from a potential mess.

Cosmo manages well. Yidrei lets out a big sigh. He notices it.

COSMO

(squints his eyes)

Have you ever seen me being clumsy?

He asks with confidence, not knowing Yidrei watched him drop an apple down the cliff.

YIDREI

Hmm... Here is a question for you:
Imagine an apple. Let's just say,
from our apple tree. And then
imagine someone from the town. I'll
let you decide; it can be whoever
you want. And now imagine an apple
from our apple tree landing on
their head. Do you think would that
hurt?

Cosmo's eyes get wide for a moment before getting closed in shame. He slowly starts placing the plates on to the tray.

COSMO
Bon appétit, me lady.

Yidrei starts laughing. Reaches towards Cosmo and hold his hand.

YIDREI
(smiling ear to ear)
Thanks for bringing me my
breakfast, and more importantly,
thank you for bringing me joy.

Cosmo blushes.

COSMO
(without making eye
contact)
It's nothing in comparison to what
you've done for me.

YIDREI
No, my dear. We can compare the
two. I took care of you, and now
you're taking care of my wrinkly
butt.

COSMO
(with eye contact,
smiling)
Agree to disagree.

Yidrei nods. Cosmo starts walking towards the door. Just before leaving, he turns around.

COSMO (CONT'D)
Is there anything you want from the
town, me lady?

Yidrei shakes her head. Cosmo curtsies and leaves the room. She laughs once again.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

MONTAGE OF COSMO'S DAY IN TOWN:

Cosmo walks inside the town, greeting everyone he sees.

COSMO (V.O.)
Yidrei's Valor. A town named after
my master.

Cosmo stops by the library and chats away with the librarian for a while. As he walks up the stairs towards the second floor, he passes by portraits of Yidrei wielding all kinds of weaponry.

COSMO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Don't be deceived by her sickly look. Without her bravery, none of this would've been here, including me.

Cosmo grabs a random book from the poetry section and sits on a chair next to a window that's looking out to the town square.

A statue. Yidrei and her companions. Cosmo looks at it in awe.

COSMO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 It never gets old, just like her stories. Battle of Zeffari... Thousands of men, women and children, led by the Saviours against the army of ifrits, summoned by Minza Raldu. As Yidrei says, "It wasn't blood, sweat and tears. Blood overpowered it all."

Cosmo reads about a dozen poems. Writes down some of them into his pocket notebook. Places the book back in its place.

As he leaves the library, he feels a tap on his shoulder. Turns around and sees the librarian. She hands him a wrapped book. A gift to Yidrei.

COSMO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 She means a lot to us all. Every time I visit the town, I get bombarded with questions about her health. When I tell people that she's doing fine, they bombard me with hugs. I can't complain about that, for sure.

Cosmo talks with the town's healer. Gets a bunch of potions. The healer hands him a note, a recipe of some sort.

COSMO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 She keeps telling me, "You're keeping me alive," but I don't think I deserve that much credit. Without these potions- I-I don't even wanna imagine...

Cosmo browses through fruits and veggies. Constantly checking the recipe. The shopkeeper approaches him with a couple of bags full of fruits and veggies. Cosmo shakes his head, not accepting the gift. Fails. Leaves the shop, shyly smiling.

COSMO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

They never let me pay for anything... Thankfully, master found a solution for that. She just keeps donating money to the council. In a way, this whole "gifting" thing ended up benefiting everyone. Yidrei feels the love and appreciation of her people, and the town improves itself in return.

Fair trade.

Cosmo slowly walks through the town. Gets stopped everyone in a while. People he talks to change, but his smile doesn't.

Once he reaches the edge of the town, he turns around. Takes another look at the statue. His face lits up.

COSMO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I am lucky. These people are lucky. Living in a peaceful town with lovely people, lovely food, rich history, and a kind-hearted soul making sure everyone's getting taken care of. Sometimes my mind tells me to get adventurous, to leave this heaven... But this is my home; SHE IS my home.

EXT. VICTORIAN VILLA - GARDEN - SUNSET

Cosmo closes the gate, picks the bags back up, and starts walking towards the entrance. As he gets closer, he sees Yidrei sitting on the pouch, going through some papers.

COSMO

I'm back, ma'am.

Yidrei looks at him with the brightest smile.

YIDREI

I heard the gate close, my dear. I might be sick, but I ain't deaf, you know...

COSMO

(slowly nods)

Oh, I know.

(MORE)

COSMO (CONT'D)
Otherwise, you couldn't have heard
me talking in my sleep ON ANOTHER
FLOOR.

Yidrei giggles.

YIDREI
"Climb up! Climb up! No, not there!
Aaaaaah!"

COSMO
(scratches his chin)
Hmm... Maybe dementia wouldn't be
such a bad thing.

Yidrei waves a notebook around with a cheeky grin.

YIDREI
You have no escape, honey. I'd just
read it off my diary.

She winks.

YIDREI (CONT'D)
Come on, come on. Puts those inside
and join me.

Cosmo nods and goes inside. Yidrei gets her focus back to the papers. One by one, she folds them neatly, places them into envelopes, and writes names on them with her quill.

Cosmo comes back out with tea cups.

COSMO
Sorry for making you wait, me lady.

YIDREI
I can wait forever, as long as you
bring me some tea, darling.

Cosmo sits down. Starts sipping his tea. He's satisfied with it.

They sit down in silence for a couple of minutes, enjoying their teas in peace. Cosmo finishes it first. He gets ready to go and refill it. But as he starts getting up, he notices the envelopes. Reads the names. All familiar. All legendary.

COSMO
What are these?

Yirdei smiles. Gestures Cosmo to sit down. He listens.

YIDREI

Ever since you had that dream, I started wondering, "What are his dreams? Maybe he wants to be a climber. What will he do once I'm gone?" I'm sure that even you don't know the ans-

Cosmo tries interrupting. Yirdei puts her hand up. He nods.

YIDREI (CONT'D)

YOU don't know the answer because you never had the chance to figure it out. YOU don't know the answer because I got sick a couple years after taking you under my wings. How long has it been since that?

COSMO

14 years. I was 6 at the time.

YIDREI

The ages where you had to find your way was spent taking care of some old retired lady.

She reaches out Cosmo's hand. Holds it tightly.

YIDREI (CONT'D)

Look, honey. I definitely don't have much left.

COSMO

(with teary eyes)

Don't say that!

YIDREI

Dear... But that is the truth. And I know that if I die before I see you on your own path, I won't be fulfilled. This is how it's going to be: We both know you hate saying no to me, so make sure this is not an exception.

She grabs one of the letters.

YIDREI (CONT'D)

You know these names. My friends, my lovers, my companions, the people whom I've fought shoulder to shoulder. There are still so many things I want to tell them...

(MORE)

YIDREI (CONT'D)

But I neither have the time nor the energy to do that. I want you to deliver these letters to them.

COSMO

What?

YIDREI

The task is quite clear, honey.

COSMO

But why? Why? Why do you want me to go away? We can easily find someone willing to do this. Everyone from the town loves you. Why not ask one of them and keep me here? There are easier and faster ways to do this. Please...

YIDREI

I'm aware, dear. These letters are only an excuse. All I want is: for you to experience life.

COSMO

Do I have to?

YIDREI

Of course not. But as I said, I rather die knowing you're on an adventure. "An adventure of self-realization."

COSMO

Since when are you so cheesy?

Yidrei shrugs.

YIDREI

You don't know the half of it, honey. My friends can tell you all about it once you're with them. You heard enough stories for me; wouldn't it be exciting to hear more stories from them?

Cosmo stays silent. Looks towards the apple tree. Looks at the sunset. Straches his head. Turns towards Yidrei with his teary eyes.

COSMO

Are you not gonna say, "It's my final wish?"

YIDREI

(smiling)

Cosmo, my child, it is my final
wish.

Cosmo closes his eyes.

COSMO

A good son shouldn't say no to his
mother's final wish.

He gets up, walks around the table, and hugs Yidrei with all his power. He starts crying. She doesn't join in. Her eyes reflect the joy and relief she's feeling.

They stay like that for a good while. Once Cosmo stops crying, he lets go of her.

COSMO (CONT'D)

I'll go cook dinner. Anything would
you like?

Yidrei shakes her head. Cosmo heads inside.

EXT. VICTORIAN VILLA - PORCH - EVENING

Cosmo sets the table up on the porch. With every new plate arriving, Yidrei looks happier.

They eat their dinner slowly, enjoying each and every bite. They know this could be the last dinner they have.

EXT. VICTORIAN VILLA - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Yidrei leans on the door, looking towards Cosmo who is in the kitchen. Cosmo turns around.

COSMO

Tea or coffee?

YIDREI

Wine.

Cosmo looks surprised.

COSMO

Are you sure?

Yidrei nods aggressively. Cosmo grabs two goblets and puts them on the counter. Points at a white wine; Yidrei shakes her head.

Then he points at a red wine; Yidrei nods and heads back to the porch. He pours the red wine into the goblets, leaving them half full, half empty.

PORCH

YIDREI

Cheers, dear. To your journey!

COSMO

To your well-being!

They sip their wines. Once again, Cosmo expects them to stay silent. Yidrei disagrees.

YIDREI

Tomorrow, we're going shopping together. And I'll introduce you to someone.

COSMO

Introduce me? To who?

YIDREI

You'll see. A companion, I shall say for now.

COSMO

I'll prepare myself for the worst. Just in case.

Yidrei giggles, knowing who he'll be meeting.

YIDREI

Your world will be expanding, starting tomorrow. Bless ALL the new people you'll meet with your gentle heart. Make them tea, make them laugh. Don't let anyone erase the smile off of your face. And most importantly, have fun.

She yawns.

YIDREI (CONT'D)

This old soul has to sleep now. See you in the morning, dear.

COSMO

Good night, ma'am.

YIDREI

Good night, child.

She pats Cosmo's head before going inside.

Cosmo gets up and walks towards the apple tree. Leans to it. Looks down at the town. Lights are still up, streets are busy. He can hear people laugh. It puts a smile on his face.

He notices an apple lying on the floor. Picks it up.

COSMO
(to the apple)
Did you fall down, buddy?

He shakes his head, reacting to the idiocy of his question. Takes a bite. Takes another one. Takes a couple more bites until it's gone. He turns towards the tree. Pats it.

COSMO (CONT'D)
I'll miss you too, tree.

Closes his eyes, knowing he means it.

COSMO (CONT'D)
(shaky)
I'll fucking miss this place...

Couple tears slides down his cheeks.

COSMO (CONT'D)
Here is a little secret. Make sure
to keep it between us. Okay, TREE?
I AM SHITTING ME PANTS.

He gets giggly. Wipes the tears off. Takes a deep breath. With the look of a dedicated son, he feels ready.

COSMO (CONT'D)
Let's expand our world.

CUT TO:

TITLE SCREEN

"Assistant on the Road"

THE END