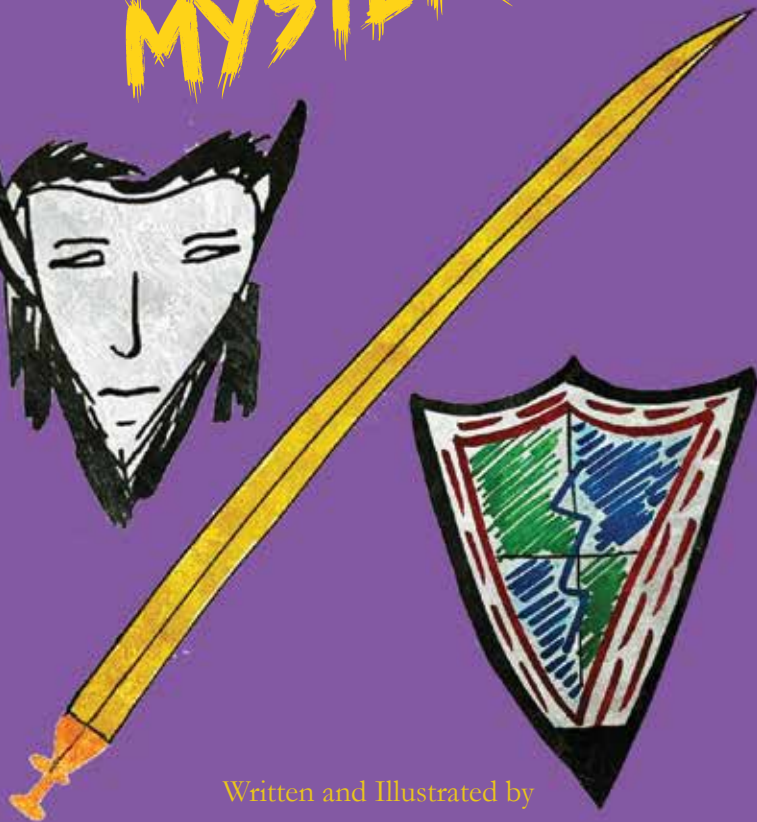




Collins

# THE ELVEN MYSTERIES



Written and Illustrated by  
**Vedant Abhyankar**

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“Oh no, no, please spare me!”. Setrøsky woke up with a start. “The same old nightmares” he sighed. It was an usual occurrence since last month. “Another day of my dull and monotonous life”, he muttered rather aggressively. He worked as a historian, specializing in Elven history. Problem was, that most of his research was on ‘ancient’, and (most of the time fake) artefacts, to prove nothing more than a conspiracy theory made by simple-minded nitwits, or so he thought... He had always wanted to be a writer, but the death of his mother pulled him into poverty, forcing him to get a higher-paying, yet uncharacteristic and futile job. “A historian”, he said. “I expected a historian if not a writer, but what have I become? An uneducated, imprudent elf hunter! My life is based on the myths and lies of others.”, he said in one of his anger fits, waving his hands around. “I do make a lot of money”, his rational side contemplated. “I don’t care!” his emotional side jutted in. “My life is a combination of unfortunate events”, his depressed side added. “Shut Up!”, he collectively told them. Since his mother’s death, this ‘conference’ of ‘feelings’ was a regular occurrence. “I better go back to sleep”, he said to his lonely self. The moment he drifted off to sleep, the light of a thousand suns flashed in front of his eyes and he was transferred to a ravenous battlefield being dominated by a humongous, devil-like creature. To his dismay, it was then that his adventure through the realms started...





“Again?”, Setrøsky started. He looked at the time. It was exactly 10 o’clock. “At least it works as an alarm”, he said sarcastically, with a slight smile on his face. It took him a hot minute to get out of bed. He had a tall and lanky build, with pale skin and deep blue eyes. “Ahh...”, he thought, my favourite suit is clean. He was a suit fanatic as he loved to make it seem as if he were a professional when actually, his job and life were the definitions of ‘tomfoolery’. He looked at himself in the mirror just before leaving. Never could he get over the fact that his ears were awkwardly pointed. “I look like an elf...”, he pondered. “Tosh!”, his rational side retorted. “You are not an elf”. But somewhere down there, deep in his thoughts, he knew that he wished to be an elf, to get out of the struggles he faced every day and enter a magical realm where nothing would trouble him. “What would my mother think?”, he muttered as he left for work. “Cab please!”, he shouted at the top of his lungs but to no avail, as they all just ignored him. “Typical English behaviour”, he sighed as he got on the bus instead. An introvert like him wasn’t welcome in the bustling metropolis of London.

A few minutes later, his phone started ringing. “My boss again?”, he muttered, displeased. He was shocked that he even had a boss, considering that he was one of the only people who theorized and researched about non-existent species. “A new artefact has arrived!”, his boss exclaimed. “I want you to take a look at it. It’s from the ‘Elven Site’”. About the ‘site’ Setrøsky knew nothing about it, but he did know that he did not share the same enthusiasm about it with his boss. “Another so-called artefact to examine”, he thought. “And another chance to make money”, his rational side piped in. Just like before, his emotional side retorted, calling rationality “the stupidest idea in existence” and “the creator of the least ‘rational’ thoughts ever!”. After suffering 30 minutes of experiencing mental pain, he was finally at work. “I want you two to zip up now”, he shouted mentally. The moment he stepped into his office”, he was taken aback. He had never seen such a beautiful artefact in his 5 years of work experience. “It may be beautiful, but will it reap results?”, he muttered, amused. He touched the beautiful stone figure, feeling its rough and smooth edges. But then, he was transported to a different world, one with a serene view and twisted and curved trees. Then he saw a weird creature, with pale skin and slightly pointed ears, just like him. He fainted almost immediately.





“Where am I?”, Setrøsky asked, groaning. “You’re in ‘Zalben’, the elf city...”, a mysterious person responded. Setrøsky got up with a start. “No, no, no! This can’t be real. Lewis, are you pranking me again?”. “No, I am not ‘Lewis’”, the person responded, disgusted. “And as I said, you are in a very real Elf City.” “What?”, Setrøsky asked, stunned. “Never mind, humans like you never do understand...”, it responded. “Your clothes are on the bench. Change and come to the main hall, the court will decide your future”. “Which hall, which court?”, he asked in distress, but the person was gone. “Ah well...”, he muttered. “What a precarious situation I have got myself in”. Behind his almost monotone voice, he was dumbstruck. Elves existed... He never thought he would say those two words in a sentence but here he was, with the evidence in front of his two eyes.

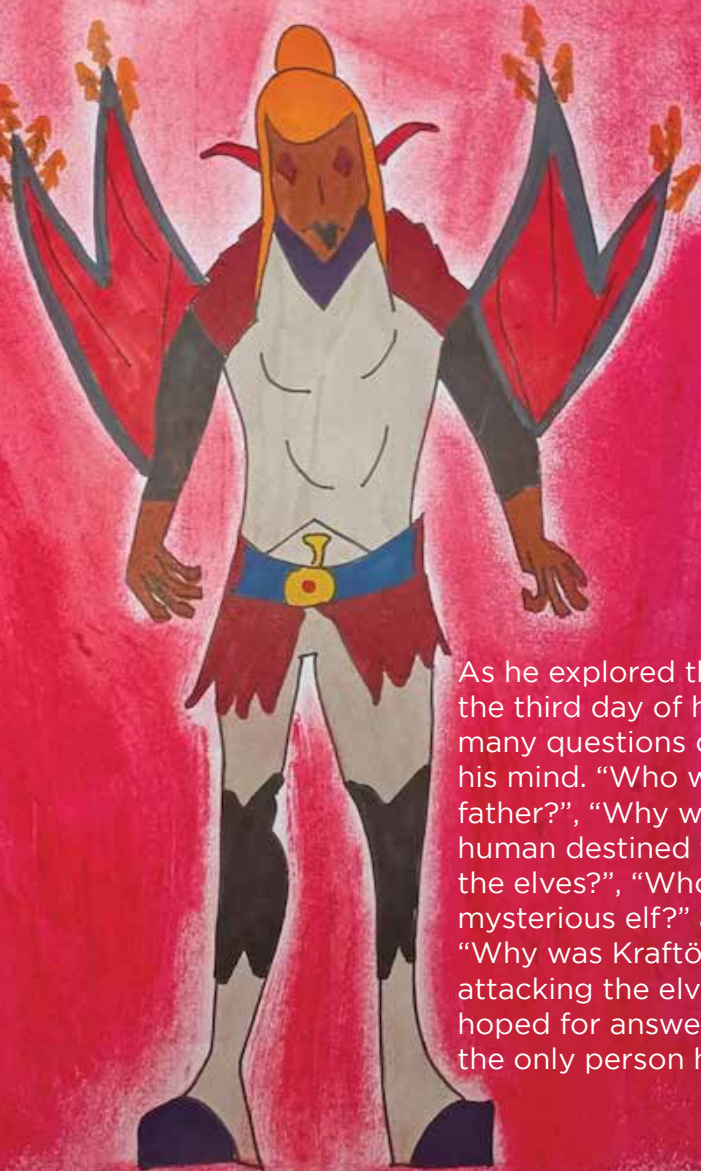
He wore his clothes and went to the Main Hall, which took him ages to find. And then, there he was, standing in front of a court of Elven Judges, with their white hair and almond-shaped, inquisitive eyes.

But he was particularly confused with one Judge, who looked like someone he knew. She looked different from the rest, with her lush brown hair, blue eyes and silky clothes. In that instant, something took control of him and he shyly asked, "Mom?". The Judge turned pink, but there was some guilt on her face. "I guess I ought to tell you... the truth", she said, eyeing the other judges. After moments of waiting she finally revealed, "I am your mother...", as tears rolled down her cheek. "Why did you leave me?", he asked, fighting back tears of his own. "Anyways...", said one of the Judges, glaring at his mother. "Let us continue the hearing, shall we?". "We are here to decide what to do...". "A human has entered our land and as per the law of Arlust, humans are to be killed on entering", Brafton the judge said threateningly, smirking. "That is not possible!", one of the Judges retorted. "We cannot just kill a human, that would violate every 'elfitarian' law we have". "Do elfitarian laws even apply to humans?", another Judge asked. After 10 minutes of this argument, his mother shouted, "Enough!". The room went silent. "The prophecy has stated that the arrival of the human will overturn our war with Kraftön...", she started. "Bah! We all know that's just wishful thinking", Brafton interrupted. "And it is such wishful thinking that will bring us a long way in

the war", she replied, glaring at the judge. "Raise your hand if you vote to keep the human", she ordered. Almost all of the judges voted to keep him. "The majority has won!", she said triumphantly. "I will not support this decision! You will see what a bad choice you have made. Because of you, the whole Elven Country is in danger", he shouted, storming out of the room.

"Finally, some peace", Setrøsky's mother said smirking. "I suggest you go take a rest in the guest room". "All your questions will be answered soon". As Setrøsky walked towards his room, he contemplated his new life. "At least I met my mother again", he thought, elated, yet full of questions. He knew the pressure was on him, to save the elven kingdom from this 'Kraftön' that they talked about. He knew that he could either flee or fight alongside his 'people'. He knew his decision could change everything, and that's what scared him.





As he explored the city on the third day of his stay, many questions came to his mind. “Who was his father?”, “Why was he the human destined to save the elves?”, “Who was the mysterious elf?” and “Why was Kraftön attacking the elves?”. He hoped for answers from the only person he knew

closely in the city, his mom, known by her elf name “Greftha”. He had recently found out that she was the queen of ‘Izwelk’, the city he was in now. Misery had befallen the other cities, with Kraftön destroying them with a snap of a finger. ‘Izwelk’ was a stronghold and Kraftön never attacked, but rumours were spreading that he was heading north, towards the city. “I’m busy now!”, his mom shouted from her room. “I have a war to deal with”. “Answer my questions, and I won’t disturb you for the rest of the day...”, Setrøsky retorted, to no response. Finally, she responded, “Come In, but the discussion should not be for more than a minute”. It was definitely longer than a minute. It turned out that Setrøsky’s father was a human, and therefore he was the only elf-human hybrid. The mysterious elf was his mom using a special technique called ‘night walking’, and Kraftön was seeking vengeance over the bitter treatment of the underworld with respect to the rest of the races, as different races found ways to make their people ‘immortal’. The elves were the first to discover the perfect combination of words to make their people immortal, and the news spread like wildfire. Only humans, distancing themselves from the elves, decided they would create their own antidote. When he asked why he was chosen, he was quite surprised by the answer. Since he was the only human-elf hybrid, the prophecy was hinting at him all along... but there was still not a lot of clarity surrounding the situation. The moment he was about to ask about the prophecy, his mother interrupted, “The war has begun, he is here...”. “I hope you are ready, son.”



Even though he didn't want to fight, he knew he had to because of the 'magical' expectations of the elves and for his 'long-lost' mother's sake.

The elves rode on their chariots, slashing the undead monsters which roamed the battlefield. They were elegant in battle, with their long hair swaying in the wind. Bloodshed was common near Kraftön, as he used the 'undead-words' to send each and every elf that tried to kill him to Tormus, the pit of the opposers. As Setrøsky tried to concoct a plan with no prior fighting experience, he thought about why he was there, and the state of affairs in the Human World. He was brought back to sense when one of the elves shouted, "He's making a portal to the Human World". That's when it struck him. Kraftön wanted control of all worlds as payback for their 'immortality' crimes! "I have to stop him", he thought as he approached the beast. "Stop Kraftön, or face the wrath of the son of Grefta!", he said. The startled demon looked upon him, laughed, and then impaled him in a split second. Suddenly, his conscience was pulled out of his body as he was sent to the devoid realm.

"What is this?", he thought. "Is this what being dead is like?" An image popped up when he thought about the elves, and he saw them being killed by the ravenous monster. Then his mother approached, pleading with Kraftön, but his axe came down and she was dead. He felt the rage coming up through his spine, and said two words that shocked him forever, 'Ograsi Fretormi...'. As he muttered the ancient words, the beast crippled with pain, and fell down to the underworld as he said, "This isn't the end of me, O' Ghostslayer...". As

Setrøsky, looked around the endless abyss of the void, he asked himself why he had helped... why he had risked his life to save those he did not know... This time there was no conference of feelings, as they were all dead anyways. He wondered whether all this was a dream, or whether he would be forgotten in the scrolls of time. With his last and final breath, he accepted the fact that he was a tool of the universe, a servant... a nobody. He was enlightened, but to what use when there was no one to talk to. As tears rolled down his cheek, he relived all his memories and then finally... peace.



## **About the Author**

Vedant Abhyankar loves coding for apps and games, playing Minecraft and eating pizzas. If he could have a super power, he would want the ability to read people's minds, so that he can predict their behaviour. Vedant aspires to become an Entrepreneur. He would like to make the world a better place by wiping out prejudices of all kinds.

## **Mentor**

Poonam Dasilva  
Dhanashri Ubhayakar

# THE ELVEN MYSTERIES

“One chance, one opportunity, to save humanity or die trying”. An avid writer turned ‘elf hunting’ historian Setrøsky, now holds the fate of the Earth and the foreseeable other kingdoms. Forgetting the Laws of Science and Nature, Setrøsky realises how small he is in the grand scheme of things. Does he run away and forget that there are worlds beyond his plane of existence or does he embrace this unfamiliar feeling of puniness and become stronger? Read on to find out.