



*A Silent Bedroom*

Juraj Poništ

*Dedication*

To my beloved Sophia

**Juraj Poništ**  
**2018**  
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## Chapter 1

### *The Sea Wanderer trembles*

“The usual, Kips?” asked Helga lifelessly and not really expecting the answer pulled a golden liquid into a mug. Barmaid of the Sea Wanderer enjoyed the moment, when the string of light pierced the beer. It was the simplicity in this scene that fascinated her. “No Helga, but thanks.” halted her chubby little man with a bald spot shining in the middle of his greasy brown hair. He closed the creaking door behind him and stopped for a little while at the doorstep staring through one of the windows opposing long wooden bar.

“I decided to give up the booze once and for all after the last cruise along the Purple Shores. It was to celebrate and show my gratitude for I did escape the beasts.” Kips wiped away beads of sweat from his forehead. The mug of beer was already half full when Helga looked up sceptically.

“Helga, if the merchant does not feel like drinking, here is somebody who would love to wet his whistle,” said drunk bony fisherman. He was resting on a table in the furthest corner of the room, wearing sweaty linen shirt. Barmaid did not react whatsoever. She was willing

to play Kips' game and left the mug of beer on the bar. As she turned over to the shelves packed with bottles of alcohol, Kips nonchalantly remarked: "I can see that



you still have it."

Helga started cleaning mirror between the shelves too vigorously. She cracked a big, stubborn smile and said: "Yes, and I am still going to have it." She was observing her hair properly now. This observation was followed by her sad

sigh: "Oh my, I really do look terrible, look at my hair, it is completely damaged." Kips moved to the bar stool right in front of her. He was trying to comfort her superficially by saying: "It is not all that bad, that dress looks way worse." Helga moved her curvy hips provocatively and with a pretended regret said: "I have nothing to offer you if you don't find me pretty."

Kips was suffering from thirst too much to react with a brick response but he managed to mutter: "How bad would it be if I really gave up the booze, Helga?" Her face lid up with a winner's smile and she started pulling

the beer once again. Merchant was enjoying the view on sapphire waves which were breaking somewhere in distance between the stony buildings of Folg.

“So how is the business going? I can see that you're not scrapping by,” said Helga and nodded towards the Kips' black satin shirt. Barmaid was almost sure that he must have bought it while he was wandering through the Land of Caves.

“You are right, I managed to earn some money but I have to tell you something: it was a journey. Oh, what a journey it was,” sighed Kips and murmured something thankful towards the barmaid. As he was sipping the beer Helga noticed exhaustion in his eyes. “The beer is great, I would even say that it is much better than mine,” said Kips and glanced quickly into the mirror full of curious faces.

“Should I prepare you some place for sleeping upstairs?” asked Helga and one could notice that she isn't very keen on the idea. She and the rest of the guests of the Sea Wanderer would appreciate more if he stayed and told them about everything he saw and heard in the Sapphire Eye. “Don't you want to hear the latest news from the city?” remarked merchant and both of them could feel that the room is suddenly filled up with tension.

“Don't worry, I do know that you're going to wait for the “elite” anyways,” said Helga sulkily. “But what if I have

really hot news?” responded Kips with that tempting voice of his. “I don't care what love stories do the rich from the city have,” answered Helga with pride.

“So? Should I prepare the bed for you or what?” The response she got made the Sea Wanderer tremble: “Start preparing a celebration Helga and don't worry about the bed!” announced Kips happily and added, “Karol managed to finally hunt down the Black Souls two weeks ago!”