To Know Scripturally

Posted originally on the fanfiction.lol at https://fanfiction.lol/works/1493.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Nonbinary
Fandom:	Magic: The Gathering
Relationship:	Ashiok (Magic: The Gathering)/Elspeth Tirel
Characters:	Ashiok (Magic: The Gathering), Elspeth Tirel
Additional Tags:	Toes, Angel/Demon Relationship, No Orgasm
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-11-08 Words: 2,056 Chapters: 1/1

To Know Scripturally

by hanktalking (hanktalkin)

Summary

I only breathe the air to keep you inside / So you would always be mine

A plane of belief!

Ashiok should never have left, so rare is this magic makes the imagined real and the real imagined. Gods and all their power waved away like smoke. A new God, her triumphs from the Phyrexian invasion fresh on the lips of every worshiper, threatens to spring up amongst the ancient and established. That which Xenagos coveted so dearly, and here the Sun's Champion has nearly achieved it. All she had to do was save the multiverse.

Statues have already been erected, dotting the landscape, here and there new receptacles for a cautiously budding cult. That's how it always starts, doesn't it? A spark of an idea, then it catches the dry grass around it, and soon… that is to say Ashiok is familiar with the principal. It is much like crafting a nightmare from a single flash of discomfort, twisting a dark spot in the corner or a rabid dog's teeth into something tangible, something with *meat*. But nightmare weaving is artistry first and foremost, the product of an intelligent mind; it is another thing entire to watch the process play out by nature.

The shrine in Oreskos has a handful of worshipers. All asleep of course. Though Ashiok can be alone in any room with the power of illusion and a form that is anomalously forgettable, it will be nice for the first glimpse of the goddess-to-be to be unmarred by other's voices. Not that Ashiok ignores them. A claw drags delicately along the temples and occipitals as a black dress slides between twitching shrine-goers, sprawled as they are across marble steps and bowls of fruit. A work of art can always be returned to later. Ashiok snatches a vision of friends and family, half-changed into machines, oil leaking from their orifices.

Even after her death, Elesh Norn manages to keep on giving. Truly, she was a spectacular subject.

Though. None could compare to one whose depiction is before Ashiok now.

Clearly the sculptor found Elspeth Tirel as enthralling of a muse as Ashiok always has. The care with which they've rendered her armor, the lack of fear in including her haughty brow — truly the artist was halfway in love with her. Yet, despite the idealization, Elspeth's facial features are rendered exact, though the sculptor could never have seen her in person. Another quirk of the plane, perhaps?

A half-burned dove smolders in the offering bowl. White feathers splay out, detached from their wing, alone and unmoored on the lip of black stone. Elspeth's presence is almost overwhelming.

Then, she is there.

There is no great flash of light, none of that unique thaumaturgy particular to each planeswalker. It is simply that she is behind Ashiok, as though he always has been, as though Ashiok has been *expecting* her to be there.

Though it is unnecessary with no eyes to lay upon her, Ashiok turns anyway.

“Elspeth. You received my letters?”

She does not rise to the bait. How delightfully surprising. Truly ascension has changed her beyond the cosmetic.

Her new wings fold behind her; they are massive, nearly scraping the ground when she jerks forward to stride toward Ashiok. How beautiful they are, how exquisite. How they could block out the sun as she descended toward evildoers. Elesh Norn may be gone, but there are still many, many in the multiverse that would quiver if Elspeth the New Sun were to haunt their nightmares.

The archangel rushes forward and grabs Ashiok by the throat.

“You tormented me when I was at my weakest, nightmare weaver.” Her nostrils flair. Once, where there were pupils and tawny irises, there is only a bright glowing gold. “Now I am strong enough to face you. On my own terms.”

“Strong enough? Or perhaps even stronger…” Ashiok whispers.

Despite many layers of mortality shed over the years, Ashiok is still of flesh. Food, water, even sight are things of the past, but even the dream render must still breath, stuttering as fist closes around windpipe.

“Silence! Yes I received you visions, your missives, whatever you call them. They haunted me before the collapse of the watchtowers. I thought them only my dreams, my memories of you, of the Underworld.”

She pauses for a moment, reveling in the world they are on, that very Underworld now beneath her feet. A warbler sings outside the bounds of the shrine. The dreamers sleep on, pained.

“But now we are equals,” she continues, “and your echos from beyond the eternities of ceased. Why is that?”

“You sound jealous, Elspeth Tirel. You needn’t be. Though I’ve been inspired many times in my very long life, I meant when I called you my Dearest.”

“Ha! More like once I became something you couldn’t control, your fascination drifted. I was no longer something that could be molded, so I was forgotten. *To remember all things in perfect order requires so much* ***energy***. Right? Those that are unshapable are nothing to you. So much of you is illusion, you don’t even know yourself what is real.“

“*You do not know me!*” Ashiok hisses.

Elspeth leans back, grip loosened. Even Ashiok is surprised by the outburst. They stare at each other, waiting, Elspeth’s gauntlet now resting on the front of Ashiok’s dress, the warbler outside still thrilling its lilting song. Elspeth’s supplicants sleep on.

So: she was not expecting the spot to be so sore, or at least not expecting a reaction if it were. She is suspicious. Then, self-satisfied.

“Perhaps I *will* know you.” Her hand comes to the amethyst inlaid over one pectoral. It is not meant to be a clasp, the halter is not meant to come undone. Yet she unfastens it. “I will show you the truth of me. And I will see the truth of you.”

Her nostrils flare. She draws in deep breath. Ashiok’s smoke spirals down her lungs and for a moment the tendrils of darkness that are meant to provide sensory input instead expand inside the archangel, mapping the whole of her. One hand pins Ashiok’s hips to the altar, the other rips the remains of the shawl away, metal components tinkling as they land on the marble floor, leaving Ashiok exposed from the waist up.

The confusion is immeasurable. Why does Elspeth step back now, undoing the straps on her breastplate? What was that expression that now graced her face? Angelic still, yes, but what other component now shapes it so?

She breaths in smoke again, two twin trails of ink connecting Ashiok to Elspeth, binding them like chains. She holds. Then, shaping her mouth, she uses her pink tongue to blow out a perfect, black, ring.

“Serra truly has bestowed upon you many gifts,” Ashiok remarks faintly.

Elspeth laughs. Is it mocking? Impossible to say, especially since Ashiok is distracted when Elspeth reaches to her fauld and presses an unseen release. The tasset falls away by magic.

It almost seemed like Serra had hermetically sealed Elspeth inside that armor, a parting gift for her most resilient devotee who’d no longer have any mortal functions that would require its removal. But, apparently, it *does* come off, and faster than Ashiok can process there is a fit, *human* woman standing in the middle of the room. The wings are still there, yes, she is clearly an angel. But the mortal Elspeth wears a light cotton shirt loosely clinging to her breasts, and trousers held together with rope. Her once-braided hair falls from her shoulders in waves.

When Ashiok stares for too long, she smiles.

When she steps forward, she attacks again with- What? A kiss? It must be, there is no other reasonable explanation for why her lips fondle and hunger for Ashiok’s cleft palette. The kiss slides down bare chest, becoming wetter, scraping along leather until Elspeth is fully kneeling on the ground. She looks up, the mean smile still there, still inscrutable.

Her hands, bare, clasp the calf in front of her. With methodical dedication, they push up, slowly revealing more and more grey, hairless skin. To the knee, then, higher, a toned thigh peeking from the folds of black dress. She puts herself to the calf, drawing her tongue up and down, up and down.

Ashiok is uncertain what exactly the situation calls for.

Hesitantly, a claw reaches out, first grabbing the back of Elspeth’s head and carding black through auburn, but then changing its mind, it grips the hem of Elspeth’s shirt, yanking it up in an attempt to pull it over her head.

It rips, of course.

She doesn't even notice. Further and further she slides, and Ashiok graciously pops up a foot to let her take it more firmly by the ankle. The big toe is quickly engulfed by the soldier's warm, wet mouth.

Suckling for only a moment, she withdraws, a string of drool connecting her to the toe, much like the strands of smoke had. Ashiok hopes she is grateful the toenails aren't nearly as honed as the fingernails are.

One by one she pops each toe in her mouth, the sound of troubled sleep now joined by an appreciative moan coming from deep within her chest. All at once, she puts the whole foot in her mouth, as deep as it will go. Her wings stretch out in pleasure, filling the shrine, blocking the sun that filters in between the pillars. An angel demands the attention of the whole room, even when on her knees in supplication.

She shucks her trousers off in a bout of speed, only rising from one knee and the next to throw them aside into the darkness. Then she positions herself, letting Ashiok's glistening-wet foot rest between her thighs, dragging her sex along it in a fashion that could no more be construed as holy than Ashiok's existence can. She thrusts vigorously, and Ashiok has to brace hard against the altar in order to give her enough resistance. Her mouth now entertains itself with the belts along Ashiok's stomach, investigating each stud like they hold the secrets to the multiverse.

"Dearest Elspeth…" What more is there to be said?

She rises, pressing her — now bare — breasts against Ashiok's equally bare chest, triumph in her expression and her renewed bite. Her death-mark wasn't visible before. The sunburst shaped scar right above her heart, the place where Heliod shoved his betraying-weapon in from behind, now apparent anterior. Ashiok's thumb runs across it. Beads of keloid rise underneath the sensitive thumbpad, like raw solder pressed to a join.

"Here you have kept me," Ashiok remarks, "in the same place where treachery has struck you."

The tentative peace between them shatters.

Elspeth's scowl is succeeded by the lash of her hand, striking out and grabbing Ashiok by the horn. With divine strength she twists her victim around, bending Ashiok over the altar and snarling.

"You can't even help yourself, can you?" she asks. "It's always games and play-pretend."

"My artistry is very much real."

Despite her claim of *can't help yourself*, she still humps possessively against Ashiok's exposed backside.

"You are known now, Ashiok," she says. "I will keep that burden of not forgetting."

She releases Ashiok's horns. Ceasing her hypocritical thrusting, she withdraws from the altar, leaving Ashiok once again in state of confusion. Did she even come?

Though Ashiok's face is pressed to stone, the smoke can see all, not contained by sockets or light. There is nothing to block the view as Elspeth grabs her armor, her clothes, and tents her wings around herself. Then, she strides out, disappearing out into the wild grasses.

By the time Ashiok stands and rightens, she is gone.

Grimly, Ashiok takes stock of the situation. Wet, disrobed, and unsatisfied. Sighing, a new dress is pulled from the smoke, slowly taking shape under exasperated fingers.

What a plane this is! Here where belief makes manifest. The dreamers were so close to their new goddess and didn't even know, yet Ashiok was the one to bear witness, the one to see the thing ruminated so heavily on…

Ashiok's spine straightens. Though it is unneeded, habit will make a person turn very suddenly, even if that person knows what will be there. Elspeth: still gone.

But, of course, she merely planeswalked away. Silently. Again. With no other indicators that she'd been there at all.

Of course.

Ashiok returns to dressing.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!