

Riding a Gryphon

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/13126848) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/13126848>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Warcraft (2016)
Relationship:	Khadgar/Anduin Lothar
Characters:	Khadgar (Warcraft) , Anduin Lothar , Llane Wrynn
Additional Tags:	Polyamory , POV Alternating , POV Third Person Limited
Language:	English
Collections:	Yuletide 2017
Stats:	Published: 2017-12-25 Words: 2,180 Chapters: 1/1

Riding a Gryphon

by [misura](#)

Summary

In which Khadgar gets flying lessons.

Notes

happy Yuletide, days4daisy! the Warcraft movie is still one of my favorites, so I couldn't resist writing you a treat.

please note the polyamory tag. this fic contains trace amounts of Lothar/Llane, Lothar/Llane/Taria and Llane/Taria.

Khadgar eyed the gryphon with considerable misgivings.

On the positive side, it wasn't Lothar's - on the negative side, it was still a very big, very vicious animal with claws and a beak and wings, of course, making it the most effective means of transportation available.

"Reach out your hand," Lothar yelled, from the safe distance to which he and Llane had withdrawn to watch this morning's entertainment *or, excuse me, 'flying lesson'*. "Just let it get the smell of you. Like you would with a dog."

Right. Khadgar looked at the gryphon, trying to gauge its mood.

It stared back at him with an expression that did not seem promising - at least, not of a pleasant, comfortable morning spent enjoying the pleasures of flight.

Right. Impressions notwithstanding, this was not a wild animal. It had been trained extensively. It had carried men and women on its back before, and would do so again.

The chances that it would suddenly lash out at someone were minimal. Virtually non-existent.

"Just get on with it, will you?"

Khadgar sighed. "Just so you know, I am a very powerful mage. If you try to bite me, I will make you very, very sorry. I will do terrible, horrible things to you. Things you can't even imagine. Things *I* can't even imagine. So just - please don't hurt me?"

Llane frowned. "What is he doing? Is he *talking* to it?"

Lothar shrugged. "I talk to my own gryphon all the time, too. It's not that weird."

"You tell it to slash, kill or capture," Llane said. "Short, easy to understand instructions. You don't recite poetry to it, or read it the first chapter of your favorite book."

"Kid likes reading. He gets the job done, that's fine with me."

Llane grimaced. "You mean that you'll heckle him without mercy rather than praise him for a job well done. We train people for this, Lothar. For years. We don't simply shove them at a gryphon and tell them to 'get on with it'."

"He's a quick learner," Lothar said. "Big brain. Smart."

"The other day, you said he was an idiot. I was there. More to the point, so was he."

"More to the point? What point?"

Llane sighed. "You want him in your bed, you might consider a slightly more tactical approach. Make yourself pleasant. Mention the good, instead of just the bad."

Lothar scoffed. "And why, pray tell, would I want a kid like that in my bed when I can sleep in the king's bed instead? What's the matter - feeling your age? Can't keep up with me anymore? Spent too much time sitting on your ass?"

"Taria's complained about your habit to hog the blankets. She gets grumpy when she wakes up all chilled."

"And that's my problem?"

Llane grinned at him. "It is when your king makes it so."

The gryphon shrieked.

"Oh, good," said Lothar. "A distraction."

The feathers were softer than Khadgar had expected them to be. He imagined feeling them all over his skin, soft and silky, and shivered.

"Good boy." He tried to scratch its head, the way he'd seen Lothar do to his gryphon, but this one's scratching tastes seemed to be different, as it shrieked at him before snapping at the apparently offensive appendage, i.e. Khadgar's hand, extended in a friendly manner.

"Sorry? You - I'll just keep my hands to myself, then, shall I? That's fine. No need to - "

The gryphon shrieked again, which was not a problem - the sound was annoying, but not so bad that it would damage his hearing. It also bucked, trying to dislodge him, which was not something Khadgar wanted to think about happening in mid-air.

"Easy. Down, boy."

"It's a girl," said Lothar, who'd come walking over, King Llane in tow, looking grave and serious.

"Your Majesty." Khadgar attempted a bow.

Lothar petted the gryphon, which seemed perfectly happy to let him. "A pretty, pretty girl gryphon. Aren't you? Yes, you are. Who's a good girl, then?"

"Presumably, not the beast who came close to maiming our next Guardian," King Llane said.

"Oh, it's - I'm sure that I - "

King Llane regarded him. "We would not see you hurt, Khadgar. We place great value on your well-being and, indeed, your presence here in Stormwind, to aid us in these difficult times."

"Uh." Khadgar felt himself blush. "Thanks. I mean, thank you, Your Majesty. Just doing what I can."

"Riding a gryphon by yourself presumably not being among those things," said Lothar. His hand was still on the gryphon's head, at the exact same spot Khadgar had been reaching for.

King Llane sighed. "They respond ill to things approaching their heads from behind. That was your mistake. Born of ignorance, and therefore not something anyone could hold against you."

Lothar grimaced. "Must you spoil everything? *I* wanted to be the one to tell him that."

"Spoiling things for you is one of the few pleasures left to me in these dark days," King Llane said.

"Hardly the only one, though," said Lothar. "Your Majesty."

King Llane inclined his head very slightly. "Commander. See to it he will be able to fly one of our birds by sunset tonight, will you? You have the full faith and thanks of your king."

"I humbly obey Your Majesty's every command."

"He's a great man," Khadgar said, staring after Llane. "A great king. I heard stories when I was living among the Kirin Tor, but I never expected - "

"Yes, well, sometimes people live up to their reputations," said Lothar, adjusting some of the straps on the gryphon's saddle. They might have gotten dislodged when the beast had bucked, but more likely, Khadgar had simply failed to properly saddle the beast.

Fair enough. We're not training him to work the royal stables, after all.

"Oh. I didn't mean to imply - "

"What?" Lothar asked, distracted.

"You're pretty formidable yourself, Commander."

And what am I supposed to make of that? 'Formidable'? Taria would laugh herself sick if she heard, right before boxing my ears for mucking things up like this.

"Well, you know, you're still young," Lothar said. "Lots of time to make something of yourself yet."

Khadgar frowned. Lothar wondered what he had said *now*. *This kid's just too damn sensitive.* "I'm not that young. I've spent years, studying the magical arts."

And one day, maybe you'll be as powerful as Medivh, and go live at Karazhan, all by yourself, and no one will get to see you for years and years because you're too busy.

But not yet. Not for a long time.

Khadgar wondered what it would take for Lothar to stop treating him like a nuisance, someone he needed to protect and look out for, rather than someone who could be trusted to take care of himself.

King Llane, at least, seemed to value his input and abilities. There had been genuine warmth and respect in the way he'd looked at Khadgar, as well as affection.

Not, of course, that he meant anything by it. Or, well, not anything more.

The Kirin Tor had not been big on affection, physical or otherwise. Khadgar had never much realized it at the time, but ever since he had left them, his body seemed to respond ... unusually to people touching him, or looking at him as if they valued him as more than a gifted student.

"Feel the gryphon," said Lothar. "Don't let go. It's a lot smarter than you are."

Right. I'm miles above the ground, on a gryphon. Maybe now is not the time to get distracted.

"Excuse me?"

"It knows how to do this," Lothar said. "Flying, I mean. You're just a passenger."

"In that case, shouldn't you tell me that I *should* let go?" *Control your magic, lest it controls you. Control your self, lest your baser self controls you. And eat your vegetables, they're good for you.* Khadgar shook his head.

"What I meant was, don't fall off."

"Oh," Khadgar said. "Good advice." *Yes. Falling off might be exactly what I'd do if you hadn't told me not to.* He tried to 'feel the gryphon', as Lothar had told him to, but he was mostly aware of Lothar, sitting right behind him, arms around him in a way that felt entirely too intimate.

Or, be fair, not nearly intimate enough. Unlike the king, Lothar wasn't married. *Also unlike the king, Lothar doesn't seem to like me very much, let alone in that way.*

"Don't get cocky," said Lothar.

Small chance of that, with you around.

"You're leaving him to Lothar?" Taria frowned. She was still wearing a band of mourning, in memory of her home village, which might never be rebuilt.

Well, and what use rebuilding a village, when we cannot return the people?

"Let us say that in view of the circumstances, I'm giving him a clear playing field. For today."

"My brother is an idiot," Taria stated. "A day? You might as well give him a week. The result would be the same."

Llane sighed. "A day, a week, what does it matter? The boy looks up to him. He's half in love with him already, if I'm any judge. What chance do I have against that?"

"You underestimate yourself," Taria said.

"Perhaps I am simply looking forward to a night during which I shall get some rest."

Taria smiled. Llane was abruptly reminded of the number of meetings he was to attend or preside over this afternoon, and the likeliness of his getting a free hour at any point in the day. "Are you?"

Llane swallowed. "No. I suppose not."

"See?" Lothar petted the gryphon, which affectionately nuzzled his shoulder with its beak. "Nothing to it whatsoever."

Except that if I tried that, I'm pretty sure it would take my head off.

"Great." Khadgar's legs felt a bit unsteady, like they hadn't expected to touch solid ground again. "Thanks."

"Oh, I wasn't talking to you." Lothar turned and offered him a smile. "I was talking to the gryphon."

Jerk. "Of course you were." One of these days, Lothar was going to go too far, and then Khadgar would lose his temper and tell him - *well. Something insulting, I guess.*

"Say, are you feeling all right?" Lothar's smile faded. "You look a bit ... wobbly? Not going to be sick, are you?"

"Why? Is that a thing people do after they've ridden a gryphon?"

"Mostly during," said Lothar. "And it's only some. *Some people.*"

"I - " Khadgar supposed it was a bit dishonest, to pretend he was about to fall over, but then, Lothar *had* asked, and he hadn't mentioned anything about people suffering from air-sickness up until now, so Khadgar felt some small measure of revenge was owed him.

"I got you," Lothar said, rather than any one of the insulting comments Khadgar had been braced for. "Easy. Let's take it slow, yeah? One foot in front of the other."

It felt good, to let Lothar carry his weight. Khadgar imagined letting Lothar take him to his bedroom, imagined Lothar putting him down on the bed, taking off his clothes. Kissing him, and whispering how Khadgar really wasn't as worthless as Lothar was always pretending -

All right, time to get back to reality. "I'm okay."

"You sure?" Lothar stared at him almost the same way King Llane had, earlier. It was a little unsettling.

"Why don't you try trusting me for once?"

Lothar shrugged, still not letting go. "I guess I like to think I can look out for you. Keep you safe. Protect you. That sort of thing."

"Well, I guess *I* like to think you can trust me to have your back. And mine, too."

Lothar smiled a little. "The evidence thus far is not on your side."

"Yes, well ... "

"There are times when I desperately want to kiss you," Lothar said. "And ... more than kiss you."

"Oh," said Khadgar. *You could have said something, maybe?*

"And then there are times when I really want to shake some common sense into you, because you're brave and smart and wonderful and you're going to get yourself killed."

"The evidence thus far is not on your side," said Khadgar. "So, you know. Maybe do that other thing?"

"Mere seconds ago, you could barely stay on your feet. What sort of man would I be, to take advantage of someone like that?"

"The sort who isn't a complete idiot? And I was just faking it. Sorry if your skills of observation weren't up to spotting that but, you know. Guess you're not as formidable as I thought you were."

"Oh, you're just asking for it now, aren't you?" Lothar shook his head.

Khadgar had no idea what it was he was supposedly asking for, but judging by the gleam in Lothar's eyes, he thought it might be something he wouldn't be all that averse to. "And what if I am?"

"I'll be happy to oblige," said Lothar, sweeping him off his feet like he weighed nothing at all. "Of course. Only don't count on me showing you any mercy."

"Wouldn't dream of it."

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!