

TORCH GUARD

(low, venomous)

You don't belong here, girl.

These halls are not for the curious –
they're for the worthy.

(he slams the torch against the wall,
lighting a nearby rune)

Generations of silence kept these
relics safe.
Not even the Elders dare touch the
sealed wings.
But you? You waltz in with muddy
boots and shaking hands,
thinking you're owed something?

(paces like a caged animal)

These shelves remember more than your
lifetime.
They remember sacrifice. Oaths. Fire.
They remember the screams of those
who tried to steal
what was not meant for them.

(pauses – breathes – then erupts)

You came for answers.
Or a cure.
Or a miracle.

(voice drops, deadly calm)

But all you've earned... is fire.

(he lifts his torch high,
casting monstrous shadows behind him)
I am the flame