

"This is bad... this is really bad..." the young man paced back and forth in Wren's sleeping chamber biting his fingernails as he was deep in thought.

He ran his fingers through his soft brown hair and stopped to look out the window. Below he saw the demon city in all its gloomy glory. Jesse bit his lower lip in frustration as he mumbled to himself; "If he dies in that tournament all our plans will be for naught. Creating another vessel like him would mean the end for another creation, again. And we've come too far for that now."

"Curse free will!! It's the stupidest invention ever!!" he screamed and kicked the nearby bureau, sending it flying across the room and crashing against the wall.

He squatted down, taking a few deep breaths to calm down before standing up straight again. "I have to do something," Jesse snapped his fingers and the broken piece of furniture mended itself returning to its original position as the skinny man disappeared.

Jesse emerged in a dark chamber. Massive stone pillars stood around a small open area with a stone altar in the middle. Above it floated a small purple sphere, pulsating ever so softly. He walked up to the altar and looked at the sphere, a welcoming feeling washed over his senses as he approached it.

Putting his one hand down on the altar, a monitor and a control panel appeared before him. "Knowing him he would be extremely reluctant to accept outside help. But if I were on the verge of eradication then he would be obligated to help me," Jesse mumbled as he pressed a few buttons on the control panel. "Just a few keys would be enough... considering this body is somewhat human my limits would appear to be... Yes, this will do nicely."

As Jesse looked up at the sphere, the control panel and monitor disappeared. He raised his hand towards the pulsating orb, streams of purple energy started to flow from them and in to his body. He gritted his teeth as he could feel the sharp sting of the raw energy that entered him. These powers weren't meant for him and he could feel the conflict within, but he knew he would have no problems in containing them.

"It's show time," he smirked.

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"Am I... getting weaker?" Wren thought to himself as he looked down at his maimed and burnt hand that had been dipped in lava during his last battle.

It had started to heal, but it still hurt a lot. There was still no skin on it and chunks of flesh were missing. The most annoying thing Wren thought, was that his jewelry on that hand had all but melted away which meant he couldn't even restore them.

He walked across the grassy plains. At least his leg had the decency to heal over the night so he wasn't limping anymore. Casting a glance over his shoulder, in the distance he could see the small pile of dirt that made up the grave of his last opponent.

"Hope you're fucking happy you're finally dead," Wren sighed as he turned his gaze forward. Looking up at the sky dark clouds had started to gather. It would most definitely start to rain soon and he would want to find some shelter.

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"<Oh look! Ruins!>" the small goblin exclaimed as he bounced up and down, pointing at the deteriorated stone structures before them.

The red and black haired girl that followed him smiled faintly as she held an arm over her midsection, "I... I'm coming Swirff," she said as she limped over the root-covered grounds.

"<We can probably get some rest there, maybe there are some whole houses left,>" Swirff said as he hurried over to his friend to help her along.

The two companions entered the ruins, the place was silent and the buildings seemed to have fallen apart by time itself. It didn't take them long before they reached a large open square.

"<Someone must have fought here recently... look at the large trenches in the ground,>" Swirff said as he looked around. "<E-EEK! KC! Isn't that blood?!>"

"Look, over there. What's that?" she pointed to a small mound at the edge of the square, a large hammer was resting against what seemed to be a hastily made headstone, "a grave?"

"<L-let's go look,>" Swirff said as he carefully walked behind the taller woman.

They walked up to the grave. It definitely looked like it had been made recently. The large hammer stood almost as a monument against the slab that served as a headstone. There was also a small dagger on the ground in front of it.

"I wonder who it was..." KC said quietly as she couldn't help but feel a little sad over the situation.

*"Some loser I bet,"* the voice within her said.

"Shut up Nagatomi," KC replied in thought.

"<It was probably a contestant... I wonder how many have died on this island?>"

"Too many! Whoever made this tournament must be evil to the core," KC shook her head and took a deep breath.

As they stood there looking down at the grave the skies above them opened and rain started to pour down.

"<Come KC, we have to find shelter!>"

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"<I'll go and see if I can't find some healing herbs,>" Swirff said as he looked out the stone doorway.

"No Swirff, it's pouring outside. I'll be fine for now."

The plump little goblin chuckled, "<water doesn't bother me! Just wait here, you need to rest.>"

KC nodded reluctantly as the goblin gave her a thumbs up before dashing out in to the rain.

"Oh Kevin... I hope you're safe..." she sighed as she leaned her head back against the cold stone wall.

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KC woke up with a shiver. She rubbed her eyes and pulled her knees up closer to her body. Looking outside it was still raining heavy. No sign of her goblin friend either. She sighed and rubbed her arms, shivering from her cold wet clothes that refused to dry up because of the humidity in the jungle.

"I wonder how long I was out...?" she thought.

*"Too long. Oh, look... we have a visitor."*

"Who the fuck are you?"

KC looked up and saw a tall man stand in the doorway to the small house. Both his hair and clothes were dry. It was probably thanks to the blue barrier that shimmered around him, protecting him from the elements. In his hand he held what seemed to be a part of a large log, a hand that seemed to be missing its skin.

"I... I'm KC," she replied.

*"Look, he's injured. I could take care of him easily,"* Nagatomi spoke inside her mind.

"I'm Wren... you're a contestant too, aren't you?" he asked as he entered the old house making the small girl back a little further in to the corner. "Don't worry, I won't attack you."

Wren threw the log on the ground and knelt down beside it breaking it up in two before summoning a fireball with his left hand and throwing it down on the wet logs. Amazingly enough it caught fire and the warmth soon covered the room.

Wren took off his backpack as he looked at the girl in the corner. Her clothes were bloodied and her body looked rather roughed up as well.

"What happened to your hand?" she asked, nodding towards him.

"I dipped it in lava," Wren replied looking at his right hand. "It's healing rather slowly. That's unusual."

"I have a friend, he's out gathering some medicinal herbs and maybe he can help you?" she suggested.

He quirked a brow, "why would you want to help me?"

"Why won't you attack me?" KC asked.

"Because you're injured," they both replied at the same time.

*"Oh god! Please say this isn't happening. He's sitting there wide open! Attack him!"*

"Fine, if you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours." Wren got up and walked over to KC, "don't be afraid," he whispered as he knelt down before her and placed his healthy hand against her forehead.

*"Fucking get away from him you stupid cow!"* Nagatomi screamed.

A white light bathed the entire room and KC could feel her energy slowly returning. The warm feeling spread from her head throughout her body as her injuries disappeared. As the light dissipated, she looked up at Wren who smiled at her, "there you go little girl, isn't that much better?"

"Th-thank you!" she smiled at him. "That was powerful healing magic, but... how come you don't use it on yourself?"

*"Hmph! He's probably too stupid to do so. But at least that healing refilled your light energies some... I don't like it when you go all crazy on me."*

He shrugged as he moved back to his seat on the other side of the fire, "I'd rather save the energy. I heal fast anyway and I wouldn't want my opponent to be at a disadvantage."

"So you're planning to fight me after all?" she looked a little disappointed.

"Of course I am! I have to get Sunnie back. I've been on this fucking island long enough," he snorted.

"So they took someone from you as well? Your girlfriend?"

He nodded, "who'd they take from you?"

"Kevin. My partner..."

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"Jesse? Wh-what are you doing here?" Gale exclaimed as he moved to the side to let the young man enter his home. "What's wrong with you?!"

Jesse stumbled inside keeling over from the pain as he looked up at the child before him, "I-I need your help... fast!!"

Gale helped Jesse back up on his feet. "My god... that power... Where did you get it?! Are you crazy! You can barely contain it!! You will die!"

"I have to get it to Wren. He needs it..." Jesse uttered as he leaned against Gale.

"I don't even know where Wren is! You're going to explode Jesse, wherever you got those powers you have to give them back!"

"Find Wren now!!" Jesse made his way over to the sofa and fell down on it. "I... I gave him a flashlight... you can track him down using that..."

"Oh for fucks sake, you're just as bad as him!" Gale said as he hurried over to the giant sphere in his room. "You know that the other Fates are going to have my head for this!"

Jesse smirked to himself as he laid there, barely conscious. "You don't have anything to worry about... this is the Creator's will..." he whispered.

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KC sighed as she looked down on the stone floor, in the corner of her eye she could see her adversary sitting on the other side of the campfire. He seemed to be resting rather comfortably, leaning back against the wall.

"I... I'm just tired of all this fighting and killing... I just want to go home with Kevin..."

"How will you accomplish that without fighting?" Wren asked as he stuck a hand down his backpack, pulling out a bloodied slab of meat that he started to chew on.

She glanced up at him through the fire, "fighting never solves anything."

Wren let out a laugh, "oh you are so wrong about that. Don't get me wrong, it's nice that it can be avoided at times but a fist in the face is so much more effective than just words."

"How can you stand hurting people like that? What if they die? What of their families?"

"I used to kill people for a living, so you should probably take that up with someone else," Wren said with a smirk, shaking his head. "Don't you love him?"

*"Are you even listening to me? I told you to attack him!"*

"H-how dare you even say that?!" KC uttered, feeling quite offended.

"You say you don't want to fight. But in order to get your loved one back you have no other choice! Now will you just sit there and pity yourself over the darkness that surrounds you or will you take action and do what is necessary?"

"Of course I will do what is necessary!"

"Then why are you moaning about hurting others?"

"But, if I hurt you what would your girlfriend think?"

Wren sighed and rolled his eyes, "she wouldn't give a fuck about that! In the eyes of your loved one, it wouldn't matter if you won or lost. All that would matter is that you stood up for them and fought to get them back with everything you got!"

"But---"

"And why wouldn't you? You love him you say? Then it shouldn't matter if it's just one person or an entire army that stands between the two of you. You do what you have to, even if it means killing an entire planet!"

*"...he has a point, now attack him!"*

KC crept a little closer to the fire as the words Wren spoke sunk in. "If that is true... why aren't you attacking me right now? I'm pretty much healed up."

"Eeh... yeah, but it's raining. I hate fighting in the rain, it's all... wet. Plus it would just feel like a repetition of my last battle here... which was also in the rain."

"So you've been here before? You... did you make that grave we saw earlier?"

He nodded, "was a week ago maybe."

"I see... why did you bury him? I mean, you don't seem like the person who cares about that sort of stuff..."

"Yeah, thank you for judging a book by its cover," Wren snorted. "He did his best. Fought well and all, no one deserves being left out to rot. Digging a grave doesn't take that long to begin with."

"So you do have a sense of honor then?"

"What the fuck?! Of course I do, probably more than most..."

"<I couldn't find any healing herbs KC, I'm so sorry I--- Who are you?!>" the small goblin that appeared in the doorway stared at Wren, pointing an accusing finger at him.

"Point your finger elsewhere or I'll shove it up your ass little squirt," Wren replied as he stood up towering over the little goblin.

"<Y-you...!!>" he quickly scurried over to KC holding out his hands to his sides to protect her. "<I-I won't let you hurt KC!!>"

"Easy, easy! Swirff, this is Wren. He's a contestant... but we're not fighting!" KC said as she placed her hands on Swirff's shoulders, calming him down. "Wren, this is Swirff he was also a contestant here..."

"Was?"

"Yeah... well... is, I guess. We never really fought, we got interrupted by other things and after that he decided to tag along with me."

"I see..." Wren sat back down on the ground again with Swirff's eyes following his every move.

"<KC, he's your opponent! Why is he here? And... who healed you?>" he asked as he turned to look at her, noticing that she was in much better condition now than when he left her.

"He did," she smiled nodding towards Wren.

"<I don't trust him, he looks big and scary!>"

"You know I can understand what you say, right?" Wren said, looking at the goblin.

"<Wh-what?! You can?!>" he turned to KC. "<He can?!>"

She shrugged, looking over to Wren who just sighed again. "Your words don't sound any different to me than hers."

"B-but he speaks goblin..."

"I have a translator. They're installed at birth in my world. Translates instantly, they're pretty awesome."

"<W-well I still don't trust you!>" Swirff said defiantly.

*"For once I agree with the annoying little munchkin!"*

"Err, so you found no healing herbs, Swirff?" KC asked in an attempt to change the subject.

Swirff turned around to face KC and shook his head. "<None... but there is some very interesting plant life here!"

"Oh, right..." Wren mumbled as he took out a small pouch from his backpack. "Hey squirt, what about these?"

He tossed the pouch over the fire at Swirff who fumbled to grab it.

"<Wh-what's this...?>" Swirff opened the bag and looked inside. The small goblin gasped in amazement, "<th-these... where did you get these?>"

"What is it Swirff?" KC asked, leaning forward to look over his shoulder.

"<These herbs are amazing!>" Swirff kneeled down and poured them out on the floor, he rummaged through his small satchel and took out a book. "<I have to catalogue these.>"

"I got it from Adron. That's the dead guy who's grave you found," Wren said. "So, can you do something with them?" he asked as he held up his skin-flawed hand.

Swirff looked at Wren reluctantly and then at KC who smiled back at him, "<w-well... you helped KC... so I guess...>"

The little goblin sighed as he took out a bottle of water from his satchel. Grabbing a few selected herbs from the spread on the floor he ground them up in his hands and put them in the bottle. Holding his one hand over the cap he shook the bottle gently so nothing spilled out before cautiously walking over to Wren.

As Swirff removed his hand that covered the bottle opening Wren wrinkled his nose turning his head away, "It smells like shit! I'm not drinking that!"

Swirff frowned, "<fine! Hold our your hand.>"

*"You idiot! If that little munchkin heals him you will have lost all your advantage in this battle!"*

Wren held out his hand to the goblin who poured some of the potion on to it before rubbing it down with his tiny hands. Wren could feel a slight sting as Swirff worked the potion in to his skin.

"What's a tiny little guy like you doing in this tournament anyway? What did you lose?"

"<...n-none of your business!>"

Wren rolled his eyes and sighed, "whatever."

"Um, about the tournament..." KC started but got interrupted.

"Why don't you want to fight? Are you weak? Or are you incapable?" Wren looked the rather plain girl across the room.

*"That mother fucker! I'm gonna rip his throat out!!"*

KC opened her mouth to say something but got interrupted again, "no... you wouldn't have made it this far if you couldn't handle yourself." Wren sighed, "you just have the same mindset as my sister."

"Who is your sister?"

"Sita, she doesn't believe in violence... sort of, anyway."

"You're very different from your sibling then," she looked down on the floor and continued in a whisper, "like me..."

"What is so special about you then?"

She quickly looked up, "huh?"

"I mean, there must be something about you that stands out. None that I have met here so far have been what you'd call 'normal'. So what's your quirk?"

*"Do NOT answer that! He's just trying to lull you in to a sense of security to then backstab you!"*

"Would you backstab me?" KC asked.

Wren quirked a brow, "what? No... I don't like sneaky-stuff like that. It's cowardly."

Having a somewhat proud look on her face she relaxed with a sigh, "I'm not a normal human."

KC sat up straight, her hair slowly going from red and black to black and white. A pair of pointy and furry ears popping out on the top of her head and a bushy tail in the same color as her new hair slipped out in to view.

"So you're a... dog girl? Kinky," he smirked.

"Fox," she corrected him.

He thought about that for a second and gave her a slight nod, "so far the most normal I've seen."

"What's so special about you then if you don't mind me asking? Besides your funky eyes?"

"Sometimes I've been wondering that too..." Wren mumbled, "eh... I'm good at what I do I guess. Or did..."

"What did you do then?"

"I told you, I used to kill people for a living. Been quite a while now since I did a job for money though."

"O-oh... right," she looked down on the ground avoiding his eyes as she cleared her throat, "so you say I'm the most normal? What kind of people have you encountered then?"



"<There... don't rub it off now!>" Swirff minded Wren as he patted his hand slightly before returning to KC's side.

Wren looked at his hand with a displeased look on his face, "it looks the fucking same! It's just... sticky, and it smells like it's been dipped in shit!"

"<You didn't want to drink it! It's gonna take a day maybe for the potion to heal you.>"

"What the fuck...! I'm so washing this crap off..." Wren grunted as he got up and stuck his hand out the door in to the pouring rain.

"<Ingrate...>" Swirff grumbled as he sat down next to KC gathering up his herbs.

Wren returned to his seat beside the campfire soon enough, smelling his hand carefully before wiping off the wetness on his shirt, "what did you ask me before?"

"Umm..." she thought for a second tapping her chin with her index finger. "Oh yeah, what kind of people have you encountered in this tournament so far?"

"A guy without a heart and a chick who thought she was a ghost. Oh, and a young kid who had some sort of berserk dark-form."

"Oh... I guess the strangest I have encountered is... Swirff," she said as she looked down at the goblin.

"<KC!!>" Swirff exclaimed, looking completely beside himself.

She giggled pulling Swirff in for a hug, "I didn't mean it in a bad way."

"<Hehe, It's ok!>"

*"Oh please let him go! He smells like an old basement!"*

"So you say you don't want to fight, but I need Sunnie back. How are you planning on accomplishing that without snapping your own neck so I can win?" Wren asked.

"Well, maybe we can go look for her, maybe Kevin is at that same place."

"No."

"N-no?"

"I've looked all over this island already, Sunnie isn't here."

"You've been everywhere already?"

"More or less. Point is, I doubt they are stupid enough to place our 'prizes' at this actual island where we might find them. They probably have them stowed away elsewhere."

*"He probably does have a point about that... which means you have to defeat him if you want to find Kevin again."*

"Naga might know..." she mumbled to herself.

*"Feh? That moron? Probably not."*

"Naga might know," she said out louder.

"Who's Naga?" Wren asked.

"He's my... he's my brother," she muttered. "He was the bastard who entered me in to this tournament."

"Why would he know---"

"Shh!! Did you hear that?!" KC's ears twitched as her body tensed up.

A rumbling sound could be heard from outside.

"It's just thunder," Wren replied.

"No there's something else too," KC got up on her feet and walked over to the doorway. Peering out through the rain she carefully scanned the area around them. Swirff followed her, peeking out from behind her.

A flash of lightning lit the ruins up before a loud boom drowned out the sound of rain, "there's something strange about this thunderstorm..."

A harsh wind blew through the area, causing the rain to go sideways and drenching KC in water. A flurry of small lightning bolts started to hit the ground in the middle of the small square that was just outside their house.

"<Look! Something's opening!>" Swirff exclaimed and pointed out to the open area.

"Opening?" Wren thought and got up to see what the fuss was all about. Standing behind the other two he leaned against the doorframe to look outside.

A dark portal opened high up in the air and a person fell through before it closed again. As he landed ungracefully face down on the muddy ground a powerful shockwave shot out from his body causing the old buildings to shake heavily. The wave knocked both KC and Swirff back but Wren caught them both. Recognizing the person that was crawling on the ground however he shoved them both aside and rushed out in to the pouring rain.

"Jess!!" sliding down next to his friend he caught the young man before he face planted on the ground again. "Jess! You ok?!"

Coughing a bit Jesse's arms fumbled around before finding Wren's shoulder, "h-help... me..."

Wren picked Jesse up in his arms and hurried back to the house. As he got inside he put the young man down next to the fire wiping some of the mud off his face. "What the hell are you doing here Jess? Did Fate send you here? I'm gonna kill that little kid all over again."

Jesse smiled faintly as he looked up at Wren, "I was worried... and I've brought you a present."

KC and Swirff looked at the rather scrawny young man that was resting in Wren's arms. He was wearing a tight orange jacket and a pair of baggy jeans that seemed to be at least three sizes too big for him.

"A present?"

"I got power. So much that it wouldn't even be diminished by skipping to this world. I hope I'm not too late..." Jesse looked to his side and saw KC and Swirff looking at him, both looking a bit worried.

He studied them both with his black eyes, "you made new friends?"

"They aren't friends. They are my opponents," Wren said. "What about this power? What kind of power?"

Jesse grimaced as he sat up straight putting a hand to Wren's chest, "this power."

"No! Stop it!" Wren grabbed Jesse's hand and pulled it away from him, "I do not need your help."

"Dude, don't be so stubborn. You've been here for over a month, you must have sensed that you're getting weaker."

*"KC! You attack them both now or help me god I will bust out of your body and do it myself!"*

"I can win this on my own," Wren said staring down his friend.

Jesse looked to the side a hint of annoyance in his voice, "fine! Then you better win fast so we can go back. I won't last a day with these powers inside me. I'm not made to hold this much and I can feel it tearing me apart." He pulled his hand back from Wren and got up on his feet. Turning his back on Wren, Jesse folded his arms across his chest muttering something quietly.

Wren just sighed pinching the bridge of his nose, "fine then, just guilt me..."

"Is he ok...?" KC asked looking to Wren as she pointed at Jesse.

Wren nodded, "for now at least."

"Why won't you accept his gift then?"

"Wouldn't that be kind of cheating?" Wren asked. "Besides, you said you knew someone that might know where they keep Sunnie and Kevin?"

"Ah, yes. Naga, he's my brother... he entered me in to this tournament... He apparently talked to the judges. And, maybe they are at the same place as they keep all the prizes."

"Where is your brother?"

"I don't know... he's probably watching from afar though..."

"You're a selfish bastard Wren," Jesse snorted. "I risk my life to come and give you these powers and you just reject me."

"Don't do this to me Jess... You have no right!" Wren sighed as he covered his face with his hand.

“Oh I have every right to do this! Do you have any idea how much I have risked by coming here to you?! Do you even know how worried I have been about you?!”

“Shut the fuck up!!” Wren yelled as he stood up, “I’m fucking trying so hard here... you don’t think I care about you?! Well I am fucking sorry but I care more about Sunnie than I care about you! Stop being a fucking whiny little bitch!”

As the two friends argued, KC and Swirff looked at each other a bit nervously.

“<Is... Jesse his friend, or his boyfriend...?>” Swirff whispered to KC who shrugged.

“I think... friend... sort of?” she whispered back.

*“They are both whiny bitches.”*

“Fucking... free will...” Jesse grumbled.

Out of nowhere Jesse leaped forward and pounced Wren. The taller man toppled over and crashed down on the floor. Both KC and Swirff gasped in surprise to Jesse’s sudden attack. With a big grin on his face he pressed both his hands down on Wren’s chest.

“You. Will. Take. This!!”

Wren took a hold of Jesse’s both arms trying to pry his hands off him. But to his surprise he wasn’t strong enough. Streaks of purple energy started flowing down Jesse’s arms and in to Wren’s body and he screamed out in pain his eyes slammed shut.

“Stop it!!” KC exclaimed as she got up and jumped over the fire, “you’re hurting him! Stop it!!”

*“KC! What the fuck are you doing?! Stop it this instance!”*

KC grabbed a hold of Jesse’s shoulders and pulled as hard as she could, but it was as if the thin man was bolted to the ground and she couldn’t even budge him.

“<KC! Watch out!>” Swirff called out.

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“Now where the fuck am I?” Wren asked himself as he looked around.

At first there was nothing but darkness. A few seconds later though Sunnie appeared, standing right in front of him.

“Dude, this is why you’re here, isn’t it?” he turned to the side and saw Jesse standing next to him.

“Yep! He’s here for me!” Sunnie beamed.

“That’s right. And you remember that Wren,” Jesse smiled poking his forehead with his index finger.

Sunnie walked up to Wren, pressing her body up against his. “You’ll do anything for me, won’t you Wren?”

"I..."

"I'm waiting for you..." she cooed, planting a soft kiss on his lips.

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"N-no... I-Impossible... I-I can't hold it in..." Jesse thought, "but I did everything right... What's wrong...?"

As he lifted his hands from Wren's chest the shockwave of energy that emerged from their bodies blew up the buildings around them, including the one they were inside. KC somehow managed to hold on to Jesse, but Swirff was knocked back with the entire wall.

The two collapsed down on Wren's body groaning in pain.

"What... the fuck...?" Wren moaned as he opened his eyes, his vision blurred.

KC sighed as she rolled off Wren. As she laid on her back she felt the rain on her face. Rubbing her head she groaned a bit, "that... really hurt. I think I'm deaf on one ear."

"Jesse... what the fuck man..." Wren sat up. His friend was still laying over him seemingly unconscious, "I don't feel very different..."

He gently shook Jesse, "hey... Jess."

Jesse groaned and slowly opened his eyes, "dude! That was tripping!"

"Swirff! Swirff where are you?!" KC called out as she slowly sat up.

"<I... I'm here!>" a small light appeared right over the head of the tenderized goblin. He quickly limped over to KC.

"What the fuck Jess? What was that? I don't feel any different from before."

"Dude, your hand has healed," Jesse smiled as he pushed away from Wren sitting up on his own. "I just reset you, sort of. You are as strong as when you came here to this island... perhaps a teeny bit more."

"Yeah, thanks for that. And thanks for blowing off the roof over our heads, I love rain."

Jesse chuckled softly as he ran his fingers through his short hair squeezing some water out of it, "what? You thought I was gonna blow your powers out of proportion? I wouldn't do that..."

"I wouldn't put it past you."

KC gasped. She knew that voice. KC sat up quickly, rubbing her eyes she looked in to the darkness.

A woman came out from the shadows and in to the soft light. With her long black hair heavy with rain just like her clothes she smirked down at KC.

"Hello, KC."

"N-Nagatomi!" KC gasped.

"Crap, I fucked up..." Jesse whispered to himself, "the energy must have spilled over..."

"Your brother looks like a girl," Wren commented as he examined Nagatomi from head to toe. She looked a bit similar to KC, but with a more sinister aura. She had waist-long hair, fishnet stockings and her skirt was torn and flakey almost melding together with her black jacket.

"Well you have a girl's name! I'm glad I'm finally outside so I can kick your sorry ass to kingdom come myself!" Nagatomi said as she held out her hand, a black sword materializing in it.

"No Nagatomi!" KC quickly scurried to her feet and got in between the two.

"Stand down KC, you want this don't you? If I win, you can go home with Kevin."

"This isn't right!" KC exclaimed with a determined look on her face.

"Well sorry honey, but you don't have control of me here," she smiled as two large black dogs emerged from the shadows. "Now be a good girl and stay..."

"If you interfere with this I will snap your neck myself," Wren said to Jesse before he got up in a crouching position. "Come at me then you fucking ankle, I will rip you limb from limb!"

The large dogs pounced at KC at the same time as Wren sprung up from his sitting position. The black-haired woman smirked as she thrust her dark sword forward. Wren barely dodged and grabbed a hold of Nagatomi's sword arm with his right hand. Spinning around the much shorter opponent he gave her a sharp elbow to the face before throwing her off in to the ruins.

KC responded with lightning reflexes sliding to the side as the dogs attacked her. Like Nagatomi she summoned a blade to her hands and slashed at the creatures before her cutting them both in half. The dark beasts melted in to puddles but as quickly as they had been cut down they emerged again, this time however they were twice as many.

"<KC!> Swirff cried out.

"Stay back Swirff! I'll take care of this," KC exclaimed as she glanced over to Wren who was running in the direction where he had thrown Nagatomi.

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Wren ventured further in to the ruins. The heavy rain and thunder made it hard to listen off his surroundings and the occasional flashing didn't help either. Discovering the site of impact where he had thrown Nagatomi he wasn't surprised to find it empty.

"Now where did you go you little vixen," Wren said to himself as he looked around.

Another streak of lightning brought an instant unnatural light to the ruins. Out of pure instinct Wren gazed up to the sky and saw a flying figure diving down towards him. Wren threw himself to the side as Nagatomi descended upon him to avoid the attack but her movements were much faster than he anticipated.

The dark blade buried itself in to Wren's abdomen and went all the way through. "Really? I thought you'd be more fun than this," Nagatomi said, feeling a little disappointed.

Wren coughed up some blood. Glaring down at the short woman he grabbed a hold of her sword-hand and squeezed it hard, forcing her to let go.

"I'm... not dead yet," he grunted as the sword dematerialized.

Nogatomi's eyes widened as her blade disappeared. She hadn't been the one to unsummon it, "what did you do?! Where did my sword go?!"

She gave Wren two rapid punches to the face before landing a hard kick right where he had been stabbed. To his surprise the girl was exceptionally strong and the sheer force of the kick made him fly backwards several yards.

Getting up on his feet again he held his hand over his midsection, the bleeding had already halted a little. Though the wound itself hurt like a motherfucker. He saw Nagatomi resummons her blade and rapidly approaching.

Nogatomi grinned as she pulled back her sword slightly before lunging forward to attack. She was extremely fast and Wren had a hard time keeping up with her swift movements, barely dodging the dark blade. Her cuts were meticulously planned, making sure that Wren didn't steer to the side as she forced him backwards, keeping him at a sword's length.

A downward strike and the blade bit in to his shoulder but this time it disappeared even faster. She stalled for a split second, but it was enough for Wren to punch her right in the face, knocking her back.

He was soon on top of her, forcing her down on the ground as he planted another fist in her face. Regaining her senses however, she fought back sticking her fingers in to his open stomach wound and twisting them slightly making Wren keel over in pain.

She quickly got back up, backing away from Wren as she wiped some blood of her face. "He's... absorbing my darkness?" she thought as she watched the large man get back up again. "I better finish this fast then."

She dashed forward jumping up in the air and spinning around aiming to kick Wren in the head. This time though he reacted in time, grabbing her foot mid-flight and slamming his other hand down at her kneecap. The bone shattered, bending her leg in an unnatural way. She crashed down on the muddy ground, gritting her teeth in pain.

As Nagatomi sat up she was met with a brutal kick to her face that made her fall down again. Wren put his knee down against her jugular to choke her as he grabbed a firm hold around her shattered kneecap, digging his fingers in to the flesh. She grunted in pain trying to reach for Wren's wound again but this time he protected it with his other hand.

Raising her healthy leg up she managed to hook it over his head and press him downwards. As he lifted his hand to remove her leg from his face he bit down on her calf. Nagatomi replied by summoning a small black dagger in her hands. She buried it in his thigh and as she thought it soon disappeared, but the wound was still there.

Nagatomi buried her fingers in the fresh wound digging herself down to the bone as Wren bit down on her harder ripping off a huge chunk of flesh from her leg.

"Rrgh! Goddammit you bitch!" he growled as he spat out the piece of meat.

Mustering all her strength Nagatomi kicked and trashed around violently finally managing to squirm out of Wren's grasp. She quickly scurried off a few yards before her dress fluttered, the torn skirt turning in to black wings and she took off in to the dark sky above.

"You fucking cheater!!" Wren screamed after her as she disappeared from sight.

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"You're very skilled," Jesse commented as he hadn't even bothered to get up from where he was sitting.

"Th-thanks..." KC huffed as she straightened her back after having fought off the last wave of demon-dogs.

"<N-no more are coming. Is it finally over?>" Swirff asked, carefully looking around and sending his light out to illuminate their immediate area.

"That's a neat looking sword you have there." Jesse said and pointed at KC's blade.

"It's my Soul blade," she replied wiping some water off her face.

"A Soul blade huh? So it's pure energy then?"

She nodded, "why do you ask...?"

"Oh nothing..." he mused, "so why don't you want to fight Wren?"

"We should be able to solve this without violence."

"Admirable idea. But it won't work," Jesse sighed as he stood up.

"Why not?"

"<Yeah, why not?!>" Swirff chimed in.

"Let's go find Wren and ask him," Jesse smiled. "Oh, and if it comes to it, I wouldn't recommend you using that weapon to attack him."

"Is there... something wrong with it?" KC asked as she and Swirff followed Jesse.

"It's pure energy, right? Wren would just absorb that in to his body, given you'd still hurt him but the weapon would be gone too."

"H-he can do that?" KC asked.



Jesse shrugged, "dunno why. You should have seen once time though, he absorbed an entire demon god, it was pretty wicked! He doesn't seem to get stronger by it though, it just... waddles around in there with him somehow. I dunno how it works, only know that it does."

"...but in reality. It's just returning to its origin," he thought.

"Why are you telling me this then? Aren't you supposed to be his friend?"

"I'm his best friend! And I'm trying to make this a more fair fight. Wren would probably appreciate that because he doesn't like cheating."

"<You're a strange friend,>" Swirff commented as he looked up at Jesse.

"Sticks and stones lil' dude," Jesse shrugged. "I always have Wren's best interest in mind."

----

Wren looked up in to the dark skies above him. He saw nothing but rain and the occasional streak of lightning. Pressing down on his leg wound he stood up, he knew that she was watching somewhere.

"Wren!" Jesse called out as the trio approached him.

Finding no other feelings than frustration from the sound of his friend's voice he glared at the three of them, causing them all to stop in their tracks.

"Stay back!" he snarled, "if even one of you interferes I will kill you all!"

Jesse shook his head and shrugged, "see. I told you so."

"Where is Nagatomi? What did she do to you?" KC asked looking at Wren's blood soaked clothes.

He grinned, "nothing compared to what I'll do to her."

----

"Tch. Fucking asshole..." Nagatomi cursed as she landed on the ground behind a wall.

Dark energy swirled around her legs, allowing her to stand and ignore the searing pain that rippled through them. Carefully peeking out she saw KC, that skinny guy and the stupid little goblin there was well now.

"Curses, why did they have to butt in? KC will no doubt try and wedge between us, stupid girl. I guess a small bite wouldn't kill her though," Nagatomi thought to herself as she got down on all fours.

The swirls of energy covered her entire body as she transformed in to a giant black fox with glowing red eyes. She emerged from behind the ruins, she hadn't been spotted yet. Her steps drenched in the sound of rain and thunder.

KC's ears suddenly twitched and she quickly turned around seeing Nagatomi's red eyes glow in the darkness.

"Look out!" she exclaimed, holding up her sword to defend herself and the others.

“Don’t interfere!” Wren growled behind her shoving her brutally to the side.

“<Stop it! Don’t hurt KC!>” Swirff uttered as a pair of roots sprung from the ground, ensnaring Wren’s legs.

It didn’t stop him for long though and Wren tore through the vines giving the short goblin such a hard kick he flew through the ruins like a bullet.

“Swirff!! NO!!” she screamed out taking her attention off Nagatomi who saw her chance and started to run.

Turning around Wren immediately got pounced by Nagatomi who had closed the distance. She tackled him head on and they fell down on the muddy ground, her sharp claws scratching his body as her hungry jaws snapped at him. Wren managed to keep her at arm’s length, but the claws of her hind legs dug in to his stomach wound.

Slowly the dark energy that surrounded her started to seep in to Wren’s body, Nagatomi knew she had to hurry up. As she mustered her powers to make the killing blow she received a hard punch against the side of her head, the water from her fur spraying out in a cascade due to the impact. To her surprise she suddenly found the fingers of his left hand in her mouth and she wasn’t late to take advantage of it.

Nogatomi closed her jaws with incredible force and Wren screamed out in pain. Gripping her muzzle with his right hand he tried to bend it open.

“Nogatomi, let him go!” KC exclaimed as she raised her sword to attack her on the ground, but Wren spotted her and managed to roll away with the black fox before KC’s sword hit the ground.

“I told you stay out of this!” Wren grunted as he flexed his arms. A crunching sound was heard as he ripped her jaws open, Nagatomi’s body started thrashing around and she yelped.

Rolling over her he exposed her jugular and bit down on it, causing her to howl in pain. Her violent spasms forced him off her but he managed to grab on to one of her front legs and threw the fox at KC who quickly ducked.

Flying through the air her journey came to a brutal halt as she hit a large tree, the ground actually quaking from the impact. Reverting to her human form, Nagatomi fell down at its base and remained there motionless.

Wren grunted a bit as he stood up. He looked down at himself, his clothes had been shredded and he was almost completely covered in blood and mud that was slowly washing away in the rain. His left hand was maimed and ripped, though he still had mobility left in his fingers. Looking at the motionless fox he slowly made his way over to her, only to have KC stand in his way again.

“You really learn slow, don’t you?” Wren snorted.

“Stop this! There is no need for anymore fighting!” KC exclaimed, “look at yourself! Look how hurt she is too! If you continue this she might die!”

“First you try to hurt her, now you want to protect her?”

“Well she’s the injured one now, isn’t she?”

“So, what? You care about that ankle?”

“I... n-no, n-not really... But she’s still a living person. I won’t let you hurt her anymore!” she glanced over to Jesse who was just standing there a few yards away, looking up at the sky. “A little help perhaps?”

“Dude, I’m not suicidal.”

Swaying slightly Wren chuckled as he pointed a finger at KC, “last chance little girl. Stand down! Or are you just being a bitch because I cunt punted that little goblin freak over the treetops?”

“You’re the freak here, “KC said as she entered her battle stance. “I’ll try to go easy on you. You seem you got pretty beaten up already.”

“Wait! Wait, wait...” Jesse exclaimed and pulled his hand through the air, a large hammer appearing in his hands. “For you KC.”

“This... isn’t this from...?” she asked looking at the weapon.

“That’s Adron’s,” Wren huffed. “Really Jess? I fixed that hammer up nice and tidy after I wrecked it.”

“And now it gets a second chance. You don’t mind do you, Wren?”

Wren just shrugged, “whatever.”

Remembering Jesse’s words earlier she un-summoned her blade and accepted the large war hammer. It was heavy and it dipped down a little as its full weight rested in her hands. She glanced over at Wren who was attempting to wipe some of the blood of his chest, occasionally poking the deep scratch marks inflicted by Nagatomi. Apart from his scruffy appearance he didn’t seem to mind his injuries much.

He was odd. At first he seemed rather willing to go along with her and not fight, to find a solution to their problem together instead. But as soon as Nagatomi had drawn her weapon against him all those thoughts had apparently been tossed out the window, along with his manners. Well, he didn’t seem to have much of that in the first place.

“I wonder what kind of boyfriend he is anyway? He’s so unlike my Kevin...” she thought as her mind started to wander. “I hope he doesn’t treat his girlfriend in the same brutish manner...”

“Stop daydreaming.”

KC was quickly taken back to the real world as Wren grabbed a hold of the hammer, planting his foot right in her stomach. The force pushed her back and she was unable to hold on to the weapon as she was tossed right in to another giant tree in the ruins. As her back hit the solid trunk she gasped for air, holding her head she looked up only to see Wren standing right in front of her.

Before she could react he grabbed a hold of her throat and hoisted her up in the air. Using the shaft of the hammer as a spear he buried the weapon all the way through her right shoulder and deep in to the tree. Twisting it a little he patted her head a bit, a sadistic grin on his face.

“Now you be a good little fox and stay,” he said as he backed away from her turning his attention to the still unconscious Nagatomi.

“N-no! Get b-back here!” KC reached out her hand towards Wren. She tried to pull away from the trunk but the war hammer was buried deep and completely stuck, not to mention that it really hurt as she moved. Her feet dangled in the air as she kicked back trying to get a footing on the old tree but the rain had made the trunk slippery and she couldn’t get a grip.

As Wren got closer to Nagatomi a black figure emerged from the ground. The shadows peeled off him like flaking paint and he looked up at Wren with his red eyes.

“You are becoming a nuisance. I would much rather you go and torment my sister a little more,” he said as large one edged blade appeared in his hand.

“So you’re Naga? I see short runs in the family.”

“Naga! Don’t you dare hurt anyone!!” KC screamed as she kicked and pulled at the war hammer, only to wince back in pain.

“Don’t worry sis. I’ll be right with you,” he said with a calm voice his eyes fixated at Wren. “Are you... really planning to attack me? I am much stronger than both my sister and Nagatomi, you won’t find my weapons disappearing in puffs of smoke.”

Wren sighed, “you’re standing in my way, dickhead. Move aside or I’ll rip that long flowing hair of yours off and use it to spank your worthless ass.”

“I’m sorry, but I won’t move. Shouldn’t you finish your job over there?” he nodded towards KC. “She’s the one who’s your opponent. If you defeat her you will have won and you can go and see your pretty girlfriend again. Besides, nothing beats the feeling of seeing your loved ones suffer.”

“Don’t tell me what to do you sick fuck!”

KC looked at Jesse who seemed to be busy admiring his own fingernails, “h-hey!”

Jesse glanced over to KC and smiled at her, “how’s it hanging?”

She frowned, “har har! A little help now perhaps? I can help him fight Naga!”

Jesse shook his head and walked up to KC with a sigh, “you know you’re almost just as stubborn as him? I wouldn’t interfere with his fun if I were you. If you do I can’t be held responsible for the outcome. So if you want to live, then I suggest you do what he’s told you and stay put. Wren won’t kill you if he doesn’t have to.”

He stared right at her with his pitch black eyes now speaking in a hushed tone. Looking in to his eyes, KC could feel the hairs stand up on the back of her neck.

“Wren is a really important player. And although I would love to just yank him straight out of this hell-hole, I have to wait and see how things unfold. Going against his will so drastically could upset the order of things to come,” then he backed up with a big friendly smile on his face. “Sorry dude, didn’t mean to be so grim about things... I think I’d better go check on that little munchkin that Wren kicked. You’re a crafty girl, I’m sure you’ll be able to free yourself. Oh, and I wouldn’t mention this little conversation to him... if you know what I mean.”

Snapping his fingers one of the large boulders nearby flew through the air and planted itself at the base of the tree, at least giving KC something to stand on. Giving her a cheerful wink, he proceeded in to the ruins.

----

Swirff let off a sigh of relief. He had managed to brace his impact by summoning vines and bushes to soften his landing. A few ribs were broken but considering the impact of Wren's kick, he was rather happy about his plump physique that had lessened the effect of the blow.

"Oh, hey! You're still alive," Jesse smiled as he emerged from behind a large tree. He tugged his large pants a bit as they were starting to get heavy with rain.

"<Y-you!!>" Swirff gasped quickly reaching in under his cape to expose a square-shaped amulet.

Swirff quickly drew a circle with it mid-air and a portal opened, another one opened right next to Jesse's face causing the skinny man to stop and look at it.

"Dude..."

Swirff quickly rammed his small fist right through the portal, punching Jesse in the nose.

"Ow!!" Jesse staggered backwards holding his nose. The weak punch from the goblin had surprised him more than hurt him. "A-a world key?! Where the hell did you get that from?!"

Swirff quickly got up on his feet as roots rose from the ground to grab a hold of Jesse's legs, the same spell he had used on Wren. This time however, he made sure he wasn't within kicking distance and quickly ran off to hide behind an old stone wall.

Jesse sighed as he looked at the roots holding him in place, "look lil dude I'm not here to hurt you!"

Peeking out from behind the wall Swirff looked at Jesse suspiciously, "<I don't trust you!>"

He sneered, "well that's a given seeing how you tied me down with roots! I just came here to make sure you were alright."

"<I have to help KC...>"

He sighed a bit, "she promised to help you, right? Man, she's got a soft spot for everyone doesn't she?"

"<KC can help me! I... I.. we're working together to get our loved ones back!>" Swirff uttered.

"<There doesn't have to be anymore killing, if no one decides to fight then they will have no choice but to give up and return the people stolen from us!>"

"Dude, as crazy as it sounds it might actually work," Jesse said shrugging a bit.

"<Of course it will!>"

"Fine, I'll help you convince Wren to stop. That sounds good lil dude?" Jesse shook his head a bit, "I'm warning you though, he's a fucker to convince once he's got his mind set on something."

"<I dunno, why would we need your help? You might try to backstab us!!>"

"Dude! I'm his best friend! You won't even have an inkling of a chance without me. You think that big lug is going to listen to some rag-tag bunch of strangers when he's all riled up?"

Thinking about it for a few seconds Swirff nodded and the plants slowly retracted to the ground, "<we have to hurry!>"

Jesse nodded and started following the small goblin back towards the small plaza where the others were. After just taking a few steps however he grabbed Swirff in a chokehold from behind hoisting the plump creature up in the air.

"I'm sorry... but I can't have you interfere so much," he whispered in to Swirff's ear.

"<Y-you traitor!!>" Swirff gasped as the branches from the trees seemed to reach down towards them.

Jesse squeezed his arm together tightly around Swirff's neck, the sound of breaking bone completely absorbed by the thunderstorm. Gently putting the dead goblin down he quickly swiped the amulet and pocketed it, "I'm so sorry lil guy. You didn't deserve this. I'll make it up to you later."

----

KC screamed out in pain as she held on the war hammer pushing away from the trunk with all her might. The rock Jesse had put under her feet allowed her to finally get a good grip with her feet. Stopping for a breather, she looked up watching Wren and Naga totally absorbed in their battle.

"I... got... to..." with a final push the hammer finally was free from the tree and she stumbled forward. She cried openly to the sky as she pulled the weapon out from her shoulder falling down on her back gasping for air.

She was finally free. It was time to take action.

Naga wielded his oversized blade with ease and didn't seem to have any problems keeping Wren at bay. He was a little disappointed, but just a little. He had watched Wren fight Nagatomi and he knew that the wounded man before him was both rash and impatient.

"Stop fucking moving!" Wren growled at him.

"I must admit I was expecting a little more from a finalist," Naga mused.

"Expected this?"

Naga glanced to his side only to be met by the full force of the hammer straight to his face. Taken totally by surprise he slammed in to the same tree Nagatomi had been tossed in to, only this time the tree actually submitted to the impact and came crashing down.

KC huffed as she looked proud of her work. That is until she turned to see Wren's extremely pissed off expression.

"I fucking told you not to butt in!!" he yelled as he grabbed a swift hold of her hoodie throwing the short girl right at her brother.

She tackled her brother unwillingly head on as he was trying to stand up, causing her to fall down again.

"Bad... sister!" Naga grunted as he grabbed a hold of her wounded shoulder, forcing her off him. His face was slowly being reassembled by his dark powers.

KC screamed out in pain, dropping her otherwise iron-like grip around the hammer. Returning to his feet Naga saw Wren come straight at him and quickly raised his sword, but he was a little late. Wren caught the blade under his left arm extending his right hand to grab a hold of Naga's throat.

"Got you, you fucking cocksucker!" Wren grunted as he could feel the blade wiggle against his side, the sharp edge cutting his flesh as dark energy started to seep from the blade and in to Wren's wound.

"Are you so sure?" Naga smirked as he did his best not to gasp for air. "With the flick of my wrist, you will have one arm less to flail about."

"N-Naga! You... ass!" KC groaned as she tried to lessen the tight grip he held on her shoulder.

Naga's eyes narrowed, he could feel Wren's grip closing on his throat ever so slightly. He would have to be fast.

Letting go of the sword he thrust his other arm forward, throwing KC at his opponent. The sword instantly went up in smoke and he could feel Wren's fingers dig in to his throat as he moved back trying to maintain a hold as the full weight of the small girl pushed the large man backwards. The sword appeared again in Naga's hand as it swept under Wren's elbow. A quick upwards thrust and Wren's red essence was mixed in with the rain. It was a clean cut, completely severing the arm right below the elbow. The entire ordeal was over in less than two seconds.

The now limp arm let go of its hold around Naga's throat and fell down on the ground. Wren fell down as well with KC on top of him. The fox girl quickly rolled off him, looking at his severed arm.

"Wren! You ok?!"

Wren groaned a bit as he sat up, pushing himself up with his remaining hand, "I just lost my fucking hand. What do you think?!" he snarled as he got back up on his feet.

"We can take him together!" KC exclaimed as she stood up next to him.

"Pfft, whatever lady." Wren muttered as he watched Naga standing in front of Nagatomi's body just like when they started this fight.

Gripping tight around his right arm a small smirk spread over his lips. Behind Naga a shadow was rising. Nagatomi had awakened and stood up again on wobbly legs, summoning her dark blade she thrust it forward, aiming at Naga's back.

The Prince of Darkness reacted in the last second, barely dodging Nagatomi's blade as it put a rather ugly gash in his otherwise perfect black robe.

Wren dashed forward but Naga was quick and saw the attack coming, slashing his sword at Wren who ducked and skid right under it on the slippery ground. Grabbing his severed hand off the ground in one swift motion he knocked Naga's feet out from under his body causing him to fall down.

As Wren rose up he smacked Nagatomi right over the face, using his right arm as a club. The blow so powerful that it completely ripped off her already trashed lower jaw.

Nagatomi wobbled to the side as KC summoned her soul blade forth. The little fox-girl jumped up in the air as wings sprouted from her back, jetting her forwards towards Naga who had managed to get back up again.

Their swords clashed and Naga was pressed backwards, but he managed to maintain his balance. Glancing over to his side he saw Nagatomi keeling over in pain and Wren standing next to her. Focusing again on his younger sister he summoned a second sword to his hands and attacked her.

Wren looked down at Nagatomi as she blood was dripping down from her open jaw. Grabbing a fistful of her hair he pulled her up and off her feet, "ready to die, bitch?"

"You stay away from her!!" Naga screamed out causing everyone to stare at him.

"Y-you...?" KC gasped a little as her attacks slowed.

Regaining his composure, Naga glared down at his younger sister, "father's gonna be happy when I finally bring you back home! There you will know the true meaning of suffering and pain."

Turning away from Naga, Wren looked again at Nagatomi only to be thrown back from a huge bolt of energy. Her eyes had gone pitch black and a new jaw completely formed from shadow had emerged. As she was dropped down on the ground again she hunched slightly as she spoke, "are you ready to die? Bitch!"

Six black wings shot out from her back as dual black swords appeared in her hands. She levitated slightly over the ground causing ripples in the water below as she looked at Wren.

"Come at me then you fucking whore!" he snapped back at her as purple streaks of energy started to swirl around his body.

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*"Yes... that's it! Show me the power I unlocked within you..."*

Jesse secretly watched the battle in silence from behind a crumbled wall. He smiled for himself as he saw his best 'friend' exchange blows and punches with pretty much everyone on the battlefield.

It was complete chaos, and he loved every minute of it.

----

Wren kicked Nagatomi hard in the side, flinging her across the square and in to Naga. Following quickly he dropped his arm on the ground and instead grabbed Adron's abandoned war hammer. Swinging it overhead he brought the weapon down full force on both of them. Reaching around her Naga held up his blade and deflected the blow.



The ground quaked as the hammer buried itself in the ground. Nagatomi sunk her elbow in to her 'savior's ribcage before getting up, pouncing Wren head on. The two fell down on in the mud but soon separated as KC swung her blade at her former parasite.

Sweeping KC's legs Wren then took aim for Naga. Going in low he planted his stump of an arm right in Naga's stomach, the flesh in his arm giving way allowing the bone pipe to tear through Naga's robes and in to his abdomen. As the black haired man keeled over, Wren grabbed him in a headlock lifting his entire body off the ground throwing it backwards towards Nagatomi who lunged at them both, swords first.

The dark blades both skewered Naga, one right through his lower back, the other exiting in the center of his solar plexus. He howled in pain as Nagatomi tossed him to the side. Summoning a new blade to her hands, she slashed at Wren who caught the blade head on with his already maimed right-side arm. The weapon split it in half down to his shoulder as he screamed out in pain.

Quickly reaching forward he grabbed a hold of Nagatomi's head wedging his thumb in under her upper jaw and sinking his fingers right in to her eye sockets. Holding a firm grip he could feel her twitch as she bit down on his thumb, drawing blood.

He kicked her hard in the stomach while pulling back his left hand. The bone gave in and she was thrown backwards, a trail of blood following her as she rolled down on the ground her entire face ripped off. Wren followed her, but was stopped by KC who slashed at his kneecap, causing Wren to fall right over Nagatomi.

"Stop it! That's enough!!" KC cried out, pointing her sword towards Wren.

"Never," he replied as he grabbed the blade with his hand.

The purple swirls of energy passed on to the sword, dematerializing it. Raising his leg up, he hooked KC with his foot and brought her down to the ground following up with an elbow to her chest that knocked her out.

Crawling over her he reached for the war hammer as Nagatomi's body twitched and jerked in the rain. Her dark energies had started to come together, attempting to heal her. As he turned to finish the job, a sharp pain hit his left leg. Looking back, he saw Naga behind him, coughing up blood as he had buried his dark blade hilt deep in Wren's leg.

"I-I won't let you... h-hurt my l-love..." Naga sputtered, holding his arm over his bleeding stomach.

The purple swirls converged around Wren's broken arm forming a new one out of pure energy. He quickly switched hand and swung the heavy weapon at incredible force against Naga. As the weapon connected with Naga's head once again it was knocked clean off. Like a black comet it went flying in to the ruins, causing the remaining body to fall down lifeless over KC.

As Naga fell, the blade in Wren's leg disappeared. He pulled himself forward, hammer still in hand. Crawling over Nagatomi's body he placed the hammer's shaft right over Nagatomi's heart. Her face almost completely restored, she gasped for air.

"N-no!!" she struggled underneath him, but Wren had managed to pin her down well, "y-you can't kill me! KC needs me to keep her dark energies under control!"

“Or maybe she should just grow some balls and learn how to do it herself,” Wren replied before driving the weapon right through her body, shattering her heart.

Nagatomi screamed out as life left her body, the dark shadows that had healed her body vaporized. Pulling himself up to a sitting position, Wren glanced over to KC who had woken up and was struggling to get Naga’s dead body off her.

With a great deal of effort Wren managed to stand up. Limping over to KC he fell down on her, knees first. The girl gasped as the wind was knocked out of her and looked up at the large man sitting on her chest.

He put his left hand up against her throat and looked down on her, “I win...” he said softly as the purple energy around his body started to fade away. “Now yield to me or I will kill you as well.”

“Wh-why? Why are you doing this...?”

“I’m no hero. I fight only for myself,” he replied with a small smile on his lips. “Now, do you yield?”

“O-on one condition! Get Kevin for me, please.”

“If I see him, I’ll send him back to you. I promise.”

KC nodded slightly, “I... I yield...”

In a flash of light Wren suddenly disappeared, leaving KC alone in the dark with the dead.

“Dude! That was a very exciting fight!”

Finally sitting up, she looked to her side and saw Jesse stand next to her. He picked up Wren’s severed arm and looked at it, “I guess he forgot---”

Before Jesse could finish his sentence the arm disappeared in a flash of light as well. The thin man looked down at KC. “Don’t worry, Wren always keeps his promises.”

“Where is Swirff?”

“Oh, he’s fine don’t worry. He’ll soon be back with his loved one,” Jesse smiled.

“There’s... something strange about you.”

“There’s something strange about everyone,” he retorted.

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Wren appeared at the end of a long white corridor. Looking down on himself he saw that his body was completely restored, his clothes as well. It was completely silent all around him. The corridor was lined with several grey doors. At the very far end, there was another door with an exit sign above it. Walking up to the first one he felt the handle it was locked. However, there was a small hatch you could open to see inside.

Sliding the hatch to the side he saw a young boy inside resting on a bed.

“Hey!” Wren called out. Are you Kevin?”

The young boy sat up and reached for the glasses that was laying on the floor, putting them on he looked towards the door.

“A-are you here to save me?!” he asked expectantly as he hurried over to the door.

“Are you Kevin?” Wren asked again.

“Um... no but---“

Wren slammed the hatch shut and proceeded to the next door, ignoring the muffled cries for help coming from the boy.

The next door had just a small podium behind it, with a heart poised on the top. Wren smirked a little before continuing to the next door. Inside he saw another podium, with two coins.

“I’m so getting those,” Wren thought to himself as he smashed the door in. Walking up to the podium he plucked up the two silvers, looking at them for a few seconds before pocketing them.

The next room held another small boy with a tiny ponytail. Too young to be KC’s boyfriend Wren thought, but he asked anyway. And just as the time before when the answer was ‘no’ he slammed the hatch shut, continuing his search.

A few rooms later and after seeing nothing but worthless trinkets and baubles, he finally came to a room with another person. This time it was a young woman with red hair.

“You, are you Kyrie?”

“What? Yes!” she looked up at Wren headed over to the door, “who are you?”

“I’m Wren, I promised Grey I’d save you if I found you. Now stand back.”

She did as she was told and backed up. Smashing the door in Wren grabbed a hold of her arm and pulled her out, “go to the exit.”

He pushed her forward, watching her stumble a little before quickly making her way towards the exit. She cast a glance back at Wren who had proceeded to the next door, feeling somehow worried to have her back turned against him.

Looking in to the next cell he finally found what he had been looking for, “Sunnie!”

She sat up quickly in bed and looked towards the door that was ripped from its hinges. Seeing Wren behind it she bounced up on her feet and ran over to him, leaping up in to his arms.

“Wren!! I knew you would come for me!” she hugged him tight.

“I’m sorry it took so long,” he said as he could feel his heart calm down. He wrapped his arms around her and inhaled her scent. He had missed it so much, more than he realized.

Looking up at her beloved Sunnie smiled at him before giving him a kiss, “Aww... you crying Wren?” she wiped away a tear falling down his cheek. “I love you Wren, I missed you so much.”

"I missed you too," he said as he kissed her back. "Gods, I missed you..."

"Just before you came I heard a voice, they told me what you have done to get here. Oh Wren... It must have been so hard."

"I survived, and I'm here with you. That's all that matters to me," he said as he sniffled a little wiping away the rest of the tears from his face.

"Let's get out of here then, let's go home."

He nodded, "I just have to find someone else first. I promised."

He put her down gently and walked over to the next door, inside sat a young man with short black hair.

"Kevin?" Wren asked.

"Y-yes?" Kevin looked expectantly.

Tearing the door down, Wren looked at the young man who had backed up in to a corner of the room.

"KC had me save you. Come out, she's waiting for you."

"KC? Is she alright?!"

"Probably, now move it."

Kevin nodded quickly and hurried out of the cell, sliding past Wren and then Sunnie who smiled a little at him.

Watching him run for the exit, she looked up at Wren, "What about the rest?"

"The rest?"

"The rest of the people here, I bet there are more..." she motioned to the remaining dozen of doors.

"I didn't promise to save them," Wren replied.

Sunnie just sighed and shook her head, "Wren! You bust these doors open so people can return to their loved ones!" she said with a firm tone.

He winced at her orders, "do I have to? I thought you wanted to go home."

"Don't be lazy! Imagine if it was you that lost. Wouldn't you want whoever won to save me?"

"I wouldn't lose..." Wren mumbled a little making a pouty face. "Fine. But you will so owe me in blowjobs."

"Fine," she smirked.

----

“Who might you be?” The dark figure said as Jesse entered their chamber.

They all sat around a crescent shaped table, there were twenty –seven of them and all were staring at the young man who made a mocking bow before them.

“This tournament will never involve the people of Lenoma again!” Jesse said out loud, “do I make myself clear?”

“Who are you to come and give us orders like this?!” another asked.

“Have you any idea who it is you stand before, insignificant little mortal!” another spat.

“We are the keepers of Fate! We decide who lives and dies, who lives and dies. No one stands above us!”

“And you can all kiss my skinny ass!” Jesse growled, “remember who it was that gave you life in the first place! If you ever, involve Lenoma in your petty little games again I will erase you! All of you!! You hear me?!”

They all laughed at him. Jesse’s eyes narrowed as he fixated on one of them. Raising his hand he snapped his fingers. The target exploded in an instant in pieces so small they couldn’t even be seen.

The Fates gasped as their companion disappeared, staring at Jesse, “wh-who are...?”

“I suggest that you cherish the memory of your lost friend, because you are the only ones who have any. Now, as I said: Stay away from Lenoma, or I will return to you... And I will not be so forgiving then!” Jesse said, glaring at the Fates before him.

“Oh, and another thing...” he took out the amulet he had taken from Swirff. “I found this on one of the contestants... Are you serious?! Have you any idea how important this item is to its home world?! Fucking think before you sign these people up! Xavian, I’m especially disappointed in you.” Jesse looked at one of the Fates who looked rather shocked as he was pointed out.

“H-how did you know my name...?”

“Remember what I said. Now I have to go and fix this mess,” Jesse grunted as he disappeared.

----

In a lush forest, Swirff slowly opened his eyes. His tiny body ached as he carefully sat up.

“<Careful dear, you had a bad fall.>”

Jolting slightly, Swirff rubbed his eyes and blinked. Before him sat his wife Ewyn. The browned haired little goblin smiled at her husband as he couldn’t believe his eyes.

“<E-Ewyn!!>” he gasped as he fell in to her arms, hugging her tight. “<Oh, Ewyn! You’re alive! I’m alive!! We’re both alive!!>”

Feeling a little confused, she patted Swirff on the head as she pushed him back gently. “<What are you talking about dear? Of course I am! Did you have a bad dream while you were unconscious? You fell from the tree while trying to harvest some mushrooms...>”

“<I... I guess it was a dream...>” he mumbled to himself, holding her hand in his. “<Ewyn... I love you.>”

She blushed a little, “<I love you too, Swirff.>”

----

“I can’t believe you gave the World Key away! What’s wrong with you Ty?!” Ty sighed heavily as she sat alone at the local café beating herself up about her loss at the tournament.

“Excuse me, are you Ty?”

She looked up and saw a man holding a clipboard and a small package in his hands.

“Um yeah?”

“Sign here please,” he said, holding up his clipboard as he put down the small package next to her.

Ty took out a pen and signed the form, “so... what’s this?”

“I dunno. I just deliver stuff ma’am,” he tipped his cap at her and walked off.

She nodded as she looked at the small package before her. As she unwrapped it she gasped in amazement, it was her World Key. And along with it a small note.

“Don’t lose this again,” Ty said as she read the note out loud. “Could it be...Swirff?”

Before she could ponder the subject further her phone rang.

“Hello?”

“OH MY GOD TY! Some delivery-guy just dropped off a box and it had the Keystone inside it!!” her sister screamed.

Holding her phone at arms distance Ty nodded with a smile, “that’s great sis! I just got the World Key back in a package too!”

“Who’d you think did this? That little dwarf you were talking about?”

“I dunno... maybe.”

“You better get back here I think dad has some questions for you.”

“Alright! I’m coming.”

----

As the last of the creatures, a strange man with horns and a tail, ran through the exit. Wren stretched his back, looking down at Sunnie.

“Are you happy now? Everyone’s free!” he said as he put his arm around her.

“Yes,” she smiled as they started walking towards the exit together. “Thank you Wren.”

“Eh no problem,” he squeezed her tight. “What do you want to do now?”

“Oh... hmm...” she thought about it while looking up at Wren. “Let’s go shop!!”

He laughed, “fine, I’ll take you shopping. By the way, want to get some ice-cream? I have two silvers here. I bet we can exchange them for some nice proper currency,” he said as he picked up the two silvers from his pocket.

“I love ice-cream! I want strawberries!”

“I think I’ll just have some vanilla...”

“That’s so gay,” Sunnie teased him, tickling his side a little as she giggled.

“Oh you won’t be calling me gay tonight,” Wren smirked as he plucked Sunnie up in his arms carrying her out the exit door.

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Natteregn: Ukon

Anemoritos: Swirff and Ewyn

Stellartune: Jake

Greyvanska: Kyrie

Dokugakuji: Adron

Heart-station08: Julius

Applesattwilight: Ty