

As the rays of the sun shone through the window down to the bed, Wren grunted sleepily and rolled over as the sunlight reached his eyes. Stretching out his right arm he expected to find his love.

But there was nothing.

Still eyes closed, he patted around on the mattress to feel if she simply had moved, but after concluding she wasn't beside him at all he pushed himself up to a sitting position.

Rubbing his vision clear, he looked around, seeing nothing but an empty room with clothes scattered all over the floor.

This was unusual, Sunnie usually never got up before him. Although... when looking out the window he saw the sun high up in the sky.

"Did I sleep in...?" He mumbled, running his fingers through his hair.

There was a knock on the door and he dragged himself out of bed, he stretched his back and yawned before wrapping the cover around the lower part of his toned naked body. The stone floor was cold and he found himself zigzagging towards the door on the clothes under his feet.

"Who is it?" He asked, before opening.

"A thousand guesses on who it might be that even dares to come and wake you up" was the reply. It was Jesse.

The much shorter and scrawnier man looked up as Wren opened the door. "...how come when I see you up here you're always naked?" Jesse asked with a sly grin.

Wren sighed, leaning against the wooden doorpost. "I'm not naked, I have a sheet. What's up Jess?"

"You're in bed at this hour Wren? It's almost noon. Usually Sunnie's the one snoring away. Did you have a rough night?" Jesse grinned, rocking back and forth on the balls of his feet.

"I always have a rough night." He pushed the door completely open and let his friend inside. "Have you seen Sun?"

"I saw a glimpse of her in the garden when I passed it a few hours ago." Jesse replied as he entered, Wren closed the door behind him.

He dropped the cover and started picking up his clothes while getting dressed. "Did you want something in particular? Or did you come here to stare at my naked ass?"

Jesse chuckled. "Jory wanted to see you."

"Oh no..."

"What? I thought you were on pretty good terms with him now."

Shaking his t-shirt a bit before putting it on, Wren sighed. "Good equals me not wanting to kill him the second I see him."

"Oh come on Wren. He's really been trying to make things up to you for the past."

"Not good enough."

Wagging his finger at Wren, Jesse shook his head. "You... are difficult. Well, I told you at least. Drop by his place when you feel like it."

"I might."

~~~~~

A few hours later, Wren still hadn't found Sunnie and he was getting frustrated. He had searched every inch of Lucifer's black castle, including the garden. Hoping his luck would change he had made his way in to the demon city.

"You look upset."

Wren turned around and saw his younger sister Sita standing there, as usual she was flanked by two of Lucifer's soldiers, for protection.

He let out a sigh. "I can't find Sunnie."

"Mmm yes, that usually makes your brow frown." She smiled looking up to her two bodyguards. "I'll be fine now, you can return to the castle."

"But, my Lady..." One of the soldiers started but quieted down as the small goth-girl gave him a tired look.

"Oh please, it's Wren! You think he'd not be capable enough to protect me? Would you challenge him for it?"

The two soldiers looked at each other and then at Wren, they carefully took a step back and bowed to their Queen before taking their leave.

She took a few steps forward, embracing her brother in a hug. "You worry too much about Sunnie."

"I think I am entitled to do so, considering her past record." He smiled, patting Sita on the head.

Sita looked up at her brother as she let him go. "I could have Lucifer assign two soldiers to escort her around the city, like he does for me."

"Oh please, you hate your guards." He said as they started walking back to the castle.

"Yes, thanks for giving me some relief." She smiled.

"I'm running out of places to search. I guess I don't have a choice. I have to go see Jory." He grumbled, kicking off a few pebbles to the side of the road.

"Oh? Why?" she quirked a brow.

"He called for me. Jesse came and told me. I've been putting it off..."

She smacked his arm. "It could be about Sunnie!"

Wren looked down at Sita. "I thought you just said I worry too much about her."

"Well... yes! But, I might be right still. See, you're being unreasonably stubborn again. Just like when Fate kidnapped her. And we all know what happened then."

"Why do you always have to be right?" Wren sighed, a painful expression on his face. "So, should I escort you back?"

She shook her head. "I'll be fine on my own Wren. None here are stupid enough to attack me, they know what Lucifer would do to them if they did."

"Ok. Take care of yourself."

~~~~~

As Wren made his way back to the castle, a shadow suddenly descended on him. He looked up in to the sky and saw a big bird circling down towards him.

"What the fuck...?" He mumbled to himself as the bird let out a loud squawk.

It swooped down and would have hit Wren unless he had ducked. The bird squawked again but its song cut short by the rock that hit its head mid-flight. The flying animal roughly fell to the ground and Wren grabbed it around its neck. "Vultures don't exist anymore, what the fuck are you?" He demanded.

The bird replied with stifled squawks as it flapped its wings, trying to escape Wren's hold, its sharp talons scratching at him, but he didn't flinch.

Wren took a hold of the creature's legs, holding them still. It was then he noted the letter that was attached to its right foot. Putting the animal down on the ground and keeping it pinned under his foot he opened the letter and read it.

As he read the last paragraphs, it all became clear to him. She had been taken. Taken from him. He could feel his anger boiling up inside him as he looked down at the helpless creature under his foot.

"What the fuck is this?!" He yelled out, his voice echoing throughout the city. Wren grabbed a hold of the vulture again and savagely ripped off one of its wings, tossing it aside. The animal screamed out in pain thrashing uncontrollably in his vice-like grip. "Who the hell sent you?! Tell me!!"

But of course he got no reply. As the vulture was incapable to answer his questions, he quickly tore off the second wing with one hand, crushing its head with the other.

He was going to get some answers.

~~~~~

There were never any doubts on where Jory would be. The old God rarely ventured outside his study, and Wren had never seen him walk willingly outside the castle.

"Who has taken her?" Wren asked as he walked in to the study without knocking.

He had been right. Behind a desk and surrounded by books, Jory sat on his chair, reading.

"About time you showed up." The white-haired young-looking man put down the book he was reading and sat up straight behind his desk.

"I said; Who has taken her!!" Wren said as he walked up to the desk, easily flicking it across the room.

Jory sank down a bit deeper in his chair. This was one of Wren's worst moods, and by 'taken' there was only one person he could mean. "Sunnie... she's missing?"

Wren grabbed Jory by the neck, hoisting him up in the air. "You did something! Tell me where the fuck she is or I will kill you! And this time you will not return!"

"I-I don't know!" Jory wheezed between breaths. "Wren. L-let me go! I don't know anything about her disappearance."

Staring up at the old god, Wren's eyes narrowed. He wasn't lying.

Wren tossed Jory back down on his chair with a frustrated sneer. Jory coughed harshly as he tried to regain his posture, rubbing his throat where Wren had held him.

"W-Wren... what happened?"

"I got this." He said, holding out the letter to Jory who quickly skimmed through it. "Oh no..."

"Yeah, you could say that again."

Clearing his throat, Jory looked up at Wren. "Gale... might know. I saw him in the park the other day, mumbling to himself about some tournament. Maybe... maybe that's it?"

"Gale? Gale?! That fucking little Fate did this?!" Wren asked. "I'm gonna rip his head off!!"

~~~~~

Gale let off a soft sigh as he crawled up on to the sofa to relax. He still hadn't gotten used to his childlike body yet, even though it's probably had been a hundred years since 'that incident'. As he reached for his cup of tea, the front door literally exploded as Wren smashed it in, filling the room with dust and debris. As the dust finally settled, Wren quickly scanned the white room, noting the tipped over cup of tea that was still giving off steam. But there was no sign of Gale.

Gale ran as fast as his short legs would carry him. He made his way through the masses of demons and angels on his way towards Lucifer's castle, the demon Lord would be the only one who could save him from certain doom. He panted heavily as he pushed himself up the hill the castle was standing on, his white clothing almost like a beacon for Wren to follow, and he could hear the man closing in behind him.

"Lucifer!! Help me!!" He screamed out in panic as he dashed through the castle gates, past the guards and in to the courtyard. Gale tossed a glance backwards to see how far behind Wren was, only to see a big hand coming towards him.

"I got you now you little shit!" Wren growled as he grabbed a hold of the small boy's shoulders in full speed. Wren spun around and sent Gale flying in to the castle wall. The entire complex quaked as the stones shifted in their place making an indent around his body as Gale fell down on the ground, gasping for air.

As Wren quickly moved up towards the fallen child, a very large man stepped in between the two. It was Lucifer. The gigantic dark-clad man looked down at Wren as he brushed a lock of his blood-red hair away from his face. He put a hand up against Wren's chest and spoke with a sigh; "Stop it Wren."

"Get out of the way, Lucifer." Wren growled.

"This is my castle, and I have told you before; I won't tolerate your violent behavior against my people. And as long as Gale is staying here, he counts as one of them."

"He's taken Sunnie!" Wren argued, pointing at Gale.

His red eyes narrowed "I don't want to fight you Wren. But I will if I have to."

Wren glared up at Lucifer. He didn't really think that Lucifer would beat him, but his victory wouldn't come easy. And, he didn't want to hurt his sister husband too badly.

As Gale slowly stood up again, he looked up at the two men before him. "I didn't have a choice. When I was contacted, I had no one else to choose from."

"What the hell is that supposed to mean?" Wren spat.

"There are things beyond even me! Even more so now that I died once, my powers have diminished. You are the strongest one around Wren, it was the only choice to send you. I... I didn't know they would take Sunnie as your entry-fee. I couldn't enter myself, I can't leave this dimension, plus I would be too weak to survive."

Wren took a deep breath, trying to calm down. He put his hands on his hips, looking down on the small boy. "I hate you."

Then he turned around and walked in to the castle, he had to prepare for his journey.

Gale let out a sigh of relief. Lucifer looked down at Gale with a disapproving frown. "You sure know how to pick 'em."

~~~~~

"Wren..." Sita knocked softly on the doorframe to Wren's room. He was pacing about in the room though stopping briefly as he saw his sister standing in the doorway, hands behind her as if she was concealing something.

"Do you need anything? I'm sort of preoccupied right now." He shook his head while pinching the bridge of his nose. "This is about the letter I got, isn't it? ...Rumors spread fast it seems."

"I just came to wish you good luck." She glanced over to the backpack sitting on the bed. "Not packing much, are you?"

Wren walked over to Sita and put his hands on her shoulders, rubbing them gently. "I don't plan to stay long. I'll go there, win, and I'll return with Sun... ok?"

"I'll miss you..." She said, looking up at her brother with a small smile on her face, she brought forward her hands. "I made this for you."

He looked down at the present she had brought. It was a first aid kit with a note attached; the box itself was black velvet with a white cross painted on the lid. Wren took the gift and read the note.

"Just in case. Remember, the more you use this, the more we miss you."

She giggled a bit. "Kinda corny I know."

"I love it Sita." He leaned down and hugged her tight. "Don't worry about me, I'll be just fine."

Sita blushed a bit, hugging Wren back. "Jesse and I will be waiting here. You can't die, he'd be so sad."

"I know."

"You should say goodbye to him before you leave."

Wren smiled at her and planted a kiss on her forehead. "I will."

~~~~~

Wren found Jesse in Lucifer's empty throne room. He was sitting on the demon Lord's stone-throne, legs swung over the armrest and head leaned back. Wren closed the big door behind him and walked up the throne.

"Hey Jess, how are you?" Wren asked, feeling a little unsure of himself as he put his backpack down on the floor.

"What the fuck do you think?" Jesse sighed as he sat up straight on the throne. "I want to come with you."

"I can't take you, it's my invitation... you can't come along no matter how much I'd like you to."

Jesse grit his teeth, he clenched his fists so hard his nails dug in to the palm of his hands, a few drops of blood landing on the armrests. "Dude... you're so cold."

Wren just sighed. "Don't worry, it'll be a piece of cake, I've saved her hundreds of times already. This will probably just be a walk in the park anyway."

"But what if it isn't?!" Jesse jolted from the chair, taking a few hasty steps up to Wren. He stared right in to Wren's color-shifting eyes. "What if you die?! What if you never return?! Don't you care about us? Your sister! Your family! Me!! Don't you care about me?!" Jesse screamed out his eyes filling with tears.

Wren looked a little shocked; he had never seen such a display of desperation from his otherwise jovial best friend. "Uh... I'm... sorry?"

Jesse closed his eyes, taking a deep breath as he turned away from Wren, attempting to calm down.

"Jess, you're the best friend I have. Fuck I even forgave you for backstabbing me about Fate and everything. You think I'd just leave you like that? I'll return, don't sweat it." Wren said, feeling somewhat uncomfortable.

Jesse quickly spun around again, a big smile on his face, the smile Wren was used to see. "Yeah! You better." He grinned. "Dude, you should take this." He made a quick incantation and a flashlight with two batteries appeared in his hand.

Wren looked down at the gift, quirking a brow. "A... flashlight. You realize I see perfectly well in the dark, right?"

"Oh, so you're gonna reject my gift to you huh?" He said, faking disappointment and making a pouty face. "I see how it is."

Wren rolled his eyes and sighed, taking the flashlight and batteries. He leaned down and opened his backpack, putting in the 'gifts'. "There! Happy?"

As he stood up straight again, Jesse threw himself over Wren, jumping up in his arms and hugging him hard.

Wren staggered backwards as he managed to hold his balance. "Jess! What the fuck?!" He exclaimed as Jesse's legs coiled around his mid-section.

"I have a really, really bad feeling about this, Wren. Please... please don't die." Jesse said in a soft whisper as he held on to Wren tight.

Wren sighed again, hugging the man back. "I won't."

Jesse nodded, a sniffle could be heard as he wiped some tears away from his face.

"...Now let me go, this feels gay."

~~~~~

"I didn't even know there was a dock in this world, let alone a lake... or whatever." Wren said as he and Gale were wandering through the forest.

"It's sort of... appeared recently. And it's not really a part of our world. It's just... attached to it currently." Gale mumbled.

"Figures." He grunted.

"Look, I'm sorry already!"

Wren frowned. "Don't be. I'll win that stupid tournament, take Sunnie home and then everything will be back to normal."

Gale stopped in his tracks, looking up at Wren. "This is the end of our realm. I can't go further... you will reach the docks if you just continue from here in a straight line." He took out two silver coins and handed them to Wren. "You'll need this..."

"Thanks." Wren took the coins, looking at them before and pocketing them.

"Come back alive, please?" Gale said quietly, looking down at his feet.

Wren smirked. "Of course I will."

"I'm serious Wren, you might be... 'limited' on that island. I don't know what will happen, and you can't expect any backup from us either. It would... be a shame if you died."

“Daww, I didn’t know you cared.” He mocked Gale.

Gale frowned. “Seriously!”

Wren’s expression softened as he leaned down to pat the child on his head. “I’ll be back soon to break your legs, don’t you worry. If Sunnie dies again however, I’ll make sure you spend the rest of your life as a screaming little infant.”

“Please Wren, I know you like hurting people... a lot. But remember, the other contestants there probably have lost something equally important to them. Don’t make their existence too painful.”

He nodded. “I know. I get that. While I’m gone... make sure that Jesse sleeps in his own room and not mine. He drools in his sleep and I don’t want my pillows to look like they have been sodomized by some pervert.”

Gale cracked a small smile at that. “I’ll be sure to tell him.”

“Good.” He adjusted the backpack that was tossed casually over his left shoulder. “See you later then.”

~~~~~

About an hour later, Wren arrived at the docks. The thick mist made it a little hard to see, but he saw the faint flickering light of a lantern, bobbing ever so slightly up and down as the boat it was tied to rocked gently upon the waves. As it emerged from the mist, he saw the ragged skeleton that was the ferryman.

“Wow... a skeletal ferryman.” Wren muttered quietly. “Someone is going for originality...”

Wren held up the two silver coins and placed them in the ferryman’s skeletal hand, the bony fingers clutching the coins tightly as he motioned for Wren to board his tiny vessel. Wren flung the backpack off his shoulder and got in to the small boat. He sat down with a heavy sigh and put the bag down next to him. He gazed out over the misty lake and couldn’t help but wonder what would come next.