Fanatical Publishing's

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AND NOW, a word from the publisher:

Hello folks, Jochannon here; first let me say thank you for reading, and I hope you enjoy, and please feel free to share it with your friends, re-post it to your profile, spread it around; the more people who get to read it, the better!

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If you want to contribute, I'd love to see your work, send it to me at the aforementioned e-mail address with: 'category(prose, fanfic, poetry), story title, author's name' in the subject line: please include the text of your story in the body of the email, and please include a cover letter about you, your work, or whatever; include any links you want.

Do you have any questions or comments? If you do, I'd to hear them; write to me at the aforementioned e-mail address.

I'm bad at stopping these things, so I'll just say again: thank you for reading, and I hope you enjoy!

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Original Prose is brought to you by Lurk and his friends

The four of them awoke in a narrow stone cell: it was about eight feet by ten feet, there was a narrow stone bench running on one of the narrow sides, and the opposite wall was made of iron bars in which a metal door was placed.

Lurk tried to pick the lock, then gave up in frustration.

Abraham was struck by a thought and turned to Rushell. "Could you try to magic the door open?" he asked.

Rushell shook his head. "I tried, but cannot perform magic here: I think she must have constructed this cell in such a way that spells cannot be cast from within."

"There must be some way to escape," Heather said.

"What do you think this is, a fairy tale?" Lurk scoffed. "You think I'm gonna just lean against the wall, and somehow push on the exact right place to hit some secret switch?" he said, folding his arms and leaning against the wall. Lurk was so intent on what he was saying, he didn't notice a small stone that moved slightly under his weight.

"And then, some hole is going to open in the solid stone wall," Lurk said, while a hole opened in the stone wall right beside him. "And if that actually happened," Lurk went on, completely oblivious to what was going on right next to him. "I suppose you'd expect me to go right on talking, completely oblivious to what was going on right next to me!"

"Lurk?" Rushell said, trying to get his attention.

"Don't interrupt me when I'm talking at you!" Lurk snapped. "Where was I? Yeah, that kind of thing happens all the time in fairy tales, but this is real life!"

"Lurk!" Abraham said.

"That sort of thing does not happen in real life!" Lurk bulldozered on. "You and me will go through our whole lives, and never see anything like that!"

"Lurk!" Heather barked.

"Oh shut up, I'm talking here!"

Abraham, Rushell and Heather exchanged a glance, then turned and walked right past Lurk into the secret passage

"Where you goin'?" Lurk exclaimed, then did a double-take. "What- hey, wait for me!"

As soon as he was through the secret door shut, leaving no sign that the prisoners had ever been there.

'STICKS AND STONES' MAKES NO SENSE

Rebekah McCue of roxannethefox@gmail.com

I glance nervously across the room again. He doesn't notice. Good. I take a closer look; his head is bent forwards over the papers, avoiding eye contact. His brown hair falls forwards, shielding his eyes. Every once in a while he'll tug on his sleeve, trying to hid a bruise on his shoulder. He told the teachers he ran through the halls and hit a doorknob. We all know it was from another kid.

"Vincent?" the teacher asks. His head shoots up and I hastily look away. "Could you answer the question?"

"...What question?" he asks. Malicious chuckles and sneers resound. My turn to study my worksheet. I can feel the teacher glare around as the class quiets down. A sideways glance shows Vincent nervously rubbing his hands on his knees.

"Number three, please," she gently requests.

Vincent murmurs something. At the teacher's confused glance, he repeats louder, strained. "I didn't get it..."

"Stupid!"

"Frank!" our instructor snaps. The obnoxious kid behind me shrugs and leans back in his chair like he owns the world. He knows the teacher can't send him to the principle's office for anything less than a swear. Plus, he's an athlete, and athletes get the school trophies.

I glance back at Vincent. His head was down again, eyes once more hidden and still wiping his hands on his knees.

That's how it always was. Day in, day out, he'd take whatever was thrown at him and never say a word. No friends that seemed to care or stand up in his defense. Just a kid alone on the side of the classroom.

The bell rang for transitions and I hastily stood up, trying to shove spare papers into a folder. Out of the corner of my eye I saw Vincent rush past me, trying to get into the hallways before the other kids. I couldn't blame him.

Once I had switched my books and grabbed my brown-bag lunch, I scurried into the cafeteria. My friend waved me over, but something caught my eye, making me slow to a stand still. Vincent was sitting alone at the end of a table, and a few boys were standing around him. I couldn't hear them, but their sinister smirks told me enough. My feet carried me over on their own accord.

"How's that mark the *doorknob* gave you?" one of them sneered, rearing back his hand.

"Excuse me."

All of them turned to me, making me realize I had spoken. I swallowed hard and spoke again, this time more consciously.

"Could you please move over?" I asked the one directly in front of me. Questioningly, he moved over a step or two. Vincent was glancing up at me from behind his hair. With a nervous smile, I sat down at the seat across from him. The other boys just stared for a moment.

"Hey! You could have told me in advance about the table switch, you know!" My friend pushed her way through the boys and comically plopped her books down, making the whole table jump slightly. She began chattering on about her classes earlier in the day, and slowly the boys left with baffled looks.

When my friend paused to take a bite of her sandwich, I took the opportunity.

"I don't think we were properly introduced. What's your name?"

"Vincent," he replied quietly, "but my nickname's Vin."

"Vincent?" my friend asked, making me hold my breath. "I like that name! Weird you're not called Vince or something though. But Vin's so much more original!" Her motor mouth rand onwards, allowing me to breathe again. After a good ten minutes, she got up to buy a water bottle, leaving me and Vincent at the table.

"... So, um ... hope those boys didn't bother you," I awkwardly tried. "They're ... morons."

He shrugged. "Sticks and stones, I guess."

I grinned slightly, pulling a packet of Oreos out of my lunch bag. I offered him one, and hesitantly he accepted.

"Whoever said that," I said after taking a bite of my own, "is a complete idiot."

INFECTION, CHAPTER 1

by Baseball Player of baseball.player88@yahoo.com

It was a brisk August morning and Abigail brushed her brown hair out of her face and mouth as she sprinted towards school. It was her first day as a sophomore at Black Hill high school. "I'm going to really late if I don't hurry!" she yelled, sprinting down the sidewalks and turning sharply around corners of buildings. "Maria, damn it!" she thought. "Not even a little 'hey wake up'. Noooo. She just takes off without me! I don't care if she is a senior or not, a little help would be nice one in a while!" As Abigail grumbled and cursed her older sister, she weaved through crowds of people and sprinted across walk ways, forcing cars to screech to stop. Abigail noticed none of them and continued her way towards the school. "I'll take this alleyway," she thought, turning into the alley. "It is a little shortcut, but it will help." Abigail quickly ran through the alley and turned the corner, but met something hard and fell backwards. Her head hit the concrete hard and everything went black. The person Abigail ran into looked behind him and carefully examined the girl.

Abigail slowly opened her eyes and saw that she was in her high school's nurse's office. "What the ...?" she thought. "How did I...?" Abigail felt the back of her head where the patch with a spot of blood soaked in and suddenly remembered what had happened and, without thinking shoved her hands into her pants. She gave a sigh of relief and started to move off the bed, but pain shooting through her head stopped her in her tracks. "I wouldn't do that," said a voice from the other end of the office. It was Nurse Patty as she filed her nails. "You shouldn't move since you hit your head pretty hard on the concrete," she explained. Abigail rolled her eyes and slowly stood on her feet, but suddenly stopped as her face exploded in a bright red, "W-wait!" she yelled as she pointed to Nurse Patty. "D-did you see what I...!" Nurse Patty looked up and chuckled. "I-I-It's not what you think! I-I-I was just ... "Nurse Patty raised her hand, "You don't need to explain it to me. I'm not surprised that was the first thing you checked, even though I've seen girls instantly check where their purses or whatever is." "How did I get here?" "A boy brought you here saying that you ran full steam into his back and knocked yourself unconscious," Nurse Patty explain, going back to work on her nails. "Pretty good looking kid too. You should go and thank him for bringing you here. God knows what else he could of done." "Y-yeah." mumbled Abigail, as she walked towards the door. "Hold it!" yelled

Nurse Patty. "What now-?" whined Abigail. "I need to get to class. Nurse Patty's eye twitched, but gave a forced sighed, "Take some aspirin. You're going to need it." "Right," muttered Abigail, taking the small pills. "By the way, what period is it?" "Second." Abigail gave a high pitched squeal, "I missed my first class and my second one!" and sprinted out of the office. Nurse Patty sat quietly, speechless, but quickly changed to anger and stood out of her chair. "A thank you would be really appreciated, you know?!" she yelled, but suddenly pulled back as students looked at her in confusion and fear. Before she could explain, the students ran off screaming sorry. Nurse Patty gave a heavy sigh and placed her head on the desk with a thump. She stayed there for a while until a voice asked if she was okay. She looked up and smiled, "Oh, it's you. If you're looking for Abigail," she said pointing towards the door, "she already sprinted out of here." The boy chuckled, "Okay, thanks." He started to move to the door, but Patty stopped him by asking how he got out of class this early. The boy looked back with a smile, "I already have everything done for today in that class so I thought I would stop in and check on...uh." "Abigail," said Patty. "Right. Well, thank you for helping her." Patty smiled as the boy walked back into the hallway.

Abigail sprinted through hallways, a million thoughts running through her head of how she's going get into the room without looking like an idiot. "Maybe I can just sneak through a window or something?" she thought, as she ran pass a girl who began to yell. She looked behind herself to see Sheri, the president of the student council, running after her. "No running in the halls!" she yelled. Abigail and her never got along ever since they met. "She is so stuck up," she thought as she stuck her tongue out and continued to run down the hall. Sheri clinched her teeth and began to catch up to Abigail. Abigail ran harder and harder through the halls, but came to a sudden realization. "I have no idea where my classes are! How can I forget something like that!" "Get back here, Abigail!" yelled Sheri, within arms reach. Abigail gave a small gasp and lowered her head as she gain more ground between the two of them. Abigail rounded the next corner, but screeched to a sudden stop for a boy standing in the hallway. He looked back and locked his brown eyes with Abigail's blue eyes. His black hair was spiked all around his head and covered a scar over his left eye. His body looked in very good shape, even with the baggy shirt and the backpack over one shoulder. Abigail's heart thumped hard as she continued to start at the mysterious boy. "Oh," he finally said, "it's you." His voice sent chills down Abigail's spine, but it suddenly was overwhelmed by pain as Sheri talked her from behind sending Abigail's forehead into the boy's crotch. His eyes almost popped out of their sockets as Abigail, Sheri, and he fell to the floor. "Ha!" boasted

Sheri, huffing and puffing. "I finally cau..." Abigail looked up to the Sheri frozen in fear, staring at the boy in the fetal position, almost reduced to tears. Sheri quickly got up and ran to the end of the hall, but quickly turned back. "This isn't the end, Abigail!" she studdered, her body shaking. "I-I will get you some day!" Abigail looked back in confusion as Sheri ran into another hall. "What the hell was that all about?" she thought. "I've never seen her act like that before." Abigail looked over to the boy, who now was on all fours, coughing. "What's the matter with you?" said Abigail, bluntly. "You head butted me in the crotch, that's what!" yelled the boy, slowly getting up as he gripped his crotch. Abigail sat up and processed it a little while as her face exploded in red again. "D-d-does that mean I gave you h-head?!" she studdered. The boy looked at Abigail blankly, "Are an idiot or something?" "I am not an idiot!" she yelled as she punched the boy across the face. He gave a small whimper before falling to the ground like a wet towel. "Ah crap!" she screamed as she shaking him like a rag doll. "I didn't mean to do that! Please wake up!"

Abigail and the boy, who was holding the side of his face, quietly leaned against the wall, the awkward silence making its presence clearly. "What the hell am I suppose to say?" Abigail thought. "I ran into his back that knocked me out cold and then after bringing me to the school I head butt him in crotch and then sucker punch him. One of us has some seriously bad luck." The silence continued until the boy grabbed his bag and pulled out a can of pop. He offered Abigail one who happily accepted it. They both cracked the cans open and drank at the same time. The two looked at each other and chuckled. "So, um," mumbled Abigail, "where you the one who I ran into earlier this morning?" The boy nodded his head, "Yep." "Ah, sorry about that and for what I did earlier." The boy took another drink and gave a small sigh, "It's alright. Just don't do it again." Abigail chuckled, "I won't." The boy smiled that made Abigail blush. "He is really cute," she thought. "I'm just glad he's talking to me instead of lecturing me like Mary would." "So," continued Abigail, "have we met somewhere before? Or are you new to the school?" The boy looked at Abigail in amazement, "You don't know my name? We sat next to each other last year in every class." Abigail thought back and suddenly remembered, "Oh, yeah! You were that quiet boy who no one ever talked to." "Y-yeah," mumbled the boy, his head hung low. "I-I didn't mean it like that ... ""It's fine, Abigail. I know you didn't mean anything bad." The silence quickly returned to the two making it even more awkward than before. Abigail I started to say something, but was cut off by the bell ending the second period. Abigail gathered her things and threw it over her shoulder, "Well, I'm going to head to class, but we should talk again sometime." The boy nodded and waved goodbye. He chuckled, "What a strange girl." He raised the can to his lips, but stopped and gave a heavy sigh, "She didn't even ask what my name was."

FAN FICTION



ME2 HELLDIVER SAGA CHAPTER 16: Best Served Cold, Part 1

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Sure enough, both and Liara had spent the whole of yesterday making love and getting Austin to recover from the hangover he had had. True enough to what both of them had expected, it had probably been the best sex they'd had yet in their relationship.

Eventually, Austin had decided to confide in Liara about the dream he'd had about Kelly. Liara had been very surprised at first and had even been a tiny bit concerned at first. Austin however had explained that it had most likely been a combination of may things that had caused the dream.

For one, he had just had a meal with Kelly the day before so that was a primary contributing factor. Also, Austin had admitted to Liara that Brandy did often give him funny dreams since it messed with his brain. Up until now though, he had never had a dream like that before. Although to be fair, he had also been out for several hours because of the sleeping gas as well, so that may have also contributed to it.

To Austin's surprise, Liara had actually found the story a bit funny, and slightly interesting. Especially since she reckoned that her... ministrations on him in the night had been a primary cause of his erotic dream.

This had surprised Austin, but he was thankful at least that Liara hadn't at all accused him of being unfaithful to her. In fact, when he had even told her that the special Helldiver implants that he had in his head which where linked into his omni tool had recorded the whole dream very clearly, she had even asked to see it.

This had shocked Austin mightily and he had even promised Liara multiple times that he loved her and only her, but Liara had calmed him and said that she wasn't angry at him at all. So, the next few hours of the night had been spent watching the whole recording together. Like Austin, Liara doubted that she'd be able to look at their Yeoman again after seeing how sexual she was, especially with him. She had even laughed hysterically at the bit where Kelly had brought the camera in and had even found the scene very arousing. It hadn't taken long for the two lovers to eventually give in to how horny they'd become from watching the recording and they'd both started pleasuring each other as they watched Austin fuck Kelly nearly everywhere.

Once they'd both brought each other to an orgasm, Austin still felt as though he owed Liara an apology and had even swore on his own life that he'd only ever Liara and would never cheat on her. Once again though, Liara told him that she was not angry at him at all and did not think that he was unfaithful to her at all since she admitted that she had once had a dream very similar to his a year or so ago after Austin had been killed by the Collector's. She'd been heartbroken and depressed and had ended up drinking a whole bottle of Ice Brandy. Her dream had included him in it, but it had also included an Asari she'd become acquitted with only yesterday. After hearing that from Liara, Austin now understood and all his worry disappeared. In fact Liara had even managed to make him hard again by explaining the dream to him fully, and in very explicit detail.

By the end of today, Austin's hangover had almost disappeared and he reckoned that another good night's sleep would take care of the rest. At that, Liara had simply smiled and once again initiated a Union with him. With her now properly inside his head, the two had a perfect dream with each other walking on a beach hand in hand. Shortly afterwards they'd both went for swim in the sea and then Austin had carried Liara back onto the sand and they'd both made love. The sex after that was... well, let's just say that it put even Kelly's dream made porn movie with Austin to shame.

Both Austin and Liara slowly woke from their slumber and Austin stretched.

"What made you think up a beach?" Austin asked as Liara sat up in the bed, not caring whether the quilt cover lipped off and exposed her breasts.

"I don't know, I guess it just came to me." Liara smiled as she gave a small yawn. "How's your head?"

"Fine. Hangover's completely gone." Austin smiled as h gave Liara a kiss. "Thanks for all of yesterday. That day is going to stick with me for a very long time."

"Anything for you, my love." Liara smiled as she returned Austin's kiss.

At that moment, there was knock at the door. Both Austin and Liara turned in surprise to the sound. Austin ultimately told Liara to just say in bed while he pulled on his boxers and some trousers and went to answer the door. It was Kelly. Austin did jump a bit when he saw her. After the dream and both him and Liara pleasuring each other to watching her, it was a bit uncomfortable to be around her. Austin however, kept a straight face and acted normally.

"Morning, Kelly." He smiled warmly.

"Good morning, Major. How are you feeling? I heard about what happened the day before." Said Kelly.

"I feel fine, thanks. Nothing a little rest doesn't fix." Austin replied. "So, what can I do for you?" he asked.

"The Arkane Council wish to speak to you. They say that it's priority 1 urgent." Said Kelly.

"Hmm, that sounds serious. Okay, I'll be down in a few minutes. Just let me get dressed." He said.

Kelly nodded and left for the elevator as the doors closed and Austin and Liara set about getting dressed. After yesterday, both of them where looking forward to a bit of action again.

The holograms of the Arkane Council stood in front of Austin yet again. This time, they looked as though they where concerned or worried about something. Austin couldn't help but feel that what they had to say would not be good.

"Major, we apologise for calling you like this on such short notice, but this is urgent." Said Spartan.

"What's the situation?" Austin asked.

"We've recently intercepted a transmission from an Alliance team. According to what we've been told, they where sent to the ice planet Krelldoor to investigate reports of a Cerberus base there. Just recently though we intercepted a leaked transmission between Cerberus agents subjecting that these reports where willingly leaked. There's a high chance that this whole ting is a trap for them." Tarnack explained.

"Why tell me this, though?" Austin asked. "I thought we weren't on good terms with the Alliance?"

"We're not. The only reason we're taking this seriously is because it... concerns your sister." Said Spartan.

Austin immediately reacted when he heard the word sister. His sister!

"Sarah? What's she got to do with this?" Austin asked.

"She's leading the team. She's still with the N7 program, promoted to Commander now we believe. She's been put in charge of the team and is handling the operation. What worries us even more is that another leaked transmission we intercepted from Cerberus mentioned her by name." said one of the Arkanes.

"Some of fear that Cerberus have planned this. They may be going after her to get to you just like Shadow went after Chief Williams to lure you to her." Said Tarnack.

"Do we know if Shadow's behind this? Because this definitely does sound like her work." Austin asked.

"Unknown. But you could very well be right. If she's back again, it can only mean trouble. Taking down the Collector's may be our top priority, but Sarah Shepard is a fine soldier. She even helped you defeat Saren at the Citadel two years ago and has even worked with your squad a few times. We'd hate to lose such a fine ally." Said Spartan.

Some of the Council agreed and nodded their approval.

"Send me the coordinates. We'll be there in no time." Said Austin.

"Be careful, Major. There's every high chance this is a trap." Spartan advised.

Krelldoor was deep inside the so called Element cluster. It was named that because each planet inside that cluster was all one different element. Krelldoor was an ice planet, Hydro was a water planet with one extremely small island, Scorch was a fire and lava planet, Dune was a desert planet, and even the planet Conifer was all jungle.

As the Normandy cleared the Mass Relay, Austin saw the each massive planet orbiting the cluster's sun. It was a colourful display.

"Well, there's Krelldoor." Said Joker.

"I pick no Cerberus transmissions, or transmissions of any kind in the area." Said EDI.

"Launch a probe on the surface. See if it picks up anything." Said Austin.

EDI did so and a probe launched from the Normandy and into Krelldoor's atmosphere. There was a brief pause while it scanned.

"Scans are coming in now. They show..." said EDI, but she was quickly interrupted when the Normandy suddenly shook violently and there was a small explosion.

"What the hell?!" said Joker.

As Austin regained his balance he could see a ship out of the cockpit of the Normandy. At first, it looked like a small fighter. But as it got closer, the ship was more like a small vessel. And when it got really close, both Austin and Joker's eyes turned to shock.

There, right outside the Normandy... was another Normandy. It was completely identical and size and design to the one they where piloting right now. The only difference was that it had Cerberus colourings instead of Helldiver.

"It can't be!" Joker managed to say.

The Cerberus Normandy fired another shot and that was enough to snap Joker out of his shock.

"Taking evasive manoeuvres! Everyone hold on!" he said.

The Normandy made a sharp rotation to the left, Austin quickly held on to a nearby railing.

A vicious dogfight occurred as both Normandy's tried to outwit one another. The Cerberus Normandy had better firepower, but Joker was definitely the better pilot. The ship shook again as the Cerberus Normandy managed another hit.

"We can't evade this guy forever, EDI! Isn't there anything you have that could give us an advantage?!" said Joker as the ship shook again.

"There may be something. The way that ship is flying would suggest that it is an AI pilot." Said EDI.

"An AI pilot? Cerberus seems far to desperate to get rid of us." Said Austin.

"We're gonna have to head into the ice ring fields!" said Joker as he steered the Normandy towards the large asteroid fields of ice orbiting Krelldoor.

"Mr Moreau, the odds of successfully navigating these fields are approximately 720 to one." Said EDI urgently.

"Never tell me the odds!" said Joker confidently.

The constant movements and collisions of the ice made it extremely difficult to manoeuvre properly. Even Joker did look nervous by this. Austin could even see him sweating a bit. The Cerberus ship also appeared to be struggling as well. Despite this though, it was still keeping up with them. It fired another shot which managed to land a dangerously critical hit on the Normandy.

"The shields are down to 10%! One more hit on rear and the armour won't be able to hold!" said EDI urgently.

"Dell, get those auto turrets online!" Austin yelled into his comm.

Dell didn't reply, but the auto turrets seemed to come on and started firing on the Cerberus Normandy. The enemy ship however returned fire and the whole chase once again turned into an intense dog fight. There was ice shattering everywhere as some of the shots missed their target and instead damaged the ice asteroids.

After what felt like several long minutes, a single massive asteroid could be seen out of the cockpit. It was slowly descending to collide with another one, and the gap was getting smaller and smaller. Despite this though, Joker kept going.

"Joker, what are you doing?! Pull up!" said Austin, realizing that the

pilot was going straight for the gap.

"It's the only way!" said Joker.

The ship continued on it's course at full speed. The gap was getting very small now and didn't look big enough for the large Normandy, or both in this case.

"The gaps' too thin, Mr Moreau!" said EDI.

"Shut up!" Joker yelled.

The gap got smaller and smaller. With some dumb stroke of luck, the Normandy flew right through the gap without even a scratch. The Cerberus Normandy would have also made it through, but the AI pilot failed to react in time to make the correct turn and one of it's engines collided with ice.

There was a massive explosion as the engine exploded on contact. The hull of the Cerberus Normandy was catapulted at vey high speed away through the rest of the gap as the asteroid collided with the other and the whole area became showered with massive ice shards and smaller asteroids.

It seemed as though they'd won as the Normandy spun several times to avoid all the shards that where heading at them at an even faster speed. However, they failed to notice the damaged hull of the Cerberus Normandy in time.

"Look out!" Austin yelled.

But it was too late. The Cerberus Normandy collided very hard with the Helldiver Normandy. Their Normandy's kinetic barriers where fortunately still active and they had been designed for an impact of this size, so they weren't blown up. But the shear size was still enough to knock the Normandy as the Cerberus ship was sent plummeting into the atmosphere of the Ice planet below them.

"The controls aren't responding! EDI, do something!" Joker said urgently as he fumbled desperately with the holographic controls.

There was no reply. The impact had even disabled EDI's systems.

"All crew, brace for impact! This won't be pretty!" said Austin into the ship comm.

The cockpit became engulfed by a lot of fire as they entered Krelldoor's atmosphere. The ship then gave a violent shake and Austin felt his helmet collide very hard with something and his vision went black.

Austin groaned as he slowly regained consciousness. His suit's visual feed quickly came back online and his suit once again went through the process of turning his lockdown off. Despite that his visual feed was fine, all he could see nothing but blackness.

As the Helldiver slowly stood up, there was a spark and the emergency lighting came on. It was faint, but at least Austin could see a bit.

"Major, you okay?" Austin heard Joker ask.

"Yeah. I'm alright." Austin groaned. He only had a small headache. Nothing that was gonna hold him back. He then looked to where EDI's avatar should have been. "EDI, can you hear us?"

There was a very long silence as they waited to see if the AI would reply. Austin just about to ask Joker to check her systems but then EDI's avatar came back to life. The bright blue light from the hologram illuminated a lot more of the cockpit than the emergency lighting did.

"Yes, I can hear you, Shepard." She said.

"Are you okay?" he asked.

"My systems are intact, so I would probably qualify as fine." The AI replied.

"Okay, first things first. What the hell was that?!" said Joker.

"I can only think that it was the Normandy was building when they where working to bring Shepard back to life. They had assumed that he would work for them and had planned to fund his mission, including building another version of the Normandy. The only reason it looked exactly the same as ours is that Cerberus managed to steal the designs." EDI replied.

"Well, however they did it, what matters is what condition we're in.

What's the damage?" Austin asked. "Most importantly, is the heating still on? Because if it's not, Krelldoor's atmosphere will freeze us to death."

"The life support systems and all the other critical systems are still operating. Our engine systems and several others however overloaded during the crash. They are all fixable, but it will take time." Said EDI.

"How much time?" Austin asked, braced for bad news.

"At least 4 hours. Beyond that, I do not know for certain how long it will take." Said EDI.

Austin was silent for a while. Of all the places to crash to crash a ship in this star cluster, Krelldoor was one of the worst. Although there where the occasional research facilities that had been posted on the planets, each one of them was largely uncharted. Each environment was so dangerous that it had claimed the lives of hundreds of exploration teams who had attempted to shed some light on the blank maps. Krelldoor however was the worst out of all of them. The atmosphere outside was twice as cold as the North and South poles of earth combined. Worse still, they had crashed on Krelldoor's dark side.

Each planet inside the Element cluster had a sun which gave light to the planets. And, like every other planet, they had their rotations around the sun and their rotational axis which enabled them to have days and night cycles. An interesting difference however was that these rotations where vastly different from that of normal planets. The planets rotated to have day and night, but they did not have the rotations that could cause seasons and weather changes. As a result of this, each planet in the element cluster had a certain part of it that was always left in the dark and never had any sunlight at all. Not even the planet's moons shone on these parts. Because each planet had them, they where all called dark sides. Due to eternal lack of sunlight, these areas where almost completely lifeless, even on a cellular level. How many people had journeyed into these regions... fewer had returned, most without their sanity.

A thought then hit Austin. The dark sides where ideal places for enemies to hide since it was impossible to anything. Even an earthen satellite would be blind trying to find something in the blackness. Krelldoor in particular had it's hostile atmosphere to boot and there was a storm nearly all the time. With zero visibility and a very low chance of being found by accident by an expedition, how could Cerberus resist.

Austin turned back to EDI.

"Have we managed to get a fix on the Alliance signal?" he asked.

"The scans from the probe where able to get a firm lock on the location from the signal and some communications from the Cerberus Normandy before we destroyed it." EDI replied.

"It is definitely destroyed, isn't it? This ship is the one and the only." Joker asked.

"They crash landed within range of the probe. The ship was completely destroyed. No survivors." Said EDI.

"Good." Said Joker.

"How far is the signal source from where we are? It has to have been sent from the base." Austin asked.

"It is roughly 14 miles from our present location." EDI replied. As she did, her avatar projected a small holographic map of the whole dark side area showing the location of the Normandy and the signal source. At that moment, Griffin came up to the flight deck.

"Major, you alright?" he asked.

"I'm okay. What happened to you?" Austin asked when he saw Griffin's condition.

The whole of Griffin's front was blackened and scorched. Austin guessed that something had gone wrong with his explosives. It wouldn't be the first time they had blown up in his face.

"I was making some more demolition charges when the attack hit. I put them away in my bag, but the crash knocked them out. Some of them... well, I think you can probably see." Griffin replied, slightly embarrassed.

Austin wanted to say something but ultimately decided not to. It wasn't necessarily Griffin's fault. He had after all stored them in his bag so that they wouldn't cause harm. If the ship hadn't crashed, they wouldn't have blown up in his face. He imagined that Dell had most likely said "I told you so." The Arkane had been concerned about the danger of Griffin making his explosives in the cargo bay.

"But you're okay?" Austin asked with a bit of concern.

Griffin nodded. "I'm fine. Don't worry about me, it happens all the time. Although, Dell nearly hit me on the head with a spanner. He wasn't too happy that this happened. He was also a bit angry that one of the charges blew his desk in half, and I may have damaged the simulator a bit."

Austin just sighed. "You really need to be more careful with those things, Griffin. It's gonna get you killed if you're carless." He said.

"Or worse, get someone else killed." Said Griffin.

"Anyway, was anyone hurt during the crash?" Austin asked.

The demolition expert shook his head.

"No. Just a few bruises and some damaged equipment, but nothing major." He said.

Austin breathed a small sigh of relief.

"So what now? Do we continue with the mission?" Griffin asked.

"The ship can be repaired, but we can't wait. Especially if those Alliance marines need aid." Said Austin.

"But how are we going to get there? There's no way the shuttles can fly in conditions like these." Said Griffin.

"The old fashioned way... we walk." Austin replied.

Griffin didn't say anything for a minute. He went to say something, but Joker beat him too it.

"Are you nuts? It's at least 100 below out there!" said Joker.

"Normal people might not survive, but we may be okay." Said Austin. He then turned to Griffin. " Check the planet conditions." He said.

Griffin nodded and went over to one of the nearby consoles in the cockpit. Joker realised which one.

"Wait, not that one! I need to..." he tried to say, but Griffin didn't listen. The demolition expert was a bit shocked when he saw that Joker had left his extranet page open. Especially since it was on the Fornax website with quite a few tabs open.

"Blimey!" said Griffin. He gave Joker a unimpressed but shocked expression from under his skull faced helmet. "Get a girlfriend, Jeff!" he added.

The Helldiver closed the site and used the console to analyse Krelldoor's current condition. There was a minute or so wait before Austin joined him.

"So?" he asked.

"Well, the temperature's far too low for the crew, but with an extra heating unit and another de-icer, we may be okay." Said Griffin.

"I'm sure Dell can oblige." Said Austin. "What about walking distance?"

"3 hours, and that's at maximum. There's a storm on at the minute, and that will really slow us down." Said Griffin. "Worse still, we're gonna be rather blind out there. There's no light at all out there and this whole side of the planet's facing away from the sun. Sun won't be on this side at all for hours."

"Well, we don't have much choice. Besides, we've been trained to handle conditions like these. Tell Alpha Squad to assemble in the cargo hold and get Dell and Sill to work on the upgrades." Said Austin.

Griffin nodded and turned to go, but Austin quickly stopped him.

"Also, tell Dell to outfit X-5 for the snow. We're taking him as well." The Major added.

Griffin nodded. Just before he left though, he turned to Joker.

"Word of advice; Delete your extranet history." He said, much to Joker's embarrassment.

The cargo hold was quite a mess. The crash had knocked over all the crates, the simulator looked as though it had broken one of it's arms and Dell's desk was covered completely in loads of damaged contraptions.

Sure enough, all of Alpha Squad where assembled here. They where currently making sure that their armour was sealed properly. If Krelldoor's atmosphere got in through a leak, they could risk instant frost bite... or worse. They where also adding a few extra accessories to their armour and also some extra armour plating. On close inspection, Austin saw that these where extra heating units and also the de-icers he'd requested. Dell and Sill worked fast. In fact all the Helldivers looked ready and the two Arkane engineers where currently making the proper modifications to X-5 by fitting him with twice as many heating units and de-icers so that he could function properly in the sub zero temperatures without his circuits or limbs freezing up. Dell was also giving him a system upgrade. The robot after all would be their guide. The Helldiver suits didn't have the range to lock on to the signal properly, but X-5 did. He would lead the group and make sure that they kept heading the right way and didn't get lost, especially since that was very easy to do on a planet with conditions like this.

Austin finished fitting the last heating unit onto his armour and readied for what was to come. He made sure that he had everyone's attention as he spoke.

"Listen up, everyone! Krelldoor is one of the most isolated and dangerous planet's in the element cluster, and possibly the galaxy. You've been trained for conditions like these, but that does not mean this is going to be a walk in the park for us. As a result, I'm laying down these simple rules." He said.

All of Alpha Squad made sure to pay attention to this bit. The last thing they wanted was to disobey their leader, especially since the slightest slip up would land them literally in a world of trouble.

"1. Never separate or stray from the group under any circumstances. If you get separated out there, we may never be able to find you. 2. Maintain constant communication with each other. If anything happens out of the ordinary, you report it immediately! Watch your suit temperatures as well and make sure that they stay at a comfortable and warm temperature. 3. Unexpected things are bound to happen. When they do, no on tries to be a hero." He said.

"Yeah. That's his job." Said Dash enthusiastically as he indicated to

Austin.

All of Alpha Squad laughed slightly and even Austin smiled a bit.

"Laugh it up, Dash." He chuckled. He did admire the Scout's attempt to lighten the mood a bit.

"Now, if you have anything that needs doing before this, do it now! It's gonna be a hell of a long walk. You have five minutes!" said Austin.

Some of Alpha Squad took this time to make sure that they had checked everything fully.

The Major then walked up to X-5 who was running a full system check to be sure that he was ready for the freezing cold.

"Ready?" he asked.

"Good to go, Major. Let's kick some ice!" X-5 replied, banging his metal fists together enthusiastically.

Dell simply groaned and face palmed at X-5's pun. He didn't know how Alpha Squad put up with this childish robot.

"Just be careful out there, Shepard. There's no telling what you'll find." Said Sill.

"I appreciate your concern, Sill. But we'll be fine. If your dad built these suits anywhere near as they say, this should just be a very long walk." Said Austin.

Dell simply cleared his throat. He was a bit nervous about this. Helldiver suits where designed for operating in sub zero temperatures and in the snow, but they had never been tested in an atmosphere like Krelldoor. He did try to relax though. All of Alpha Squad had taken every precaution to make sure they didn't get frozen after all. There was very little that could go wrong and a very rare chance of the more likely things going wrong.

With everyone ready, Alpha Squad stood in front of the cargo bay doors, ready to disembark into the cold vastness.

"Clear the cargo bay!" Austin yelled.

Everyone else immediately did so and the hanger bay was soon empty

of everyone but them.

"We're ready to disembark, Joker. Open the cargo bay doors." Austin said into his comm.

"Aye aye, Major. Good luck." Said Joker.

"Be careful, Shepard. Come back alive." Said EDI.

There was a slow grind as the cargo bay door slowly lowered itself. Almost immediately, wind, snow and an absolutely massive amount of cold air entered the cargo bay. Alpha Squad immediately felt the temperature outside of their suits drop completely. The cargo bay door finally hit the ground and Alpha Squad slowly made their way out into the snow. All that could be seen was nothing but blackness. They could only see the Normandy's hull because of thee lights on the outside and inside. Their visibility had turned to zero immediately and they couldn't see anything, not even their own hands.

In an attempt to try and illuminate the path ahead a bit more, all of the Helldivers activated the lights attached to their armour. For this particular mission they'd swapped their usual flashlights for very powerful spotlights. The spot lights did at least make things bit easier and they could now see each other, but only just. Plus, the spotlights only managed to illuminate about 4 metres of the path ahead. Even with all the spotlights on, including X-5's, they could hardly see anything. The only other thing that was visible apart from themselves, was the ground and the snow being blown about everywhere. The wind didn't help either as it kept blowing in their direction and their helmets kept getting covered with snow. The heat from the suits and the de-icers quickly melted the snow, but the clearness was only brief before more snow blinded their visual feed.

"I can't see a goddamn thing!" said Sandra as she tried to wipe away the snow that was collecting on her helmet.

"It's worse for Cerberus than it is for us." Said Austin.

The wind and the snow made it impossible for Alpha Squad to hear each others voices, so the had to use their inter comms to talk to one another. It wasn't a bad thing. They had often done this before on other missions. It also allowed them to communicate to one another without the enemy hearing them.

Austin turned to look back at the Normandy. He could see Joker

waving to them from the cockpit.

"We're clear of the Normandy. Close the doors." Said Austin.

Joker nodded from inside the cockpit and the cargo bay doors raised themselves back up. The huge amount of light that had been emanating from the cargo bay slowly disappeared until the door had completely shut.

All they could see of the Normandy now was the cock pit. Joker simply nodded to Alpha Squad.

"Alright, everyone move out. X-5 will lead the way. Stick close to him, we don't want to get separated out here." Said Austin.

"Twenty bucks says that at some point during this mission, you're gonna be hiding behind him." Said Kraan to Dash.

"Hell, if it draws fire, great! Just means I won't have to shoot it myself." Said Dash,.

"I can still hear you all!" said X-5, not happy at being called it instead of he. He may be a robot, but he had feelings and emotions.

"That's enough!" said Austin sternly.

The whole squad set a steady pace through the darkness for two hours. If it weren't for the storm they would've been there by now. But the shear force of the wind, and the snow blinding their visors every second was really slowing them down. Even with all the enhancements that their suits gave them, the Helldivers where still met with a lot of resistance from the wind. In fact, the wind so strong that Dash almost got blown over due to his armour being the lightest and therefore the easiest to push.

"I'm cold, and I can't see a goddamn thing." Sandra repeated from earlier.

"Quite gryping, Sandra!" said Ventra.

"I like gryping." Sandra replied.

"Knock it off you two!" said Austin.

He didn't blame some of Alpha Squad for arguing with one another.

Cold temperatures like these often did things to people. Nature could be lethal when need be.

Another hour or so passed as the Helldiver's made their way very slowly through the dark snow. It was a tiny bit scary being able to only see as far as the spotlights would allow. Some of Alpha Squad had even tired uses different visions modes, but even night vision made no difference at all. Thermal vision however had been a small laugh when Ventra had joked that Leena looked very hot in that mode. The Quarian Helldiver had said it was only the thermals, to which everyone had laughed. Even Leena had also laughed after realising what she'd said.

The pace was slow, but the mood slowly brightened as Alpha Squad spent the time by chatting to one another. Griffin in particular did his best to keep the conversation up. The conversation eventually turned into stories as Alpha Squad started filling the time with their back stories. Griffin listened intently to this. He had only worked with Alpha Squad for a year after all while the rest of the Helldivers had all worked alongside one another for at least five years. Austin was happy to see Griffin chatting and laughing with everyone as though he'd known them all his life. The demolition expert was settling in very well.

Finally, after 3 whole hours of wandering through the snow, they could see something the distance. Light! It was very, very far off, but light all the same.

"Looks like we're here. Everyone keep your heads down stay cloaked." Said Austin as he and Alpha Squad crouched down, their cloaks activating as they did so. You too, X-5." said Austin as he turned to the robot.

X-5 did so and vanished with everyone else. The next few metres where taken at a slow pace as the group got closer to the complex undetected. As they got closer, they found that it was actually a camp of some sorts. Austin guessed however that most of the facility was below the snow and ice rather than on it. There was one single large building which looked like the entrance and it was surrounded by several small bunkers. A bit like the houses on Horizon and human colonies in fact, only with windows to keep the cold out. There where several large spotlights to illuminate the area and also quite a lot of Cerberus troopers on patrol. They too had exosuits to protect them from the cold temperatures. The snow and the storm made it all the more easier to sneak in close enough. Finally, Alpha Squad took cover behind one of the bunkers. Austin took a small sensor from his belt and threw it into the centre of the camp. Within seconds, a small pulse emitted from it and all the Cerberus troopers where shown on the Helldiver's HUDs.

"No way we can get through without being spotted." Said Alaara. "Too many Cerberus troopers."

"Deal with them. Nice and quietly." Said Austin.

The wind howled fiercely as the Cerberus sentry stood guard. He didn't really see much point in standing guard. Who would find them out here? This was the most hostile, isolated and dangerous places in the world. Still, that didn't change anything. He'd signed on to this job and was getting paid for it, he might as well do it. Besides, it wasn't like he was being asked to do anything unreasonable, all he had to do was just stand outside until the next guard came to do his shift. Then he'd be able to go inside the nice warm huts and either have a warm meal or catch some much needed sleep which he was actually very desperate for. One of the sentries had been stupid enough to not check his armour seals properly and had even fallen through the ice into freezing cold water which had given him a major frost bite. Unable to do his shift, the current sentry had to do it for him.

The fierce wind and heavy snow got even worse as the storm increased a bit more. What the sentry wouldn't give now to have a fire out here right now like the others had indoors right now. Unfortunately, the storm was far too windy to have or even start a fire.

As the storm reached the absolute worst he'd seen on Krelldoor in all his time here, he started contemplated just saying "fuck it all" and go inside until it was his shift that he was meant to be doing. Before he made his mind up however he started to hear something. It sounded like movement of some sort. It startled him at first, it was probably just a small rock or something. However, several seconds passed and the sound didn't stop. This slowly began to worry the sentry. He and all the others had already had the run in with that Alliance squad that had according to what he'd been told had been lured here to lure a Helldiver squad here as well.

It did suddenly occur to him that he had been told to keep an eye out for any silhouettes in the snow since this could be the Helldivers cloaked. Then the sound started to get slightly louder, the wind also started sounding as though something was distorting it, and then there came the unmistakable sound of footsteps.

The sentry raised his gun very slowly as the noise slowly started to surround him. It now seemed to echo all around him.

"Guys, whoever's doing that, stop it! It's not funny anymore!" the Sentry shouted into the wind.

The sound however did not stop and just kept growing louder and louder. He looked around aimlessly for any sign that there was someone else other than Cerberus out there. Nothing but snow, the spotlights, and endless darkness.

As the sentry stopped turning however, he found himself looking at something. A silhouette of some kind. It almost looked camouflaged. Before he could see anything more or react in time, the silhouette lunged at him and everything went dark as the Sentry felt a blade impale him in the heart.

Several more sentries where currently huddled around a small fire that was heating a large saucepan of water that they where going to use for making some warm cups of tea or coffee. Unfortunately, the heating in the bunkers and the normal cooking facilities had been damaged when the Alliance squad had attacked. They would need to remember to get some technicians up from the underground base to fix them. As they waited for the saucepan to reach the right temperature, the door was suddenly flung open.

All of the sentries immediately got to their feet and pointed their guns at the door. They tried desperately to see who had opened the door, but their was no one there. To try and see better all the troopers activated their lasers. Still they could see nothing but the dark snow storm outside.

Then they suddenly seemed to notice the laser dots as they where being shone onto something. Only too late did they notice the three silhouettes inside the bunker with them before they heard the sound of a blade, or a sword, being unsheathed.

Before any of them could react, one of them was suddenly thrown by an unseen force right into the wall. He went completely motionless as he did. Almost as thought he'd been impaled there by something.

The other two Cerberus troopers looked around aimlessly for their attackers, but still nothing.

Then the next one was picked off as the long blade of a sword was suddenly stabbed right through his chest, spraying large amounts of blood everywhere.

The last sentry panicked and just simply fired everywhere, hoping he would somehow hit his attacker. This tactic however was short lived as he heard a twang of released string and he to was suddenly flung right into the far wall by nothing at all. As his back collided with the wall very hard, he felt a severe amount of pain in chest and looked down. For a moment, there was nothing there. He slowly moved his hands to where it hurt and tried to feel. He felt his suited hands touch something.

Then came the sound of an electrical buzz of some kind and very slowly, an arrow of some kind slowly appeared out of thin air. Slowly but surely, it seemed to de-cloak outwards from his body, almost as though it was growing out of him. Finally, the sound stopped and the arrow was fully uncloaked. Seeing now that he had a massive arrow sticking out of his chest, the soldier went limp on the wall and simply lay there almost like a trophy hung up on a wall.

The invisible forms of the Cerberus attackers slowly moved the dead bodies out of eye range so that no one would find them by accident. This however did not work right when one more sentry suddenly appeared in the door way.

"Guys? What's with all the noise?" he asked.

He only briefly saw the already frozen blood on the floor before he hard the loud noises of screams of pain over the loud noises of the wind. As he quickly turned back to the sight inside the bunker he saw the silhouette of an invisible figure brandishing a blade dripping with still warm, red, human blood.

Acting immediately on instinct, the Cerberus trooper bolted the door shut as he ran for it. Just as he bolted the door shut however, another arrow suddenly punctured it's way right through the door. As it shot through, it tore right through the trooper's suit and also ripped off a rather large chunk of his skin. The trooper grunted loudly in pain as the arrow scarred his arm and he immediately felt the killing cold temperatures of Krelldoor on his skin. Clamping his hand over the tear on his arm, the soldier ran for it, daring not to look back as he heard a loud smash behind him.

The trooper ran for the next nearest bunker he could see. He was so frightened that he didn't even notice that the door on this had been forced open as well. He suddenly felt his foot slide as he slipped on the still unfrozen blood of his dead comrades. He was left briefly petrified by the sight of the bodies. He quickly regained his composure however as he spotted another camouflaged silhouette heading in his direction.

The sentry tried to run, but the wet blood on his foot kept making him slip and he tripped on the dead bodies several times. The massive figure toward over him as the soldier tried to crawl to safety. As the figure slowly reached for him, he desperately tried to kick the figure's arm away. In his haste, he kicked the saucepan that was on the fire. The pan full of water went flying, spraying the figure with unfrozen water and the Helldiver's cloak malfunctioned.

The Cerberus soldier looked in astonishment as Kraan seemed to materialize out of nowhere right in front of him. The Krogan looked at himself briefly as his cloak malfunctioned and the Cerberus trooper finally managed to get back on his feet. Kraan roared at the trooper challengingly before the soldier sensed another presence behind him. He whirled around to find another cloaked Helldiver right behind him. He pointed his gun, but the cloaked Helldiver grabbed his wrist and gave it a violent twist, breaking the bones in his arms.

The cloaked Helldiver then gave the soldier a violent punch which smashed him right through the wall of the bunker and out into the cold again. In the distance was the very edge of a cliff. As the Cerberus trooper slowly picked himself up from the small wreckage, the cloaked Helldiver hopped out of the hole he'd just made and landed right in front of the trooper.

The Helldiver reached down and threw away a large bit of debris so that he now had complete access to the Cerberus trooper. The trooper however counteracted by grabbing another large piece of debris and swung it at the Helldiver. Despite swinging as hard as he could however, the debris simply smashed to pieces as it hit the Helldiver's armoured arm.

The cloaked Helldiver immediately returned the attack with a very fast but strong kick which sent the trooper flying. This time however, the trooper was sent right in the direction of the cliff's edge. The trooper struggled violently to slow himself down but he had nothing to grab onto due to the smooth snow and ice. He tried even using the ice pick on his belt but it simply wouldn't dig in. All it did was just go right into the snow and not grab onto anything. The trooper kept trying harder and harder, but still nothing. Before he knew it, he felt his entire body leave the ground and he could only scream as he flew right over the edge and plummeted down into the pitch black abyss.

Austin stood over the edge as he watched the Cerberus trooper disappear into the darkness. With the whole camp now clear of all the Cerberus troopers, he deactivated his cloak and the rest of Alpha Squad also uncloaked behind him.

He turned to face Kraan who was still sparking a bit.

"What happened?" he asked.

"Idiot threw some water on me. My cloak shorted out." Kraan replied.

Austin walked up to Kraan and gave the Krogan a quick scan.

"Should be okay in a few minutes. The water will turn to ice very quickly in this weather." He said.

"So what next? We've got many different ways of approaching this." Said Alaara as she indicated to the base.

"We could just blow the doors off." Griffin suggested.

It seemed however that none of Alpha Squad had forgotten about what happened on the Purgatory.

"And have you set off all the alarms again? No!" said Dash.

At that moment, X-5 came out from behind one of the bunkers and joined them.

"I think we just go in stealthily. We still have the element of surprise after all, unless we go with X-5's approach." Said Alaara.

There was a slight murmur among the Helldivers that X-5 didn't understand.

"Yeah, barging in, face first, guns blazing and getting your friend shot in the ass!" said Ventra.

"Easy for you to say, at least you have a..." X-5 went to say, but Austin interrupted him.

"Alright, that's enough!" he said.

Everyone fell silent as he said it. All that could be heard now was the wind and the storm until Austin spoke again.

"We do this by the book. We go again, find Sarah and the Alliance marines and get off this base without anyone seeing us." He said.

"And if Shadow's here?" Sandra asked concernedly.

"Leave that to me." Austin replied coldly.

Right at that moment however, they started to hear something. A rumbling sound of sorts. Then they started to hear the faint sound of what sounded like train. But that was impossible. Those sort of things hadn't been used for at least a hundred years.

This however was all cleared up when a large monorail train suddenly came into view. It was heading towards the facility at a steady pace. It was only now that Alpha Squad saw the long track rail going from the small base entrance far out into the darkness.

Austin didn't blame anyone for not seeing that earlier. The track was very thin, it was unlit and the snow and storm hid it from sight very well. As the cargo tram zoomed over their heads, Ventra activated his scanner's. The tram was slowly heading for a smaller bunker right next to the base entrance. The doors to this bunker where now open, emitting a faint but definitely noticeable light.

"Or we could just go in that way?" He suggested over the tram's loud noise.

"That would certainly be more sensible than trying to get the main doors open." Said Austin rather loudly so that everyone could hear him.

Just before they could grapple onto some of the cars however, Griffin suddenly shouted out to them.

"Guys, watch out!" he yelled, almost as though something was about to happen.

"What are you..." Dash was about to ask but he was quickly interrupted by what Griffin was trying to warn them about.

The demolition expert had spotted several Alliance demolition charges planted on the tram tracks in the distance. Before they'd been able to do anything though, the tram had already reached them and it was too late.

The whole front of the train exploded as it hit the charges. The train became dislodged from the tracks and the rest of the cars became violently derailed. Surprisingly, there where quite a lot of cars. But then again, this probably was a cargo tram so it made sense for it to have this many carriages. Right now however, that was the least of Alpha Squad's concerns as the force of the explosions sent some of them off their feet.

"Get clear! Run!" Austin yelled as he and the others ran to evade the other carriages as they fell violently from the tram and seemed to land everywhere. More explosions and wreckage littered the whole area.

This was starting to feel like something out of a disaster film as Austin just managed to jump away from a carriage that landed dangerously close to where he'd just been.

"I don't wanna die!" Dash yelled in a panicked voice as he ran.

More and more of the carriages on the tram tracks smashed into each other and then fell onto the snowy ground.

"Liara!" Austin yelled as he found himself separated from the others as two more carriages and a large piece of the tram track landed right in front of him, blocking his path.

He managed to stop just before he crashed into the debris by accident, but he then suddenly noticed a large crate that had landed in front of him. It was filled with several cylinder and rocket shaped objects, and it was partly on fire. One the side of the box it said "Warning: Explosives!"

Without even thinking, Austin turned and ran as fast as he could. The crate seemed to explode as he ran sending flying of his feet and he

landed head first in the snow.

Austin dared not get up as thing started to quiet down again. The last of the tram had most likely come and derailed. Still, Austin simply lay there, a bit shaken by this and he also felt a bit too petrified to move. A sudden loud noise however quickly snapped him out of it. Austin looked up as he heard a loud bang in front of him.

Austin got up slowly and looked to where the bangs where coming from. As he did, one of the extremely bright spotlights on the base shone in his eyes and he struggled to see clearly. From what he could see however, one of the carriages had landed in front of him and it seemed to be shaking. Another loud bang came and the carriage shook again, this time even more. It was a s if there was something inside trying to get out.

Austin was about to do a scan, but at that moment the door on the carriage was suddenly catapulted into the air as another bang smashed it off. It flew up into the air and then landed very hard right next to Austin.

Austin simply stood there as he saw something very big crawl out of the carriage. The light was still shining in his eyes and he could only see the silhouette of what liked a massive creature of some sort. It looked almost spider like from the looks of it having more than just two arms and two legs. It's precise size was hard to tell, but from the looks of things at had to be at least 5 metres tall.

The silhouette merely stood where it was for a moment. Austin dared not move in case this thing hadn't seen him yet. The creature seemed to look in his direction for a moment and he seriously contemplated on running, but it then turned away and seemed to sniff the cold air. Austin could only dread to imagine what this thing was. Although he could only see the silhouette, it did not look alike any sort of creature he'd even seen before. The creature then reared it's head up and emitted a loud ear splitting roar which sounded very close to a scream. Once it had done so, the creature then looked in the other direction away from Austin and disappeared as it hopped down. Whatever that thing had been, it looked like it was gone. At least... for now.

Austin quickly found the others who also seemed a bit shaken from the experience. Dash in particular looked a bit dizzy with shock. "You guys okay?" he asked.

"No significant damage, I guess." Said X-5.

"Okay, first things first... what the hell was that?!" said Ventra. "Accidents like these only ever happened with Earthen trains."

"It wasn't an accident. Someone put some Alliance demolition charges on the tracks." Said Griffin as he fished his minigun out of some of the wreckage.

"Why would the Alliance marines blow up the tram though?" said Dash, finally regaining his voice.

"Lot's of reasons. Most likely to cut off reinforcements." Said Liara.

"That was a cargo tram though. All the markings on the carriages denote cargo and supplies. Plus, my scans show no sign of any other life forms." Said Leena.

"You okay, Shepard? You look like you've seen a ghost." Sandra asked concernedly, noticing how Austin seemed rather quiet.

"I think I did." He replied.

"What?" said everyone.

"There was some sort of... creature in one of the carriages. I don't know what it was, but it was... big. I didn't really get a good look though, I only saw it's silhouette." Said Austin, trying to keep his nerve and trying to pull himself together and stop his minor shaking.

"Well, whatever it was it's no longer in the vicinity. My scans show nothing." Said X-5.

"Do you think there's a shipping manifest on this thing?" Ventra asked.

Leena nodded as she picked up a small datapad. It looked a bit damaged, but functional.

"According to this, they where bringing in cargo and supplies from the next base several miles from here." Said the Quarian. Before anyone could speak however, she continued. "But they had something else as well. Under special authority from the Illusive Man, secret cargo was also being moved here as well. It doesn't really say anything more than that, apart from something about, Experiment 13."

Everyone fell a bit silent. If the Illusive Man himself had ordered something to be transported here under extreme secrecy, it could not be good. Austin however pushed these thoughts aside and his thoughts turned back to the Alliance and his sister.

"We'd better get moving. We've still got a job to do." He said.

All of Alpha Squad nodded and they headed for the entrance they'd planned on originally. The small opening where the tram should've disappeared into was still open. If they where quick, they could get in before it closed.

It stood on top of a very large piece of debris. The small metal creatures that it could see moving below all had their backs turned, so it didn't need to worry about being seen. It was tempted to just attack here and there, being held as a prisoner inside that carriage for so long had made it very hungry. It watched patiently as the metal figures made their way through some kind of opening. As the creature moved a bit closer, being careful not to be seen or make any noise because of it's massive size, it could slowly feel the warmth and light coming from inside. A strong smell also started to come to the creatures nostrils, a smell that easily overpowered the current usual smells of smoke, fire, oil and the freezing cold air. Flesh and blood! The creatures hunger only seemed to grow as it could now smell some proper prey. It watched as the metal figures disappeared through the gap. It considered this for a moment. Would it be wise to go in there? For all it knew, this could just be another trap by those humans who had tortured and imprisoned it ever since it could remember its' first sight and smell from birth.

The contemplation however was interrupted when it saw that the large doors where slowly closing. Moving as quickly and quietly as it could, the creature ran at the entrance and managed to stealthily jump in without being spotted.

The creature gave a very comforting sigh as it felt warm air on it's skin again. Plus, the smell of food got even stronger. Soon it's hunger would be over. The creature gave a small growl as it set off to hunt for it's unsuspecting prey. Sarah Jane Shepard was alone. Everyone tat she'd been with earlier had either been captured or killed. She was really regretting coming here now. This had all started when the Alliance had recently acquired intel saying that a Cerberus base was here. An Alliance team had been selected for this task, and as an N7 marine she'd been put in charge of them.

This mission however had gone to hell almost instantly. This whole thing had been a trap. From what Sarah had managed to learn, this was all a trap for a Helldiver team with her and the marines as bait. Sarah had done her best to fight them off, but all the remaining Alliance soldiers where either dead or currently a hostage.

Sarah was currently wondering cautiously through a corridor. From inside the N7 Death Mask that she wore, her breathing was calm but fast. She was sweating as well with nervousness and fright. Not only had she had failed the team she'd been put in charge of, but something else had happened. She hadn't seen what had happened, but from what she had heard, Cerberus wasn't the only danger in the base. Something had come out of the shadows and attacked the Cerberus troops. Sarah hadn't even dared look and had just run. She wasn't cowardly, but she had been in very poor condition to fight. In fact, her N7 Defender armour was rather damaged from several gunshot holes. Sarah herself though was okay.

A sudden bleeping sound however, made Sarah stop. She'd attached a motion tracker to her assault rifle and it was currently showing something was near. Sarah now slowed to a snail's pace as she slowly continued through the long corridor. As she continued moving however, the bleeping just seemed to get faster. Whatever was near her was getting closer, or she was getting closer to it.

She turned towards a nearby door and the beeping was now so fast that it was just a constant beep. Sarah was taking no chances with whoever this was. Just as she set up to breach however, the door was suddenly smashed open and Sarah found the door collided with her, sending her flying backwards.

As Sarah slowly got up, she looked to the doorway. Standing there was a figure. At first, Sarah couldn't tell because of a lot of smoke. But as it cleared, it revealed a female form clad in some sort of armour. White and black and a few other colours adorned certain parts of the armour. The helmet in particular however sent chills down Sarah's spin as she found herself looking at the helmet of a Cerberus Phantom. This Phantom however was unlike some of the ones that had attacked her and her team earlier though.

This Phantom had a dark grey armour that looked more larger and bulkier than the usual Phantom's who had more slimmer armour. The Phantom's right arm looked almost like a cybernetic arm. It reminded Sarah just a bit of her father, General Matt Shepard of the Helldivers. In addition to this, the Phantom had a battle dress of some kind around her legs, two large shoulder guards, and she also seemed to have a small pony tail of jet black hair sticking out from behind her helmet which oddly had one half of it's eye optics blue, and the other half red. The Helmet itself had a more slimmer design than the usual Phantoms and the eyes where different too. Rather than the design that a normal Phantom had, this one had a design that looked more death like. The Phantom also had two large curved blades of some kind on her back. Of course she also had the usual Phantom sword which was strapped in a holster on her right thigh. Also on the Phantom's back where three spears of some kind. They where decorated by some sort of necklaces with miniature skulls on it, and on the very ends of the spears where real human skulls. One of them even looked like it sill had some blood on it, and another even had it's spine attached. It was not a pretty sight.

The Phantom glared down at the N7 marine. Sarah didn't even stop to consider as she fired several shots at this new Phantom. The shots didn't even seem to have any effect on the Phantom's armour as she made her way over to Sarah. The Phantom's cyborg hand closed around Sarah's neck and threw her against the wall. As Sarah recovered from this blow, she noticed the Phantom walk up to here for another attack. Sarah didn't give he the chance however and she used the end of her rifle like a club and smashed the Phantom in the side of the head. Very shockingly however, this did not seem to even hurt the Phantom and she turned her head back in Sarah's direction.

Before the N7 marine could try again, the Phantom grabbed Sarah's neck again in her cyborg hand and grabbed the rifle with her other, throwing it away as she did do. Both opponents stared at each others masks for a moment before the Phantom seemed to move her head to the side slightly. Then there was a small faint mechanical sound as her helmet retracted, revealing the users scared face.

"You?!" said Sarah in surprise.

Sarah found herself staring into the face of a very old friend of hers.

Tyranny Azula, known these days by the name, Shadow. The cybernetic upgrades from the Illusive Man had helped a great deal. The Phantom had never felt this powerful before. As had already been noticed by Sarah also, she had made a few upgrades to her armour. The cybernetics on her face however did show. They hadn't fully healed from the surgery and Shadow's fierce temper and violent attitude wasn't helping. In fact, the scars where glowing brightly with an evil red tint to them. Only Shadow's blue cybernetic eye stood out, but a few minor implants around her eye also glinted from the scars hadn't fully healed yet.

"Hello, old friend. You don't look to good." Said Shadow. Even her voice sounded all the more evil than ever.

"And you look like crap, Azula. What's happened to you?" said Sarah coldly.

Although the two women had been old school friends a very long time ago, that was passed. Worse, they had parted on very bad terms. To say that they where pleased to see one another would be an impossibly mild understatement.

"Your meddlesome brother, that's what!" said Shadow.

"You let your past haunt you, Azula. My brother's been dead for two years." Said Sarah, trying her best to still breath as the cyborg still kept her grip tightly around her throat.

"How little you know." Shadow grinned evilly. "And how little you will know before I kill you."

"Still angry about the night before break up? Nothing's changed! Cerberus is evil... and so are you!" said Sarah.

Shadow didn't say anything and simply looked at Sarah's death mask.

"You're very wrong, dear Sarah. Once again you put your keen and penetrative mind to the task, and as usual, it come to the wrong conclusion." Said Shadow. "Now if you'll excuse my hastiness, I have a score to settle with your brother."

Shadow then switched hands so that her human hand now gripped Sarah's neck while her cyborg hand was now free. The long metal claws slowly grew out of the mechanical fingers, still dripping with a bit of blood from her previous victim. "Maybe... but not today!" said Sarah.

As Shadow lunged at her, Sarah pulled the trigger on the pistol she'd been holding in her left hand and had been pointing right at Shadow's stomach. It was a trick she'd learned well from her brother to offer one hand, but arm the other. A trick it seemed that Shadow had similarly employed as well, but didn't use in the same way.

Shadow gave a sharp and painful scream as the round managed to penetrate her new armour. She dropped Sarah and her left hand flung to the wound. As Sarah got to her feet however, she saw that it wasn't bleeding.

"A clever attempt. But ultimately pointless." Shadow smiled evilly as her helmet pieced itself back together over her head.

Sarah knew she couldn't possibly have any hope of fighting Shadow at all, so she did the only thing that would be best. She ran. Surprisingly, Shadow didn't run after her, just walked.

The N7 marine had no idea where she was going, nor did she really care, but she had to hide somewhere. As she ran down the stairs and threw a long corridor, she tried a nearby door to hide in, but that wouldn't open. Starting to panic now, Sarah pushed open some double doors. As she turned a corner however, what she saw next froze her right there.

In front of her was the unmistakable cloaked silhouette of a Helldiver. Normally this would've been good news for Sarah. But as the Helldiver uncloaked in front of her, she found herself staring at a very familiar sight. The Helldiver's armour was almost 100% identical to the armour that her brother once wore.

A few differences was that this ghost seemed to look like more... updated. Almost as though it where showing what her brother would look like where he still alive.

Sarah thought she was going mad as this ghost drew an M-76 Revenant from his back. He seemed to head towards her without even showing any emotion. Not wanting to find out whether this spirit came in peace or not, Sarah headed back through the doors that she'd come through earlier. She wished she hadn't however when she saw Shadow had now reached the bottom of the stairs in front of her. The Phantom's cybernetic arm folded open to reveal her mini plasma cannon which she pointed at Sarah. Sarah turned around only to find her brother's ghost blocking her path as well. He too seemed to have his weapon pointed at her. Was this really the end? Sarah just closed her eyes from behind her Death Mask and waited for the inevitable. However, what she heard next in place of an expected gunshot changed everything.

"Sarah, get down!"

Sarah's eyes shot open. Her brother's ghost had definitely said that and it was in his voice. Sarah didn't have much time to debate this though as she just trusted her instincts and ducked without even thinking.

As she hit the floor, there was a loud bang as the ghost fired his weapon. Sarah looked up slightly to see Shadow staggering backwards slightly. The round hadn't damaged her armour, but it had left a mark it seemed.

It then occurred to Sarah that what she had thought to be a ghost had just actually fired a real shot at Shadow. Was her mind playing tricks on her?

Her answer came in the form of her brother grabbing her and shielding her from Shadow's attacks as the Phantom recovered from being shot and fired her plasma cannon at them. Any thoughts of this being a ghost vanished from her head now. This was real. But how could it be? Her brother had been confirmed killed in action two years ago. And she really doubted that it had all been a cover up, even if it had, Austin would've still found a way of letting her and their parents know he was alive. He wasn't that sort of person, he'd never let anyone think for a moment he was dead if he wasn't really.

Question after question flooded Sarah's already confused mind as she felt plasma shot after plasma shot impact against the Helldiver's armour. It didn't even seem to be causing him pan and neither was it damaging him.

Then Shadow's plasma fire stopped suddenly. Her weapon had overheated. The Helldiver immediately reacted by smashing open a nearby door and pushing Sarah in.

"Stay here!" he said.

Once again, it sounded just like her brother. Could it really be him?

Austin turned back to Shadow. He had to admit he was taken aback slightly by Shadow's new attire. She just seemed even more villainous than ever now. The skulls just made things even worse.

Right now though, he was more concentrated on making sure that Sarah was safe. Once he'd dealt with Shadow, hopefully for the last time, he'd explain everything.

Shadow's wrist cannon finally cooled down and she resumed firing. Once again though, the plasma melted upon contact with his shields. Unlike Helldiver cannons, Shadow's was based off of the plans for the prototype which had been stolen after these ones had been discarded because they overheated. As a result, Shadow's plasma was far too weak to penetrate his shields or amour. Any other normal person, or an Alliance marine in Sarah's case would still be obliterated though.

As plasma shot after plasma shot kept melting harmlessly on his shields. Austin fired another shot from his Revenant. Shadow staggered once again as the heat sink hit her hard in the chest. Before Shadow had a chance to recover, Austin fired another one. He fired another one, and another, and another until finally the last one knocked Shadow onto her back. The neon lights on her armour flickered and seemed to go out. That at least meant she was down for now. But Austin knew Shadow too well, she was down but not out.

The Helldiver stood over the Phantom's motionless body as he took a thermal clip from his combat belt and inserted it into the Revenant. Sarah risked a glance out of the doorway to see Shadow's neon lights coming back. Before Austin could react in time, Shadow got back up and her feet and grabbed the gun.

The two opponents glared at each other as they wrestled violently with each other. Austin tried to loosen Shadow's grip while Shadow attempted to yank the gun out of Austin hands. After failing to overpower each other, they simply abandoned the gun and grabbed one another.

Sarah watched as the two armoured opponents smashed one another into the walls, almost punching right through them. The shear strength and force of both of them caused the walls to crumble slightly. Austin then managed to give Shadow a hard kick which smashed her right though one of the walls.

As both opponents disappeared into the next room, Sarah ran for it. She knew that if this was indeed her brother, he'd want her to do this.

Shadow threw Austin to the ground. The cybernetic upgrades had made her stronger than ever and she was also faster. Not to mention that her temper was just as fiery as ever. As Austin tried to get up, Shadow once again grabbed him and threw him out threw a nearby window. The window was in front of an outside walk way, so Austin didn't need to worry about falling to his death.

Shadow it seemed didn't want to finish him off. Her real target was Sarah. As Austin saw Shadow leave, he jumped back in through the window and took off after her, stopping only to pick his Revenant.

Sarah continued running through all the different corridors and down all the stairs. She dared not look back for fear that Shadow was right behind her. Then, things got even worse. Sarah found herself in a corridor that seemed to have no end, and to make things even worse, the lights started to flicker. As the lights went on and off Sarah started to sweat even more. Sarah's running stopped completely and it now turned to a walk. Then to a crawl.

The lights went off. Then on again. Then they went off again for a very long time. Then again they came on. Sarah jumped back in fright as she Saw Shadow standing in the corridor before the lights went off again. There was a brief pause before they came back on again. Shadow was gone and the corridor was empty again. This time though, the lights where very faint. All the lights managed to do was allow the doorways and just a tiny bit of the corridor to be seen.

Sarah didn't moved for a very long time. She simply stood there, petrified with fright. She took several deep breaths before she made a very slow and cautious step forward. The N7 marine instantly regretted that though. Because as soon as her foot touched the ground, the whole complex seemed to shake as a long drawn out, ear-splitting roar echoed throughout the entire corridor and the complex.

Sarah was once again left completely paralysed as the terrifying roar

shook the entire place and she saw her vision blur a bit. Sarah was seriously beginning to doubt whether her sanity was intact now.

The lights then suddenly went off again. This time, they seemed to stay off. Without any way of seeing anything that could attack her, Sarah quickly reached for a flashlight attachment on her belt. She quickly turned it on as she un-holstered her assault rifle and clipped the attachment into place.

Like something in a horror film, or a horror game, the flashlight only made the atmosphere all the more eerie. It only illuminated about two or three metres in front of her.

Austin set a very slow pace through the corridor. Whatever that roar had been, it had not been friendly. Worse still, the lights where out. As if it wasn't hard enough to find Sarah.

His thoughts however where interrupted when his suit detected motion right around the next corner. Austin immediately switched off his flashlight attachments and also switched off the spotlights on his armour.

Very quietly, the Helldiver took cover right at the end of corridor so that the motion he was detecting was right around the corner. He noticed that whoever this was also had a flashlight.

Austin slowly took a very deep breath. He had no way of knowing who this was. If he was lucky, it was Sarah. If he wasn't... well, he'd adapt to the situation.

He took one more deep breath and he bolted round the corner, gun raised.

Sarah jumped back slightly in surprise as her brother jumped out in front of her. In her surprise, she drew her gun. When she saw that it was Austin however, she didn't fire. She still kept her gun trained on the Helldiver though. She wasn't taking any chances. She had to know for certain whether this was truly her brother. For a long time she'd been hearing all these different rumours about her brother being alive, even when he should be dead. Austin instantly put his left hand up in an attempting reassuring manner.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa! Sarah, easy! It's me!" he said quickly.

Sarah was clearly shaking. She was clearly very frightened, confused and probably delirious. It almost made even Austin shed a tear to see his sister like this. What had the last two years done to her?!

The N7 marine very slowly lowered her gun slightly so that her guns flashlight was not shining in her brother's face. It was now that she saw her brother's armour clearly. True enough, her brother had a more advanced look to him. His armour also had a more cleaner look than when she'd last seen him alive two years ago. Still, as she'd found out, people these days could make very convincing replicas of armour if a person was willing to pay enough money. And, as she and her brother had learned in their line of work, appearances could be very deceiving.

"Show me your face." She ordered.

"I..." Austin went to say, but Sarah repeated her words, this time even louder and way more forceful.

"Show me your face!" she yelled.

Austin did not try to argue with Sarah and retracted his helmet. He also holstered his Revenant.

Sarah was lost for words as the Helldiver's helmet retracted and she found herself staring right into the face of her brother. He looked no different than she remembered. He did seem to have one or two new scars, but other than that, nothing different at all.

Sarah quickly snapped her mind back to the situation at hand though. Facial surgery was also popular with enemies.

"How do I know it's really you?! Tell me something only my brother would know!" Sarah demanded.

Austin did not even hesitate to argue. He instantly wracked his brain for something about Sarah that only he would know. Then he quickly came across a memory of when Sarah had revealed a very startling fact about herself. "When you where in high school, you brought a girl home with you. After a long conversation, you revealed that you are in fact bisexual. You prefer that this fact is left secret, and is only ever kept between you and me, our mother and father, and your closest friends." Said Austin.

Sarah was left speechless as she heard this. Only her true brother, her family, and someone she trusted with her own life knew this secret. True indeed, she was bisexual and preferred women as much as she preferred men.

To make sure he was absolutely certain, Austin then added another fact about his sister that only he would know.

"Also our mother always called you by the nickname Sari until you where 12 years old." He said.

Upon hearing this, Sarah eye's went wide with shock behind her Death Mask and she dropped her assault rifle right there.

To Austin utter surprise, his sister then literally pounced on him and hugged him so tightly that he feared she might crush his armour. The N7 marine even removed her Death Mask as she did so.

"You're alive! You really are alive! I can't believe those reports where actually right." She said, now sounding on the point of tears.

Austin wanted to say something, but he ultimately couldn't find the right words and he simply hugged Sarah back just as tightly. Apart from Liara, Austin had missed Sarah more than anyone.

After several long seconds, Sarah released her brother from her hug and Austin got his first clear look at Sarah's face.

She hadn't changed a single bit and she looked just as young and beautiful as she had done two years ago. Her hair looked red than ever and her face was just a beautiful. She had a more mature look this time, but it did nothing to diminish her looks. This was beyond any shadow of a doubt his sister. A sister he loved dearly, and would never abandon again.

"I've... I've missed you so much." He said, doing his best to hold back his own tears. He did hate it when he went all emotional like this. "Where have you been all this time?" Sarah asked.

"Dead! And now he's going back to it!" a voice yelled.

Both siblings instantly looked to the source of the noise. The light's instantly came back on Shadow stood in the corridor. Here where both her targets, right where she wanted them.

Austin immediately reacted and he pushed Sarah behind him. His helmet reassembled as he did so. He turned to face Sarah as he did so.

"Run." He said.

For a moment, Sarah didn't reply. She wasn't about to abandon him now.

"Run!" Austin repeated, this time more forceful.

Sarah didn't need to be told again. She quickly picked up her Death Mask and her assault rifle and ran for it.

Shadow saw her run and started slowly waling towards Austin.

"Not this time, Shadow. You can mess with me, but you will not have my sister!" Austin said in his head.

As Shadow slowly made her way towards him, Austin un-holstered his Revenant and pointed it at Shadow. As he pulled the trigger however, the gun simply clicked. Austin pulled the trigger again, but still the gun clicked. The Helldiver looked at the gun's thermal clip chamber. It was completely empty.

"Aw. What's the matter, Shepard? Lost something?" Shadow laughed evilly as she took a small cylinder object out from under her combat dress.

"I hate it when she does that!" Austin groaned in his head as he saw the thermal clip shine in Shadow's cyborg hand. The Phantom had very sneakily taken it out of the gun when they had wrestled with it earlier.

Shadow tucked the thermal clip back under her combat dress and resumed her advance. Despite the fact that the gun was empty and that Austin didn't have enough time to put another one in though, Austin did not throw the gun on the ground. Instead, he did something that the Phantom hadn't thought of.

Once Shadow was close enough, Austin swung the gun right at her helmet and it hit her with full force. Normally, that would've knocked a normal person to the ground, but Shadow was different. The cybernetics in her body made her three times stronger and more endurable than a Krogan. All the attack did was knock her head to the side a bit.

Austin however, followed this with several more strikes, but still it did no good. After the last strike, the two simply glared at one another.

Austin went for another strike, but Shadow blocked this one. Before Austin could react in time, Shadow brought the Revenant to the side and then gave Austin a hard but very swift kick. Surprisingly, the kick was so hard that Austin was sent flying backwards.

As the Helldiver collided very hard with the floor, he caused several of the tiles and the floor to smash part slightly. Austin was left rather disoriented by this and it took him a while to recover. Shadow noticed this and slowly walked up to him. She stood over her opponent for a moment before she reached down and grabbed Austin with her cyborg hand. Before Austin could do anything, Shadow hauled him up and threw him right threw the wall.

Austin saw that his surroundings where a large open office. Shadow slowly stepped through the hole she'd made in the wall. This time though, Austin had recovered from Shadow's kick and he swung his leg at hers. Shadow was knocked onto her back and she landed very hard on the floor. Austin then rolled back up and he brought his left fist down onto Shadow's helmet. The Phantom spasmed slightly as the fist hit her square in the face.

Shadow however quickly counteracted with a swift kick which knocked Austin off of her. As Austin recovered slightly from this, Shadow rolled over onto her front and quickly got back up in a crouched position.

The two opponents once again looked at one another again before Austin picked up a large desk and swung it at Shadow.

Shadow was still in the middle of getting up as the desk collided with her. However it did very little to damage her. All the desk did was smash to pieces in Austin's hands as it made contact with the Phantom's armour. Austin looked at the smashed apart desk for a minute before Shadow grabbed him and flung him against the wall, smashing apart several more desks as she did so.

As the Phantom pinned him against the wall, Austin gave Shadow a hard punch in the face which sent her off him. Before Shadow had time to recover, Austin grabbed her and threw her half way across the wall, once again smashing up more desks as he did so.

Austin slowly made his way over to where Shadow was slowly getting up. He was so preoccupied by expecting Shadow to trip him up though, that he failed to notice that the Phantom's left hand was glowing with biotics. Austin only noticed too late before Shadow gave him a very hard biotic ally charged punch which sent him flying.

Shadow got to her feet and made her way slowly to where the Helldiver had landed. When she saw the small crater where the body should've been however, there was nothing there. Just as she looked around though, Austin suddenly uncloaked right in front of her and gave her another punch in the face. Shadow was quick to counteract with her own punch however as her cybernetic hand made very hard contact with Austin's helmet.

The Helldiver reacted quickly by grabbing both of Shadow's arms and pushing her hard. The Phantom tired to push back, back Austin's strength and mass still outweighed her own. Wall after wall was smashed and crumpled as the two opponents charged their way through.

Shadow finally managed to get grip on her feet again and she pushed hard. This stopped Austin there and Shadow seized the opening. Using her cyborg hand, she grabbed Austin's helmet and smashed it several times into a wall.

Austin had to admit that this was not going well. He'd been completely unprepared for Shadow's new strength and enhancements. She also seemed all the more determined than ever to kill him. He doubted he'd be able to win this if it continued. He'd have to find some way of losing her and rejoining with Alpha Squad, and hopefully his sister.

The corridors once again shook as another horrifying roar echoed

throughout the corridors. Sarah was beginning to think that Cerberus wasn't the only enemy down here. Having heard this roar twice now, it now sounded familiar to the sounds she'd heard when Cerberus had suddenly been attacked by an unseen creature. Whatever that thing had been, it was close.

Her thought's however where interrupted when she suddenly ran into something hard. The crash knocked her back and she fell. She looked up to what she had bashed into. It looked like a silhouette of some kind. A camouflaged silhouette be more precise. It moved slightly as it looked at her.

"Sarah?" it asked in a strangely familiar female voice.

Sarah looked up in surprise. She recognized that voice immediately.

"Liara?!"

The silhouette disengaged it's cloak and Liara stood above Sarah in her Helldiver armour.

"You're a Helldiver?" Sarah asked in surprise.

"It's a very long story." Said Liara as she helped Sarah up.

At that moment, the rest of Alpha Squad uncloaked.

"You're all here as well?" Sarah asked in surprise.

Before anyone could answer though, another roar echoed throughout the corridor. This time though, it was much louder and it sounded as though it was much closer. Something was heading their way, and it did not sound friendly.

BROKEN WINGS CHAPTER 3

by Tiffany Kennedy of withoutcause@hotmail.co.uk

NARUTO (-???-)Masashi Kishimoto & Shueisha. Original Characters & plot belongs to me. Broken Wings -Re-Write-A modern day Naruto Fanfiction.

Aoi was quick to make friends with Tenten. After that sport match they hung out a lot but Aoi didn't really sit with her friends to have lunch. She was also able to make friends with Sakura during that week but they weren't really close or anything, they just talked when they had the same class. Tenten had told Aoi about her friend Neji. He was off in some boarding school at the moment and Aoi wondered if Tenten liked him. She had also gotten to know Gaara well throughout these weeks; turns out he liked to do a lot of art which was something they both had in common. Aoi sighed. She still hadn't decided on when she would take Gaara out. She saw Gaara sitting by himself in the cafeteria. Naruto was sitting next to him for a while but Gaara seemed to have pushed him away. Aoi decided to sit next to him.

"No artwork today?" she asked him.

"The room is closed," he replied and picked up a cookie. She snatched the cookie away from him.

"I'll take that!" she took a bit and he yelped at her.

"Don't eat my cookie!" he snatched back what was left of it. She laughed at him. He nibbled on the rest of the cookie.

"So when do you want to go out for dinner? Friday?"

"Friday's good," there was almost a hint of happiness in his voice.

"Sure thing, I'll be at yours by six. Oh and you're driving!" she laughed. Gaara shook his head and chuckled a little bit while he added his address into her phone. She smiled. She had never heard him laugh before. She knew she was progressing. They discussed some music for a bit since she was actually bale to whip up a conversation about the Akatsuki's new song. She had the preview tape. The conversation flowed perfectly. Gaara surprisingly found himself enjoying her company. Tenten came and sat down next to Aoi.

"Hey,' she said.

"Oh, Hey Tenten," Aoi replied. She could feel Gaara stiffening and feeling almost awkwardly. Aoi touched his hand lightly, gracefully. It made him blush a little but soon he was comfortable with another person being around, even though he didn't really talk. Aoi removed her hand.

"You know there's a party this Saturday right? Do you two want to come? I know Naruto has been trying to get this one to come," she laughed at Gaara, "I'll text you the details."

Aoi glanced at Gaara who didn't say anything.

"Yeah sure," she smiled. Tenten opened up her lunch box. She shared her food with Aoi and they talked nicely. Naruto sat down next to Gaara and nudged him. Gaara stomped on Naruto's foot and he tried to hide his pain. The blonde gave an awkward smile then grabbed some food. Soon Sakura and Ino came to join them. They all talked among themselves. Gaara and Aoi felt weird being in an actually group.

Once the day had ended Aoi walked home to the mansion. Itachi wasn't home but she could hear a noise up stairs. Aoi dropped her bag and slowly crept up there. She walked up to Itachi's room to find Sasuke in there. A wave of relief came over her for a moment before she frowned. Her face went a bit pink as she noticed that Sasuke was only wearing his pants. She could see every single muscular line on his body. Her eyes widened when she realised she was staring so she quickly turned away. Sasuke walked up to her, his finger rested just under her chin as he made her look towards him. She stared into his eyes then quickly looked away. He grunted and grabbed her wrists pulling her towards him. Her hands rested against his chest. She felt the warmth that carried through him though he gripped her wrists hard, painfully. Her cheeks went even redder than before.

"Remember what you did to me?" he whispered in her ear, almost like a moan. He was able to close the door with one of his hands.

She felt his breath on her neck, just under her ear. His warm, hot breath.

"Do you remember, out there, in the woods," his voice was slow, "We were camping."

Aoi felt her heart beat start to race.

"You know you're the reason I fool around with girls," his ginger traced down her, pulling against her shirt, it created a warm shiver down her, "I'm just like you, you know."

He planted a kiss on her neck just under her ear.

"I had a crush on you, you were gorgeous," he kissed her again, planting a small trail of kisses down her neck, "You knew I liked you, you knew that for a very long time."

He continued kissing her slowly and softly down her neck. His grip on her wrists, were tight and hard. Not the way it had been once before. Sasuke knew she couldn't escape him, he knew how to get her to react a certain way, to get her to moan, to get her to do exactly as he pleased. She couldn't resist being kissed down her neck.

"I thought, you were the sexiest thing alive," he chuckled slightly

before kissing her shoulder.

"Your own lust confuses you," she squirmed. She didn't her best not to moan as he moved his way back up her neck and bit down where she liked it.

"It was midnight," he kissed her again, "You came into my tent and kissed my neck."

His kisses were rougher now and he lightly sucked on her skin as he continued. She couldn't help it; she let out a small moan. He smirked, that Uchiha smirk of his.

"You did it, over and over again, causing me to moan," he kissed her neck and then her shoulder, "You took my hand and took me out into the woods."

His hands made their way under her shirt as he continued to kiss her neck. She was flustered by him. He unclipped her bra and pulled her shirt off slowly. She tried to move away but he gripped her wrists even harder, pulling her towards him. He pulled off her bra and one of his hands started to stroke her side as he kissed her shoulder.

"You told me, that we could do it. In the middle of the woods. Away from everyone," he said in between kisses, "you pulled my shirt off and left a trail of kisses on me."

He pulled her closer and moved his hands to her hips, holding her close. She tried to push him away but it was no use, his grip was strong.

"I gave in completely to you!" his voice changed, "We fucked over and over again, every night in those woods. We would usually end up sleeping in each other's arms but that last night was different. Wasn't it. You got what you wanted but moved me to a different part of the woods, I was completely naked. You took all of my clothes and left me next to a cave to rot. I was out there for a week straight, naked with a bear trying to eat me. Remember that. You left and went home and when we arrived back at yours, I never said anything to anyone but you whispered something in my ear, do you remember what it was?"

He nibbled on her ear softly, "Well that was fun."

He quoted her. She knew she had said it, she knew she had said it to various people. She knew she could never love, she knew she never did love. She remembered blanking out, waking up in random peoples beds, sometimes she would blank out then find herself fucking someone. It was insanity, but it was something she was never able to escape, that was until she found out why she had been liked that. She looked at Sasuke, he had turned it all into revenge, he was a drama queen who blew things out of proportion. His hands made their way around her, feeling every inch of her exposed torso.

"No! Sasuke!" she pushed him back and tried to run, she gripped the door handle but Sasuke's arms wrapped around her tiny little waist. He pulled her to the bed. She struggled but he had her pinned down. His breath was on her ear again. "Sh. Its okay, Aoi," he kissed the top of her ear, "I just want to show you how it feels. To be violated, fucked and played with, like a doll. Then I'll leave you naked on your own to starve and die with no one else but yourself."

Aoi screamed, clawing at his arms, "I'm sorry! I'm sorry okay!? I was different then!?"

"Different? People like you can never change."

"Speak for yourself, you have a different girl here every night, you use them like dolls!"

"The difference is, once I've had my fun, I take care and put them back where they belong," she felt his hand start to move down her pants. He moved on top of her pinning her to the bed as he left a row of kisses down her stomach. She looked around desperately as she tried not to moan. Sasuke was fiddling with her pants as he worked her breasts. This was practically rape. She felt like she was going to cry, she could feel the tears swelling. She saw the alarm clock. She grabbed it quickly and hit him in the head with it. He groaned as he slipped off the bed. She got up and ran out the door. She ran down the stairs and towards the door grabbing Itachi's jacket which she had left on the table. She opened the door and ran out; she could hear Sasuke on her trail. She put the jacket on and zipped it up. She felt Sasuke try to grip onto her but she was fast. She had no idea where she was going. She didn't even know why Itachi wasn't home. She just kept running. When she found herself clear of Sasuke she took out her phone. She looked at her phone and followed the address. It was Gaara's. That was the only address she had.

She reached the street and what looked like to be his house; it was huge, massive really. It looked as big as the Uchiha mansion. She knocked on the door.

"Gaara, will you get the door?" Temari called.

"Why?" he called back.

"Because I'm busy."

Gaara groaned but didn't move from the couch. Temari muttered something unpleasant and roamed down stairs. She opened the door and stared. The girl with electric blue hair was standing at the door. Aoi wrapped her jacket around her, hiding the fact she was wearing a shirt. Temari looked at the poor girl, her hair was messed up and she looked like she was going to be sick. Aoi looked up at Temari; she had dirty blonde hair that was tied up in four pig tails. She wore a shiny black dress that finished just above her knees.

"Uh, is Gaara here?" her voice shook.

"Uhm, yeah he is sweetie," she smiled, "Gaara, your girlfriend is at the door."

Gaara frowned and looked up from the couch to see Aoi. He sighed at the annoyance that had fallen onto his door step. He walked

over to her noticing the sadness in her eyes.

"Aoi?" he was confused at why she was here.

"Gaara. I'm so sorry I came here, I just, I, I don't have anyone else's address," she played with her jacket. Gaara saw that she wasn't wearing a shirt underneath and blushed. He mentally slapped himself; he didn't have time to be wondering about what was underneath her jacket.

"It's fine," his tone was annoyed, "Why'd you come here?"

Temari closed the door and went back up stairs.

"Oh, I just, it doesn't matter, I can leave."

"No, no, um it's okay," he didn't know why but he just wanted to help her.

^{*}I just, it was Sasuke, something happened between us. He just, he won't let it go and he's set on revenge, revenge against me."

Gaara looked at her oddly.

"I, can I borrow a shirt?" she blushed slight. He nodded and took her upstairs to his room. It was relatively clean, surprisingly for a boy's room. He threw a shirt at her and pointed to the door in his room which was the bathroom. She went in there and changed shirts then untangled her hair slightly. She came back in and thanked Gaara. Temari walked to the door and knocked on it.

"I'm going out now, have fun," she winked.

"Don't you think it's weird your dating a higher schooler?" Gaara asked bored.

"He's smarter than you think. And you have no right to comment on my dating life, or I'll comment on yours," she smirked and left the house. Gaara turned back to Aoi; she was looking down at her legs as she sat on the bed. He sat next to her. She looked up and gave him a sad smile.

He just looked at her sadly not knowing how to react or help her. She sighed and latched onto him, her arms flung round his neck and he sat there taken back. He was shocked at her sudden movement but she was a mess. He looked at her awkwardly then extended his arms out. She leaned into him, holding onto him tightly. He put his arms around her, his face becoming a bit red. He patted her back, hoping that would work.

FORCING A YES

Teresa Criss of t.criss22@hotmail.com

Hi, my name is Teresa. I am 20 years old and live in Canada. I am a huge Supernatural fan and as of resent have started writing fan fictions involving my OC (Teresa). I know she has the same name as me but think of it like how Bobby Singer is named after one of the producers. All of my Fan Fictions are on my deviantart page, http://swindchesterlover22.deviantart.com/. In some of my Fan Fictions I have also inserted my Step Sister's OC, Drade, and I take no credit for her.

In this Fanfiction, my OC gets kidnapped by Meg and the Lucifer Loyalest because it has almost been a year since Lucifer was released from Hell and Sam still hasn't said yes.

Disclamer: I don't own anything except my OC Teresa. Supernnatural belongs to Eric Kripke and the CW. Drade belongs to my Step Sister Amber

It had been almost a year since Sam had accidentally released Lucifer from the cage. And since then him and Dean found out that Sam was meant to become Lucifer's vessel so that he could fight his brother Michael (who needed Dean as his vessel) and start the apocalypse. Also since that night the brothers had met up and teamed up with a young brunette named Teresa, who had worked her way into Sam's heart after her brother was killed as a trap that was set by the demons so that Sam would say yes. And now that it had been almost a year, the demons were starting to get restless, and even though Lucifer had told them not to trick or pressure Sam into saying yes, they decided to do it anyway and that Lucifer would thank them after Sam said yes.

"Sam! Teresa! Would you two hurry your asses up! Michael and Lucifer aren't going to gank themselves." Dean yelled impatiently back to his brother and his girl, who were taking their sweet time leaving the motel room that they shared.

Since Sam and Teresa had gotten serious Dean had opted into getting his own room after a few too many times walking in on the two of them. Don't get him wrong Dean was happy that his brother had found someone who made him happy but there were certain things and parts of Sam that he never wanted to see. "We're coming! Sam, stop it! Dean's waiting for us." Dean heard Teresa's voice laugh from the room.

He shook his head as he watched Sam and Teresa come out of the motel room.

"Finally! Drade is waiting for us a few towns over she thinks that she has found Pestilence." Dean called before folding himself into the front seat of his 67 Impala that his father had given him.

"Jeez, hold your horses we're coming." Sam smirked as he opened the door to the backseat of the impala for Teresa.

"Why aren't you a gentle man." Teresa smiled as she climbed into the backseat.

Before he closed the door Sam leaned down and placed a soft kiss on her lips causing Dean to roll his eyes and turn on the radio. All of a sudden "Back in Black" by AC/DC came blasting through the speakers causing Sam to jump and hit his head on the roof of the car.

"Cause I'm back on the track

And I'm getting to flac

Nobody's gonna get me on another rap

So look at me now

I'm just makin' my play

Don't try to push your luck, just get out of my way

'Cause I'm back" Dean sang off key as he tried not to laugh.

"Sam are you okay?" Teresa asked concern in her voice as she watched Sam groan in pain and rub the top of his head.

"Ya I'm fine but Dean might now be for very long." Sam sneered as he closed the door to the backseat and made his way to the passenger side of the Impala. After folding himself into the Impala, he threw his older brother a bitch face as he slammed the door close.

"So where did Drade say she was meeting us?" Teresa asked as she

leaned forward between the driver and passenger seats, while she softly rubs the back of Sam's head.

"Manchester, New Hampshire. If we take turns driving we should be there by tomorrow night." Dean stated as he started his car with a roar and headed on to the highway. Little did the group know that they weren't going to make it to Manchester.

They had been driving for a few hours, when Dean decided to stop for a bite to eat.

"I thought you wanted to get to Manchester by tomorrow night?" Teresa asked as they pulled up to a small diner.

"Don't worry we will. I just need me some pie, if I'm going to deal with Drade and Gabriel." Dean stated as he jumped out of his baby.

Sam and Teresa followed Dean into the diner. After they were shown their seats Teresa excised herself to the lady's room. And as usual as she walked away Sam stared at her hips as she strutted away. He turned to see that Dean was also watching her leave as well, but he quickly looked away when Sam's hand met the back of his head

"Ow! What was that for?" Dean snapped as he rubbed the back of his head.

"You were looking at Teresa's ass!" Sam yelled at his brother.

"What so you're the only one aloud to look at her?" Dean asked.

"Yes because she's my girl!" Sam snapped just as their waitress got there.

After throwing Dean one more bitch face, Sam gave her his and Teresa's order. Dean also gave her his and as she walked away he watched her leave, the same way he had watched Teresa.

"Where's Teresa?" Sam asked after noticing that she still hadn't returned from the restroom.

"She's probably fixing herself up after that early morning escapade." Dean laughed, earning his another bitch face.

A few minutes later the waitress came back with their food and Teresa still hadn't returned.

"I'm going to make sure she's okay." Sam stated with concern as he headed to the restroom.

"Dude! She's fine!" Dean called after his brother but Sam just ignored him.

Sam found the restroom that had a little picture of a lady on it and knocked.

"Teresa? Is everything alright in there?" Sam asked as he placed his ear to the door, but there was no answer. He called her three more times but still no reply, so he reached down and twisted the door handle. As the door swing open a look of pure horror came to his face. The restroom was empty, Teresa had disappeared. Then Sam noticed the faint smell of sulfur in the air and on the mirror something was written on it.

"She is ours now!"

And as he got closer he noticed that it was written in blood.

"Son of a Bitch!"Sam cursed as he ran from the washroom and back to the table where Dean was stuffing his face with the cheeseburger he had ordered.

"So did you find her?" Dean asked through a mouth full of burger.

Sam ignored his brother and kept walking till he was standing next to the Impala.

"Damn it! I should have checked sooner!" Sam thought as he smacked the hood of the Impala.

"Whoa! What did my baby do to you?" Dean cried as he came out of the Diner.

"They have her Dean! The took her while she was in the washroom!" Sam barked as he could feel the rage building inside him.

"Who took who? And what does this have to do with my baby?" Dean asked with a confused look on his face.

"Dean forget about the car! The demons! They took Teresa!" Sam snapped running his hand through his long hair.

"Wait! What? When?" Dean stuttered in confusions.

"When she was in the restroom! We have to find her!" Sam cried jumping into the car.

"How do you know she was taken?" Dean asked as he climbed in after his freaked out brother.

"Cause it reeked like sulfur and there was a note on the mirror saying "She's is ours now!" Written in blood." Sam stated with a sad look on his face.

"It's okay Sammy, we'll find her. Why don't you call Drade and let her know what happened." Dean told Sam as he pulled out of the parking lot.

Sam nodded, pulled out his cell and pressed 6 on his speed dial for the crimson haired demoness. It rang a couple of times before she picked up.

"Hey Samsquatch! What's up?" Drade asked her soft velvet voice coming to his ear.

"We have a problem. . ." Sam started but was cut off.

"Great let me guess, kiddo has turned in to Daphne again." Drade stated sarcastically into the phone.

"Drade this isn't funny! They have her! The Demons!" Sam yelled into the phone making Dean slink away from his very pissed off brother.

"Whoa there Sammy, stop yelling, I didn't catch that last part." Drade huffed out a laugh.

"THE DEMONS TOOK TERESA!!!!" Sam roared into the phone.

"Okay Sam, calm down. Where are you?" Drade asked trying to calm the angry hunter.

"We are just getting onto the highway just outside of Barnstead, New Hampshire." Sam said after taking a deep breath.

Just then a small deep purple portal appeared in the backseat. Drade crawled out of the portal and on to the back seat.

"Okay, I'm never going to do that again." Drade choked as she moved so she was sitting. "So start at the beginning."

As Dean drove down the highway Sam filled Drade in on everything that had happened at the diner, and in his head he was praying that they weren't hurting her to bad.

Teresa opened her eyes slowly, but all she saw were spots. It took a couple of minutes for her to adjust to her surroundings. She tried to reach up and rub her eyes but found that her hands were tied behind her back.

"Wh-what the h-hell?" She asked, trying to shake off the vertigo.

"Well, looks like sleeping beauty has finally woken up." Came a surly voice to Teresa's right.

"Wha . . . Uh." Teresa groaned after turning her head a little too quickly.

"Aww does the little princess have a head ache?" The voice mocked but this time come from right behind her.

"Wh-who are you?" Teresa asked turning her head slower this time.

"Aww, the boys didn't mention me? Now that hurts." The voice whispered into her ear.

Teresa heard the sound of clicking heels until a figure appeared to the right of her. A young woman came into view; she had long wavy black hair that matched her pure black eyes.

"You're a demon." Teresa sneered between her teeth.

"Well aren't you a smart cookie. No wonder Sammy likes you so much." The demon smirked.

"How do you know about Sam?" Teresa barked, pulling at her restraints.

"Oh Sammy and I go way back." The black eyed women laughed.

"Ruby?" Teresa asked trying to shake down one of the silver daggers that she always had in her right sleeve.

"Not quite. Name's Meg. Oh and are you looking for this?" Meg asked lifting Teresa's silver dagger. "Tsk tsk. Looks like the little princess doesn't want to play with me anymore." Meg fake pouted as she stepped closer to Teresa till she was right in front of her.

"What do you want you black-eyed bitch!" Teresa snapped.

"Whoa, when you talk like that it makes my meat suit go all dowy." Meg said seductively as she started to trace the dagger across Teresa's cheek and down her neck.

Teresa gritted her teeth in pain as Meg cut into her skin. Meg kept pushing the knife into Teresa's skin till she was rewarded with a scream. "What I want is for your plaything to finally say yes to Lucifer." She whispered into the trapped huntress's ear.

"That's never going to happen!" Teresa cried through the pain that was running through her body as Meg dug the knife into her skin.

"I'm not sure about that. I mean we took his girl, his source of pleasure. And if the only way to save her is to say yes to Lucifer then I'm guessing he will say yes in a heart beat." Meg laughed finally pulling the knife from Teresa's chest.

Sweat was now rolling down Teresa's face as she tried to regain herself, but Meg didn't give her a chance before bringing the dagger up cutting into her cheek.

"This is going to be so much fun." Meg smirked as two more demons appeared with a tray full of tools.

"Sam please hurry." Teresa prayed as the Demons got closer, knowing that this was going to be a long night.

"Drade why aren't we out looking for her?" Sam snapped losing patience as he and Drade sat in the motel room waiting for Dean to come back from a supply run. "We will Sam. We don't know who took her and why so it's going to take a powerful ritual to find her." Drade stated, a little annoyed at the tall hunter.

"But they could be hurting her!" Sam cried standing up from his chair as he started to pace the room.

"Well that's not my fault. I'm not the one who brought her into this life." Drade said as she leaned forward throwing a look at Sam.

"What is that supposed to mean?" Sam asked walking closer to Drade.

"You know exactly what I mean. She was in danger of getting hurt the second she crawled into the Impala after her brother was killed." Drade stated not taking her eyes of the angry hunter. "If you had told her that she couldn't come with you she wouldn't be in this mess."

"You don't think I tried! I told her that it would be dangerous!" Sam snapped getting in her face.

"Well maybe if you had tried harder she wouldn't be in this mess." Drade growled back, "If you hadn't been thinking with your dick and had been thinking with your head you never would have let her join you!"

All of a sudden Sam took a step back as her words sunk in. He turned his back as he lifted his fist to his mouth.

"You're right." Sam mumbled into his fist.

"What?" Drade asked not sure if she had understood him.

"YOU'RE RIGHT!" Sam snapped turning to face the red head.

Drade took a step back when she saw that tears had appeared in the tall hunter's face.

"You're right. This is my fault. I was selfish. I haven't felt this happy since Stanford. The only problem is I forgot there was someone else I needed to think about. And know the one person that I care most about in the whole world is being tortured by demons if not worse . . ." Sam trailed off as the tears started overwhelm him.

"What are you two?" Drade sneered rolling her eyes.

"Wh-what?" Sam asked through the tears.

"If you promise to stop crying I will make sure to get kiddo back safe and sound." Drade states as she pats him on the back.

Then Dean walks in and stops when he see's is brother crying. "Whoa! What did you do to him?" Dean asked placing a big paper bag he was carrying on the table.

"Nothing, just giving Sammy here the facts of life. So did you get everything I asked for?" Drade asked moving away from Sam and over to Dean.

"Ya I got it. Some of it was difficult to find but Bobby sent it over with Cas." Dean told her as he started to pull the items from the bag.

"Where is he?" Drade asked after looking around but didn't see the nerd angel.

"Well after I told him all about Teresa he kind of just did his disappearing act." Dean stated with a shrug.

"Do you think he went to go find her?" Sam asked wiping the tears from his eyes with hope in his voice.

"Maybe, I had barely gotten the sentence 'The Demons have taken Teresa' before he poofed. Now what is all this for?" Dean asked raising an eyebrow at the eyes of newt, bone of a black cat and other items that he had gotten.

"Like I was telling Sam, the only thing we know is that Demons took her and not even which ones. So it's going to take a pretty powerful ritual to find out who took her and where." Drade told the boys as she started to rummage around the small kitchen till she found a large bowl.

"Okay so there are only two more things I need before I start." Drade said as she arranges the ingredients around the bowl.

"But I got everything on the list." Dean stated with a slight hurt look on his face.

"Well there are a couple things that you couldn't grab for me." Drade

said as she placed a couple candles around the bowl.

"Well what are they?" Sam asked in urgency.

"I'll need something that belonged to her and the blood of her true love." Drade told him as she finished lighting the candles.

Before she had finished with the candles Sam had grabbed Teresa's hairbrush and was about to pull a blade across his hand but was stopped by Drade's hand.

"Whoa, we don't need the blood right now. I'll let you know when I do." Drade said pulling her hand from Sam's and started throwing ingredients into the bowl while chanting something in Latin.

After she had placed all the stuff that dean had gotten into the bowl she placed the hairbrush on top.

"Okay Sam now I need your blood." Drade said with eyes closed as she concentrated all her power on the spell.

Sam held his hand over the bowl and winced slightly as Drade dragged the blade across his hand, but he shook it off cause he would do more then just give blood if it meant that he would get Teresa back. After a couple more minutes Drade opened her eyes as she lit a match and tossed it in the bowl lighting all the contents.

"Teresa is not going to be happy when she finds out we burned her hairbrush." Dean said earning him a bitch face from Sam and Drade.

Then all of a sudden Drade let out a cry of pain and fell to the ground.

"Drade! What's wrong?" Sam asked with concern as he ran to the red heads side.

Sam lifted her head to see that there was sweat running down her face as her crimson hair stuck to it in places.

"What's wrong?" Sam asked again truly worried for his friend.

"T-Ter-Teresa. I know wh-where she is." Drade choked as she spit blood into the ground.

"Where is she?" Sam asked shaking Drade slightly.

"Sam! Calm down. Let her catch her breath!" Dean said grabbing her brothers shoulders and pulling him off of the choking huntress. After the placed Sam in one of the crappy kitchen chairs he turned to help Drade off the floor and on to one of the beds. "Okay first of all, are you okay?" Dean asked with concern.

"Ya, I-I'm fine." Drade stated hanging her head as she tried to catch her breath.

"Hell you are! Now what happened?" Dean asked in a stern voice.

Drade looked up at Dean and was about to tell him to back off but she was in too much pain to argue with him, "Fine, it's a side effect to the ritual. The way I found Teresa was by tapping into her soul. So whatever she was seeing I would and whatever she feeling . . ." Drade trailed off when Sam caught on to her point.

"Teresa!" Sam cried as he felt his heart break at the thought of what the demons were doing to his girl.

There was flapping sounds and the group turned to see Cas standing in the corner. "Don't worry Sam I know where she is." Cas told the group earning himself a bitch face from Drade.

"You couldn't have told us that ten minutes ago." Drade growled as she fell back onto the bed.

Teresa screamed out in pure agony as a knife came across her bare stomach. She was now strapped to a table, her clothes stripped and tossed in the corner of the warehouse.

"It looks like all the women who have been with a Winchester ends up bleeding from the stomach." Meg laughed over the cries of pain.

"You bitch!!" Teresa snapped trying to free herself from her binds.

"Keep talking to me like that and I might have to start sticking this knife somewhere else." Meg sneered seductively dragging the knife lazily down Teresa body.

"Sam is going to make you pay for what you're doing." Teresa threatened trying not to let the fear show.

"Aww I'm so scared now! The great Sammy is going to get me." Meg fake cringed before bursting out in laugher as she dug the knife into Teresa's shoulder.

Teresa cried out again as the tears started to fall down her face. Meg continued to laugh as she continued to torture Teresa. Doing everything in the book till there was a huge gust of wind and flapping sounds from behind the girls. Meg's face dropped when she saw two hunters, a huntress and an angel standing in front of her.

"S-Sam, I k-knew you w-would s-save me." Teresa choked happily as blood dripped from her mouth before she finally passed out from the pain.

"Teresa! Meg! What did you do to her?!" Sam roared lifting the demons blade and taking a step towards the demon.

"Well you see Princess here was stopping you from saying yes to Lucifer so I had to put a stop to it." Meg stated with a smile.

"If your on Lucifer's side then you know that he promised never to pressure or trick Sam into saying yes." Drade sneered as she lifted her own blade.

Meg turned and dragged her blade across Teresa's chest, who cringed at the touch even in her unconscious state.

"It's true that my father told you that but it's been almost a year and we are getting desperate so I decided to take action." Meg stated as she lifted Teresa's head, "And I figured that the only way Sammy here would finally say yes would be to take the one thing he holds most dear to his heart and the only way he will get her back is to do so." Meg laughed letting Teresa's head fall forward again.

"You son of a bitch!" Sam roared as he advanced on Meg.

That's when the rest on the team noticed that there were demons surrounding them. Drade dealt with the two on her right, Dean started in on the two to the left of them leaving Cas an opening to go rescue Teresa. Sam started by throwing a fist into Meg's face causing her to stagger back. Drade got down, stuck her leg out then spun on her hands tripping the two demons, while Dean grabbed the first Demons shoulders as he thrusted his knee into his stomach then turned quickly so that could hit the second demon square in the jaw. Cas held his angel blade up as he made his way over to Teresa, just I case there were any more Demons. When he got to her he put a finger to her neck feeling a faint pulse but he could also feel that she was fading fast.

"Cas get her out of here!" Drade ordered as she kicked one of the demons she was fighting in the side if the head.

"NO!" Meg cried as she was finally able to kick Sam in the gut causing him to fall on his ass. She started to make her way over to Cas who held up his blade. "Come on Clarence. Step away from the princess and why don't you and I have a little fun." Meg smirked seductively as she stepped closer to the Angel.

Sam took this opportunity to grab Meg by the legs and pull her to the ground. She fell with a shriek as she fell face first, her face slamming into the ground. Sam pulled on her feet so that she was now under him.

"You are going to pay for what you did to Teresa!" Sam growled as he raised the demon blade.

"Cas! What's the verdic?" Drade yelled reminding Cas of his job.

"She's not good I need to get her out of here or she may not make it!" Cas said as a pain of sadness for the young huntress came to his face.

Cas turned placing two fingers on Teresa's head and transporting them away. Sam could feel his heart break as Cas's words hit his ears. He didn't know what he would do if he lost Teresa like he had Jessica. Sam shook his head before turning his attention back to the Demon squirming under him.

"I swear if she dies you be glad all I did was kill you!" Sam sneered down at Meg.

Meg reached up and traced a finger down his firm chest. "Can we just pretend that she did so maybe you could treat me like the bad demon I am." Meg smirked seductively.

Sam raised the demon blade but before he could thrust it into Meg's chest there was a huge gust that knocked it right out of his hand.

"What the hell?" Sam snapped looking up from a relieved Meg.

Drade stopped as she had both of the demons she had been fighting in head locks. Dean looked up as the had already killed on demon with the colt and was about to shot the other. They all froze when they saw who had cause the gust of wind.

"Tsk tsk Meg, what have I told you about playing nice?" Lucifer asked as he folded his eight sun burst wings behind him.

"Father! What are you doing here?" Meg asked as she cowered under Sam.

"I heard through the grape vine that some of my children were breaking my one rule." Lucifer said snidely as he stepped closer the to group.

"Well, y-you see it's been almost a year so I thought . . ." Meg stutter as she tried to find under Sam.

Sam looked down at Meg then laughed as he got up and walked over to Drade who still had two demons in headlocks.

"You weren't thinking!" Lucifer barked making everyone step back, even Drade had never seen Lucifer so pissed off. "I told you that I didn't want to push Sam into saying yes! I want him to say yes cause he wants to! Not because you took his girl!" Lucifer snapped as his blue eyes flashed with his Archangel power.

All of a sudden the demons that Drade an Dean were fighting smoked out of their vessels. Meg was about to do the same but was stopped with a snap of Lucifer's fingers.

"You stay right were you are." Lucifer stated with power before turning to Sam. "Sam I just want to say that I'm sorry for what my miss guarded children have done to you and Teresa." Lucifer said with a soft voice that made Sam realize that he truly meant it. "Now you better get going and see how that girl of yours is doing."

Sam nodded as Drade lifted her hand creating on of her purple portals. Dean went first but just as he was about to step through the portal a hand stopped Sam. He turned to see Lucifer looking sad.

"Oh and tell her that I'm truly sorry about what happened to her brother." Lucifer said sadly as he looked at the floor.

Sam smiled at the archangel before stepping through the portal. Drade came up behind Lucifer, "Oh Luci, you do have a heart." Her voice ghosting over his ear sending a shiver down his spine.

Drade huffed a laugh as she stepped through her portal. She stopped quickly when she saw the scene that was playing out in front of her. Teresa was lying on one of the beds shaking uncontrollable while Cas tried to work on her. Sam was trying to hold her down, which only made her shake harder. Dean was pacing the motel room and blood had started to pour from Teresa's body as she shook.

"Okay everyone stop!" Drade's roared causing the room to stop. Drade walked over to the bed and stood behind Cas. "What's going on?"

"Every time I try to touch her to heal her, she screams and starts to shake." Cas said worried about the young huntress.

"It's cause she was just tortured for two and a half days. She must be scared out of her mind." Drade told them as she made her way over to Teresa, who had passed out again. She lied a soft hand on Teresa causing her to shake slightly.

"Drade, please help her. I can't . . ." Sam started as tears appear in his eyes.

"Whoa no more tears. I can save her but first I need a few things from my safe house. Cas I'm going to see what I can do know for her so I need you to go get them." Drade ordered as she grabbed a pad and pen off the nightstand so she could write down all the stuff she needed.

Drade had barley handed Cas the list when he disappeared. She then asked Dean to get her some damp towels.

"And Sam I'm going to need you to talk softly to her. Let her know she's safe and tell her exactly what I'll be doing when I do it. So this way she'll be prepared." Drade told him as she shrugged off her trench coat and tossed it on to the other bed.

Sam nodded then leaned into Teresa's ear, "Teresa, sweetie, it's me Sam. Your okay I've rescued. You're safe."

"S-Sam?" Teresa stuttered opening her eyes slightly.

Sam smiled and grabbed her hand, "Yes it's me!"

"I-I was so s-scared." Teresa choked as more blood spilled out of her mouth.

"I know and I'm sorry I didn't protect you. But everything is going to be okay now. Drade's going to make you all better." Sam smiled softly as tears started to roll down his cheeks.

"Your doing great Sam. Now I just need you to tell her that I'm doing run my hand over her just to she if there are any internal problems." Drade told him as she knelt down next to the bed.

"Did you hear that Teresa. Drade is just going to run her hand over you to see if there is anything major she needs to treat." Sam whispered into her ear.

"O-okay." Teresa said as she closed her eyes preparing for pain.

Drade hovered her hand over Teresa and concentrated, sensing that she had a couple broken ribs and a few ruptured organs, which is why she was still spitting out blood. Just then there was a flapping sound as Cas reappeared in the motel room. He had brought a tray full of stuff that Drade had asked for. Drade grabbed an IV bag and hung in on the wall lamp that was over the bed.

"Okay Now I need you to tell her that I will be inserting an IV." Drade said as she grabbed a needle off the tray.

Sam told Teresa what Drade was doing as she went everything from inserting the IV to inserting blood. After Drade finished Teresa fell asleep, Sam kissed her forehead then pulled the blanket over her. Then he went to the fridge and grabbed two beers tossing one at Drade before popping the top on his and taking a swing.

"So where did Dean and Cas disappear to?" Drade asked as she took a swing of her beer.

"Dean figured that there was nothing for him and Cas to do so they went out to get a drink." Sam stated as he picked at his label. "So is she going to be okay?" Sam asked glancing towards the bed.

"I've done as much as I can, she should heal fine from her wounds but it's her mental state might take awhile to recover." Drade stated as she swirled her bottle.

"What do you mean?" Sam asked not sure if he wanted the answer.

"Sam, she was tortured for two and a half days. It will take a really long time to get over." Drade said sadly.

"This is my all fault. I should never have let her come with us." Sam sighed as he hung his head.

"Not going to deny that fact." Drade stated sarcastically with a raised eyebrow

"I can't let this happen again. I'm going to tell her she can't be with us anymore." Sam said quietly.

"Whoa, did you not just hear what I said!" Drade snapped making Sam look up at her. "I said that her mental state isn't great and what do you think will happen when you tell she can't be with you?" Drade asked raising her eyebrows at him.

"Well . . ." Sam stuttered before Drade cut him off.

"It would kill her! You get it mullet boy, kill her!" Drade stated firmly as she leaned on the table.

"But I thought you said . . . " Sam started to ask but was cut off again.

"I know what I said but that's was before I realized how much she just went through. I mean she didn't pass out till after she saw you there cause that was when she knew she was safe. And just know do you know why I got you to talk to her?" Drade asked softening her tone slightly.

"No." Sam said quietly not looking at her.

"Because I knew that when she heard your voice she would know that she was fine and that we were here to save her not hurt her." Drade stated with another swing of her beer.

Sam hated to admit it but Drade was right. In fact it would kill him to too say goodbye to her. But at least in his case he had Dean but Teresa had no one left except him.

It took almost a month till Teresa was back on her feet, but just like

Drade had predicted her mental state still wasn't perfect. Sam would wake to hear her screaming in the middle of the night and the only way to quiet her was for him to hold her in his arms and rock her. And when ever someone would come up behind her she would jump ten feet in the air. It had been two months since all had started and Sam was starting to get really worried about her so he asked Drade if she could talk to her.

"No!" Drade told Sam for the thousandth time.

"Why not." Sam asked throwing his hands up in frustration.

"Because that is one part of my life I don't ever want to talk about." Drade snapped placing her hands on her hips.

"Please Drade." Sam begged.

"Fine send her over." Drade sighed hoping that if she said yes it would shut the tall hunter up.

Sam smiled, walked outside and grabbed Teresa pushing her into the motel room. Sam kissed her on the forehead before leaving the two girls alone. Teresa shuffled slightly not looking at Drade.

"Okay kiddo lets get this over with." Drade sighed going and sitting on the couch. Teresa nodded and took a seat on the other side of the couch. "So Sam tells me that you are having nightmares."

"Ya, whenever I close my eyes I she that warehouse and that demon." Teresa stated still not looking at her. "I haven't had a proper nights sleep in two months."

"Hey your lucky. It been about 6 months since I last slept." Drade huffed a laugh.

"Wait what?" Teresa asked finally looking at Drade.

"Yep, since I escaped from Dr. Benton, I can't sleep and the only way I can is if I take a swing of this, every 6 months or so." Drade state holding up a small bottle.

"What is that?" Teresa asked again grabbing the bottle from Drade's hand.

"It's a sleeping serum. It makes it so that I sleep but don't dream. So I

think this can help you with your problem." Drade told her before standing up.

"Wow thanks Drade." Teresa smiled at the redheaded huntress.

WEEK OF LOVE, CHAPTER 1: STEWED SEA PRUNES

by Katara434 of waterbendingrules@hotmail.com

My name is Melinda Burnley; I'm 20. I started writing not that long ago. When I was in High School, Senior Year, I entered a writing contest, and became one of the finalists to have lunch with an author. I can't remember his name, but I remember being shocked when I was one of the finalists. I had told my friends and teachers who had participated that I didn't think my writing was good. They had proved me wrong, so I decided to start writing a novel and some fan fictions. I never would have guessed that people would read what I wrote. It filled me with a sort a of proud achievment.

I have been reading for three years, every single day; that's how much of a bookworm I am. I can't live without reading a thick book. My mother sometimes could not under how I can read thick books in only a few days. When I read, it's not the words I'm seeing; it the pictures in my mind they produce. It's like watching a video inside my head. My family always told me I had a big imagination. I guess that's why I enjoy reading so much. I've read romances, mysteries, adventure series. Remance and Adventure are my favorites. Now I would like to give a synopsis of a Kataang Fan Fiction: Week Of Love.

Synopsis: It was a month before Aang's 14th birthday, and the couple have been together since the war ended. They have been getting stronger as a couple the longer they were together. From the icy South Pole, home of the Southern Water Tribe, they go across the world to the Earth Kingdom, where the Council tries to break them apart. Then Aang and Katara fly away to the Southern Air Temple, after Aang frightened the Council, denying them of what they wanted from the Avatar. After Aang's birthday, time has passed, and the couple was stronger than ever. By the times they were in their early twenties, they had been married at a young age, and their love for one another only became stronger as they become closer. Destiny and Fate brought them together, and nothing, on Earth or in the Spirit World, can break them apart. It has been eleven months, one month before Aang's 14th birthday, since the 100 Year War ended. He and his friends had been helping with the rebuilding. Sokka and Suki had decided to stay on Kyoshi Island. They travel the world sometimes if they were needed; but otherwise they stay where they, training new warriors in the ways of the fan and sword.

Toph had opened an Earthbending Academy. Her parents had finally accepted her for who she was, not what they wanted her to be. They gave the money to help Toph open her school, and the lessons have flourished.

Zuko and Mai had been in the Fire Nation, righting the wrongs that the country, or their previous rulers, had inflicted upon the world. The two teenagers were growing stronger, not only as a couple, but as the rulers of a powerful Nation.

As for Aang and Katara, they spent most of their time traveling around the world. That said world was still recovering from the war, and there have been urgent calls for the Avatar and his soul mate. But sometimes even the Avatar gets a break, and today was one of many. As a 'thank you', Aang's schedule has been cleared for the week, seven days of rest and relaxation. Despite his being the most powerful person in the world, Aang was still human, and so he still gets tired. At the moment, Aang and Katara were at Hakoda's home in the South Pole. The village was much more than that. It was more like a city, smaller than the North Pole but larger than it had been while Katara was growing up. The couple was seated at the table made of wood (kindly sent by Earth King Kuei. He gave some building supplies as a thank you for stopping the war.) Aang was eating a salad while Katara was eating stewed sea prunes. He never did understand how she could like that stuff. They looked like something an animal regurgitated in his opinion.

His face must have showed his disgust because Katara rolled her eyes and said, "Come on, Aang. They're not that bad. If you would just *try* them, you would probably like them."

Aang shook his head. "No thanks." His voice sounded a bit deeper and he was at least an inch taller than her. He really has grown into quite a good looking boy of almost fourteen. "The last we had them was when we saw Bato. I thought I was going be sick when I smelled the stuff. What's so good about them?" "Well, for one thing, they're healthy. Second, they don't add so much water weight. And lastly, they have good flavoring."

Aang shook his head again. "Well, you stick with Water Tribe food. I'll stay with veggies." And he ate more of his salad.

Katara chuckled. "A monk through and through."

Aang grinned back. "You know it." And he got a little idea forming in his head and hid his smirk by pressing his lips together. Katara was starting to finish off the prunes and Aang knew her long enough to know that once they're gone, she'll drink the juice. So while her spoon went for the last prune, Aang gently flicked his hand in an almost casual way. The juice flew into Katara's face and she gasped, totally unsuspecting. Her mouth was open and the front of her parka was sodden.

It wasn't until Aang started laughing that she knew what had happened. She narrowed her blue eyes on him and started Bending the juice off herself. "That was so uncalled for! Just because you don't like them it doesn't mean you should be splashing other people with it!"

That only made him laugh harder. It took a while for him to calm down; when he did, Aang saw that Katara was holding a ball of juice. His eyes widened as she hurled the ball at him. Thanks to his reflexes from his various training sessions, he manage to take control of the ball and toss it to the ground. Katara stared in disbelief. She was so close! She almost nailed him right in the head.

She crossed her arms and muttered, "Stupid training."

Aang laughed lightly and stood up to go over to her on the other side of the long table. Placing his arm around her, he said, "Aww, come on. You know I was just playing around. All these meetings take a lot out of a guy. Those old men are too stiff." Katara chuckled, knowing this was true for she had been to those meetings and knew exactly what Aang was talking about. Aang continued. "And you know that life needs fun every once in a while. Besides, we're still kids in some ways. Sure we had to go through war, but at the same time, there is enough room to be just what we are: kids. Gyatso once told me: "Keep your child's heart aflame. Never let things get too serious. Find the time to let go." He meant to have fun, never let friendship or love go."

He blushed at that part. Katara looked a little red there too, but she

was smiling a bit. Aang finished with, "The point is, you have to learn to just let go and be free. That's all there is to it."

Katara hugged him, and felt his arms wrap around her tightly. "When did you become so wise?" she murmured. "What happened to the little twelve year old boy I found in the iceberg?"

Aang chuckled a bit and replied, "Trust me, he's still there, probably jumping right now." Katara had to press her face to his chest to keep the laughs from bursting out. "As for the wise part, you'll have to thank my past lives for that one. I wouldn't be where I was now if it hadn't been for them." Then he turned serious and lifted her face so he could look into her eyes. "But if it wasn't for you, the war would still be happening, I would still be in that ice prison, and the world would have ended months ago. Thank you, Katara, for everything you've done. Your mom would be really proud of you."

Katara had started crying and she buried her face in his monk robes again. She felt him kiss the top of her head and pulled him closer. They stayed like for a while until the tears stopped flowing and her breathing became regular again. Only then did she raise her head and smile at her boyfriend; her hero. "Thank you Aang," she said. "That's the nicest thing anyone has ever said to me."

She tried to kiss him but Aang held her back and shook his head with a look of disgust on his face. She was confused for a moment before Aang said, "I'm not kissing you that mouth until it's clean. You just ate sea prunes!" He stuck his tongue out and Katara laughed.

"And the child is back," she said grinning.

Aang grinned back. "Yes he is. Now get to it. And then we can go penguin sledding!" Katara shook her head, amused, but got up to do what she was told to. She didn't know how he did it; first he was fun, then serious, then fun again. It was a cycle. But she supposed that was what she loved about him: he could balance everything out. But she still wished she could get him to eat stewed sea prunes; but she knew he wouldn't. And she wouldn't change him even if she wanted to.

POETRY is published here thanks to John Mahler's Quotes of the Day

Some people, at least, have enjoyed my Quotes of the Day, so here they are, for your amusement and bemusement: one entire year's worth of quotes. My quotes by the way; nobody else's. These are my thoughts and observations on the world around us: funny, sad, uplifting, evocative, inspiring, silly, and occasionally just plain stupid, they are all here for your perusal: enjoy!

FLYING WITH THOUGHTS

Guada Pillon of giadap14@libero.it

"Illuminated by the beam of sunlight that embraces the moon,

I see you smile at the world and I see diamonds of sweetness that swirl in your honest eyes.

And then I feel my soul wriggles to to free itself from the chains

that Impossible puts to her.

It has also taken to her, wings to fly to him , it has taken the voice to sing his name;

but it has left to her sight and hearing, taht show to her the angelic feeling

and listen to the most beautiful melody ever created, without be able to touch them.

I can feel my heart yelling at Destiny incorruptible and

attempting to make free the soul, without success.

And I feel that is the feeling of love that gives life to heart and soul

and with its deep breaths moves them. just the thought is free from all.

So I let it go, flying through the clouds;

I throw it in the sky as when you release a small dove, messenger of peace.

Only it, can be close to him, limitless, for a boundless time.

It can embrace him, it can wrap a tuft of his hair between fingers,

it can whisper tender words to him, walk with him, talk with him in

waterfront,

splashed by the crashing of the waves on majestic reef.

Sometimes, I wish I could follow my thought ..."

THE HELL

by Aaron Jay of aaron.jay.w@hotmail.com

Cataclysmic love, Interlocking with a passionate kiss. Latten with a fear of what to show upon desire: A mimic, a glare, a lusty fire. Who needs love?

A bastard to hope as the switch is flipped. Give way, not to evil, Not to insanity, But to what I call you.

ONE OF MANY

Kela Lewis-Morin of kelathewriter@hotmail.co.uk

One of Many.

I'm afraid of your judgments. I'm afraid of what you will think of me.

So I make subtle adjustments And become someone you want me to be.

I hide behind my mascara and concealer. Smile and respond when instructed.

I'm not smart or sexy enough to be a leader. So I allow myself to become conducted.

I allow myself to become obstructed. I allow myself to become abducted. I allow myself to become corrupted. I allow myself to become artificial. I allow myself to become superficial. I allow myself to become superficial.

And live behind a carefully applied screen. Because my real face can never be seen.

It's easier to act like everyone else Share the same values and tastes.

Believe the illusion and forget yourself. Because the bare truth is to spiteful to face.

If you dare to stand out, Expect no helping hand outs.

You have to completely give in, If you want to be a part of the world that we live in. After all, everybody just wants to be able to fit in.

COME DANCING?

by David McKinstry of davidm19@uw.edu

If you want to read more, check out my DeviantArt account here: http://fiyerotigelaar.deviantart.com/

In my mind You linger and help guide me In my soul You set a passionate fire When you're gone Full of hope I wait for you When I am lost you are there to find me Your light never fades

And your skin, it glows with warmth of angels Those eyes bear the beauty of a full moon You carry an aura of tranquility

Now, sweet Seraph, will you come dancing with me in the starlight?

APPLES

by UntamedUnwanted of nktgill@gmail.com

Sweet and sensual, The feel of your fingers on my skin. Slow and longing, The trail of your hands on my curves. Languid and helpless, The pulsing of my veins under your masterful strokes.

My love for you is like my love for apples. Juicy, crunchy, delicious... And as dark as a sinner's heart.

ICARUS THOUGHT PATTERNS

by Solilska of solsilence@live.co.uk

This piece was written to point out and see Humanity's power and this is what I came up with:

Some of us seem incapable of real individual thought, but the majority of people I have encountered (Especially my own generation and those younger than me) Have shown great powers in being able to absorb ideas and improve on them, we are advancing at a continually faster rate.

It seems a common trait of the older generation to be stuck in ways of thinking I *consider* ignorant and unchangeable, yet we are still progressing and opening up more and more of our minds daily. It seems nature is too slow for our brain, so we are going into genetics to control our own fate and evolution.

There aren't groups around the world and philosophies based on transhumanism for no reason. We as a race want to step over humanity and be the next step. Although I agree with the vast majority in part, most of us are of very limited intelligence. If anything that spurs me on harder. We never looked at the stars and said "We'll never get to touch that", we looked at the stars and said "I'll get there and I'll walk on that and that is my dream!" That's humanity's real power and strength.

This strength of humanity, this Icarus (Or should I say Daedalus, as Icarus was the foolish boy) way of thinking is exactly what influences me. See the potential in yourself and those around you. To quote; "Who we are is but a stepping stone to what we can become."

A poem wrote with this Idea in mind -Not every man can prove their weight, their worth. With dreams of wings I am forced to walk. I wish to become the challenger of my own gravity, To rise so much higher than fate will allow.

A wall of fate; nothing satisfies. Just because I defy you, doesn't make me wrong. The size of my deed will reflect my ego, Project myself, I must become exactly what I want.

So gravity, I challenge you to keep me down, I defy you to crush my wings! In defiance I scream at my fate; "I'll gain my wings and you'll keep your weight!"

YOUR GUARDIAN DEMON

by Vajavoda

I'm not a knight in shining armor No my armor is black and dented I'm not the selfless martyr No I'm just a little bit demented

My goal in life was just survival Until your eyes I did see And I felt a revival That forced me to decree

I will make you smile Whether you want to or not And I will stop all that are hostile So your pain can be forgot

This is just my way I might be a bit rough But like I said that day I am evil, it is no bluff

So you can try to push me aside But I will not falter I will always provide You're much needed shelter

From all that you fear And all that you hate So don't you worry my dear I will be guarding the gate.

POSTAGE STAMP

Caitlin McGee of cmmcgee_writer92@yahoo.com

An endless road And so many miles between us And still we could not be separated, Still our love for one another Could not be denied Nor hidden away inside. And though I may not be able To hold you close in my arms While this endless road And countless miles Lie between us, I can still write you letters Telling you how much I love you, Because even when I cannot travel Such a long distance To speak to you The words I wish to say, At least a single little postage stamp can.

LAYING IN THE BED I MADE

Kristina Carlock of tinzthecan@gmail.com

are you at war with yourself?

I feel as though I've finally stopped caring (I'm lying) If I'm being honest (which I'm not) It feels amazing (because caring too much left me broken) For now I am content (lonely) without a worry (crying) It scares me only a tiny bit (a lot) 'Cause I just got lost along the way. (please don't tell me that you are on your

way)