

Fanatical Publishing's

Weekly Review

Issue #54

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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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https://www.box.com/files/o/f/594601922/Fanatical_Publishing's_WEEKLY_REVIEW

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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AND NOW, another word from the publisher:

Hello, folks, you may not know this, but I'm a writer too. One of my more popular works is the Lurk series: It's a hodge-podge collection of bad jokes, stupid pop culture references, action, adventure, sex, a quest for true love, and an incredibly ugly hat:

Inigo FitzGibbons was a short, thin man with stringy black hair and a narrow pinched face. A barbarian hero from the western continent, he had come to the Romany Empire seeking his wife. Right now he wore a sword on his right hip, thrust through a red sash worn over a patched brown jerkin and britches. Everyone called him Lurk.

The tailor seemed not to want to touch Lurk's hat(which had made his job rather difficult) but he was eager to get it out of his shop, so quickly repaired Lurk's hat, and passed it over quickly.

Lurk paid him, then popped the hat onto his head and looked at himself in the mirror. "Well now," he said with satisfaction. "Doesn't that look good?"

"I agree with you Lurk," Abraham said.

"You do?"

"Yeah. That doesn't look good." Abraham van Helsing was a scholar-turned-wandering swordsman. A Hitton from the Desolation of Balilael, he was tall with gray hair and clear gray eyes. He wore a heavy tunic of black wool belted over brown canvas trousers and old boots.

Lurk sighed. "Y'know, I'm tired of you guys complaining about my hat all the time."

"Tell you what," Rushell offered. "If you stop wearing it, we'll stop complaining about it."

Lurk turned away and saw Heather standing in the doorway.

Heather was a werehuman, but she looked attractive for all that. She had pale white skin and a build that drew one's eye to all the right curves. Her silky, straight, neck-length hair was the color of coffee with cream, and was worn in a severe, simple style.

Right now she stared at Lurk with a very worried look in her wide orange eyes. "Heather!" he said cheerfully. "How are you doing?"

"I'm fine," she said softly. "Lurk, there is something very important I need to tell you."

"Okay. . ." Lurk said, getting worried. "What's wrong?"

"Lurk," she said carefully. "Stay calm, don't panic. There is something eating your head."

Check it out!

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/search.ep?keyWords=lurk&contributorId=242500&sorter=publicationDate-desc>

IDIOT RIOT: THE DAY THE LAWN GNOME CAME BACK (BECAUSE HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO STAY Dead)

Justin Hillis
of heavymokebishop@yahoo.com

Disclaimer: what the hell. I wasn't sure I'd ever get back on this...but a certain lawn gnome, and a dream, kinda spurred this. Hopefully this won't end up as a big deal. For the record, Po-tae-toes, or Po-tah-toes. Whichever you prefer.

The setting? A castle. Doesn't help the damn thing is on the outskirts of New Pork City. It's like when an area gets cleared out and someone builds a really random, yet dark and evil-seeming castle and/or mansion on the outskirts of town. Still with me? Good. You can take a few moments to visualize this, if you want. I'll still be here.

Moving on.

As you may, or may not, remember, I had just finished the life-story of the Lawn Gnome, and was gonna (eventually) write the life story of Mayor Borin G. McOnion. After that, I was gonna write this major clash of McOnion and his army of clones and Tofu Ninjas (yeah, you heard me right), vs. Corn Dogg and his group of "Ghetto Fightas" (essentially just a rip-off of the Z fighters from DBZ, only ghettofied)...and then there were...the Union of Lawn Gnomes, or the ULG.)

Anyways, that was taking too long, so I just said screw it. I got lazy, I'll admit it. Don't look at me like that. Admitting one has a problem is the first baby step to recovery.

Moving on, again, before I get off on the wrong foot.

Anyways, one day a deranged looking guy in a cloak was pulling a wagon loaded with all kinds of electrical equipment, the kind of stuff you'd see in a lab that was built to specifically conduct really creepy experiments. No, they're not gonna revive the dead with lightning. That's so outdated.

Anyways, he was pulling the cart and-oh, look, there's a sign that says "This isn't dark and mysterious lab equipment." on the side of the cart- noticed a small lawn gnome on the ground. He stopped and picked it up. He took off his headphones, with Lady Gaga blaring out of the ear pieces, and called for his Master.

Said Master was on top of this wagon, having a spot of tea, complete with crumpets. Oh, and some cheese too. Just sitting there, quietly enjoying his tea, when his deranged looking hunchback of a servant called for him.

"...eh? What is it, Egor?"

"My name is E-LITE-GORE! Get it right, you tea-sipping puss-suit! Just because my grandfather used to work for your grandfather doesn't mean you can treat me the same. I am a hunchback rights activist, you know! I don't have to put up with th-

"Yes, yes, I know the whole ordeal. What is it?"

"Oh, I found this on the road. You want it?"

"What is it?"

"A lawn gnome."

"...hmm...toss it in the wagon. I'll find a use for it."

E-lite-gore did just that; he tossed the lawn gnome into the wagon and continued on his way. As they traveled down the main highway of New Pork City, they held up traffic like no one's business. People honked, flipped them off, yelled for them to go back to the circus, called them freaks. Hell, one guy even asked for a foot massage, because it's New Pork City, city of random shit, like having a Forrest Gump rip-off onion for a mayor.

Continuing.

Finally, after much pushing, and pulling, E-lite-gore made it to the mansion. How long did it take? About 2 hours. He was bushed, as he nearly collapsed right there on the spot. The Doctor, still sipping tea, noted this, and snapped his fingers. At once, a group of grapes, pears, and bananas all went to work and began unloading the suspicious looking equipment. One of the grapes grabbed the lawn

gnome and upon seeing what it had grabbed, went into a panic, only to be kicked in the ass. The Doctor grabbed the gnome and carefully placed it E-lite-gore's hands, and gently patted him on the head with a smile on his face. Whether it was sarcastic or not, I'll leave that up to you.

Within a few hours, the equipment had been unloaded, the fruits all paid and sent home...and-oh, hey, look at the back of the sign, it says, "Like hell this equipment ain't suspicious."- while E-lite-gore made dinner, still bobbing his head to Lady Gaga, The Doctor had sat himself down in a chair, with a beer-dispenser hat, but instead of beer, it had tea. He was watching a massive screen TV, watching Mythbusters. As the hunchback activist sat down the simple dinner of a two foot long sub in front of his master, the doctor looked up from his tea-sipping.

"Is it ready?"

"Yes, Master. It is. The lab and mysterious equipment are ready."

"Yeesss...once more, the Burgerstein family shall rule the galaxy....!" (cue an echo on that for best effect, BTW.)

A lightning bolt struck as the Doctor rose from his chair and threw his arms triumphantly into the air. Egor just stared.

"Have you been watching Star Wars again, Master?"

"...Um...no?"

"Sigh....you're a mad scientist. What mad scientist watches science fiction? It's ridiculous, I tell you."

The Doctor looked at him, with equal annoyance.

"Oh, I suppose you're gonna tell me you're Yoda's biggest fan?"

He sipped more tea out of his tea-hat.

They paused. Then they both took a deep breath, with Egor speaking first.

"Ok, ok...let's calm down. We went over this crap at Mad Scientist University. What was it our professor U-nderpaid-Gor told

us? We gotta cool down and talk this over like a civilized mad scientist and servant.”

“If by cool down and talk this over, you mean dress up as Pikachu and sing “Bad Romance” complete with dancing, then hell no.”

“...That was not my fault, Doctor.”

“Bullshit. You were kissing that professor’s ass the entire semester.”

“Was not.”

“Was too.”

“Not.”

“Too.”

A lightning bolt struck, and made them both jump. Sheesh, finally, they shut up. Kids, I’m gonna turn this story around and we will go back home if you both don’t shut up!

...ok, that’s better.

“Look...”, Egor started. “In times such as these, we need to find our common ground, and work from there.”

“I’m not joining you in a Hunchback Rights March.”

“I never said th-hey, what are you implying?”

“I’m a mad scientist, you dolt. Hunchbacks make great servants. Why do you make such a big deal out of hunchback rights when they’re tailor-made to be servants? Sheesh, this is almost as bad as that time I was asked to give up The Beast so it could find a good home.”

“You gave up The Beast?”

“Yes, yes.” The Doctor rubbed his forehead tiredly, and sipped some more tea from his hat. “It was a huge scandal, everyone screaming I give it it’s freedom or I give it to a good home. It was stupidly annoying.”

The Beast had been his greatest creation. His. Greatest. Creation. What was it? I don't know, use your imagination, dammit. Somebody get me a coke or something, I need some caffeine and sugar....oh, there it is.

Sorry about that, moving on.

They descended into the lab, going down several flights of stairs that spiraled into the deep pits of the caverns of the hill the castle was on. Dr. Burgerstein, because I'm just tired of calling him The Doctor, had replenished the tea supply on his hat and enjoyed every sip.

Egor, or E-lite-gor, whichever you prefer, held a lantern up for his master to light the way. Eventually he got to wondering when they'd reach the bottom, when they finally stepped down. After some more walking...they reached the lab. Or so they thought they had. Turns out they had to go up another flight of spiral stairs. Wow, talk about a workout. That'll get your calves burning in no time.

They finally reached the lab, which was conveniently hidden in a mountain, with the peak open...and no, before you ask, no they aren't in a volcano. It was raining, and some rain was on the equipment.

This is why you don't put electric equipment near water, kids. Dr. Burgerstein ignored this, and immediately wandered towards the table, while Egor turned on the lights. Think about that. Electric lights in an open mountain, while it's raining outside. Anyways, he then looked over his Master and watched as Burgerstein slowly and quietly took off the tea hat. His face was mad with glee and insane with anticipation. Egor raised an eyebrow.

"...Are you the Doctor?" he asked.

"Who?"

"Exactly!" Egor clapped with vigor as he got to make a joke.

Burgerstein picked up a lab vial with green, evil-looking fluid in it. His voice got deeper as well.

"This has acid in it. It'll do bad things to you. Horrible, face-

melty-kind-of-bad-things. Make another joke; I dare you. It's time for business."

That shut up Egor fast. He returned to his servant duty, while Burgerstein looked over at the table. It was a medical table, covered in a white sheet. There was a small body in the middle of the table, and Burgerstein was grinning like mad at it. Once more, he would create life....and then the Burgerstein family would once more rise to fame!

...What? You thought I was gonna say they would rule the galaxy? Hell no. That's just stupid.

As they were raising the table with the sheet to the sky, Burgerstein slapped some black latex gloves on. He then walked over to Egor, and place his hand on his shoulder.

"Egor." he started, "I just want to let you know I'm glad you're my servant. At least you're nothing like my last servant, ugh."

"Oh, I remember him. His name was...Pal-something..Palbazeen? Turpentine? Ovaltine?"

"I don't remember either, but I swear, if it wasn't "Turn to the dark side!" it was "Reeeeeeeeeeeeeedddd!" or "Liiighttsaaaber..." or "Go destroy the Jedi!"...it was annoying, I assure you. I haven't heard that much crap on Star Wars since that one time in college where I was forced to sit through all six movies."

Egor shuddered. "I remember that."

Burgerstein looked up at the sheet, and waited.

Nothing. No lightning, nothing up top to say, "Hey, I'm here to grant you a r-up!"

Then he realized he had forgotten to throw the switch.

"Egor!" he yelled. "Throw the switch!"

Egor was off in the corner with his ear-phones on, bobbing his head to Lady Gaga again.

Burgerstein tossed a book at him; that got his attention.

"Throw the SVITCH!!"

“Switch? Are you going back to your German roots, doctor?”

“Throw the damn switch! It is time we made life!”

Egor did so, and lightning rods appeared over the table. Lightning finally struck, once, twice, a third time. The table slowly came down, ever slowly, so slowly that the Doctor had even gotten a pillow for a quick five minute nap. What the hell, wake up doc before I...ok, that’s it. NO CHAIR FOR YOU.

The doctor managed to regain his balance after falling on his ass (that’s what you get for falling asleep on the job. :P). He got up and clambered over the table. His eyes widened as he saw fingers move. The figure under the sheet groaned as it remembered how to move fingers, toes, whatever else.

The Doctor was ecstatic.

“IT’S
ALIVE....ALIIIIIVVVVVVVVVVVVVVEEEEEEEEE!!!!!!!!!!”

Shit doc, I think they could almost hear you over in New Pork City, lower your volume.

Anyways, he ran around the shop, dancing in joy with Egor, clicking at switches, watching the body move more. He was so excited he took a can of tea from his hat, and guzzled it there on the spot. He then threw the can to the side.

“Yes....Yes...I have done it Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandfather Rudolph T-Bone Von Steakenstein! Once more the world shall cower in fear of our name! they mocked us, but now they shall face the wrath of-”

“PO-TAE-TOESSSSSS....”

“- the wrath of po-tae-toes, yes....wait, the wrath of po-tae-toes?!”

That question would not be answered, as the sheet was flung off to reveal..

THE LAWN GNOME! YES PEOPLE, HE’S BACK! Victory dance time, mmmyes.

Instantly he turned gold, going Super Lawn Gnome level 2! He then blasted himself out of there and left the area. Where is he going? Shit if I know. Meanwhile, the doc and Egor just stared at the hole in the mountain wall.

“Shit.” the doctor cursed. “looks like we gotta rob some more graveyards again... Egor, remind me to look over my samples first next time. I think we have just unleashed a horrible thing upon the world.”

Egor was making notes on his iphone, nodding each time he was asked to make a note of something. Burgerstein’s look of insanity and determination mixed together for a few moments as he clinched his glove-clad hands into fists.

“Should that dreaded being return, I shall kill him with my bare hands...if he should go anywhere, I shall find him and end his miserable existence. WITH MY BARE HANDS, Egor! If I must die, then I shall go out in a blaze of glory!”

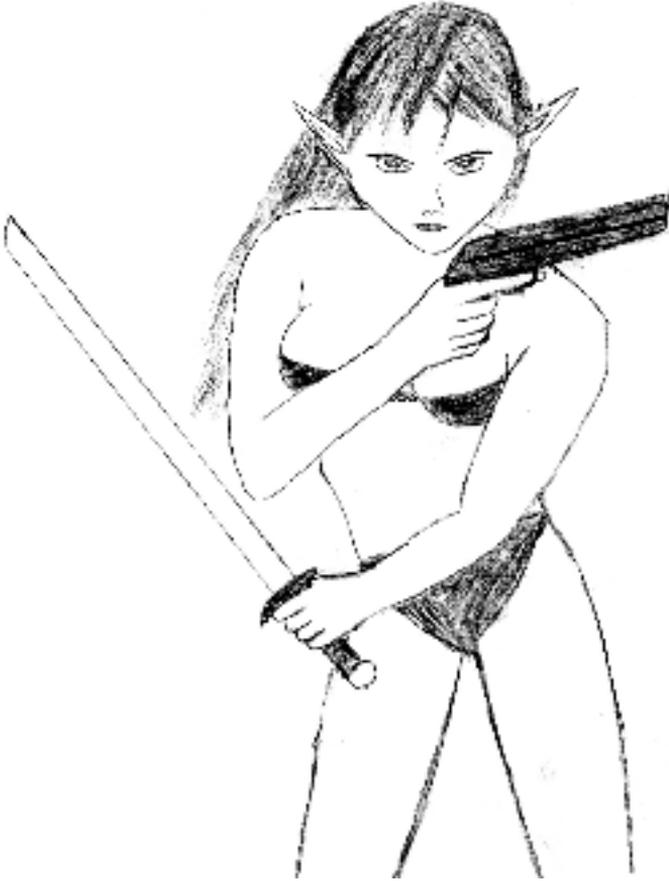
He picked up his Tea hat and wiped some dirt off of it.

“ But first, I need some tea. To the mansion, Egor!”

And off they went to drink tea, talk about what went wrong, and put plans into motion to stop the Lawn Gnome. But let’s be honest here; it’s the fucking Lawn Gnome. Can he be stopped? I don’t know, and I admit to writing this shit.

In any case, let’s give a salute to Tea! Wahoo! Go drink some!

FAN FICTION



or: Leanna's Return

Brought to you courtesy of Gunslinger, the wandering Vigilante.

Check it out: <http://www.lulu.com/shop/jb-hickock/gunslinger/ebook/product-18930890.html>

==sexual content warning==
ME2 HELLDIVER SAGA CHAPTER 21:
KASUMI'S RECOVERY AND THE PRICE
OF REVENGE

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The elevator opened and Kasumi proceeded slowly in. True to what Austin had said, the brief fresh air of Ilium had at least cleared her head up a bit. She was feeling a bit better now and she harboured no hate towards Shepard for destroying the graybox. Besides, she also understood that it wouldn't be healthy for her to be constantly dwelling on the past. Keiji was gone, and there was no chance of bringing him back. She would have to move on.

Ultimately, the thief had got bored of the wait and had decided to do something she'd been doing a few nights. She often made a habit of sneaking around the ship with her cloak engaged. In particular, she'd often snuck into Shepard's quarters and had watched him and Liara having sex. She couldn't help it really. Plus, she was quite impressed when she had seen the sort of things the two lovers got up to and had also been impressed with how much of a man Shepard was.

She was pretty sure that was what they'd be doing right now. Austin and Liara often had sex on a regular basis. Not that it was any surprise considering how much they loved each other.

As the invisible thief looked around though, she found the Major's quarters empty. Strange, she was sure she'd seen the two disappear into the elevator and press the button for this room.

Kasumi stepped in a bit more before she then heard something. It sounded like running water and then she saw a bit of steam coming from the shower room.

"Ah. That explains it." she thought.

Kasumi walked a bit closer and poked around the corner. Sure enough, both Austin and Liara were inside the shower. Both of them were completely naked and kissing and hugging as the hot water cascaded down them. It seemed strange that they'd left the door open, but the thief wasn't complaining.

Austin and Liara both moaned into their kiss as they moved their hands up and down each other's bodies. Austin was paying particular

attention to Liara's behind as he massaged it. Liara meanwhile had one hand on Austin cheek while her other was resting on his chest.

Kasumi simply watched the two for a while. Then she suddenly felt something she hadn't felt for long time since Keiji had been killed, Arousal. She could already feel her nether regions motioning a bit as her gaze travelled lower down Austin's body and spotted his flaccid member. Even though he wasn't erect yet, his length and size was still very impressive. The thief felt herself starting to get wet as she imagined this cock being stroked by Liara or being pushed into her Azure.

Liara's moans started to get a bit more intense as one of Austin's hands now moved from her ass, up her body and started fondling one of her breasts. The Asari returned the favour as her hand travelled slowly down her lover's body and grasped his cock.

"Oh my god!" Kasumi moaned in her head as she watched Austin's cock slowly start to grow longer and thicker as Liara slowly but firmly started stroking it.

"Mmmmm, that feels good, Liara." Austin moaned.

"I aim to please, my love." Liara smiled as her strokes started to get faster.

Austin grunted as he felt his member start to reach its absolute limit. Mind you, it usually did around Liara.

Kasumi meanwhile couldn't take it anymore as Austin's cock reached a near 10 inches. Making sure that she was still cloaked, she gently undid her trousers and reached her hand inside to touch her aching pussy. She found her panties already soaked and her pussy dripping. She gently started rubbing herself as she watched Liara continue stroking Austin's fully erect member. She was starting to see a bit of pre cum oozing out of the tip. Both lovers still continued to moan into their kiss as Liara gave Austin her best hand job so far. It always felt nice when she touched his dick. Such soft hands and the Asari knew how to get her strokes just right.

A long moment passed as Kasumi kept touching herself to the sight of two touching one another in the shower. If only she could join she wasn't willing to risk it. It would simply be better to look, but not touch.

Liara had now pulled Austin's foreskin back and was giving the mushroom head some extra attention. Her wet, soft hands made Austin grit his teeth and he felt himself getting close.

"Oh god! I can't hold on long." he groaned.

Liara and Austin broke apart for air from their kiss and Liara got down on her knees, still keeping her bond mate's cock in her hand.

"Sure you can take it all?" Austin asked slyly.

"Well, let's find out." Liara grinned just before she took gave the cock a small lick causing Austin to moan in pleasure and fall back

slightly against the shower wall.

Kasumi was now increasing the strokes of her masturbation as she watched Liara deep throat the Helldiver's cock. This was so much better than extranet videos. She could practically hear the wet slurps and sucks as Liara took Austin's member right to the back of her throat. Her hands played with his balls as she waited until Austin would let loose. She was taking it slow, but that just made it all the more better for Austin. Slow and tender was often how Liara did it since she loved Austin so much. Austin stroked Liara's head crest tenderly as Liara's tongue licked his shafts head gently. It just felt better somehow. In a way it also made Austin all the more desperate for her to go faster. He was in no rush though. This was just as much fun and pleasure for him as this fun and pleasure for his true love.

Liara looked up at Austin and stared lovingly into his eyes as she continued sucking on his dick. She then gently moved her hands around Austin's hips and grabbed onto his buttocks as she continued pushing his cock all the way into her mouth.

"Oh Liara!" Austin sighed lovingly as he moved his hands gently over her arms and finally around her head. Liara showed her appreciation by briefly letting his cock slip out of her mouth and she gave a slow and lovingly long lick with her tongue.

The Asari slowly started speeding up and she was now starting to bob up and down on her favourite cock at a very fast rate. Austin only lasted a few minutes under Liara's new aggressiveness to his cock before his ejaculation signalled its arrival.

"I'm gonna cum!"

Liara took Austin all the way in and settled there. Austin's cock jerked and he shot a large load into the Asari's waiting mouth. The Asari hummed and moaned onto his cock as she swallowed it.

Kasumi was a bit disappointed that Liara had made him come this soon. She'd hope to enjoy this show a bit longer. Luckily, it didn't look like either one of them was finished yet. Austin immediately hauled Liara back up to eye level. Liara pushed Austin against the shower wall and once again started kissing him. The Helldiver grabbed both of Liara's upper legs and hoisted her up off her feet as she wrapped both her arms around his neck. Austin was now holding the Asari up by her buttocks as his left hand lined his member up with her Azure. Liara's kisses moved down her boyfriend's neck as he plunger her onto his cock, causing her to moan into her kisses.

Kasumi nearly let out a loud moan as she watched Austin dick disappear into Liara's folds. She'd watched plenty of humans fucking Asari on the extranet, but seeing it in person was something else. It was enough to make her arousal climb even more and the speed of her hand rubbing her pussy only increased.

Austin was now maintaining a steady pace as he thrust in and out of

Liara's azure, the water still running down both their bodies. Liara wrapped both her legs around Austin's midsection so that he now no longer needed to hold her up with his hands.

"Oh Goddess! This is so good!" Liara moaned as Austin once again squeezed one of her tits in his now free hand. His other hand kept holding her ass, and even at one point gave it a playfully hard slap. He began thrusting his hips even faster now and he could hear his hips slapping against Liara's as his dick constantly moved in and out of her pussy.

Kasumi had now added a finger to her masturbation and was now slowly moving it in and out. So good! She was finding more difficult to keep quiet though. She had to take extremely deep breaths in order to breathe properly. Fortunately, the sound of the water running from the shower muffled out the noise of her heavy panting. The Thief finally decided to enjoy this fully and she undid the upper piece of her outfit as well allowing her fairly sized breasts to finally be exposed to the warm steamy air. Kasumi accidentally let out a sigh of pleasure as her nipples became even more aroused at the feel of the cool air. Once again though, Austin and Liara didn't hear her as they kept fucking one another.

Liara was now clawing at Austin's back and her kisses had now turned into sensitive bites. Then all of a sudden, Austin could feel the Asari's pussy tighten and clamp down on his wet cock.

"OH GODDESS, YES! I'M CUMMING!" Liara screamed as her eyes smashed shut and her legs squeezed tight around Austin's waist.

Austin slowly eased his member out of Liara and allowed his lover to get her breath back. She still had plenty left in her.

"What now then?" she asked as the water still cascaded down her body. Her beautiful blue skin always looked brilliant when it was wet.

"Get on your knees again. I'd like you to use your breasts." said Austin.

"Oh my god! She's going to tittyfuck him!" Kasumi moaned in her head.

The thief watched excitedly as Liara got down on her knees and pressed both her tits together around Austin's shaft.

Austin immediately started thrusting his hips back and forth as Liara started moving up and down on his cock. The wet sound it made, as well as Liara's sexy moans were really arousing. Kasumi watched hungrily. She really envied Liara now for having such a fine man all to herself. If Austin wasn't already taken she would definitely have made a move on him and would've claimed that massive cock for herself. But no, Liara was the lucky girl. Despite her envy though, Kasumi was very happy for them both. She could tell how much Austin loved Liara and how much she loved him in return. They made a perfect couple.

"Come on, Austin! Faster! Fuck these tits! You know you want to!" Liara moaned encouragingly to spur Austin on. Naturally of course, of it worked and Austin's thrusting increased. At the same time, Liara squeezed her large breasts together a bit more. The wet feel of Austin's cock only intensified now and she could already feel him swelling. He was close to cumming again.

"Oh god!" Austin groaned as he felt the cum slowly creep up his cock.

Liara quickly got the message and increased her pumping speed even more. That was all it took to throw Austin over the edge and he let loose. Liara smiled as Austin shot several short jets over her face. They quickly washed off again because of the shower.

Kasumi really couldn't believe this was happening. Austin had now come twice and had made Liara come as well. Still though it looked as though the couple could do this all night. Mind you, she was still a bit far off from her own release as well.

"What now?" Austin asked, his cock still rock hard and ready for another round.

Liara bent over slowly and spread both her ass cheeks. Austin immediately got the message.

"Your wish is my command, sweetheart. But be careful what you wish for." he smiled slyly as he placed both his hands on Liara's gorgeous bottom and lined his hard member up with her entrance.

"Actually, before we do, I've always wanted to have a union in the shower." said Liara as she turned around and held her bond mates face in her hands.

"I must be dreaming!" Kasumi thought in shock. Was this really what they were like when both aroused?

The thief checked to make sure her cloak was still working. Not only did she want to watch this until the end, but she just wanted to be sure that the couple were' doing this on purpose because they somehow knew she was there. From the looks of things though, they still oblivious to the master thief standing right outside their shower and masturbating to the sight of them having sex.

"I love you." Austin sighed as he wrapped his arms around Liara's waist as they Asari closed her eyes in preparation for the union.

"I love you too. Embrace Eternity!" she said.

Liara opened her eyes and they went completely black. Austin felt Liara's presence enter his mind. Sure nought, two became one.

Kasumi nearly fainted as she watched some sort of pink mist envelop them both. In all her life, even in extranet videos, she'd never seen this happen before. Most likely because the Asari in the vids only did melds. Union was obviously much different.

Liara then once again returned to facing away from Austin and offered him her butt. Austin lined himself up once again and slowly

eased in.

Liara gritted her teeth and gave several sharp intakes of breath as she felt her lovers raging dick slowly enter her.

Kasumi slowed down her strokes and now simply moved her finger out very slowly so that she now matched the speed of Austin. She then added a second finger into play and began to try and envision herself in Liara's place. This only turned her on more as she imagined herself completely naked, bent over in the same way and with Austin's wonderfully massive cock slowly moving in and out of her rear. She gave one of her breasts a squeeze and pinched the nipple as she did so.

Rather surprisingly, Austin did the same to Liara and started fondling the exact same breast in his hand as he kept slowly pushing in. He was still only half way inside Liara at the moment and he was already meeting some resistance. He and Liara had done anal that much, so she was rather tight. The Helldiver could also tell that Liara was finding this a bit painful.

He gently brought Liara's face up to his and kissed her to try and sooth her a bit. It worked and Liara started to moan in pleasure again as she felt Austin's balls start to touch her Azure. He was almost there.

Austin groaned as he gave one more push and he was finally all in.

"You're... unbelievably tight." Austin groaned. His dick felt almost as though it was being chocked. It was a good feeling though for Liara to be squeezing his shaft so tightly.

Very slowly, he started to pull out and then thrust back in again.

"Oh, oh Goddess, you're fucking that ass so good. Harder, you're gonna make me cum fucking that ass." Liara moaned as Austin started to move in and out very gently. All the while, Austin and Liara's tongues kept intertwining with one another as they kissed.

Kasumi slowly started increasing the speed of her fingers moving in and out of her dripping pussy. She would definitely need to change her panties after this and would probably need to get her outfit cleaned as well.

Austin now started to slowly speed up. He then decided to get a bit rougher. He slowly pulled right out of Liara's rear and then thrust back in very fast. Liara nearly screamed at this sudden aggressiveness, but she liked it.

"Oh Austin! So rough!" she moaned.

Austin's other hand moved down to Liara's Azure and started rubbing it. Liara started moaning even more and this only spurred Austin on as he thrust into Liara's ass even faster. The Asari was in so much pleasure that she moved both her hands to her ass cheeks and started massaging them. Normally she'd be happy with Austin doing it, but both his hands were occupied with her boob and her pussy. Austin kept grunting each time he thrust into Liara's tight hole.

Unlike his girlfriend, he wasn't very vocal. He mostly just grunted and groaned where as she moaned and screamed. Liara didn't seem to mind though. Besides, there were plenty of times when Austin had moaned. Whenever he usually came for example and also when Liara stroked his cock.

Kasumi was now fingering herself really fast as she watched Austin fuck Liara in the ass.

"This is incredible! I wish that was me!" the thief moaned in her head.

Liara had her eyes closed and was moaning with each thrust and wet slap sound as Austin's balls slapped against her pussy each time he pushed his shaft all the way in. She was enjoying it so much though, that she afield to notice her hands glowing slightly with biotics while they were fondling her ass. Austin however, did notice and only too late noticed what was happening. He tried to speak, but found himself speechless as Liara's ass cheeks started to slowly enlarge.

"Holy..." Kasumi nearly shouted as she watched Liara's ass enlarge. How was the Asari doing that? She knew a fair bit about Asari, but she had never seen this happen before. Even when watching Austin and Liara as she was doing now, she didn't recall Liara's body turning into that of Matriarchs.

"Liara?" Austin said as he stopped thrusting.

"Austin! Why'd you stop?" Liara moaned desperately.

"Liara seriously, stop! Austin said urgently as he pulled Liara's hand away from her ass. The Asari's eyes flung open and she looked at Austin. Only now did she notice what she'd done. She was lost for words as she looked at her large behind.

"Oops." she said innocently in the same way a small child would say when their parent's had bought them doing something they shouldn't. "Guess I got carried away. No worries. I can fix this." she said as she went to touch her butt once again, but Austin didn't let go.

"No. Leave it actually. You look much hotter that way. Besides, I don't mind a little junk in the trunk, if you know what I mean." he said slyly.

"Kinky!" Liara chuckled as Austin gave her new ass a playful slap. "Although let's complete the image." she said as her hands reached up to her breasts.

"Don't overdo it, love." Austin advised.

"Relax, Austin. It's not like we've never done this before." Liara smiled as her tits started to slowly grow. "Bigger and bigger." she whispered in a very sexy way as her nipples went even more erect and both her boobs started to become even larger than her head.

Kasumi nearly had her orgasm already as she watched the Asari's breasts grow also to the size of a Matriarch's. She was really impressed with herself for managing not to cum from this erotic sight.

Liara let her hands fall away from her now massive tits and once again bent down to let Austin fuck her in the ass. Austin however gave the impression that he was pulling out.

"I am starting to feel tired. But I can manage two more cumshots I think. Besides, we'll be at Zorya soon."

Liara simply smiled.

"Two's not bad. As long as you fill both my holes with your cum, I'll be happy." she said.

"Now that, I can do." Austin smiled as he once again took Liara's massive breasts in each hand and started thrusting again. Liara moaned her approval as she also moved her behind in synch with Austin's hard thrusting.

Kasumi could feel herself getting close as she now added a third finger. This would have to end soon. She'd rather be out of here before the two lovers finally finished their sexy shower and went to get a towel.

Austin was now thrusting into Liara so fast that Liara was nearly screaming.

"Oh Goddess!" she moaned.

"I'm cumming, Liara!" Austin moaned as Liara felt his cock twitch inside her and she then felt his cum painting her insides.

Kasumi watched keenly as Austin slowly slid out of Liara's ass, a small bit of cum dripping out. She was so very close to her release now. If she could time this just right, she'd be able to cum with them as well as they did their last fuck in the shower.

Liara turned around and pushed Austin into one of the shower's corners. He sat down on the floor, still stroking his shaft gently so that it remained erect in all its glory.

"Now for the finishing touch since this'll be the last one." Liara smiled as she kneeled down in front of Austin and took his dick in both her hands.

"No! This can't be happening! She's not seriously going to..." Kasumi thought.

Sure enough though, and much to her sheer delight, Liara's hands once again glowed with biopics and Austin's already large cock started to grow even larger, thicker and longer. A bit of pre cum leaked out of the tip as the organ nearly swelled. Liara finally stopped once she had reached her favourite cock size of 16 inches.

The two lovers smiled at each and Liara slowly got on top. Austin lined his now massive shaft up with Liara's azure and slowly eased in as the Asari gently sat down on him.

Kasumi let out a very quiet but deep breath of pleasure as she watched the almost inhuman penis disappear into Liara's folds. Liara had her back to the shower entrance, so the Thief had a perfect view of Liara's biotically enlarged ass and her bond mates cock disappearing

inside her beautiful Asari pussy.

Both Austin and Liara moaned in union with one another as Austin kept thrusting up into Liara and the Asari moved her hips in time with his thrusts. All the while, the hot water from the shower kept making their skin glisten.

"Keep fucking my pussy! I'm close to my own release! Liara moaned as she kissed her bond mate who was giving her so much pleasure.

"Me too. My cock's always rather sensitive when you make it bigger." Austin moaned.

"I'm close too!" Kasumi thought in her head, imagining that she was part of this.

"Cum with me!" Liara moaned.

Austin made one final thrust and his cock completely erupted inside Liara.

"Aaaaaaaahhhh!" All three of them moaned. Both Austin and Liara's moans were loud enough that they didn't hear Kasumi moan with them as she too had her orgasm.

Some of Austin's cum leaked out Liara's azure and slowly ricked down Austin's cock. Kasumi licked her lips as she watched it.

"Oh, I enjoyed that immensely." Austin panted as he stroked Liara's beautiful face lovingly. The two lovers remained where they were in the corner of the shower and simply hugged one another affectionately, the water starting to get a bit cold as the warm water ran out.

"So did I, Shep. If only you knew." Kasumi thought as she quietly zipped her uniform back up and left the room. This was something she would not easily forget.

Griffin was Austin's first choice for accompanying him and Zaeed on this mission due to his Blue Suns expertise. Finally, he felt it best to top it off with X-5. The Hellhound dropship gently touched down and the doors opened. In the distance, they could see the damaged tower of the refinery.

"Tapping into Blue Suns communications. Stay tight, and look out for ambushes." Said Zaeed as he started hacking into the communications channel.

Everyone unholstered their weapons and slowly started proceeding through the jungle.

"Squad Bravo, a shuttle landed near your location. Check it out" said a voice over the radio.

"Here we go. Keep close." said Zaeed.

The jungle was actually rather pretty considering the circumstances they were here under. There was the gentle sound of birds chirping and Austin did notice a few Pyjaks running around and some even

climbing the trees.

Eventually, the group came across an unwelcome sight. Several dead bodies of some of the refinery workers.

"Shot in the back and left to rot. That's definitely Vido's style." Zaeed commented. "Let's push ahead."

"Command to bravo. Take position. Likely these people are not runaways." came Vido's voice.

There was a small lookout post ahead, but it wasn't anything they couldn't handle. After dealing with them, they came across a bridge.

"This is Commander Santiago. If any of you retreat while the intruders are still alive, I'll kill you myself." said Vido's voice. Zaeed motioned for Austin hold the bridge for a minute. The Helldiver once again pressed the panel and the bridge stopped.

"Vido. Sounds like he hasn't changed." said Zaeed.

"I get the feeling you have a past with this Vido." said Austin.

"I knew he was a sadistic bastard back when we started the Blue Suns. The Suns only got meaner after he staged his little coup twenty years ago. So, yeah. We have a past." said Zaeed.

"Twenty years is a long time to hold a Grudge." said Austin.

"A grudge?! Vido turned my own men against me! He paid six of them to restrain me while he put a gun to my head and pulled the trigger! For twenty years, I've seen that bastard every time I closed my eyes. Every time I sighted down on a target. Every time I heard a gunshot. Don't you call that a goddamn "grudge!" Zaeed shouted angrily.

"You survived a gunshot to the head?" Austin asked.

"Where the hell do you think I go this from?" Zaeed asked as he indicated to his blind eye and the massive scar on the right side of his face. "Besides, you pretty much survived your ship getting disintegrated. The stubborn enough person can survive just about anything. Rage is a hell of an anaesthetic."

"Hang on, if you founded the Blue Suns, how come I've never heard of you? I should know after all, I was a Sun once before I became a Helldiver." Griffin asked.

"Because it's not common knowledge. Vido wiped me out of the records. He ran the books, I led the men. Worked real well for a while. Then Vido decided to start hiring Batarians. Cheaper labour, he said. Goddamn terrorist, I said." Zaeed explained.

"Well, at least we agree on that." said Griffin.

"We'd better get moving." said Austin as he once again captivated the bridge and it reached the other side.

"Yes sir." Griffin nodded.

"They're into southern access. All squads mass at the gatehouse! Now!" said Vido.

"They know we're here."

"Bring it on, you son of a bitch!" said Zaeed as the group crossed the bridge.

"Squads Charlie, Delta. Mass at the gatehouse." they overheard one of the teams say.

It was once again a long walk through the jungle. The occasional views and the scenery were very nice though. Austin occasionally risked a few glances to take pictures using his helmet's visor. Maybe one day he would put these in a diary. Pretty soon, they came to the entrance. It was a heavily fortified door.

"Griffin, what do you think?" Austin asked.

The demolition expert looked at the door for a few seconds as he examined it. He then walked up to the door and put his helmet right up close to it. Griffin then banged gently on it a few times as he tested how thick and strong it was.

"Hmm, strong. Very strong. Blue Suns certainly like to keep people out of their bases." Griffin commented as he stood back.

"Can you blow through it?" Austin asked.

"Perhaps." the demolition expert said as he examined how much explosives he had. He looked at the small device in his hand, then back at the door.

"I could blast that open if I had about 200 of these. Problem is, I've only got about... 10." he said. "Plus, 5 of my own. Still not strong enough to blow something this thick."

"Let me give it a try." said X-5.

The robot walked up to the door and started to force it open. He grunted rather loudly as the door slowly started to creak. The metal creaked very loudly and was eventually forced right open. If Austin didn't know that it was reinforced metal, he'd have easily thought it was just foil the way that X-5 ripped it apart. It did scare him sometimes that X-5 was this strong. He was glad that the robot was on their side. God knows how much death and destruction he'd cause in the hands of the wrong people.

Finally, X-5 had managed to force the door open enough that they could all fit through.

"I'm glad you're on our side." said Griffin.

"Yeah, yeah. Machines are strong, we get it." said Zaeed sarcastically.

"I'm not a machine, old man. I'm a robot. There's a big difference." said X-5 crossly.

"Just ignore him, X-5." said Austin calmly.

Zaeed immediately went through the gap first. The rest quickly followed.

They found themselves in a massive loading bay of sorts. On a high balcony where several Blue Suns troopers. Among them was one without a helmet. Austin noticed Griffin's look of hatred at them as

the demolition expert was reminded of his wrong doings during his brief time with them.

"Zaeed Massani. You finally tracked me down." said the leader. There was no doubting that this was the man Zaeed wanted dead. Vido Santiago.

"Vido." said Zaeed cold as he reached for his rifle. He hesitated though when he saw how many men Vido had with him.

"Don't be stupid, Zaeed. I have a whole company of bloodthirsty bastards behind me, ready to kill or be killed on my command." said Vido. Zaeed looked around as he scanned the area. "Actually, take your shot. Give my men a reason to put you down like the mad dog you are. Again." said Vido challengingly.

Austin looked at Zaeed. The bounty hunter stood still for a moment before he then unholstered his Avenger rifle and started running as he fired it in Vido's direction. A shot impacted on one of the gas tanks that Vido was standing behind, but none of them hit Vido himself.

"What was that? Gone near-sighted, old friend?" said Vido.

"Burn, you son of a bitch." said Zaeed as he fired again.

Only now did Vido notice that Zaeed had shot the tank intentionally. The gas ignited and the whole of the tanks on top of the balcony exploded, taking out some of the mercs and wounding Vido.

"You just signed your death warrant, Massani!" he said as he limped off.

The rest of the soldiers covered Vido's retreat and fired on the group. Zaeed remained where he was near a gas valve while the other took cover behind a nearby bit of the hanger. As they did, Austin heard a constant clanging sound. He looked to the source of the noise to see Zaeed was smashing the valve constantly with the butt of his rifle.

"What the hell are you doing?!" he said.

Zaeed continued smashing until a sudden explosion blew the valve and the rest of the tanks on top of the balcony completely exploded and fire was everywhere. The door at the far end also blew and was now open.

"Opening the gate." Zaeed replied.

"Next time you're gonna blow something up; I wanna know about it first." Said Griffin.

"Vido was confident, had a lot of men. Now he's lost the home field advantage. If we keep up the pressure,

"We don't sacrifice lives for the sake of the mission, Zaeed! There's always a better way." said Austin angrily.

"Like what?! Wandering out in the jungle for hours, looking for another way in?" Zaeed retorted frustratingly. "You want to waste time out here, go ahead. I'm going to..."

But before he could finish, he was interrupted as Austin punched him very hard in the face. The bounty stepped back, clutching his jaw. He even spat a bit of blood out of his mouth.

"What the hell! You trying to break my bloody jaw?!"

"You're endangering lives – and the mission – for your own selfish revenge." said Austin.

"You really wanna do this, Shepard?!" said Zaeed.

"I ought to knock you the hell out. But thanks to you, we have a burning refinery to save." said Austin angrily.

"Let these people burn! Vido dies, whatever the cost!" Zaeed shouted.

Austin simply ignored Zaeed and the group set off. The whole refinery was starting to catch fire. It wasn't looking good. As they neared a door, Austin noticed a worker stood up on another balcony. He quickly noticed the two Helldivers.

"Help! We're trapped! We can't get to the gas valves to shut them off! The whole place is gonna blow!" the worker yelled as the refinery was slowly starting to fall apart.

"No time. Vido's probably halfway to the shuttle docks by now." said Zaeed. There was no hint of regret or emotion in his voice. He sounded casual in saying it.

"You're willing to watch these people die?!" Austin asked, appalled at Zaeed's lack of compassion for these workers.

"Damn right I am. We stop to help these people, and Vido gets away. And if he gets away, I'm blaming you." said Zaeed.

Austin took a long moment to think this through. He needed Zaeed to be focused for this mission, and if Vido got away, he wouldn't be. But Austin's Helldiver training had taught him to always value innocent lives over the mission. Even if it meant jeopardising the mission altogether, they would save innocents if in danger. That was an unbreakable rule that all Helldivers were trained with. Eventually, he saw no other alternative.

"We're here to free these people. We're going in." he said forcefully.

He immediately hopped over the edge. Griffin and X-5 didn't need to be told twice and they followed. Griffin in particular agreed with Austin's choice. He knew the code just as well as the Major did.

Zaeed lingered for a bit before finally giving in. There was no way he could convince any of the others and he would be killed if he tried to go after Vido by himself.

"I knew this was a mistake. If we're gonna do this, we'd better get to it." He said as he quickly joined the group again.

Austin looked up at the worker who was still up on the balcony.

"Just hold on! We're coming for you!" he called.

The worker nodded in acknowledgement and ran back inside;

most likely to reassure the other workers that help was coming.

The whole place was in flames. Austin and Griffin were very glad that their armour was flame proof. X-5 didn't have any bother either since his armour was made from reinforced Helldiver metal, so the flames wouldn't trouble him either. Zaeed on the other hand wasn't as protected and was sticking close to X-5 and making sure he kept away from the flames.

"Upstairs! The extinguishing system is upstairs!" they heard a voice yell.

There where explosion all over the place as the gas valves kept blowing. The whole refinery looked as though it was going to collapse any minute. They didn't have much time.

Soon though, they found all the workers. They were trapped inside a separate room. They looked safe, but the main doors were locked. They couldn't escape.

One of the workers saw that they were here to help and called to them from behind the glass.

"The doors won't open until the fire's out!" she said.

Austin and Griffin nodded in acknowledgement and quickly followed the gas pipes to where the valves were.

The valve was extremely stiff and it took both the enhanced strength of Austin and Griffin to move it.

"I hate fire. Plays hell with my explosives. If those flames touch me, I'm gonna kill Zaeed for starting this." Griffin groaned as the valve slowly turned.

Even Austin agreed with Griffin. Even for the two Helldivers, it was like trying to move a normal rusty valve without a suit.

Eventually, the valve finally stopped and the gas was redirected. Some of the fires went out and they now had access to the fire extinguisher systems. Austin wasted no time in bringing them online. Almost immediately, the extinguishers came into life and the rest of the fires slowly started to die.

From on top of the balcony they were on, Austin looked down to see the workers hurrying out of the doors. They were saved.

"Let's go. We may still be able to catch Vido if we hurry." Said Zaeed.

Austin simply sighed and motioned for the others to follow.

They quickly entered another large room. This one was filled with a lot of pipes. The whole place was alive with explosions and two massive fuel tanks that were currently bolted to the ceiling where in danger of becoming dislodged.

"I'll bring this place down around you!" came Vido's voice.

Immediately, several Blue Suns mercs flooded into the room and

opened fire on the group, who quickly went into cover.

"You should've died when I shot you the first time!"

Griffin was being especially careful that he stayed away from the Pyro's. If the flames touched his explosives, he'd most likely bring the entire refinery down on their heads. The structure was already weak enough. Explosives were the last thing they needed.

The demolition expert stayed back and provided mostly cover fire with his mini gun while the others did the fighting. X-5 and Austin in particular were firing at mercs.

Zaeed however was desperate to get rid of all the mercs and he was firing at them like mad. There were shots all over the place.

"I don't care who you brought with you! I'll kill you all! You think I won't roast my own men just to kill you?"

Austin rolled into cover as a Blue Suns heavy fired several rockets at him. Luckily, they hit a nearby pipe and it caused another explosion which then travelled along the pipe and eventually exploded right next to where the heavy was.

X-5 and Zaeed meanwhile were taking it in turns to take cover and reload while firing at a heavy mech that had just been activated. On the plus side though, it did now allow access to the other side of the room where the exit was, and where Vido had fled.

"Say your goddamn prayers, Massani!"

The mech continued firing, forcing both Zaeed and X-5 into cover. Griffin was able to distract it a bit, but not much. Austin was forced to fall back to Griffin's position when more mercs came in. One thing that Helldivers hated about the Blue Suns was that they were so well equipped, even when compared to other merc groups like the Eclipse or Blood Pack. Even more surpassing was the Eclipse and Blood Pack had been around for decades, whereas the Blue Suns were only 20 years old yet they had some of the best weapons to date. They always had been a thorn in the Helldivers side. Still, having Zaeed along did count for something, especially since he had most likely trained some of these soldiers.

As the fight continued, one of the large fuel tanks on the ceiling started to creak loudly.

"That fuel tank's coming loose. Shoot it! Bring it down on top of 'em!" Zaeed yelled.

Austin and Griffin quickly took notice and fired on the tank as it started leaking fuel.

"That's it! Shoot it down on top of them!"

A few more shots, and the tank fell. The other mercs only noticed too late as the tank fell on them. There was a massive fiery explosion and all the mercs were obliterated. Even the heavy mech was caught in the blast.

Zaeed seemed to waste no time and ran for the door. The others

quickly followed.

They were too late to see a Blue Suns gunship slowly lifting off.

"Not this time, Zaeed, you son of a bitch. See you in another twenty years." Came Vido's voice.

The Gunship then activated its Thrusters and flew away. Austin was blown back by the blast slightly. Zaeed on the other hand continued running and then fired like mad on the leaving gunship. Even Griffin fired a few shots. They hit, but didn't really do any damage. Eventually, the gunship disappeared from site and Zaeed ran out of ammo.

He fumbled with the gun before unloading the heat sink and then suddenly pointed it at Austin.

"You just cost me twenty years of my life!" he yelled.

Austin immediately reacted and pointed his own rifle at Zaeed and also activated his plasma cannon.

Zaeed failed to notice however that the heat sink had ended up on some leaked fuel. It ignited and the fire quickly travelled to the main tank and it exploded. Austin quickly dived away, but Zaeed wasn't as quick and a large beam landed on his legs.

"Son of a bitch! Argh!" he groaned as he tried to push the beam off, but it was too heavy for him to lift.

"Zaeed! You alright?" Austin asked worriedly. True he didn't care that much, but he still wished to look after everyone.

"The hell do you care? I'm fine. Now come on. Get me out of this shithole." Zaeed groaned.

"I'm not sure I want or even need a man like you on my ship." Said Austin coldly as he knelt down in front of Zaeed.

"If you didn't need me, The Arkanes wouldn't have paid my fee. I'll do what I was paid to do. Nothing more, nothing less. Now stop screwing around! I can't move this goddamn beam by myself!" said Zaeed.

"You're too crazy, Zaeed. You have no place among my crew." Said Austin, now willing to leave the bounty hunter to burn in the fire he started.

"You can't be serious. You need me." Zaeed laughed, thinking Austin was joking.

"Do I look I'm joking?" Austin asked seriously.

Zaeed's laugh faded when he heard the seriousness in Austin's voice. The Helldiver wasn't joking.

"Major, maybe there's a better way." Said Griffin as Austin radioed for the Hellhound.

Austin and Griffin turned their backs to Zaeed as they talked among themselves. Zaeed knew they were talking about him. He just hoped that Griffin would convince Austin to help him somehow.

After severally long, painful moments, Austin and Griffin turned back to him.

"You put your own goals ahead of the mission. That's not how this works. Even the Sun's don't work that way. An you think you're better than them?" Said Griffin.

"I've survived watching my own back. No time to worry about anyone else." Said Zaeed.

He was interrupted though, when he saw Austin point a pistol right at his head. He immediately froze, fearing that Austin would pull the trigger the same way that Vido had twenty years ago.

"You're part of a team now, Zaeed. A Helldiver team. There's no way we can do this unless we all work together. So you're either with us, or against us. Which is it gonna be?" Austin asked as he flipped the gun in his hand and now had the handle facing Zaeed.

"You... you have a point." Zaeed admitted.

Austin took this as the right sign and used his enhanced strength to lift the beam of Zaeed's legs. Griffin then helped the bounty hunter up to his feet.

"I'm not done with Vido, but I can put it behind me long enough to get your mission done." Said Zaeed. "Let's get the hell out of here."

Zaeed remained quiet as the Hellhound touched down. As they entered it, Griffin handed him something.

"What's this?" he asked.

"Consider it a little reward for coming to your senses." Griffin smiled under his helmet as he sat down.

Zaeed examined the object in his hand more closely and saw what it was.

"A detonator? What for?" he asked.

"For the explosives I placed on Vido's gunship." Griffin replied.

"What?!"

"Those rounds I fired weren't bullets. They were these." Said Griffin as he took a very small object from his belt.

On closer inspection, both Austin and Zaeed saw that what they had first assumed to be a minigun round was actually a very small explosive device.

"I've been working on them for a days. Thought I might test them out. They look small, but don't let that fool you. They're extremely powerful. Just one of these babies is enough to blow a hole in a solid rock wall." He said.

"You mean... those things are attached to Vido's ship, and one press of this and..."

"Yep! Goodbye, Blue Suns leader." Griffin smiled.

The demolition expert then activated his omni tool and it displayed a visual feed from a small camera that had also been attached to Vido's gunship.

"Fry you son of a bitch!" said Zaeed coldly as he pressed the button.

The visual feed showed the very brief shot of the beginning of an explosion, and then the feed went static. Also, they all heard the very faint sound of an explosion in the distance.

"I... thanks. I appreciate what you did." Said Zaeed eventually said as he handed the device back to Griffin and sat down. He looked out at the view of Zorya with a smile on his face as the doors closed and the Hellhound lifted off.

"Good thinking, Alex." Said Austin as he sat down next to Griffin.

"I'm sure you would've thought of something too. Just doing my part." Said Griffin modestly.

"Nevertheless, being able to think up a good compromise like that is highly valued in the Helldivers. You did well, soldier. I'm proud of you." Austin smiled under his helmet.

Griffin was rather lost for words for a moment. To have approval like that from a Major, especially one like Austin was definitely something.

"Thank you, Shepard. I've always been honoured to be part of this." Griffin finally said.

"Alaara made the right choice when she picked you. I'm horned to call you an Alpha." Said Austin as he held out his fist. Griffin smiled and banged his own fist with Austin's. Friends with the great Major Shepard. How'd he get so lucky?

"Let's get back to the ship. I need a victory drink." Said Zaeed as he sat back in his seat, grinning with pride.

Sarah couldn't sleep. She was just having one of those nights where she couldn't get to sleep and was restless. She sighed as she stared at the ceiling of the quarters her brother had given her.

It was very kind of Austin to give her quarters of her own rather than her being forced to share room with someone. Because she was bisexual, she did sometimes get embarrassed when she saw other women naked. Normally, she'd simply tell them not to undress in her presence, but she couldn't really do that without anyone knowing about her sexuality. It wasn't that she hated being bisexual, she loved it in fact. It allowed her to like both sexes and she'd certainly had a few one gift stands in her life with both men and women. The N7 marine had a feeling though that she was more into women than men. There was something about the female body that she found so much more beautiful and sexy. So much so that she'd made sure to be careful round the more sexy members of this team.

Samara for example always distracted her with her cleavage. Then again, she had a feeling that she wasn't the only one. She was pretty sure that her brother and the rest of the crew did risk glances.

Kasumi was also someone that Sarah was careful around. Especially since that time on Bekenstein when she had seen Kasumi watching her strip out of her dress. Kasumi had also been very happy to see Sarah when she came to chat to check up on her. The Thief was doing much better now and appeared to have moved on now.

Though Sarah was sad that Kasumi had lost all that was left of her lover, she knew Austin had made the right decision by destroying the graybox. Not only were risks too great if that information had been leaked to the wrong people, but also, it wasn't healthy for Kasumi to keep dwelling on the past. Keiji was gone and wouldn't be brought back. Kasumi needed to move on. Keiji himself would also want Kasumi to continue being happy.

Sarah once again tried to let her mind rest, but she just couldn't drift off.

Maybe I need a shower." she thought.

The N7 marine threw her bed covers aside and got out of bed. She took a dark red dressing gown from a nearby hook on her door. She put it on and made sure that it covered her completely so that no one saw her red underwear.

Sarah's favourite colour was red. Mind you, it wasn't like that was a complete surprise. There was plenty of hard evidence to indicate to her favourite colour.

The N7 logo and stripe were red, she had red hair and also red underwear and even a red dressing gown that she was wearing right now. In fact it was actually this like of red that had eventually made her dye her hair red.

Sarah made her way through the quiet deserted corridors to the showers. She didn't expect anyone would be out here. The only people that would still be up at this hour was Joker, who was flying the ship, Dr Chakwas, who had a habit of working late, Samara, who never slept since her meditations rested her body, and Kasumi who Sarah knew often liked to sneak around the ship cloaked. While she was pleased at the thief taking some enjoyment out of her life again, she wasn't sure if she was comfortable with Kasumi watching her and the crew secretly all the time. Having EDI watch everyone was hard enough.

Finally, she made it to the showers. She undid her dressing gown and stripped out of her red bra and panties. She then walked up to one of the showers heads and activated it. Although Austin and Liara had been showering earlier, that still hadn't drained the warm water. In fact, the showers here and the shower and Austin's quarters both had separate water containers for the water.

Sarah sighed as she felt the warm water wet her body. As she started using some soap on herself though, she heard a faint breathing sound and then she saw something through the steam of the warm

water. She hid her nervousness and pretended to chuckle slightly.

"Kasumi, I know you're there. Enough with the hiding." she said.

"How'd you know?" Kasumi asked in surprise as she uncloaked. Sure enough, the thief had followed Sarah in.

"I saw your silhouette through the steam." Sarah said. "Why are you spying on me?"

"I'm not. I actually wanted a shower too. I just didn't want to make you nervous if I showered with you. I know that you are uncomfortable around other naked girls." said Kasumi gently.

"Hey, don't let my feelings stop you. If you want a shower as well, there's nobody stopping you." said Sarah.

"You're too kind, Shepard." Kasumi smiled as she reached for the zipper on her outfit.

"It's Sarah. Please, if you keep calling me Shepard, you'll confuse me and my brother." said Sarah.

"Very true." Kasumi nodded as she peeled her outfit from her body.

Sarah was actually surprised when she saw Kasumi lower her hood. The thief had dark hair and sure nought had a very Japanese look to her. As was visible, she also had a purple line on her bottom lip. Sarah did her best to ignore Kasumi's body. As expected, the thief had a very fit and athletic form. Thin, but with a good amount of muscle. Annoyingly for Sarah, Kasumi's breasts where also fairly large. Mind you, this shouldn't be unexpected. Her outfit did little to hide that. Sarah also noticed that Kasumi's pussy was cleanly shaven. That just made it all the more harder.

Kasumi smiled as she saw Sarah's embarrassment. Everything was going as planned. Ever since she'd watched Austin fuck Liara earlier today, she had an uncontrollable craving to have sex. Particularly with a girl. Though Kasumi had been with Keiji and she often preferred men, she'd found that she also seemed to like women as well. Also, she knew that a well-built body ran in Shepard's family. Austin was well endowed with is impressive cock and Sarah had a body that could very easily rival Liara's and Miranda's, even without modifications or enlargement in Liara's case.

The thief walked over to the next shower right next to Sarah's and switched it on.

"How are you doing lately?" Sarah asked as she resumed using the soap on her body and did her best to not stare at Kasumi's breasts or her butt.

"Good thank you. I've been thinking a lot lately. I understand why you're brother made me do it. I'll miss Keiji, but at the same time it's better this way. I can't keep dwelling not he past like this. I have to move on. And anyway, I think I've already got my eye on someone." said Kasumi.

"Oh really? Who?" Sarah asked.

"That Jacob, he seems pretty tense. I wonder if he likes Japanese girls with a pension for kleptomania." Kasumi replied.

"Maybe. You talked to him yet?" Sarah asked.

"No, but I may try. He certainly seems sociable." said Kasumi. The thief then looked at Sarah for a minute. "What about you? Is there someone?" she asked.

"I've had a few partners, but they were all just sex. I haven't really had anyone I've really loved like you have." Sarah sighed.

"Well, your brother's got Liara. Maybe you'll eventually find someone as well." said Kasumi.

"Why do you ask?" said Sarah.

"Because I wanted to know if this would be wrong." said Kasumi.

To Sarah's utter surprise, Kasumi then pounced on her and literally locked her lips onto Sarah's. Sarah was completely taken aback by this and was in enough shock that she didn't try to push Kasumi off. Where had this come from?

Kasumi finally broke for air and simply held Sarah tightly as she looked at the N7 marine's shocked expression, a look of lust in her eyes.

"Where did that come from?" Sarah asked when she finally found her voice. "You just said you fancy Jacob."

"That wasn't a lie. I actually am interested in Jacob. But I've been ever so horny today and I just have to relive it. I was hoping you could help. I know that you're bisexual and I'll admit I have found you rather hot while we've been working together." said Kasumi.

"Stress relief? That's all you want? Well, since you put it that way, I suppose it's okay." said Sarah once she realised Kasumi's intentions. The thief didn't feel anything for her; she just wanted to work off some of her recent stress. "You're absolutely sure though that this is just sex? I like you as a friend, in fact you're a great girl to hang out with from time to time, but I'm not attracted to you in that sort of way." she asked.

"Don't worry, Sarah. I promise, this is just sex. I like you as a friend too, but only as a friend. Nothing more." Said Kasumi as she went to kiss Sarah again, but the N7 marine stopped her.

"Not here. Too public. Someone might walk in." she said.

"Well then, let's take this somewhere more private." Said Kasumi very seductively.

"Get your clothes then. Let's just hope no one catches us in the hallway." Said Sarah.

The two quickly scooped up their clothes and underwear and made their way out of the shower and to Sarah's quarters. Once they were inside, Sarah instantly threw Kasumi down onto the bed. The thief was rather surprised by the N7 marine's forwardness, but she didn't

complain as Sarah slowly walked towards her, swinging her hips seductively.

"You have one hell a sexy body. Does it run in the family?" Kasumi asked as she fingered herself, watching Sarah slowly crawl towards her as she reached the side of the bed.

"I would assume so. I wouldn't know. Unlike you, I don't sneak into my brother's quarters and try to see him nude with Liara." Said Sarah.

Kasumi seemed rather surprised by this. How had Sarah known?

"Before you ask, I've known for a while. I saw you disappear into the elevator earlier today and I also caught you watching me undress before we entered Hock's mansion." Said Sarah as she slowly crawled up Kasumi's body, planting kisses on her as she did.

"You haven't told him, have you?" Kasumi asked worriedly.

"I was going too, but I'll make you a deal. I do this for you and don't tell my brother, and in return, you promise not to do it again." Said Sarah as she now reached Kasumi's face and now lay on top of the nude thief.

"Alright, I promise. Now please fuck me." Said Kasumi.

"This'll be fun." Sarah smiled naughtily as she and Kasumi started kissing.

Kasumi was actually surprised that Sarah was such a good kisser. Despite that this was just sex; it seemed that the N7 marine certainly wanted to enjoy this.

Sarah then shifted her attention to Kasumi's breasts and started kissing and sucking her nipples.

"By the way, you have a very sexy body too. Not surprising considering all the things you've stolen in your life." The N7 marine smiled as her hand squeezed Kasumi's breasts while she kissed the other.

"You sound just like Keiji." Kasumi smiled as she stroked Sarah's red hair. "Tell me, is this actually red? Neither your mother or brother have red hair."

"I dyed many years ago when I was still only 13 years ago. I always wanted red hair, so my parents eventually let me. I've kept it like that ever since." Sarah replied as she now let one of her hands leave Kasumi's breasts and slowly move down to her pussy.

"Looks good on you." Kasumi smiled.

"Thank you. For that, I'll give you a little present." Sarah smiled seductively as she put both her fingers in her mouth, wetted them and then slowly inserted them into Kasumi's folds.

The thief moaned in pleasure as she felt Sarah's fingers enter her pussy.

"Oh, your pussy is so tight." Sarah moaned as she then moved up Kasumi slightly so that her face was once again in line with the thief's.

To her surprise, Kasumi then did the same to her and pushed her own finger inside her.

"I haven't had sex for a long time. Not since Keiji's passing." Kasumi moaned as she pleased Sarah.

"Was he good in bed?" Sarah asked naughtily as she started planting faster as the thief's fingers started to increase their speed in and out of her wet pussy.

"You bet he was. He knew how to push all my buttons." Kasumi smiled; pleased at the pleasure she was giving Sarah.

"Tell me some of the things he used to do. I may just be able to repeat them." said Sarah.

Kasumi considered this for a moment. Why not? Besides, she hadn't felt the touch of a good woman in a very long time.

"Well, he'd always pay close attention to my tits. He'd suck on them as though I was his mother." said Kasumi.

"Men." Sarah sighed. "They always go for the tits and the ass. Not that we complain about that."

Sarah's mouth once again travelled to Kasumi's breasts and once again started sucking on her erect nipples.

"Mmmmm. You're tongues so good!" Kasumi moaned. "I can only imagine how much pleasuring it's done."

"You've no idea. Especially how I've even used this tongue on mission to get information." Sarah teased as she gently bit on Kasumi's breasts. The Thief only moaned even more.

"Enough talk. Just suck my tits!" Kasumi begged.

Sarah did so and now focused her full attention on Kasumi's bust. Sarah certainly was enjoying the feel of the them. So large, firm and soft. Keiji must've had a lot of fun with these. As the N7 marine continued her ministrations, one of her hands moved along Kasumi's smooth legs and held one of the up. Kasumi smiled as Sarah stroked her thigh.

"Can I lick you now? Believe it or not, I haven't actually been with a woman for a while either." Sarah asked.

"Munch away, honey! This night for us." Kasumi smiled.

Sarah smiled back and moved down to Kasumi's pussy, planting kisses all over her body as she went and only pausing briefly to lick around Kasumi's tummy button and kiss it. Sarah finally reached Kasumi's nether regions which were dripping in anticipation.

"I'll bet I can make you scream my name. Every woman I've taken to bed has screamed my name at least once when I've pleased them with my tongue." Sarah said challengingly.

"Bring it on then! I like a challenge." Kasumi said as she once again stoked Sarah's red hair before then pushing her face down against her pussy.

Kasumi nearly screamed almost immediately as Sarah's tongue

teased her womanhood agonizingly slowly.

"Oh God Sarah, your tongue feels so good running over my pussy..." Kasumi moaned as she pulled Sarah's head deeper into her crotch. Sarah paused and looked up, smiling devilishly at the thief's sheer amount of pleasure. She also smiled smugly at the fact that she'd made Kasumi scream her name already.

"Honey, I've barely just started fucking you, believe me..." she purred before she went back down to lick Kasumi's sensitive clit, but faster this time.

Uunnggh! Oh yes Sarah, faster! Oh fuck... grab my tits now!"

Sarah was pleasantly surprised and even more aroused to discover that Kasumi was vocally expressive. She preferred her women to be vocally expressive as they were the ones who typically gave their partners and themselves the most pleasure. She gladly obliged Kasumi's plead, squeezing both of her breasts while she gradually sped up the teasing play of her tongue on her clit, and the lips of Kasumi's vagina soon parted slightly, as if daring the N7 marine to take it to the next level.

Sarah accepted and inserted two fingers into Kasumi. The thief practically screamed and nearly came right there.

"Oh fuck!"

"Wow. It really has been a while for you, hasn't it? You are quite tight." said Sarah as she did her best to move faster. It was difficult to the tightness of the thief's pussy. Not that the N7 marine minded though.

"Stop! Stop! I don't want to cum just yet." said Kasumi as she urged Sarah to stop. "Give me a minute, and then we'll continue. No way can I last very long."

Sarah understood and simply splayed herself on top of the Kasumi as the thief got her breath back. During that time, Sarah flipped her over and started giving her a back massage.

"You tease!" the thief sighed in pleasure. "I'm beginning to think this is dream."

A naughty smile crossed Sarah's face and she suddenly gave Kasumi's ass a firm but playful slap. It was rather a spank, but it was still hard enough to leave a red mark.

"Ow! I don't mind a good spanking, but what was that for?" said Kasumi as Sarah moved down to her ass and started playing with her cheeks.

"Still think it's a dream now?" Sarah replied.

Kasumi simply smiled and laughed slightly. Shepard certainly did have a cheeky sister.

"No. I guess not." she said.

"Ready for another round yet? Sarah asked as she continued fondling Kasumi's firm bottom, enjoying the feel of her soft skin and

smooth flesh.

"I think so." the thief replied. "Tell me, have you ever scissored a girl?"

"No actually. I haven't, never crossed my mind. Why do you ask?" Sarah replied.

"I've never tried it either. Want to be my first?" said Kasumi.

"Sure. I've seen it in plenty of extranet videos and it always makes me horny." Sarah smiled as she got off Kasumi and they got into the right position. They could both feel the heat and arousal from each other's pussy lips. Kasumi held her breath as she watched Sarah's azure slit move toward her own crevice. Then their loins pressed together, their nether lips meeting in an intimate kiss.

"Ahhh...that...that's..." Sarah gasped as the thief began churning against her. "Damn...that's good! That's really good!"

The two of them thrashed against each other, their bodies undulating together ever faster. Kasumi grasped Sarah's long, smooth leg, hugging it against her bosom as she gulped down air.

"Hell yes!" Kasumi pitched her hips, slamming their sensitive flesh together. Their intimate folds worked against each other. "Come on, Shepard! Aaargh! That's right! Oh YEAH!"

Sarah had never experienced something this good before and was gritting her teeth in pleasure. Each thrust made a wet slapping noise as both their wet pussies slapped against one another. Just the sound alone was enough to turn anyone on. Sarah fondled one of her breasts as she continued thrusting her hips against Kasumi's. They were getting used to this very quickly.

"You got any toys?" Kasumi finally asked after several long minutes of scissoring.

"I'm... afraid... not. I'm... not... that... kind of... girl." Sarah panted with each thrust and slap of their pussies.

"Oh well." Kasumi sighed, but her expression then turned back to a naughty smile. "Let's finish with a 69 then."

Sarah smiled and turned around as she got on top of Kasumi. The thief gave the N7 marine a playful spank as her pussy came close to her face.

"Like what you see, Kasumi?" Sarah asked teasingly.

"You bet I do. You've got such a hot body." Said Kasumi as she moved her hands up Sarah's legs and began touching her ass.

Sarah stuck out her tongue and began licking at Kasumi's folds. The thief moaned in pleasure as she did the same to Sarah. Sarah almost immediately began to moan into Kasumi's pussy as she licked it.

"God, you're so good!" she said as she briefly passed her assault on Kasumi's pussy and then resumed.

"You... too!" Kasumi moaned back. Sarah could already tell she was

nearing her climax. Then again, she was too.

"You're gonna make me cum, Kasumi!" she said.

"Cum with me!" Kasumi moaned.

Both women practically screamed in pleasure as they finally came, both their faces became covered with the others cum.

Sarah rolled off Kasumi and simply lay there catching her breath. Kasumi did the same, but she did still stroke Sarah's legs as she did so.

"I can't tell you how much I needed that." Kasumi panted.

"You weren't so bad yourself. Do you wanna sleep here tonight? I don't mind." Sarah asked as she slowly got up and fished around for her red underwear.

"Thanks. You're such a good friend." Kasumi smiled as she pulled the covers over them.

"You're a good friend too, Kasumi. I hope you find some happiness with Jacob." Sarah smiled as she got comfortable.

"Me too. I have noticed him watching me from time to time." said Kasumi as she wrapped her arms around the N7 marine and rested her head on her breasts.

"Goodnight, Kasumi. Sleep well." Sarah smiled as she stroked Kasumi's hair.

"You too, Sarah. Your brother's lucky to have a sister like you." Kasumi said before she drifted off to sleep.

BROKEN WINGS CHAPTER 8

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

Do it. No. Do it. I can't. **Do it.** No! **Do it.** I've done enough damage! **You hurt some little girl.** She's not just some little girl! **Does she know that?** Go way you devil. **Don't you remember? You and I are the same person.** I'm not going to hurt her ever again, get out of my head. **I'm the voice in your head.**

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaarrrrrrrgggggghhhhhhh!" I threw the chair into the wall.

Get out, Get out, Get out! **That's it, create chaos, and destroy everything.** He was toying with me and I knew it. I threw one of the chair legs at the wall. **That's eat Gaara, keep going.** I felt the slyness in his voice. You make me sick. **You're the one doing it; you're the one that hurt your pathetic little girlfriend.** She's NOT my girlfriend. **Then what is she?**

I ignored the voice. If only it would go away, but I knew it never could, I was stuck with a devil. **You can't escape me.** You made me hurt her! **So, she's nothing to you.** She doesn't deserve it...

"GAARA!" Temari called from down the stairs. I grabbed a baseball bat and threw it down the stairs. I didn't want to hurt anyone or anything but what does that matter. I've ruined everything. I'm not meant to care; I'm not like everyone else. I don't even have a purpose for my existence. It doesn't matter, I just don't care anymore. I used my nails to rip at the wallpaper. I kicked everything I could find and ripped it to shreds. Everything was gone. I have nothing, I am nothing and I deserve nothing. I kicked the window smashing it to pieces than jumped out onto the window sill. I jumped off of it, half hopping that I could plunge to my death but I knew I could never do that. I landed on my feet. I always do.

I ran away from the house. I just couldn't be there. I couldn't think either. Everything was in ruins. I ran into town, where the shopping mall was. People. **I hate people.** Me too. My thoughts were getting hazy. I picked up a rack of clothes and threw the rack at the nearest person. I yelled unfazed and broke the glass of every store. People screamed and panicked. I couldn't tell if any of them were calling the

police. I couldn't help but smirk slightly. **Perfect.** I ran out of the stores before security could get there. They'll know it was me anyway. I ran outside seeing someone who looked similar to Sasuke. My words slurred, I had no idea what I was saying but I punched him in the face. I started running. I kept running.

My feet were hitting the ground so hard. Guilt was making me heavy but I had to keep going. I have to keep running. I found myself in front of a forest. What are they going to charge me this time? **It'll change what Aoi thinks of you. She'll never look at you the same way again.** You made me hurt her. **I didn't make you do anything.** I could hear the snarl in his voice. That's it; I'm never going to rage again. You will never make me do this ever again. I'll find a way to stop this. All of it. **I don't think so. One day you'll just snap. You've been leading on that girl, she's precious to you, she's lovely, fantastic, brilliant even but one day you'll snap and everything will come out. You know it's true Gaara, tell her before I do.**

I ran through the forest. I don't know if it was the mall security or the voice that I was trying to get away from, maybe both. I stopped when I reached a cliff. There was a tree there, like an oak tree but small white flowers sprung from this tree. I didn't even have the sense to know what I was called. The flowers had a blue tint inside of them. It was beautiful. Even I knew to admit that.

I find that weird though, I mean I can still see this beauty within my clouded judgement. Sometimes the devil just comes out to torture me. Most of the time he's locked up in the back of my head not giving a damn. I moved closer to the tree. Beauty means nothing. I punched it as hard as possible. The tree shook.

"Watch it!" Yelled a familiar voice. I frowned and moved to the other side of the oak tree to see who it was. Aoi. She was cuddled up against the trunk of the tree. She looked like she had been crying. I could see the cut on her cheek, she didn't have a Band-Aid on but I could tell that she did not too long ago. She wore her panda spirit hood which she loved awfully.

"Aoi..." my voice trailed off, that was all I could say.

"Uh, what are you doing here?" she got up quickly.

"I was..."

"Running away?"

"Yeah."

She looked down at the ground and I moved forward. She saw my feet move and she edged back. I looked at her in complete awe that it sickened me, "Sorry."

She moved closer this time. Her feet stopped shuffling back. Her toes almost met mine. I could tell she was frightened now by my appearance, she was never like that. She was the only person that

wasn't afraid of me, I guess it's different now.

"Are you, alright?" she stuttered slightly. **Hurt her. Kiss her. Punch her. Hug her. Feel something, make yourself alive.** His voice was beyond annoying.

"I..." I didn't know what to say really, I didn't even know if I was okay.

"Gaara, is this where the rumours came from?"

"I guess so, I just, I don't know. Maybe I have killed someone. I don't think I have, I just uh. It's all just a bug misunderstanding I know it. I didn't mean to hurt anyone, I never meant to, I didn't mean to hurt you," I placed my hand against her cheek. She just looked at me while I eyed the cut. My thumb rubbed against where the glass had hit her. It was a fin wound from glass; it wasn't infected luckily. I noticed that her cheeks suddenly went red.

"It's okay," she smiled that smile of hers, "could you, maybe explain it to me?"

"Uh, well, there's another voice inside of my head. A demon, I guess. His voice can sometimes control me, over power me, and make me do stupid things.'

Her hand touched mine, I then realised that my hand still hadn't left her cheek. She smiled again. A smile that made everything better. There was just something about that smile that gave me emotions.

Yuck. No one asked how you feel.

"It's okay Gaara, I'm here," she took off her panda spirit hood and put it on my head, "you look adorable."

I gave her a glare and she laughed a little, like a child. She sat back down against the tree trunk and signalled for me to sit down with her. I did and she leaned against me.

A flower flew onto my head. I picked it up to have a look before blowing it away. Aoi was sitting in my lap. I guess I must've shifter her when she fell asleep. She was snuggling right up against my chest. Her hands cuddled against me. I held her there, not wanting to let go. I was still wearing her spirit hood. **You can't be here.** I know, I should leave. **You feel happier now, right?** Yeah, I guess I do. **Then go.**

I sighed not wanting to leave her. But I had created a mess and I needed to fix it. I took the spirit hood off and put it on Aoi's head then shifted her slowly off of my lap. I put her down on the ground and let her lean against the tree. She moved a little but she didn't wake up. I shifted her closer to the tree so she would be more comfortable. I don't know what's wrong with me. I want to try something. **Than do it.** I don't know...how...**Come on. You've seen all the movies. Feel something.**

I cursed at the devil before kissing her forehead delicately. I ran away from the hoods. I hope she's okay when she waked up. When I

arrived back home, Temari was down stairs cleaning and Kunkaro was talking to the police. I sighed, time for the charges. We all discussed it. I would get off on Juvie if we paid them three hundred. Kunkaro reluctantly handed over the money before pushing me inside. For the rest of the day I had to clean up. It was all that stupid demon's fault.

WEEK OF LOVE CHAPTER 6: TRADITION

Katara434
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Two years later, Aang's and Katara's relationship remained strong. Katara was eighteen now, a beautiful young woman that could compete against Aphrodite herself and win hands down. Her chocolate curls went beyond the small of her back, her body has filled out nicely, and her blue ocean eyes seem to glow. Aang, sixteen years old, has grown taller and stronger. He now towered over Katara easily. The silver and gray in his eyes had a serious look to them, but he was still that same fun loving goof that everyone has come to love. His muscles are firmer; not a lot, but enough for people to notice. He's not the same scrawny kid they had thought of him at the beginning. Aang was now a young man. And today was very special: it was his and Katara's anniversary. Every year, it was tradition for them to go to Iroh's tea shop: The Jasmine Dragon. They would leave a few days early in order to get there. By the time they would arrive, it would be their anniversary day. Iroh would have the shop closed on this particular day so they wouldn't be mobbed by their fans and admirers. They were sitting at their table right now, drinking Jasmine tea and talking about their time in the Fire Nation.

"When I found out you were the Painted Lady," Aang was saying, "I thought I had finally lost my mind. I thought I was dreaming when you told me you were doing it to help those people in the village."

Katara snorted. "Yeah, well, no one else was doing anything. All you and Sokka did was make spirit noises."

Aang shook his head. "Come on," he said. "You have to admit it was funny; at least a little." Then he did the exact same thing with his arms like he did in the polluted village, wiggling his arms and making ghost and exploding sounds.

Katara snorted, trying to hold back her laughter; but it ended up coming out in bursts. Aang laughed along with her. Iroh smiled from the back. He knew those two would be perfect for each other. It was their destiny; and destiny is a funny thing. And it was fate that brought them together; nothing is ever going to change that.

After the laughing stopped, Katara said, "Okay, you have a point. It *is* funny now that I think about it. It was still annoying back then though."

Aang grabbed her hand from across the table. "But that's in the past now," he said gently, smiling at her. "All we have to do now is

look to the future." Katara smiled her beautiful smile and nodded as Iroh came to them.

"From the laughter I hear," he said, "you two must be having a good time." His old wise eyes sparkled with knowing. "Are you hungry?" They nodded. "The usual?" Iroh asked; they nodded again. The 'usual' is vegetable noodle soup. They would always have that when they're here. The old man left them, but not before winking at Aang, which went unknowing to Katara. She was placing a napkin on her lap. Aang had come here earlier to ask for advice while Katara was getting ready. The sun was starting to set, casting warm colors over Ba Sing Se. Aang was starting to get fidgety. It was almost time...

Iroh came back with the food a few minutes later and walked away, and the couple ate in silence. Aang observed his girlfriend, who was wearing blue and white kimono. *'She really has become more beautiful'* he thought dreamily. He thought this every day, but he couldn't help it. To him, Katara was the most gorgeous creature to ever walk the planet.

Katara looked up and caught Aang watching her with a silly, love struck smile on his face. They blushed, but didn't lose eye contact. "Why are you smiling at me like that?" she asked.

Aang held in his laughter, remembering how she had said that same sentence when they met. "Oh, I was smiling?" he asked back, repeating the old lines.

They laughed again; when they calmed down enough Katara said, "So you remember that day?"

"How could I forget?" Aang replied, chuckling. "That was the day our lives really began. I was such a goof back then. Everything is so different from the world I used to know. But I wouldn't change anything even if I was given the chance."

Katara nodded in agreement. "We've been through a lot. But I'm happy with how things turned out."

"Me too." They ate the rest of the meal in comfortable silence. They didn't need to fill the pauses and silences anymore because they had gotten used to them. At first they had been awkward in the early stages of the relationship; but now the silences have become their friends.

Once they were done, the sun had reached the horizon, the sky growing darker. Iroh took the bowls away and the couple stood up. Then Aang grabbed Katara's hand and said, "You ready to go?" She nodded and they said goodbye to the old man. He watched as the young people left, mentally wishing Aang good luck.

Aang and Katara, hands clasped perfectly together, were walking around the lower ring of Ba Sing Se. The city has become more friendly since Kuei had returned. The walls were still up, but everyone was being treated as equals rather than different classes. Normally,

Aang and Katara would go up on the wall to watch the sun finish its decent; but Aang was leading them somewhere else.

Katara looked around, confused. "Aang?" she asked and he looked at her, watching as a breeze played with her hair. She tucked a few strands behind her ear. "Where are we going? I thought we were going to the wall."

Aang smiled and squeezed her hand. "Don't worry," he replied. "I know of a different place that you'll love even more." He turned away and Katara shrugged, following him. Just before they reached their destination, Aang turned to his girlfriend and gently ordered, "Close your eyes." She rolled her eyes, remembering how she had told him the same thing for his 14th birthday, before doing what she was told, putting one hand over her eyelids as her boyfriend led her by the hand.

When they got there, Aang released her hand but told her to keep her eyes closed. She giggled, but stayed as she was. Aang looked around. There was just enough light to make out the lanterns and posts. They were unlit. Good; he didn't want to give away where they were yet. Taking a Firebending position, Aang took a breath and shot tiny specks fire into the lanterns. When he was done, everything was aglow. He then turned to Katara, who was oblivious, and said quietly, "You can open them now." She did, and gasped lightly as her eyes grew huge. They were at the Firelight Fountain, the flames reflecting in the pool.

Not taking her eyes away from the beauty of the fountain, she said, "This is beautiful, Aang."

The Avatar chuckled as he grabbed her hand again. "I thought you would like it."

She turned to him with happy eyes. "I love it; very much." Then she frowned thoughtfully before asking, "But why haven't you brought me here before for our other anniversaries?"

Aang scratched the back of his head, suddenly nervous about what he was about to do that would change them forever. "Well, I wanted to save this for something special." She looked at him curiously and he took a deep breath before pulling her over to the water. He grabbed both of her hands and looked into her eyes as he said, "I saved this place for so long because I wanted to ask you something." He brought her closer, their bodies pressing together. His heart was thundering in his chest. He began. "Katara, we've been through a lot; we both lost people who were dear to us. We fought in a war that was never meant to happen. I ran away from home and froze myself and Appa in an iceberg for a century. Then I remember waking up with you watching some strange little kid that you were willing to travel with even though you barely knew him. Despite all the bad things that have happened, I wouldn't change any of it because I was led to you." Katara was crying,

but her eyes never wavered for a second. He never broke eye contact either. "You've been my best friend for a long time; we've been together for years now. I can't live without you, and I would die if I even tried. What I'm trying to say is..." He went on one knee and dug something out of his robes. It was a necklace, the neck strip blue with orange swirls decorating the top and bottom. The amulet itself was crystal with Air and Water mixing together in an intricate pattern. He looked up at her to see she had her hand over her mouth. "Katara of the Southern Water Tribe, will you make me the happiest man alive by marrying me?"

Katara was stunned. They had talked about getting married, but she didn't think it would be so soon. Nevertheless, she removed her hand from her mouth, smiled, and said, "Yes, Aang of the Air Nomads. Of course I'll marry you." Aang beamed and stood up. Katara took off her mother's necklace, thought for a moment, then wrapped it around her wrist before turning around and lifting her hair. Aang reached around her and placed the piece of jewelery around her slender throat. It fit perfectly. The crystal caught the firelight, making colors dance. She turned and wrapped her arms around his neck as he did the same with her waist. They were glowing with happiness and love.

"Is this really happening?" she asked jokingly. "Am I really engaged to the Avatar?"

Aang smiled and shrugged. "Only if you want to be," he replied.

Katara grinned and touched her new necklace. "I wouldn't be wearing this if I didn't want to be." She brought her face closer to his and whispered, "Can we make this our new anniversary spot?"

Aang sighed and closed his eyes. "For as long as you want it to be. It could be a new tradition for us. I love you, Katara."

"I love you too, Aang. My future husband."

Aang grinned, liking the sound of that. "My future wife," he murmured before kissing her to seal the deal.

Six months later, the wedding took place in the Eastern Temple courtyard. The ceremony wasn't very big, but that was what the couple wanted. Family and friends surrounded them as they took their vows. Aang was wearing a tunic that went with cuffs he got for his 14th birthday. The tunic's sleeves went to the crease of his elbows, with tan pants and brown boots and orange trimmings at the end of the sleeves and bottom of the shirt. Katara was wearing a traditional Water Tribe dress that her mother had worn for her wedding. It fit like a glove. It had fur trimmings on the neckline that dipped slightly and on the sleeves. Her hair was done with her curls pinned in place at the top of

her head, pearls glinting in the firelight at every movement.

Hakoda was standing on the makeshift alter, waiting as the couple gave their vows. It was only when they were done did he say, "By the power invested in me, and by the Spirits, I now pronounce husband and wife. You may now kiss the bride." Aang cupped her face in his hands, feeling the skins warmth, and sealed their vows with the most breathtaking kiss as the audience clapped and cheered. After the reception, they said goodbye to their family and took off on Appa, stopping in Ba Sing Se to go to the Firelight Fountain, where their new tradition took place, before going to their home for their honeymoon, and starting their new life together.

NEW AGE OF HEROES - THE TASK

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For millenia, the Greek Gods have lived to serve man, create legends and demigods, but as mankind lost faith advanced on their own, the Gods became weak.

So Zeus and the other gods created a new world, taking Mount Olympus,
ancient cities, monuments and mankind's memories of the myths.

-10 years later, the Gods established civilization in their separate dimension, where demigods completed tasks to remove their sadness. The newest hero was Isalus, son of Zeus, and Maniala, a simple woman from Sparta. He saved Sparta from the Clazmonian Sow and married Leona, an Amazon warrior.

All seemed calm in the world, until the air in Olympus grew cold. Zeus shivered at the sight of the Creator and Destroyer of All Life, Chaos. He quickly killed Zeus, Hera, Dionysus, Demeter and Aphrodite, along with Isalus.

-15 years later, Apollo and Athena lived in a cave in the side of the Typhon Mountains, and had a child named Isalus, who looked just like the hero: short red hair and a somewhat-deep voice. He was the God of

the Soul. They gave him the task to collect the Souls of the fallen Gods. After he was given his mission, Chaos wiped out Apollo and Athena, while Isalus ran away.

Chaos said, "I'll look forward to wiping you out when you get some of the Souls." He vanished, and Isalus ran to the Gods' bodies, and saw their Souls. He absorbed them and gained the control of the Sun, Music, Wisdom and Warfare.

Inside his Soul, he was in the middle of a dark room with 2 thrones for Athena and Apollo.

Athena said, "Isalus, my Son, your mission begins now. Visit my brother Ares. He will know what to do."

"Yes, mother."

Then Apollo said, "Also, visit your Underworld friend Nickolaes."

"Yes, father."

"And get my sword and bow. They shall serve you well."

"I shall."

New Age of Heroes is about an apocalypse in the world of Greek myths.

The Nothingness that created everything, Chaos, has a form, destroys the very foundations of the world, and descends it into ruin. Read about the new God, Isalus, as he collects the Souls of the Gods. PS-I know that Pysche is the Goddess of the Soul, but I don't care. Enjoy.

POETRY

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John Mahler's Quotes of the Day

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/john-mahler/john-mahlers-quotes-of-the-day/ebook/product-20105057.html>

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!

DEAD ALIVE

Malachi Morris
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Even as i was born i was dead alive,
thoughts here but my soul has gone,
somehow on birth i lost that bond,
those that most would be quite fond,
whoever has my soul i guess there a con,
because im no godfather no comparison to the don, the only thing i
have are fights i have won,
battles to become the greatest son,
now in the end i feel like the only one,
family is nothing of interest,
friends have many points to confess,
i have a secret i prive,
a thirst for blood i thrive,
my secret is that i am dead alive.

A THOUSAND FISH IN THE SEA

Caitlin McGee
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There are a thousand lips
That I could kiss,
But yours are the only lips
That I truly wish to kiss.

There are a thousand arms
That waiting to embrace me, make me warm,
But yours are the only arms
That can melt my frozen heart.

There are a thousand beautiful smiles
That can bring light on a cloudy day,
But only your smile
Can brighten the darkness in my life.

There are a thousand fish in the sea
Waiting to latch themselves onto my hook,
But you're the only fish that'll do;
You're the only fish that I need.

TIRED

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As far as a message to convey about the poem: We all go through a time in our lives where we don't wish to see another sunrise. We just want our suffering to end. Its hard to crawl out of the dark pit, I know. This is a little piece about what goes through the minds of those who suffer and long for even a small piece of acceptance from those we care about. We know its not the answer, but sometimes enough is enough.

On the outside I laugh and I smile
But what people do not see
Is the screaming me
I'm crying in pain and sorrow
Not wanting to face the morrow
I want to hide, to disappear
Even though they can't see my tears
The pain may lay silent for a time
But then returns with an even worser crime
I want it to end, can't bare it anymore
I don't care what life has in store
I'm tired of being alone, of being wrong,
Of being left behind, of singing this sad song
I'm tired of faking
Of pretending
Tired of laughing when I want to cry
Tired of living when I want to die
Just leave me in this pit, in the dark
I'll find something, maybe kill myself with a dart
There is no heaven, no hell
Just the pain and suffering with me in this well
You can't save me, all have failed
Just let me die and end my tale
I'm tired of this bullshit, of having to smile
I know my choice won't stop time
But still the choice is mine
And I know when this happens that people will cry
But please remember that it was my choice.....to die

MAKING BLANKETS

Kes Carron
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Crochet kisses criss and cross
Weaving and welting
Creating new intricacies on my skin

Patterns are what I see
When I'm alone tracing my sordid fingers
Across this tapestry of hello and goodbye

A knot and a loop;
Here are my promises

Repeat, repeat

Still the tale grow with its color and thread
My interest waxes and wains with songs and sonnets
But my hands continue
When will we be made?

The problem with beginnings are the incomplete ends

My head says stop waiting.
Embrace the design.

THE COMMON STRETCH

Denis Doiron
of denisdoiron@comcast.com

Surreal splendor

Loss in repetitive folly

Cost heavy

Past serenity

Pieced in harsh words

The careless bellows

warped in selfish life.

Stumble Forward

In boldface tender.

Turn your bright cheek

And let the madness

extinguish in fallen time.

AUTOINTOXICATION

Makenzi Marshall
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There is beauty in the ashes
and sorrow behind the shutters
We could have once called eyes.
There is joy to be found in Poison; light-fingered,
Twisting like Hederan vines
'round this cage of bones
And spilling silver-tongued symphonies
from a tarnished Chalice.

Raise high your glass;
play me a melody on white-washed ribs,
Clinking glass against mortared teeth
and singing to the sky
A tale of woe.
We find solace there,
In the Aphroditic scent of moʘuʘrnings not yet born,
Born to be broken; still-birthed, and on the morrow
We'll craft beauty in their breakdown,
Just like you
Always
Promised-

You,
My lamentable,
languorous Reflection;
A modern-day Lucrezia, mother of poison,
Your hands dancing with Cantarella-
The ghastly-white liquor of Succession-
Those Red-rimmed lips
pressed quivering against the Papal altar
In a kiss of Blood.
You find such beauty in death,
These silent sacraments of sorrow.
Do you weep for them as I once did;
Will you lift the rose-petal hue of dilated eyes
Towards the face of god-
the very god-
that cast you down?
Does the Light
of Thy father;
Holy light shining
With all the weakness
and mistaken symbolism
Of the men who created it-
Will that Light be enough to cast out
the liquid after-burn of too many drinks
And tear through the years of glossed-over nicotine

Coating those silveréd lungs of yours
With tar-nished grey?

Lucrezia, my shadow,
pitch-black reflection
glinting with gold
in a darkened mirror, I shall tell you
in the rumbling voice
of god:
your Lord has Left you.
He hangs there in the garden,
a glass-jawed marionette
With only the smoking haze of Cerebra to keep him warm-
Fuel for the witches, whose ghosts have passed.
He has Left you soaking in the taste of Catharidine-
Red cardinals that eat their own children-
(The holy grating of irony).
This Poison you've gorged yourself on
brings vision of oil-spills
Dredged raw from bottomless depths;
Food for the fishes,
We are wearing concrete shoes tonight.
But this
Is
 Not
 Drowning.
This is Catharsis.

My angel,

My child,
The white-washed feathers of your wings
have grown damp
From the years of petrified sea salt
And the thorns in your heart
Are buried deep,
Lashed tight across the brow of dead saints
and silent martyrs.
A crown for the worthless,
D-i-yed black with oiléd blood.

Lucrezia, fallen id-l-e-ol,
In the face of thunderous Warning
we have dug these graves ourselves
And the noxious bouquet of spider-lilies
You'd left at my door
Have turned to dust from your mephitic touch-
For in the wake of such disease,
even the ominous ghosts of Lycoris Radiata
could not stand resurrected.
Do you miss them,
with all the gentle weeping
of the hurricane that made them bloom?
Would the silken abs -c-e-s-s-ence
of their watchful umbelliform eyes
Have been enough
to bring him back?
(To bring you back?)
You see, I missed him once-
really, I did, as I missed you-
The sort of missing that comes in the wake of a Revelation,
The bitter, sweet taste of a lifetime of wasted prose.
Lucrezia, vulpine poisoner,
my heroin?e?
Instrument of a fallen deity,
That needle in your hands

Used to feel a lot like home-
I remember, fondly,
the acrid taste of death
That would have once
Turned our veins
to nightlights-
And so, as we Sing loud this Sorrow
I will drink in your meta-fictional lullaby
For the last time
And while falling,
Craft an Empire from its ruin.