

World Rebuild Project

- Prologue

If someone were to write a book about my life, it'd start off happy, although I guess nearly everyone's life starts that way. Well, unless you're a main character in some random show or book who has the worst life possible to make the audience feel sympathetic. Not anyone I know personally remembers neverending despair as their first ever memory, whether they went through infant amnesia or not. My life was like any other normal girl's life after that. Loving parents, good grades, a small friend group I spent break and lunch time with. My mother had beautiful red hair and bright green eyes while my father had platinum blond hair and eyes as blue as the clear sky. They apparently fell in love at first sight and had a fairytale like romance. Of course, I wasn't even born yet, but I begged both of them to tell me about their love story so many times that I can recite it word for word. It was better than any classic fairytale book like Cinderella or Snow White. My pink hair was apparently a miracle. Theoretically speaking, red plus platinum blonde, essentially white, would make pink, but nobody had ever been born with pink hair before. Well, I loved my hair color, so no big deal. I got my dad's blue eyes. Growing up, I was constantly told I was the product of their love and that they loved me more than anyone else. We were never particularly wealthy, but I always felt loved. In case you're curious about my parent's jobs, My mom was an aspiring actress who had a few small roles in some movies, and my dad was the CEO of a small company. I had a happy, fulfilling life. However... That all came crashing down on my 15th birthday. I had come home from school happily, having been showered by gifts from my friends and teachers. When I reached my home, however, I realized something was wrong. Several police officers were standing outside my house. When they noticed me, they looked stricken. A police woman bent down to meet my eyes.

"Hello, sweetie. Are you Solana Everglade, the daughter of the couple living here?"

I nodded, confused.

"Umm... Well, darling, your parents got into a car accident... We found this in the car."

She handed me a parcel wrapped in light pink paper, the color of my hair. I unwrap it to find a music box. Inside the music box was a set of jewelry. A necklace and earrings that had jewels blue as my eyes. My last ever birthday gift from them. After that, I was forced to go live with my grandmother. The name my parents gave me, Solana, means sunshine. A name is a gift we carry on for most of our lives. Therefore, I always tried my best to live up to my name. No matter what, always stay p

positive and keep smiling. Even if I lost all my friends, even if I fail an exam, and even if I lose the very people who gave me this name, I will continue to stay optimistic. My grandmother lived far away, so I had to switch schools. In fact, I just took the GED and didn't go to school. Despite this, all my friends at my old school still came to visit every other weekend and we would all play together. I was always at the center of these gatherings, haha. My friends would often joke that I'm a flower with the sweetest nectar and they were the bees. They also often said my strongest point was my never ending positivity and my magnetic personality, meaning I naturally attract and bring people together. A couple years later, the government started talking about the sun's explosion and moving to other planets and the like. This... Didn't exactly work out though. Most people died, including my friends and family. I was thankfully in a habitable zone, so I didn't die but... Practically everyone else died. My world was crushed, both figuratively and literally. But... You know something? Going through something again makes it easier to get back on your feet. My world was crushed when I was 15 due to the death of my parents. Therefore, when the world crushed a second time, I adapted very quickly. I already knew how to cook and clean, so the only problem was food. Thankfully, my house was still... Relatively okay. Well, as okay as you can get, considering earth shattered into pieces. There was still some food in the fridge, so I can live on that for a few days until I figure something out. I fall asleep and wake up in an unfamiliar place.

- End of prologue

"Where am I?"

"Welcome to World Rebuild Project, also known as WRP."

"World Rebuild Project...?"

"Yes. As you already know, worlds have shattered into pieces."

"Uh... Yes, I know. A huge explosion of the sun caused Earth and other worlds to shatter into pieces. Thankfully, the shard of Earth where I was landed in the habitable zone, so I didn't die right away."

"Good. Yes, that explosion. What you see before you are the other members of WRP. Ah. Before that, please introduce yourself."

"Oh, okay! Hello! My name is Solana Everglade, but you can call me Lana! I'm 17 years old. I hope we all get along well!"

Solana Everglade ↓



Long pink hair

Blue eyes

Bright and cheerful smile

No cat ears

Blue jewel earrings and necklace

17 year old(youthful and innocent)

"Solana is here to guide you and help you rebuild a new world with the pieces of y our original worlds. Solana, your fellow members of WRP are different races, and y ou're the only human here."

"And... Who are you?"

"Me? Well, I'm just the supervisor. I assist in pulling the pieces of different wo rlds together. Another part of WRP. You and the other members here are supposed to figure out how to rebuild the world in a society sense. How to work together, what rules you should have, that sort of thing. We'll take care of everything technical like making sure it's actually livable. All you have to do is make sure this world is actually somewhere you can live happily. Like you used to before the great expl osion happened and wrecked your world and everyone else's too."

"Oh... I see..."

"Solana. This goes without saying since I kept dividing you and the other members, but your role is crucial. It wouldn't be a stretch to say you're their leader."

"I'm their leader?!"

"Yes, Solana. You heard that correctly. The fate of WRP rests on your shoulders."

"Well... That's a big responsibility."

"Indeed it is. Well then, good luck, Lana."

"Bye bye~! I'll try my best, so don't worry and let's continue on with our own agendas and rebuild a brand new world!"

"Haha... Looks like I made the right choice selecting you. I'm counting on you, Lana."

He leaves, leaving me with the members.

"Hi! So, as you already know, I'm Solana. Could you please introduce yourselves?"

A man with long black hair and deep purple eyes that look like they have entire universes inside starts. He looks to be the oldest out of all of us.

"Horatius."

"Uhh... Apologies if it's rude to ask, but may I have your race as well?"

"You might as well call him time and space itself. Cosmic horror."

"What?"

"He's someone who foresaw this and has leaped through all of time and space."

"I see... Next?"

Everyone else looks to be around my age. The guy who introduces himself has fluffy light blond hair with white horns and gold eyes that look somewhat like a cat's eyes.

"Eragon. I'm a dragon."

"Wow~! That's so cool!"

That explains the eyes.

"I'm currently in human form because of this earring though. In case you didn't notice, we all have this earring. It's like a restraint. It restricts our powers and keeps us in human form."

That's when I notice practically everyone is wearing an ear cuff with dangly bits.

"We're free to customize it however we like. The restraint part is in these crystals."

Oh. So that's why everyone's is different.

"Am I next? Sirius. Unicorn."

Another per- Uhh... Creature speaks up after Eragon is done. He has long white hair and blue eyes. He overall exudes a very pure and majestic aura.

"Unicorn? Like... The horse with a horn?"

"Exactly, miss Lana."

"Out of all of us, Ri will probably like you the most. And will be safest with with or without restraints as long as you're okay."

"Why don't you go next since you spoke up already?"

He has light blue hair and deep eyes that shine with all the colors of the ocean, ranging from cobalt blue to emerald green. Woah... He's extremely beautiful. I feel jealous of his beauty, and I'm a girl.

"Oh. Cordelian. I'm a merman."

Cordelian... That means jewel of the sea, right? How fitting. His beauty is truly exquisite. I'd be surprised if I were able to find anyone with more beauty than him.

"I'm... Ciaran."

Ciaran has silver hair and eyes. He seems uncomfortable with me...

"Ciaran is the god who demons worship."

"I see. Next?"

"Volpe. I'm a werewolf."

Volpe has tanned skin, black hair, and golden eyes.

"And who are you?"

"Faunus. I'm an elf. An elven king. Or well... Was an elven king."

Faunus, similar to Cordelian, is very beautiful. Long blond hair that's partially braided and a crown that looks like it's been made out of leaves and branches. His ears are partially covered by his hair, but the ends are pointy. His eyes are a captivating emerald green.

"Alright, last?"

The last one has light brown hair and red eyes that look somewhat vacant. He also has lots of restraints.

"Darrell. Zombie... I guess..."

"Darrell has lots of restraints because he's made from the parts of the strongest species. I don't think it affects him though. They don't seem to do much."

"Right. Just to make sure Solana is on the same page with us, I think we should tell her the truth."

"The truth?"

"You know how the sun exploding was an unprecedented acceleration that was supposed to happen after you and I were all dead?"

I nodded.

"Yeah, well, what people didn't want you to know is that it wasn't a coincidence. There are creatures out there who want to take over everything. That's why they accelerated the explosion of the sun and shattered worlds. Your world and ours. They thought we wouldn't be able to resist if our worlds were shattered and we were the only survivors of our race. WRP is of course trying to rebuild a world, but also a defense program. Because of this, people involved here are exposed to constant danger. Attacks are commonplace. So, Solana. You have one last chance. Do you want to back out? No one will blame you."

I think for a moment. If I go back, I can still live a relatively cushy life. But... At the same time, that means I won't, no, can't do anything. And that's the worst. I don't want to live like a flower inside a greenhouse. I want to see the outside world, no matter how harsh it might be, because that's what helps me grow. I don't care how dangerous it is. I'd rather die trying than not doing anything at all.

"No. I'm staying here."

"What?! Are you insane?!"

Some members try to scold me when Horatius holds up his hand, wordlessly telling them to be quiet.

"Very well then. As you wish. Welcome to WRP, Solana. I look forward to working with you to rebuild and defend our world."

"Yes! I'm looking forward to it too! Please take care of me!"

"Likewise, Solana. So, first. I'd like you to tell us a bit about you and your life. Being our leader, I'm guessing the new world's model is your life. And... Here."

"What's this? I don't have any power..."

"That is a communication device. Our earpiece doubles as a restraining and communication device."

"Oh. I see. Thank you!"

"All of you should also talk about your worlds. All of us are going to be living in the exact same world, so we'll have to combine all elements of each world."

"My world was covered with water and everyone was half fish half human. Merpeople, to put it simply. I was the merpeople prince, his highness prince Cordelian, before it collapsed."

"I see... Well, who wants to be next?"

"I'll go. As you already know, I'm a dragon. My world had lots of cliffs and caves. Most of us lived in the sky, but young dragons who couldn't live in caves or nests on top of cliffs."

Meanwhile, I'm making notes.

"Well... My turn? My world had lots of plants and we lived in fields. Some fruits had magic effects because they were enchanted by our magic. And a fountain that had healing properties since we dipped our horns into it daily, purifying it."

"My kingdom was in the center of a forest. The way to get there is very complicated. You can only get there if you were an elf or had an elf with you. Of course, I never thought it'd get destroyed by extraterrestrial forces rather than creatures living in the same world as us."

"I don't have a world. Well, all the worlds are my world, but the world I was currently residing in was destroyed. It was like the human world, although it doesn't matter."

"Umm... Forgive me for asking, but... Why are you here? Couldn't you just... Move to another universe and start anew there?"

"Well, I've grown to quite like it here. Also, it's annoying watching these alien creatures playing god, destroying worlds and the like. It's extremely displeasing."

"Okay... Next."

"My world was pretty similar to Faunus's and Eragon's. Think of it as a mix between the 2. We stay in wolf form most of the time, but we can transform into human if needed. We grow stronger and our wolf instincts take over when it's a full moon. It didn't really matter because we stayed in our wolf form most of the time."

"My world... Was dark. And gloomy. Danger was everywhere. It was survival of the fittest. I killed many unwillingly."

... Umm... Gosh. That was... Bleak...

"Okay... Last?"

"I don't know."

I look at the others for explanation.

"He's a zombie. He's not really a species. He's made up of all the strongest species. Horatius called him his... What was it?"

"My masterpiece."

"Yeah, that. It hasn't been long since he's been made, and he doesn't have a world."

"Aha. Well, do you all need to know what my world was like?"

"We have a fairly good idea because Horatius was describing it to us."

"Well... Umm... Here's the issue. We need to figure out how to not pollute the world."

"Oh, yes. That was the main issue with you humans, wasn't it? If it's any consolation, your world was on the right track what with solar and wind energy and the like. What did humans call it...? Ah, yes. Renewable energy sources, was it?"

"We were?"

"Yes. Although it carries no use to us now. All those scientists and engineers are all dead by now. We only have you. I don't think you're capable of singlehandedly figuring out how to make all those solar panels and make it a reliable source of energy like solutions for cloudy days and the fact that you need a lot more energy than fossil fuels to do the same thing."

I go silent. He is right. I don't know the first thing about those things.

"Wait. That makes it sound like you know what to do!"

"I don't. I remember going to another universe where most of their energy was renewable, and their energy system looked pretty similar to solar panels. That's it. That was a few 100 years ago, so I can't go back and find it now."

"Then why'd you even bring it up?!"

"Y- Your highness! Please calm down, we have to work together, not argue!"

"What did you say?"

"We should all work together?"

"No, before that."

"Your highness?"

"Yeah, that."

"What about it?"

"Why are you calling me that?"

"You're a merprince...?"

"... I'm the only one left! What's a prince without his people?! You know what, I have a great idea. We should all call each other nicknames to feel closer to one another."

"If we don't have one?"

"Make one up. I'll go first. Call me Lian."

"I'm sure you already know, but... Lana. A pleasure to meet you all once again."

"Cordelian, is this really necessary?"

"I second that. This isn't needed."

"My name has no feasible nickname."

"Oh, come on!"

"Just because we're in the same world, doesn't mean we have to get closer to each other. I have no intention of getting close to any of you. Least of all, Solana. She may be our leader, but that doesn't mean I have to be close to her."

"But... Why?"

"I'll cooperate, so don't worry about that."

"It's nothing personal. I have nothing against you. How could I, when I have never met you before? I just have no intention of becoming close to you. Well... Any of you for that matter, but you most of all. It's laughable. A being of cosmic horror, the subordinate of a mere human. Don't think I accept you, Solana. The only reason I welcomed you was to watch you try and fail pitifully to do something."

"That's... Unnecessarily rude, don't you think? I guess I can understand why you don't want to associate yourself with me. In fact, I understand you might consider me a hassle since the only reason you're here is to put these aliens back in their place, and I might be an obstacle. However! That doesn't mean you have to be rude and tell me you only agreed to watch me try and fail pitifully. We don't have to be friends, but can't we at least be civil toward each other? We're going to be living at the same place, and I don't think any of us are going anywhere soon."

He sighs.

"Listen, little girl. There's only one reason you're the leader. You're the only one who has the emotional capability to actually be optimistic about this little project. This could have gone on without you if any one of us had the emotional availability."

... That's harsh... But I can't allow myself to give in so easily like this!

"But you don't, do you? That's why I'm here. And just you wait and see. I'll become an irreplaceable member of this team! When that day comes, I want you to apologize and treat me with respect like you treat the other members of WRP!"

He laughs at me, clearly not taking me seriously.

"Sure, princess. Let's see how you'll make yourself "irreplaceable" to the team."

Horatius... Just what happened for you to be like this... Yes, I know you're cosmic horror, and yes, I know you're the closest thing to a god, but that doesn't mean you have to shut everyone out... And Ciaran too... What is with those two? It's not like the rest are perfectly fine either. Gosh, all the members are so complicated! How am I supposed to lead them all... No, no. You can do this, Solana. Don't lose hope! I'm sure you can get through to them as long as you treat them with sincerity. For now, all you can do is try your best. Right. You can do this, Solana. You've got this.

- The next day

"So, everyone. I've drawn up a diagram of earth and I assume this is what the new world will look like. The merpeople will be in the sea, I assume. The dragons in the mountains and sky, probably. The elves and werewolves in the forest or some other nature preserved space. The unicorns in some meadow or clearing, maybe a pasture of a sort. The humans... I'm not sure we should build a city... Maybe we should build towns...? Darrell, Horatius, I'm not sure where you two fit. Well, I guess you could go to another world, Horatius. Darrell... You look human, although that may be because of the earpiece thing you all have on..."

"Oh, no. He just looks like that. I made him and picked parts that looked human."

"You... Made him?"

"Yes. I personally picked all his body parts from the strongest species. His head was human, though."

"I see... Then Darrell will live as a human, I guess. The main problem is pollution. Cordelian, do you have any ideas for how to protect the ocean?"

"Huh? I'm supposed to know?"

"Umm... You are a prince?"

"Exactly. I'm a prince, not the king. My dad was taking care of all that, not me."

"... Okay, let's try talking about it with everyone later. What about you, Faunus?"

"Elves are born from nature. It is an integral part of our tradition to value nature and take great care not to damage it. As such, we never had to worry about us possibly harming nature."

"I see. That's very admirable. Attitude is very important in everything. Anyway! Now that that's out of the way, let's get to the next part! Rules for the new world~!"

"Rules?"

"Laws."

"I just change the law whenever it suits me. Can't I just do that?"

"No, no, no! We want a democracy!"

"A... What?"

"Democracy. Governed by the people. Not a dictatorship with one person who holds all the power! Besides, we're all different species, so one person can't hold all the power if we want harmony in the world!"

"Fair. So, how do you suggest we go about this? By the way, we've never had a democracy, so this is new."

"None of you?!"

They all shrug or nod. Cordelian, Faunus, Horatius, Ciaran, and Darrell, I get. But the rest... Seem like they'd have one? Sirius starts explaining.

"We never had anything to discuss as there were no problems."

Eragon says

"Yeah, same thing."

Volpe is like

"We all had a leader of the pack, which is dictator- esque."

"Ah- ha. Okay... Well, I was thinking we have a monthly meeting... Or maybe an yearly thing? We can adjust it as we go along, but anyway, we have a meeting with the leaders of each species and talk about any inconveniences or changes we're experiencing and how to improve things."

"Yeah, question. How do we pick the leaders of each species?"

"Oh, each species vote for the best one for the job. Currently, it's going to be you all because... You guys are the only ones."

"Where does Darrell fit in with all this?"

"Oh, Darrell? Well, he's a combination of all the species, so I thought- Oh my god! Why is he having a nosebleed?!"

"... Oh. It hasn't been long since he's been created, so he's kind of unstable. This happens pretty often. Apparently, this is supposed to stop happening so frequently after some time. This is according to Horatius, who created him, so we just decided to take his word for it. He's fine."

Volpe walks over and gets some tissue to stop the bleeding while explaining. The others all seem pretty used to it as well. Okay then... I guess that's that. Let's just get back to talking about the meetings.

"Right. Okay. So, as I was saying, I thought Darrell could kind of lead the conversation as he's all the species? If not, he can also provide a new perspective on things."

"Okay. So, miss Solana, anything else?"

"Umm... No, not really. Do any of you have ideas on what else?"

"Yeah, umm... What does this have to do with making laws?"

"Oh! Umm, we discuss problems and find out ways to solve them. We create and enforce laws that will help us solve issues we find in the new world."

"Punishments for breaking the law?"

"Umm... I didn't think about that. We had prison, where we locked people up for that, but umm... I don't think that's going to work, especially as that's a building, and we need to preserve nature as much as possible. We also need a judge to like... Decide on the sentence and stuff, which means we need a court... Any ideas?"

"I don't think we need to decide that right now... The only ones here are us, and I'm sure none of us plan to break laws, especially when we're the ones that made the laws in the first place. Besides, we haven't even made any laws yet anyway."

"Yeah, we can push it back. This was more like a system more than actually making any laws. Ah, I probably should've asked before, but... Is there anything I should know about this uhh... Place?"

"Umm... We're gonna get rations or something. The others, who are like, going to the worlds and looking for stuff have been bringing us food and stuff, but there's a limit, so they said they're going to restrict our food and water intake until they find a more reliable food source. Faunus will be working on that because he can make plants grow. Of course, it's not like they're trying to kill us. It's supposed to be pretty loose and it's supposed to only be like that for a few days, so yeah."

"Okay... I have a small appetite, so I don't think I need to worry too much."

"Anyway, that's pretty much it. I assume you've already seen your room... Want some of us to guide you around the facility? It's pretty big, but this room and your room are the only ones we use."

"What are we gonna do if there's like... An attack from the aliens?"

"Well, we take these off first of all."

"The... Earpiece?"

"Yes. It restrains our powers and keeps us in human form. However, in the event there's an attack, that's a liability. We have to fight if something like that happens, so having our powers restrained is terrible if we were in a situation like that."

"What do I do?"

"Can you fight?"

"Umm... No...?"

"Then you just go to the safe room or stay back and watch us fight. We can't have you dying on us or have you distract us while we're defending this place."

"Alright, fine. Can I at least help you after you're done with the fighting?"

"Yeah, that's fine."

"Yay! Thank you~!"

"Why are you so happy?"

"Well... It means I can help! Plus, I interned at a hospital before the world shattering occurred, so I'm pretty good at treating wounds and the like, haha. I wanted to become a doctor or a nurse."

"Huh. So it turns out you're actually good for something for once in your life."

"I... Hey, that's rude!"

"Truth hurts. You're not living in a fairy tale book, princess. Get a reality check."

"Gosh, Horatius. You're not going to make any friends with how you're acting. Do you even plan on doing so? Anyway... I think we're done for the day. I'll be going to my room now. Call me if you need me. Bye~!"

I wave and go to my room. I said it as a joke, but Horatius really doesn't plan on getting attached, huh? As for Ciaran... He spent a majority of his time staying out of within a 6 foot radius of me like he was allergic to me or something. The others were all pretty chill, which is nice. Well, Darrell is kind of emotionally detached, but uhhh... That's not his fault. He literally has no emotions because he was created.

- The next day

"Guys, our rations arrived."

"Really? Let me see!"

"Here's the list."

"Oh, it's not that bad. Is it just for today?"

"Yes, it's the same amount daily until we can sort food and water out."

"Ah! Faunus, you scared me, popping out like that with no warning."

"My apologies, it was not my intention."

"No, no. It's fine."

The rations, for me, are very generous, so I have no problem sticking to it. I actually have about half left over for both food and water. As I said, I don't eat or drink a lot, but I guess that could change the longer I stay here. That's when I hear arguing.

"I told you! Don't touch my water!"

"I was thirsty!"

"Well, so am I! And now I can't drink because of you!"

... I should go see what's going on...

"Guys. What's going on?"

Volpe, who was watching, fills me in. So, apparently, Cordelian drank all his water and still got thirsty. So, he thought it'd be fine if he drank someone else's. He looked in the fridge and found a bottle of water. He thought it had no owner, so he drank it. Turns out, it did have an owner, Eragon, who just put it in the fridge due to a preference for cold rather than room temperature water. Since Cordelian drank his water, Eragon was (understandably) angry. And Cordelian thought Eragon was at fault for not writing his name or whatever. Long story short, they fought about water. That sounds so weird out of context... Anyway! I break up the fight and give both of them my water. And here I was thinking rations wouldn't be a problem... I can't believe I was dragged into a fight in the middle of the night...

"Eragon, stop. You're like... 5000 years old."

"Uh, yeah. That's a hatchling's age."

"... Sure, let's go with that. Anyway, Cordelian's a mermaid. He lives in water. You can't blame him for being thirsty."

"He has that necklace which lets him breathe on land! Why can't it control thirst if he has a device that helps him breathe?"

"That's probably the trade off..."

"Ugh, whatever! Just stick to your own water tomorrow! And even if you take someone else's water that isn't mine, I'm going to yell at you just the same!"

"I got it. But my skin needs proper hydration to stay this smooth."

"Lian, just come to me if you run out. I have some left over anyway. And Eragon, don't be too angry. I'm sure he regrets his actions. He thought it had no owner."

"Yes, I understand. I'll be calmer."

"Thank you~!"

- The next day

"Solana!"

"Hmm? Volpe, is anything the matter?"

He grabs my hand and runs off to the classroom where we usually have meetings. When I get there, I see Cordelian collapsed on the floor.

"... What happened?!"

"I don't know!"

Okay... Let's think, Solana... Water! Maybe that's the key... He is a merman, so maybe he gets dehydrated easily. I gently pour out some of my water on a spoon and try feeding it to him, but it doesn't work. Okay... Well, there's always this way. I only saw it in some TV show, so I'm not sure if this works or not, but trying never hurts. I drink some of my water, but don't swallow it. I then proceed to perform mouth to mouth resuscitation, except I'm not trying to make him breathe, I'm trying to make him drink the water from my mouth. Oh wow. That actually worked! He blinks a couple times before sitting up. I'm so relieved I feel tears gathering in my eyes.

"Hmm? Woah, why are you all gathered around me?"

"... Do you seriously not remember what happened?"

"No?"

"Hey, hey. Lana. Shh... There, there. He's fine now. See? Don't cry..."

Volpe, who I guess has a natural affinity for humans, starts comforting me. That's when everyone else notices I'm in tears. Wow. How perceptive, everyone.

"Lana~."

"Yes?"

"I... Don't remember what happened, but based on our current positions, like how I was lying on the floor and our close proximity, I'm guessing I fell or fainted or something and you saved me, right?"

"Well... I..."

"Can anyone tell me what happened?"

"You fainted."

"Yeah, I guessed that. Why?"

"I don't know."

"Well, can you tell me what Lana did so I can figure it out?"

"She kissed you?"

"What?! No! I mean, yes, but that wasn't what I was trying to accomplish!"

"Pfft... Were you trying to act out the little mermaid as a genderbent version?"

"I already told you, n- How do you know about that fairytale?"

"We were told to read books so we could see how humans view us. But what did you do if you weren't reenacting that?"

"I made you drink water through my mouth and ended up kissing you in the process. I didn't even intend to do that, so stop referring to it as one! That makes it sound like I basically sabotaged my first kiss! Not even stolen by someone else!"

"... Thank you. I would've died if not for you."

"D- Died?!"

"Hmm? Yes, didn't I tell you? Merpeople are used to being underwater all the time. We can be on land due to this necklace, but we need constant water, or at least liquid, to live. When the search team found me, I was near death due to severe dehydration. I had to stay in a water tank for a full week to recover."

"... Idiot! If it was like that, you should've just told me! I wouldn't make a fuss if it were a life or death situation!"

"I did try, but you didn't listen. I guess I got swept up in the atmosphere and began yelling at you too. Sorry about that."

"Alright! Now that that's settled. Let's create some new rules. Firstly... I think we need to adjust some rations. So... Who here does not need all their water?"

"If you need water, I'll give him all of mine."

"Faunus... Are you sure?"

"Yes. Elves can survive on very little water."

"Really? That's interesting!"

"It's actually very natural. If you love something, or indeed, someone, and treat it or them with love and care, the receiving end will, in most cases, reciprocate. As I've already explained before, elves love nature. In turn, nature also greatly favors elves, allowing us to survive in even the harshest of natural conditions, including going without water, food, or air for long periods of time. However... We are nearly done and rations will be over soon. A couple days should be all we need to finish up and get a stable food source."

"Wow~! That's so cool!"

"It's really nothing. Something like growing plants... It should be easy for an elf, especially so for an elven king, no less."

"I see... But I can't do that, so I still find it really cool. I used to grow lots of flowers and had a small garden on Earth, but... I bet they're all dead by now, haha..."

"Oh? You used to grow plants?"

"Huh? Oh... Yes, I did."

"I see. Anyway, is that all?"

"F- For now, yes."

"I'll be going then."

"Goodbye~!"

Faunus leaves. He's been spending every day trying to grow plants, hasn't he? I hope he finishes soon. It's taking a long time. Well, he said he'd be done soon, but still.

"Guys?"

"Yes?"

"Can any of you... Like... Track the aliens or any other impending danger?"

"No. We get an alarm from the danger lookout team around 10 minutes before said danger. Mostly aliens, like you said."

"There's another team?!"

"Of course. There's the technical team, who takes care of the actual construction of the new world. Then there's us. Then there's the search team and the danger lookout team. There are others too, but those are all we currently know of. Well... Some of us switched teams."

"Eh?"

"Horatius... Was the driving force for the search team. He was the only one who could jump through worlds and dimensions and the like, transporting the rest of the team along with him."

"So... He brought everyone here?"

"Mm- hmm."

"But... if elves can survive without food, water, and air, why aren't there more?"

"Why don't you ask his majesty? Looks like he's coming back."

"Huh?"

"Hey, Faunus! Lana wants to ask you something!"

"What?"

"Umm... If elves can survive in harsh natural conditions, why aren't there more?"

"... Are you being serious? Honestly, Miss Solana. If you had stopped to consider my words, you would've already had your answer. You mean to tell me you think the

sun exploding due to aliens is natural? I was only able to survive because Horatius arrived to save me in the nick of time.”

“And they didn’t save the rest of you?”

“We only had time to take one. I can jump through dimensions easily, but taking others along with me takes longer. He said he was king, so I figured he’d be the best representative.”

“Okay... What about Cordelian?”

“Oh, him. He was the only one alive.”

“Excuse me?”

“My world was covered in water, but some rocks rose above the water. I got bored and used my necklace to transform my tail into legs to sit on the rock and go cloud gazing. Then disaster struck and all the water vaporized. And the world shattered. This necklace is rare. Only royals have one, but I was the only one who wore it constantly. Mother and father kept it in treasure or jewelry boxes. As such, they couldn’t transform in time.”

“I see... Gods are immortal, I don’t need an explanation for Ciaran. Who do we have left... Eragon, Volpe, and Sirius?”

“Oh, umm... Me? Uhhh... I don’t really know? There was something humans call an Earthquake, and I was the only survivor. And then I was found and brought here.”

“To be more precise, Volpe’s world shattered like yours. Either they landed in inhabitable zones and froze to death or the opposite of it. Some were crushed or fell through the cracks and died. Point is, Volpe was the one and only survivor.”

“Okay...”

“For me... Our horns cracked.”

“Sorry...?”

“A unicorn’s horns are their life. We tried to fight against it and use magic to stop the world shattering. Everyone ended up overdoing it and their horns ended up broken or cracked. I was the only one with an intact horn, but that was only because I was born with a lot of magic and my horn adapted to the amount of magic I had.”

"Oh... I see..."

Everyone turns to look at Eragon.

"... What?"

"You're not going to tell her?"

"I don't want to talk about it."

Horatius sighs.

"Your world ver 2 is what happened."

"Oh... I see... Anyway... Faunus! How is the garden going?"

"Oh, are you curious?"

"Yes, it's important for us. By the way... What do you all eat? If you don't need to eat, what do you like to eat?"

"Well... It's almost done. Another day and it should be over with. Elves eat fruit."

"Dragons generally eat meat."

"I have no particular preference."

"Neither do I."

"What do I eat?"

"... Actually... Good point. What does he eat? Horatius, any idea?"

"I made him based on a human, so probably whatever you eat. But he's made out of the strongest species, so he's much stronger and more durable than you."

"Oh, I see. Cordelian! What about you?"

"I generally used to eat plants like seaweed and kelp, but I also ate fish and crustaceans sometimes if I was in the mood. I'm open to trying new things."

"Nice. Volpe?"

"I also ate meat."

"Sirius, what about you?"

"I generally ate fruit and grass. Plants, to put it simply."

"I see. I personally eat both meat and plants. I see how the plants will work, but ... What about the meat?"

"The others are working on that. I believe they were talking about making artificial meat through plants or lab meat."

"Oh, I think I read something about that."

"Anything else you want to ask?"

"No, no. I'm good. Thanks."

Faunus is... Strange. It's not like he's openly hostile like Horatius, not is he a voiding me like Ciaran. However... He's not exactly friendly either. He's perfectly patient and polite, but he's not really... I don't really know how to explain it. He never seems to really open up? I don't think I've ever seen him smile. Not truly anyway. You know that smile people wear just to be polite? That's how he always smiles. He's never truly happy. I can never tell what he's thinking. But how can I get him to open up to me? That's... My role. If I can't get them to open up to me, I won't be able to reach them and won't be able to lead them. At least, not properly. Plus, my personal pride is on the line here. Not that that's more important than rebuilding the shattered world or anything, but I'd like to prove my worth while we're at it, y'know? Haaa... What should I do? This isn't a case of might makes right. Rather, it's might makes wrong. I may be wrong, but if it were me, I don't think I'd appreciate this little girl you barely know force you to share sensitive information. And yes, I know I'm not little by human standards, but 5000 is apparently young for dragon standards, so I must seem super little to some of them. Sure, I might share a little to placate her, like a mother would use a pacifier on her child, but not all. If I use force, that probably worsens the situation, because it means I don't respect boundaries, which lowers the chance of them ever telling me on their own. Maybe I should just praise him lots and make an effort to talk to him? Wouldn't that make him feel more comfortable? But in moderation. I don't want to come off too forceful or overly outgoing. That might have the opposite of the desired effect.

- The next day

"Are you sure you're not thirsty?"

"Eragon. I literally drank water like... 10 seconds ago. No, I'm not thirsty."

"But what if you faint again? Do you want my water too, just in case?"

"Volpe. I'm fine. Seriously. Actually... Can both of you get away from me? You're making me all gross and sweaty because of the body heat coming from you two!"

"Alright, everyone! I know you all are worried because Cordelian fainted, but we have more important things to do. Especially you, Cordelian. Honestly! How can a prince be so clueless about his own uhh... Sea? I can't believe you don't know the slightest thing about pollution and how to control it! Anything would've been fine! But no, you were all like "Dad takes care of everything." So! Starting from today, you will be reading up on ocean pollution and thinking of ways to stop it! Although I don't think you use most of it, you have good insight and seem intelligent, so make good use of those assets of yours!"

I then proceed to dump stacks of books on his desk.

"Get started on reading these for now. Write down any ideas you get, okay? Cordelian? Why are you smiling like that?"

"Haha... It's nothing. Okay. I'll be sure to try my hardest and write down as many ideas as possible. You can count on me!"

"Okay then... Great! Love the enthusiasm! Ah, one more thing."

"Yeah?"

"Can you please stop complaning about your looks every 10 seconds? I swear, 90% of every word that comes out of your mouth is about how you look. No one here cares as long as you can offer something of value to the conversation. Which you currently won't or can't. I don't know. So, when we have a meeting tomorrow, we haven't been doing one because Faunus was busy but he'll be free by then, I will be looking forward to your contribution."

I then clap my hands twice.

"Okay, everyone. Get back to work. Volpe, Eragon, you two... Either you guys also think of something to contribute, or help Cordelian with his task as moral support. Actually... Volpe, you go rest. Eragon, you can do whatever you like, but keep an eye on Cordelian for me. I don't want him to collapse on me again like last time."

"I'll be fine, I promise."

"Okay then. Let me know if you feel sick or anything, okay? And feel free to stop and take a break. Sorry, I realize I may have sounded a bit too harsh. I didn't mean to make you feel bad or anything..."

"Oh, it's okay! Don't worry about it. I wasn't hurt by it at all!"

"Okay then. I'm glad."

I gently ruffle his hair to encourage him and leave to draw up a to do list. What are the rest doing, you might ask? Well, Horatius is not really cooperating and just stays in his room. Darrell also stays in his room, but that's for power control. Apparently, the restraint barely contains his power. Sirius is supposedly helping Faunus because of his healing power. And Ciaran, well... He got even worse, if that's possible. He refuses to be in the same room as me, so I don't know where he is.

"Umm... Solana?"

"Oh, Cordelian. Yeah? Need something?"

"I... I read all the books."

"Already?!"

"Umm... Yeah..."

"Wow, that's amazing! You're such a fast reader! Even I can't read that fast! Here, let me show you to the library, there are lots of other books. How did you do it?"

"How did I read it?"

"Yeah! I want to learn!"

"Um... I just... Read?"

"Really? Wow, I guess you were just born with that gift..."

"It's a gift?"

"Hmm? Of course! I would give anything to read and absorb information as quickly as you. It's super useful. I thought I read quite quickly, but it's nothing compared to you. Did you write down some things?"

"O- Oh, umm... Yeah..."

"Great~! Thank you!"

"But... You really don't care about my appearance?"

Is he still going on about that?

"I mean... I guess you are pretty? But so what if you are? For all I know, you could be average among merpeople. You could be the ugliest of your kind and you'd still be valuable because you're the only merperson still alive. I don't really care. Besides... I was never the type to look at appearance as a way to judge anyone. Personality is a far better way to do so. Ah, can I ask you something?"

"Sure?"

"Can you sing?"

"Sing?"

"That... I heard mermaids had beautiful singing voices, so..."

"Hmm? Oh, you mean sirens? Well... I guess we are related. Oh, now that I think of it, Ariel in the little mermaid had a beautiful voice, didn't she? I guess in human myth, we got mixed up, but we're actually separate creatures. Sirens are half bird, half human who have beautiful voices. Mermaids have been called enchantingly beautiful, but our voices weren't particularly praised. Still... We are distantly related to sirens, so I suppose I could, although I've never tried."

"So... Sirens don't exist?"

"Well, there were only 3 of them to start with, and there was an oracle that said they would die when a sailor resisted their songs. That happened ages ago, so they were long gone by the time I was born."

"So... If you can't sing, what can you do?"

"Excuse me?"

"I mean... You're technically supposed to be able to fight, right? What can you do if you can't enchant these aliens with your voice or whatever?"

"I, as the prince of the sea, can control any kind of liquid. Saltwater is easiest, but I can control other types too, like milk or juice or whatever. Of course, I can also control freshwater or the water you drink. We don't know a lot about these aliens, but we do know they need water to survive. And they have blood, which is technically a liquid. So, I can control their blood and halt their movements. That's how I can fight them off. Of course, I could also heat up water and burn them, since I can also control temperature."

"What if there's no water?"

"What? Haha, don't be silly. Water is everywhere."

He then makes a ball of water out of thin air and starts playing with it.

"See? There are small particles of water in the air. Humans call it water vapor, right?"

"Wow~! That's so cool!"

"Haha, yeah? You think it's cool?"

"Mm- hmm! Can you swim?"

"Solana, I've lived my whole life underwater. Of course. Why? Can't you?"

"Not really... I got scared I could drown after seeing how a little girl drowned while playing in the ocean."

"That's just because you can't breathe underwater. If you can, there's no reason for you to drown, now is there?"

"And you can make that happen?"

"Of course. I can either give you this necklace, which would allow you the ability to breathe underwater, or I could help you by making you a helmet with some air inside. Kind of like scuba gear, but without the cumbersome suit and oxygen tank. I recommend the necklace though. It's easier. I'll have to ask for it back after you've had your fun though. It's the only way I can breathe on land."

"I see... Hey, were there any desserts underwater?"

"Oh, umm... Yeah. I never was allowed to eat it, but I remember there being sugar under a plant called seagrass."

"So... You've never eaten anything like cake or caramel or candy?"

"Hmm? Sorry, I haven't read a lot on human food. Should I know what that is?"

"I mean... You don't have to know, but... They're sweet treats made from sugar and other ingredients like milk and butter and stuff. I just find it surprising sugar was it. Ah. There's a book about food, so I'll add it to the stack, oka- Ah!"

I lose my balance and trip due to the weight of the books, dropping them all.

"... Ow..."

"Oh my god! I'm so sorry! Are you okay?!"

"I'm fine. I'm not so weak as to become seriously injured by some books. You?"

"I- I'm okay. Thank you for catching me."

"Honestly... If the books were that heavy, you should say something. Or at least bring them one by one."

"I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

"... Calm down, I'm not mad. Thank god I didn't get scratched or anything. I don't know what I would do if my porcelain skin got injured and left a scar."

I rolled my eyes inwardly and started picking up the books and dusting them off. I then narrowed the books down to the top 5 and handed it to Cordelian.

"Read these for now. Oh, one more thing."

"Hmm?"

"Can you purify water?"

"Purify...? I've never tried that before..."

"Really? Try it now. One sec. I'll be right back, okay?"

I go outside and get a bucket of water that was being saved to water the plants. It was already pretty dirty, so it should be fine, right? I carry the bucket back in.

"Okay! Try to purify this bucket of water!"

"Umm... Okay... I should be able to do it, considering I rule over water, but no idea what'll happen to the dirt in it."

Cordelian puts his hand over the bucket and concentrates. A bright light flows out of his hand and the water in the bucket turns crystal clear, purified completely.

"Wow~! You're amazing~!"

"Huh. That actually worked."

"... I... Didn't you say you should be able to do it because you rule over water? Why do you sound surprised that it worked?"

"Well... Theoretically, my ability is called liquid manipulation, so I should be able to do it, from a purely hypothetical view. However, there's a difference between hypothetically and in actual practice."

"I mean... I guess that makes sense. You guys lived in water, so you would have no reason to purify it."

"... True. Thank you."

"Hmm?"

"I discovered something new about my powers. Why did you ask me to do this though? It wasn't on a whim, right?"

"Haha... Wow, such a high opinion already? But... You're right. I thought that if you could purify water, you could use it to solve pollution. By the way... Are there limitations to your power?"

"I wouldn't say limitations, but... Using my power does deplete my energy quickly. I have to use a lot of that for it to happen though, so this much is nothing. It also depends on the power I'm using. If I control someone's body, it takes up more energy because I'm doing it against their will and I have to fight that. Liquid generally yields easily to me because I am their master. Like how nature likes elves."

"I see... Interesting. Well... Anyway, that's pretty much all I wanted to know, so you can go back and do whatever you want."

"Alright then~! I'll get to reading these! Let me know if you want to ask anything else."

"Sure. Let's discuss your ideas tomorrow."

... Well, that wasn't too bad. I thought he was a narcissist obsessed with his looks, but turns out he can actually be quite useful. But if he's so intelligent, why doesn't he know? He's a prince, so his parents must've taught him how to rule, right? Don't most parents slowly teach their kids at around 15 or so? He seems to be close to my age, so... It makes no sense as to why he seems to know nothing about how his parents ruled the sea. It also seems he was an only child, so it's not like there's an older brother or sister who was expected to take on the role of heir to the throne. Actually... I should ask if he has an older sibling.

"Cordelian?"

"Yeah?"

"Do you have an older sibling?"

"Huh? Ah, no. I had cousins, older and younger, but I was an only child."

"So... You were first in line for the throne?"

"Well, yeah, since I was the direct descendant of the king and queen. But that's clearly not happening now."

"I see. Okay, thanks for telling me."

As I thought... He was definitely first in line for the throne. But why did his parents not teach him anything about ruling? I mean... It's not like he's incompetent. He's actually very skilled. Did his parents think he'd automatically learn?

"Did you go to school?"

"No."

Wait, what?!

"How do you know how to read?!"

"I taught myself how."

"You... Taught yourself?"

"Yes."

"How?!"

"I don't remember that part. I just know I never went to school. There was a school, by the way. I just never went."

"Why not?"

"I don't know."

"Okay..."

Well... He taught himself how to read, and presumably, write. So I guess it makes sense that his parents thought he would be self sufficient? But even so, teaching him how to rule is completely different from schoolwork. That's something only experience can teach. Did his parents even... See him as a potential candidate?

"How was your relationship with your parents?"

"They were... Nice enough. They were trying to find me a fiancée who would, in their words, one day rule alongside me."

So they did see him as a candidate... But in that case, why didn't they send him to school or teach him anything? And it seems he wasn't mistreated or whatever.

"How old are you?"

"Ah, that's right. I didn't tell you. I'm one year older than you, so 18."

"Y- You're older than me?"

"... Everyone is, except Darrell, but he doesn't count because he's created. His physical age is meant to be 18 though, so he's technically older than you. Or... Maybe it's different for human age? I believe Eragon is around 19 in human age, and as for Volpe... He's 20 in human years. Faunus is also 18, I believe."

"... I'm the youngest."

"Yes. I believe I don't have to tell you Horatius and Ciaran are older than you. S irius is the same age as Eragon, 19."

"Wait, I'm the youngest and I'm meant to like... Lead you all?!"

"Uhh, yeah. What's the big deal?"

"None of you respect me!"

"I... Really don't think age plays a part here. Faunus was king and was respected, when many of his people were older. I was also treated as a prince."

"That's different!"

"Oh, really? I see. Forgive me, leader."

"Those are positions given through birth. If your parents are royalty, you also be come royalty automatically! But this is a completely different situation. I'm not a princess, nor am I a queen, nor am I any part of nobility. Rank... Is non existe nt here. I need to earn respect. It would be helpful to be a bit older, because pe ople often see older people as a form of authority. But clearly, that's impossible ."

"... I see?"

"But I have a question."

"What is it? I'll do my best to answer."

"Am I not beautiful?"

"Hmm? Haha, didn't I already tell you? I guess you are pretty, but I don't find ap pearance a decisive factor anyway."

"Why not?"

"What do you mean, why not? I just never found it to be important. I could tell yo u a 1000 compliments about your face, but it'd all be pointless if your personalit y is terrible and can't express gratitude."

"I got it. Thank you for explaining."

He then brightly smiled at me. ? I don't get it. Just what did I say for him to be that happy? If it were anyone else who had great pride in their appearance, my dem

eanor, that I didn't care at all, would be mildly annoying at best, very offensive at worst. It was the truth, as I couldn't tell a convincing lie to save my life, but... No one would have been happy if they heard the same thing, especially someone like Cordelian who takes care of his looks. Ah, whatever. I guess I should be thankful he's taking it so well, right?

- The next day

"Faunus!"

"Is anything wrong?"

"No, no! I just wanted to ask if you're done with the plant growing."

"Oh, that. Yes, I'm done."

"Yay! Finally!"

"Is that... Really something to be that happy about?"

"Yeah, because we can have a meeting again."

"Were you putting it off until now?"

"Huh? Well, yeah, because you were busy."

"Don't wait next time. I'm fine with anything the rest of you propose."

"But... I want to include you too... Your opinion is important for me..."

"Wait, wait. Don't act so upset... Honestly... You're not going to cry, are you? Oh good lord... What a handful..."

Faunus awkwardly but gently starts stroking my head, his fingers threading through my long pink hair. He doesn't really say anything, but he does it so gently one would think it's his first time. Haha... I wasn't planning to cry eitherway, but his face is so full of worry that I quickly reassure him that I'm okay. Hmm... His hair looks just like silk... I reach out to stroke his head, similar to what he did to me a couple moments ago. He looks surprised, his green eyes widening at the sudden contact, but he doesn't brush my hand away and lets me do as I please. No, he actually makes it easier, even lowering his head so I can reach the top of his head easily. I had to reach up before because he was quite a bit taller than me, so my arm was starting to ache a little. Actually... All of them are a lot taller than me. It may be because of my age, but it's likely more that they are different races

and they are taller than humans. It probably doesn't help matters that I'm short for my age... Horatius would literally have to kneel down to look me in the eyes. Of course, he's never done that even once, but... I'm just giving you an image so you can picture our height difference. Come to think of it... Cordelian can control water, because he's a merprince. In that case...

"Faunus, what are your powers? In other words, how will you fight against the aliens if they do end up attacking?"

"Ah. I have a bow."

"A... Bow?"

"Yes. All elves are skilled archers."

He sticks out his hand and a bow made out of branches appears in his hands. Wow. I did not expect him to be able to summon a weapon.

"And... You're confident in your aim?"

He gives me an incredulous look as if I'm stupid or something.

"I've never missed my mark."

"Never?!"

"Never. I've been practicing archery since I was 7, so it's been over 10 years."

"What about the arrows?"

"Oh, the arrows are made out of magic. As long as I have enough mana, I can keep making arrows. Why? Should I show you?"

"Really? Okay, one sec."

I grab an apple, put it on my head, and lean against a wall.

"Your task is to slice the apple in half without harming even a hair on my head."

He smiles condescendingly.

"Is that all? What a rudimentary task."

He's so arrogant...! I swear, if he can't do the task I set him flawlessly, I'm going to call him out for being a liar. There's no wa-

Before I can even finish my thought, a sparkling arrow whooshes over my head, slicing the apple into perfect halves. It doesn't even make a mark on the wall because the arrow disappeared immediately after slicing the apple.

"So. Did I, by any chance, harm a single hair on your head, milady?"

Ugh... Dang it. I want to be mad, but I can't because he did it unbelievably perfectly. He fully deserves to be that proud of himself. His attitude is infuriating, especially as he's still being condescending, his lips forming a smirk. He's calling me "milady" as a joke rather than an honorific. I guess that task really was easy for him.

"F- Fine! You're good at archery! But is that the only thing you can do?"

"Haha, still not convinced? Well, I can make plants wrap around your wrists and ankles, capturing you. I can do that to the aliens too. Or I could grow poisonous plants and make the aliens ingest them. There are a multitude of things I can do. Especially when I take my restraint off."

He gently taps his earpiece twice. That's right... If he was able to grow plants and summon a bow with his powers being restricted... There's no telling how powerful he'll be without. Cordelian is the same story. And as for Horatius, well... I don't even want to imagine what he could do if his entire power is unleashed. He is basically time and space itself, able to bend reality to his will. On top of that, he can shift dimensions and teleport as needed. Honestly, thank god he's on our side or we might as well give up right now. We wouldn't stand a chance if Horatius was siding with the aliens. Maybe... That's why he was so dismissive. He's immortal, practically a god... No wonder he saw this whole project as a fun show. He can do anything he wants. For the first time... I think I understand the full power of my comrades and what they can do. Does this get me down, you ask? Lower my confidence and make me feel insignificant? Not at all! If anything, this only strengthens my resolve to become irreplaceable. Even if they are all powerful, I was selected to lead! There has to be a reason for that. So, if anything, this belated realization of mine only served as motivation. However, on another note... Horatius could literally be dreaming all of us up right now. When he awakes, we'd all just... Cease to exist. Wait... What if...

"Horatius!"

"What is it?"

"You're not dreaming, right?!"

"Dreami- Oh. No, no. It's true I can make dreamlands and everything and everyone will cease to exist in that dreamland once I awake, but... Rest assured. I am not dreaming. You and I, and everyone else here are all very much real. I have enough self awareness to know if I'm dreaming or not. I don't know if that's good or bad news considering the current situation of the worlds shattering, but you are real. And so is everyone else here."

"So... What exactly are you?"

"What am I? You wouldn't possibly be able to comprehend. I rule what knowledge and reason cannot learn. Time and space itself. Universes are my playground. That's why these aliens are annoying me so much. Currently, I'm very interested in WRP and it's members. That includes you."

He gently pats my head.

"Although I doubt you'll be able to become someone special to me, try your best. Because I think that'll be quite fun to watch as well. As much as watching you try and fail pitifully, really."

... He said the same thing when I first arrived but... For the first time, I see something else underneath that cold exterior. He seems... Saddened. Lonely. Everyone here seems to have something underneath their general personality... And that's exactly why I have to become closer to them. If not, I won't be able to do my job, lead them and create the new world, properly. Sure, I could just pretend not to know, but... That's so cruel and heartless! If I'm going to be working with them, I at the very least want to help them a little... I shake my head side to side to clear my mind. Focus, Solana. You can get to that when the time is right. However, for now, let's just do what we can, one at a time.

"Everyone, gather around! Let's have a meeting! Today's topic is pollution!"

At my call, everyone, including Ciaran, gathers in the meeting room. But he stays as far away from me as physically possible. I'm honestly getting a bit upset. What did I ever do to him for him to avoid me so openly? I don't think I wronged him. So, I take a step towards him. When I do, he takes a step back. However, he's soon pressed up against the wall.

"Do you hate me?"

He blinks at me with his silver eyes, clearly very confused. I thought it was a reasonable question though?

"You keep avoiding me. Why would you do that if you don't hate me?"

Understanding flashes in his eyes.

"No, you misunderstood. I... Do not deserve to be near you, so please stay back. My darkness will contaminate you."

... Uhhh... I kind of get it. He's a demon god, so I guess he views himself as evil or dark, I presume? And he doesn't want me to be exposed or be dirtied by the darkness? Well... If that's the reason... It's actually quite sweet. A demon god with a pure heart... What a unique combination. But "I don't deserve to be near you"? What nonsense. There is no way he will contaminate me. Even if he is a demon god, his heart is as pure as can be. Someone like that would never be able to have a negative effect on anyone. At least... Not on purpose. I'd like him to know that, but... That's a conversation for another day. I step back for now, and he breathes an obvious sigh of relief.

"So! Back to the matter at hand! Pollution! Now, we're going to be talking about 3 main types. Air, water, and land. Would anyone like to go first?"

"Can I?"

"Cordelian! Go ahead. I assume you'll be talking about water pollution?"

"Yes, that's correct! So, I have a couple ideas. I read up on water pollution, and it turns out a lot of pollution is because of plastic. So, to combat this, I propose we should reuse plastic, if it's going to be manufactured. Another solution is we use another material that is biodegradable and is not harmful instead of plastic. Another problem is toxic chemicals and waste flowing into water. On earth, that is. I really hope we don't have to run into the same issue, but this could be solved by my ability to purify water or wastewater treatment if I find it difficult to purify large bodies of water. Some harmful chemicals include pesticides and fertilizers. I find the usage of these highly unlikely due to elves having the ability to grow plants, but if you need them, please use pesticides and fertilizers that contain no harmful chemicals to prevent water pollution."

"Wonderful! Any other ideas?"

Silence ensues.

"Okay, it seems everyone agrees! How about air pollution? Eragon, I believe you're most suited to talk about this problem since you can fly, but anyone else is welcome to talk about it as well."

"I don't really care."

"... What?"

"There's no point. I'm leaving."

... Eragon... What is going on lately?

"Hey! Eragon!"

"Cordelian, stop. Give him some time."

"But—"

"No buts, Volpe."

"Fine..."

"Meeting adjourned. Get back to your rooms, everyone."

First Cordelian, then Faunus, after him Horatius, later Ciaran, and now Eragon. What is going on lately? Is anything wrong with them? I mean... It's good because it means they're opening up to me, but it's happening all at once, which makes it confusing. Over half of them suddenly sort of opened up to me. Well, maybe not Ciaran because that was sort of forced. And maybe Eragon didn't mean anything by it. However! The rest definitely have something going on. I don't know what it is, but I think it's crucial to find out. It's not easy, but... No one said this would be a walk in the park. It actually should be anything but, so I can do this. It'll be fine. But in the case there's an attack and they have to take off the earpiece... That means they can't communicate with each other when they're far away or something. Which could prove to be a serious liability. For example, Eragon can probably fly, right? So maybe he could warn others of incoming attacks through the earpiece? They could just take off the crystals because that's the part that restricts their powers. I should talk to them about it tomorrow. Well, assuming the aliens don't attack tomorrow.

- The next day

"Guys?"

"Hmm?"

"You said the earpiece restricts your power but doubles as a communication device, right?"

"Yeah, what about it?"

"Well... Wouldn't being able to communicate with your comrades be an advantage in battle? Is there a way to take the crystals off so the earpiece doesn't restrict your power but allows you to communicate with each other?"

"Actually... That's a good point... We should ask the tech team to make a new version or just ask them to make an ear piece that only functions as a communication device, nothing else."

"There's a tech team?"

"Yeah. They're the ones handling the plant based meat and stuff. But they're just mixing and matching stuff from other worlds. It's nothing new."

"What creatures are they?"

"We don't know. We were nearly all knocked out or near death when WRP showed up to bring us to their facility. When we woke up this earpiece was already on us."

"So... Cosmic horror and gods can get... Knocked out?"

"I wasn't knocked out. Honestly, they just looked a lot like people."

"So... There are more people?"

"I said they looked like people, but then again... Look around you. We all look like people. They could be other creatures. Why they're not joining I have no idea. I suppose they could be robots. The only other person is the guy you met on your first day. The supervisor."

"Umm... I see... Anyway. One of you will talk about the communication device, right?"

"Yeah, sure."

"Anyway... I realized I was being far too... Negligent with you all, and I thought it'd be a good idea to have you all talk and demonstrate your abilities. I know the restraint weakens them significantly, but I think some can still use them."

"Umm... Okay. Should I start or...?"

"Oh! Yes, please go ahead, Cordelian!"

"Uhh... Okay. So my ability is connected to liquid."

"Any liquid?"

"If you have questions, please ask later, but yes. Any liquid. If you could melt metal into liquid I could still control it. I can also control the temperature of liquid, I'll use water for an example. Lana, can I use that cup of water you have as an example?"

"Oh, sure!"

Cordelian closes his eyes and focuses and the water suddenly turns to ice. He opens his eyes again.

"Do you want me to melt it again?"

"Yes please!"

"Alright."

He gently taps the glass once and the ice turns back into water.

"As you've all seen, changing water back to its original state or manipulating it while it's liquid is easier than making it into a solid or gas. Now, my ability is circumstantial. If there's no liquid, it's practically useless. However..."

Cordelian makes a water ball out of air the same way he did for me in the library.

"As long as we're here, I can use the water vapor in the air. Of course, I can also swim because I used to live in water. Do any of you have any questions?"

Oh! I have one!

"Can you talk to marine animals?"

"Oh, umm, it really depends on the animal, but some of them, sure. I used to have a pet dolphin I could talk to."

"What about the purification?"

"Ah, yeah, I forgot to mention that. Thanks for reminding me, Volpe. It turns out I didn't really test out my power to it's full extent, so there may be things my power can do that I don't know about yet. The ability to purify water was one of them. I'll let you know if I find any new powers I can add to the roster."

"Okay! Next?"

"I can go, if that's alright with you."

"Oh, Faunus! Sure you can!"

"Right. So, as I said before, nature favors elves and I can survive in reasonably harsh conditions without great difficulty. I can also grow plants. As for combat abilities... I'm an archer. I can summon a bow, and my arrows are made of magic. My bow, by the way, was crafted by me."

"You can... Make bows?"

"Of course I can. All elves make their bows that reflect their desire and who they are. Therefore, only a bow I made myself will show my true skill as an archer. Oh, and I can talk to animals living in the forest, from birds and rabbits to deer and the like. It's not very useful in a situation like this, but I can do it. I can also technically control all elements, so earth, air, water, and fire. However, Cordelien would be much more talented with water. To explain this in an easy way... In terms of raw power, we would have the same amount. However, Cordelien has all his power put into water manipulation, while my powers were quartered into each element."

"Wait, you didn't tell or show me about this when I talked to you privately!"

"I... Goodness, are you really upset about something so insignificant? You know now, do you not?"

"Faunus! That's not the point!"

"It's not?"

"No, oh my god! How are you so bad at interpreting why someone is upset?!"

"Exactly! Your empathy is practically non-existent at this point!"

"Can you all stop telling me off? Besides, I was about to explain why I didn't mention or show it anyway. So, our restraints weaken our power significantly, like you

u said. However, element control is actually still very powerful, even if weakened due to the restraint. If I were to use it, I could hurt you. I was intending to use this power as little as possible and leave it as a last resort, so I thought it unnecessary. Anyway... Oh, right. I can grow new plants."

"New plants?"

"All I have to do is imagine a plant, it's appearance, characteristics, and I can make it grow. For example, I could imagine a plant with deadly poison. That's about all I can do. Next?"

"Wait, wait, what can you do with your element control?"

"As I said, I don't plan to use it, but to give you an example... I could make others suffocate by controlling air flow or I could make barriers of earth, air, and fire."

"So like... Can you create it or only manipulate it?"

"You don't see any fire I can play around with here, do you? I can create elements."

"Cool~! Okay, that's all I wanted to ask!"

"Okay. Who wants to go next?"

"I can, if nobody else wants to."

"Volpe! The stage is yours~!"

"So... I basically have all the abilities a wolf would have. Enhanced senses, strength, agility, speed, night vision, you get the deal. I can also heal quickly in wolf form. All this gets enhanced when it's full moon. What else... I'm good at tracking scents and have great directional sense. By the way, I have black fur and gold eyes when I'm in my wolf form. I shapeshift, but... That's kind of a given. Anyway... Yeah, I think that's pretty much it."

"Okay, amazing~! Does anyone want to go next?"

"I want to go last."

"Uhhh... Okay, noted. Then you can go last, Horatius. By the way, uhhh... What can Darrell do exactly?"

"Oh, yes, him. Let me see... He can't die, so he's immortal. He's also equipped with super strength. You'll see what he's capable of. I assure you he can pull his own weight in a battle."

"Uhhh... Okay. Good to know. So... Eragon, Sirius, Ciaran. Would one of you 3 go?"

"I can go."

"Eragon! Please begin!"

"Okay, so... This is honestly going to sound super similar to Volpe. I can shapeshift into a dragon. My scales are white, by the way, as seen by my horns. My scales, in dragon form, are impenetrable, not counting the soft parts like my belly scales. By the way, spears can harm the soft parts but arrows will have no effect, so hopefully that gives you an idea of how hard they are. I can breathe flames, napalm, and poison as needed. Faunus, I don't know if having fire around helps, but yeah. I can also, uhh, fly, if that counts."

"What's napalm?"

"Oh, you don't know what it is, Lana?"

"I learned about it in the Vietnam war, but I don't quite remember what napalm itself was. I just remember it can burn you."

"Napalm, in simple terms, is a mix of gelling agent and a petrochemical. It's a flammable liquid that burns at very high temperatures and sticks to its targets."

"So... It's more dangerous than fire?"

"Napalm, on its own, isn't dangerous. However, it burns far hotter and longer than fire once it ignites and catches fire. Plus, it sticks to whatever it touches. So, yes, it's considered to be more lethal."

"Eragon?"

"Yeah?"

"Can you like... Combine breaths?"

"Yes. I've made poisonous fire several times. I guess I could also try a fire and napalm mix, but I've never tried that because it would be too dangerous."

"No. Do not use that. Especially in front of Solana. We might be able to protect ourselves, but Solana has no such skills. If you ever happen to be in a situation where there is no other option, use it only when Solana is far away and call her back only when the flames are out."

"Uhhh... Cordelian, I'm not that fragile."

"Solana. Please. Just run to the farthest room you can find if an attack were to happen. We will call you back when it's over and done with, okay? We already went over this when you first arrived."

"I... Okay, I understand, Volpe."

"Good. Anyway, getting back to the topic at hand... Sirius, why don't you go next?"

"Well... This is in my unicorn form. I have all the abilities of a horse, but enhanced. So, I can run quickly and all that. My specialty is healing and purification magic. I umm... Don't really have any offense spells, but... I'm good at defense... Uhhh... Yeah, I guess that's it..."

Hmm... Strange. Sirius, a unicorn, is the ultimate symbol of purity and hope. A beacon of joy and light in the darkest of times. Therefore, it makes sense Sirius would have the ability to heal wounds and purify things. That fits him perfectly, and I personally think that's his strong point. Even when everyone is wounded and hurt, Sirius can heal and purify their scars, providing them the strength to get back up and fight for another day. Sure, his role in actual battle may be support rather than actually fighting, but that's no reason to feel embarrassed.

"How can you use defense?"

"Oh, um... I can make shields and the like..."

Exactly. Plus, he can protect others. The way I see it, his powers perfectly reflect his general personality and the meaning of a unicorn in symbolism. However... Considering his general demeanor when talking, it's nearly like he's... Ashamed of it. Well... I could be wrong, and it'd be wrong to call him out and potentially argue with him in front of everyone, so I let it go for now, but I make a mental note to talk about it later when the timing seems right. I decide to change the subject for now.

"Okay, Ciaran! Do you mind going next?"

"My power... Comes from the demons who worship me or everything negative."

"Umm... Are they even alive?"

"Apparently, his worshippers are souls. He doesn't need their physical body to draw power from them."

"Oh, that makes sense."

"Yeah, so his worshippers are okay."

"I've never unleashed it willingly before, so... I'll just explain what happens when I lose control and black out."

"... Blackout...?"

"He means he's not in his right mind and goes on a rampage because his power was restrained for too long and needed to be let out. So his conscious "blacked out", if you get what I'm trying to say."

"Oh, that makes sense. Sorry for interrupting, Ciaran. Please continue."

"N- No, not at all. You don't have to apologize."

"Haha, thank you! But please, do continue."

"Well... Because I wasn't in my right mind... I don't really know what happened. I come to my senses and see corpses all around me. Umm... I actually think I unleashed it on your world accidentally, causing the world wars and the great depression and everything else bad that happened..."

Okay... Well, it's clear he's powerful, so that's good. But he shouldn't blame himself for everything bad that happens. It's not his fault if he didn't mean it. He lost control. And honestly speaking... Who wouldn't?! He has thousands of demons worshipping him as a god. If I had that kind of power, I wouldn't be able to control it either. If he really caused everything bad that happened, not counting the sun exploding, he did a great job holding back. There have only been 2 world wars, and the great depression no. 2 never happened. Sure, some places are poor and underprivileged, but speaking on a general scale, he did fantastic restraining his power. His mental fortitude is really something else. I would've already lost my sanity and reason if I were him. Anyway...

"Horatius, per your request, you are indeed, last. So, what can you do?"

"Well, let me see... I can bend reality to my will, for a start. I can also travel between dimensions and shapeshift according to which world I live in. I control time and space itself. When I dream, I dream up entire worlds that are destroyed, people, civilization, and all when I awake. In fact, you all could be a dream of mine. You're not, by the way, a dream. I just wanted to tell you how my dreams would feel just like reality. Also, I'm immortal and cannot be killed. I also don't age. Well, I do, but I do not physically age, as I am not bound by the laws of time. As for what I am... I suppose I would be closest to what you call a "god", in a sense. Do you understand, Solana? I was trying to break it down into simple terms to aid your understanding, but if something didn't make sense, let me know."

"No, no. It makes sense- Wait, so you were matching your explanation to me?"

"Solana. Everyone was."

"I- I'm not stupid, you know!"

"I never implied you were, Solana. It's just that all of us have magic or come from worlds that have magic, but you don't. As a result, we were trying to make it easy for you to understand as we knew that as long as you understood, the rest would too. Besides, you were the one who requested this of us, so doing this would be futile if you couldn't comprehend it."

"O- Oh... I see."

"No need to feel embarrassed, Solana. While it wasn't intended, I can see how you might misinterpret Cordelian's words as you being of lesser intelligence."

"Faunus! What else was I supposed to say?"

"You simply could have not said anything or provide her with the explanation that I just gave her."

"That was a rhetorical question!"

"Oh, really? My apologies for not realizing."

Haha... Cordelian looks so annoyed... Their dynamic is really entertaining to watch.

"Anyway... Solana, I realize you don't have any powers, but are there any special skills or hobbies you have?"

"Huh...?! Oh, um... I... I can do first aid, but I think Sirius has that covered. Uhh... Let's see... I like drawing and writing things. Sometimes I write and sing songs?"

"Nice. Can you sing something for me later?"

"Huh? I thought you could sing."

"What? No! Why does everyone think I can sing?!"

"So... You can't sing?"

"Yeah, I can't, Eragon! Oh good lord... Sirens and mermaids are different!"

"Umm... I- I'm so sorry..."

"What? Oh, no. You're fine. I mean, considering how the little mermaid emphasized.. What was her name? Aria? Ari something's voice, I can clearly see how badly humans mixed sirens and mermaids up. Besides, you at least asked me and didn't automatically assume."

"Uhhh... Thanks for... Forgiving me?"

"Don't mention it. Anyway! Point is, I can't sing, okay?! If I had a hypnotizing voice that could lead sailors to their death, I would have mentioned it."

I clap my hands twice to diffuse the awkward atmosphere.

"Okay! Everyone, thank you so much for today, it was very insightful. You may all go now. See you tomorrow."

"Okay~!"

"Ah, wait, wait!"

"Yeah?"

"Umm... This is probably not the best time to ask, but uhh... Eragon?"

"Hmm?"

"One day... When all this is over... Could I possibly... Ride on your back when you're in your dragon form? I always wanted to know what it was like and fantasized

about it thousands of times. Of course, it's okay if you say no! Don't feel pressure--"

"Sure."

"Wait, what?!"

"Sure. I'm not letting you ride on my back in the middle of battle, but when all this is said and done, I don't see why not. I can definitely take you for a ride for a couple minutes at least. You also seem really light, so... Yeah, sure. Be my guest."

"Ahh!"

He suddenly picks me up and twirls me around as he talks.

"As I thought. Light as a feather. I promise you to give you a ride one day."

He sets me down, gets on one knee, takes my hand, and lightly kisses it while promising me. I... What was that?!

"Cordelian, Faunus, did I do it right?"

"... Bro, what?!"

"Didn't you say that I should kiss the hand of a lady when making her a promise or asking her for something or to thank her?"

"Yes, but... No at the same time. There's a time and place for these things, and I didn't mean a promise like that."

"Ohh... I see. Sorry!"

"No, no. Nothing you should apologize for."

"So... You're not mad?"

"Not at all, haha."

"I see. That's a relief."

"Anyway... You can all go now. For real."

- The next day

"Lana! We got the new communication devices!"

"That quick?"

"Mm- hmm. The tech team is really efficient. They should connect to your earpiece as well, so we can communicate with you during the battle while not having our power restricted."

"Nice! But... Is that really necessary? You said I should just run and hide."

Well... I'm not doing that anyway, but I can't say that because then they'll be on the lookout for me when the battle begins and cart me back to the safe room regardless of my own will. If I use the element of surprise, they'll still likely focus on protecting me, but on the battlefield which is better than being locked up in a room and only being called back out once everything is said and done. That basically defeats the whole purpose of me being here. I'd rather die trying than die without doing anything, but if they lock me up, I'm going to die without doing anything anyway. It doesn't matter where I am if they lock me up in some random room.

"We need to check how you're doing."

"Okay then...? I understand."

Anyway... They have the battle part taken care of, but I still feel that they're not exactly enthusiastic about rebuilding the world. I don't blame them, I sure didn't really care about... Anything when my parents died, although I got back on my feet pretty quickly. However, the situation is different. We need to be a little more passionate about this project of ours. So... I feel like maybe we should try and cultivate a good relationship with each other which could maybe help them realize we're in this together, and be a bit more serious about this. I think some have some... Interesting dynamics with each other. For example, Cordelian, Faunus, and Eragon seem to be arguing or at odds with each other most of the time. Actually, it's just Cordelian and Faunus, I guess my brain added Eragon because of the water drama. It actually does make sense why they're so at odds though. They're practically foils of each other. You see, they're both royal and the next heir/ruler of their kingdom, plus the same age. They both have semi-similar magic as well, that being element magic. However, while Cordelian is very carefree and has an uninterested attitude about his role, Faunus is often very serious and responsible, the so called "perfect ruler". If I had to use one word to describe each of them, it'd be... Beauty for Cordelian and Perfection for Faunus. And not because those are qualities they possess, although they do have those qualities. It's more like... Those are qualities they obsess over, to the point it could be called mania. They don't

show it a lot, so I guess mania is a bit too far, but Cordelian talks about his looks 24/7. He literally passed out from dehydration and the warning he gave us was his skin not getting enough moisture. As for Faunus... He seems very... Arrogant. From the "You are beneath me" tone to the part where he said he's never missed his mark, he takes extreme pride in his abilities. But at the same time, he doesn't talk about anything he's not good at unless necessary, such as his elemental magic. It's like he needs to appear perfect. Eragon is generally very chill and has actually become good friends with Cordelian, I believe, but the topic of his old world seems to be a touchy subject. Let's see... Who else? Ciaran... Yeah, he needs to come closer instead of avoiding me like the plague or something. Yes, I know the reason is nice, but this isn't going to work if he keeps staying out of a 6 foot radius of me. Horatius... I'm inconsequential and unimportant to him, and he says he's just here for the show. He refuses to get close to anyone, which... Makes sense. After all, he has thousands of other worlds and universes he can go to. It's not like we're special. We're like... A temporary pasttime for him. But even so... I can't shake the feeling he must feel lonely at times. As for Darrell, Horatius's creation, he's a zombie. Well, obviously, I know that, but he acts like the zombies you'd see in video games or something. No feeling, no emotion. Killing machine. His red eyes are always so vacant and empty looking. It's not his fault, I know. He has no memories, no family, nothing. He was created. But... I think it'd be nice if he could understand and maybe learn how to feel one day. His nosebleeds have decreased, at least, which is good. It must mean he's becoming more stable with time. Now we have our animal shapeshifters, Sirius and Volpe. Sirius... I've mentioned this before, but I feel he's embarrassed about his inability to go on the offense. However... That's actually good. I don't want offense. I'd rather everyone focus on defense. Yeah, the aliens are... Supposedly evil, but I don't want to kill or hurt them. Villains are made, not born! I believe there's still some good left in them, no matter what, and I'd like for them to one day live in harmony with us, not live as enemies. So, really, Sirius is my best bet of how I want things to go. Focusing on defense, not offense. And he's the only one who can heal others, so if one of us were to get seriously injured, he'd be saving lives. He's really amazing, and I wish he'd realize that too. And as for Volpe... He said werewolves, much like wolves, lived in a pack. He didn't specify what rank he was, but I suspect he was actually the leader of his pack. I have 2 reasons. Firstly, if we look at everyone else, representatives of each race were brought, Faunus and Cordelian being our 2 most obvious examples. Well, Cordelian was the only one alive, and it was the same for practically everyone else, but my point still stands. For example, Sirius had the most amount of magic. Nearly everyone had enhanced abilities compared to the rest of their race or was a fitting representative. In Volpe's case, the one with enhanced abilities would be the leader of their pack. Considering he was the sole survivor, it would make sense if he had enhanced abilities that allowed him to stay alive for longer. Secondly, he's perceptive and quick to react, qualities a leader,

especially one that lives in the wild, needs. Not to mention... He's like... Super protective over everyone. Me especially. I don't know about you, but if my pack died, I'd probably try to protect my new friends, and Volpe makes friends very easily. Anyway, my concern with him is... He's way too hard on himself, but in a different way from Faunus. If Faunus is trying to better himself and being too harsh in the process, Volpe is trying to make sure everyone around him is okay and overworks himself while doing that. I don't think I'm doing anything particularly wrong, but... Why do I feel so guilty? Hmm... Is speculation about one's past impolite even if they don't know about it? I guess so. HUUU... Get it together, Solana. Focus. Remember why you're doing this in the first place. Anyway, we have 8 members excluding me, so that's good. A perfect number. 7 days each week, one talk with each every week. Ciaran is the one I'll be excluding because... It's not because I hate him, it's just... He can't even be in the same room as me, how am I supposed to go about it? So, I'll instead make him step closer to me until he can stand right in front of me. Well, either that or prevent him from backing away from me when I step closer. That's why I decided to start with the others.

- The 1 on 1 meetings

"Solana?"

"Horatius! Welcome~! Take a seat!"

"So? Is there anything else you need to ask me besides my powers?"

"Umm..."

Oh gosh, I did not think this through in the slightest.

"I want to know about... Your past?"

Okay, that was so random. I am so screwed.

"My... Past?"

I nodded, plastering a smile on my face. This is fine, everything's fine. Asking about his past is a reasonable question.

"Well... I used to pretend to be a citizen for centuries, constantly changing my identity because I didn't age, but then the sun exploded and I didn't have to do that anymore, which was convenient."

"I... I want more detail? Like... Did you have any friends or your childhood... If beings of cosmic horror had childhoods..."

"I did. Have a childhood. But I don't remember it, nor do I remember any friends I had."

"But..."

"Solana. I don't remember. End of story."

"Liar. You do remember."

"I don't. I'll be going now."

He gets up and starts walking off.

"If this is about every human dying before you, that doesn't mean your time together meant nothing!"

He stops.

"Of course not. For you, at least. Because a human's life is so short and inconsequential, they remember all their friends and loved ones. I don't have the time to remember every single little human who passed by me."

He then leaves for real. Umm... That was sort of productive. What I said got some sort of reaction from him after all.

"Solana, what did you say?"

"Huh? Cordelian... What is it?"

"I have no idea what you did or said, but you should apologize. Horatius practically fell apart after he left the room."

"Fell... Apart...? Horatius?"

"Well, not fell apart exactly, but... He was upset, okay?"

... I had no idea that actually made him upset. I guess I was somewhat on the right track, but I guess I should still apologize to him since I said something I shouldn't have? I gently knock on his door.

"Solana, what are you doing in front of my room?"

"Ah! Oh, you scared me... So... Uhh... I..."

"I don't have all day."

"I... I apologize!"

"I wasn't scolding you."

"No, not that, although I apologize for that too! I... I'm sorry for what I said! I realize I was being too insensitive!"

"..."

"Umm... Horatius?"

"Hahaha, honestly. Was that it? I never knew you were so prideful that saying sorry to me was embarrassing."

"No, no! That's not it! I was just trying to figure out the best way to apologize!"

"In that case... Do me a favor, will you?"

"A... Favor?"

"Yes. You want a chance to make it up for me, isn't that right?"

"Yes, yes! But... Can someone like me... Really do a favor for someone like you?"

"It's very very easy, so even someone like you can do at least this much. At least, I hope you can, or this project is done for."

"... You know, I know I started it, but can you stop with that tone?"

"Of course. After you prove how irreplaceable you are, gladly."

... Dang it, why did I say that!

"Come on, time for your favor."

He pulls me by my hand into his room and sits me down on a chair. He sits down on a chair that faces mine.

"So... What do I need to do for you?"

"You... Are going to listen to me and occasionally provide your thoughts."

"So... You just want me to listen and empathize with you?"

"Yes. I told you it was easy. Do you think you can at least do that much?"

"Sure! Start whenever you'd like!"

"When I was young, I was known to be extremely sociable and outgoing."

"Really? I don't see it."

"That's because it was thousands of years ago. I was very curious and interested in all sorts of species, despite knowing they were all beneath me. Out of all of them, I was the most fascinated with humans."

"Humans?!"

"Yes. They developed very quickly. I looked away for a moment and it looked like years had gone by with how quickly they were progressing. Well, not that I had any concept of time. Whether it be 10 years or 1000 years, they're all the same to me. As such, I decided to masquerade as one."

"So... This is a disguise?!"

"No, this is the closest to how I'd look if I was human. I changed my identity and looks several times throughout the years. The earpiece transforms us all into how we'd look if we were human. For others who look relatively human, such as Faunus and Cordelian, it's just a power restrainer. Exactly the same for my masterpiece, by the way."

"So... This is you, but human form? Kind of like... I'd be a pink kitten with blue eyes if I were to be imagined as a kitten?"

"Yes. Exactly. Moving on, I pretended to be human."

"So... Do you have like... Parents?"

"I masqueraded as an adult. And cosmic horrors just spawn. We don't have what humans would call parents."

"Ah, that reminds me. Do you have friends that are also cosmic horror beings?"

"Oh, I wouldn't call them friends, but I know them, yes. Azathoth and Yog-Sothoth to name a few."

"If you're not friends, what's your relationship? Acquaintances?"

"No. I am above all cosmic beings."

"Huh?! So... You're like... The King?!"

"I don't particularly care for that title, but I suppose you can call it that. I mean, someone had to take order. Azathoth is known as the blind idiot god, so I can't leave him to take charge. I suppose Yog-Sothoth isn't that bad, but he's young. I think he and Azathoth had a grandfather-grandson relationship."

"So... I know I'm not going to understand, but... What do you rule over?"

"Generally or in a cosmic horror hierarchy?"

"Generally."

"I believe I already told you this, but to say it in simpler terms, and don't ask, you won't be able to understand and would eventually lose your sanity should you try to understand because your human brain wouldn't be able to comprehend it, I reside out of space, time, and all known concepts and rule over all. I govern what reason and knowledge cannot learn. Time, space, laws, all of them do not apply to me. I rule over it after all. However, I assure you you won't go poof one day. Oh, and I left the rest of the gods in good hands, so don't you worry."

"Good hands...?"

"Yes. I sent them all to sleep. It'll be several centuries until they wake up. And then I can just send them back to sleep. I can't have them bothering me."

"But they need to eat and drink and- Oh. They don't need to, do they?"

"No. They don't. We can, however, eat. It's simply not a necessity. Anyway... To continue, I was very interested in humans that I masqueraded as one of them. I made many friends along the way. All of them are dead now, of course."

"Do you remember them?"

"Not all. Just a few."

"Such as?"

"My first friend was a man named Kyle Johnson. He was an upright, honest man who had a wife and 2 kids, a boy and a girl. I attended his funeral. I pretended to age by changing my appearance slowly. I changed my appearance completely and the man that was his friend presumably died from old age. The man of then had brown hair and green eyes. I was also friends with a lady named Olivia Riverdale. She was the daughter of a Marquis."

"A... Noble?"

"Yes. I have lived among humans for longer than you think."

"Okay... Continue."

"Olivia fell in love with me, but her father disapproved of me. He forbade her from seeing me again."

"Why?"

"I had a company that was very famous and I rose to wealth quickly. I was granted a noble title because of it, although I was only a baron. The Riverdale family was a marquisate for generations, so of course her father wouldn't like for his only daughter to have a relationship with me. I was relieved as I didn't harbor any romantic feelings for her but had no idea how to reject her, especially with her rank."

"Did your friendship end like that?"

"Yes. I later heard she eventually was wed to a duke and had a son. It was an arranged marriage, but she seemed happy with her life nonetheless."

"Have you ever had a girlfriend or a wife?"