

Twenty two

The room was silent and aura heavy. It was full of emotions as they all processed what had happened in the last few minutes. Ikaris had killed their leader and mother figure. It was his fault that Gilgamesh was now powerless and weakened. Ikaris was prepared to kill them to continue the emergence and the destruction of the planet. The same man who they had lived and fought with for the past thousands of years had now turned against them. Sprite's added betrayal seemed just to be icing on the cake. It stung and hurt, no matter what their relationship was with the two of them. They were still teammates, friends, family that had arrived to this planet with them.

"Why did Sprite go with Ikaris?" Makkari asked. She had returned a minute earlier and Ikaris and Sprite had left, confused and worried. It was visible on her face.

"Because she loves him", Kingo replied, voice breaking the silence and seeming louder than it should be. He paused, glancing around at them. "Oh, you guys didn't pick up on that?"

Agil had known but he wasn't in the mood to voice it. It wouldn't help. He let out a deep sigh and ran his hands over his face, fingers pressing into his temples for a second. "He really fooled us", he muttered, frustration layering his tone.

"Karun, let's go", Kingo's voice was quiet.

"Wait, where the hell are you going?" Phastos called as the two men turned to the door.

Kingo's shoulder slumped. "I can't help you guys. I still think Ikaris is right".

Phastos raised his head and stood up, eyes narrowed. "So that's it huh? You just going to follow him?"

Kingo sighed. "I love the people of this planet but if you stop the emergence then you are stopping the creation of thousands more worlds like this one. I still have faith in Arisham but I refuse to hurt any of you for my beliefs". He turned to stride for the door but Makkari caught his shoulder.

"We need you".

He gave her a sad look. "Even with my help we're no match. It's Ikaris".

"I think you're underestimating us", Agil spoke up. Kingo turned to face him. "Ikaris is not undefeatable".

"He is still the strongest of us". Kingo then gave a chuckle. "I never thought of the day when I would be the leaving Humanity and you would be the one to stand with them, Agil. You have changed".

Agil's gaze was unamused as he stared back. "Time does that to a person".

Kingo smiled sadly at them all. "I hope to see you all on the next planet". Then he was walking out the door and down the shadowy corridor. Karun pausing in the doorway to bow to them.

"Thank you for all you've done for humanity. It's been a great honour. I will miss you all," the valet bowed and blessed them in Hindi. Druig and Agil both nodded at him in goodbye and the man disappeared after Kingo.

For a second there was silence as they watched them go. Druig's voice broke it. "Look", his voice was loud and Agil watched him. The blue eyed man sat down on a nearby table and tucked his knees up to his chest as he draped his arms over them. "If I am going to get myself killed going up against Ikaris, we'll need to have a back up plan".

Thastos sighed and threw up his hands. "All of our powers even combined, are not enough to kill a celestial. So-"

"Well Sersi did turn a deviant into a tree", Druig interjected. "And Agil manifested attributes belonging to animals I have not seen on this planet before".

Agil frowned. "When did I do that?"

"It was the fight in the forest", Sersi voiced. "You created wings that looked reptilian to shield us". Agil hummed, remembering. He hadn't realised in that moment that those wings were unusual, too caught up in the heat of the battle to notice.

"I'm sorry what?" Thastos paused. "And you didn't want to tell me that?"

"You have never been able to do anything like that before," Makkari stated.

"And I'm pretty sure I couldn't do it again", Sersi muttered.

Thastos scooped. "Well now is the time to try, don't you think?"

"Thastos, that deviant is dead", Sersi snapped. "Our plan is to put Tiamut to sleep, not to kill it. I can't kill a celestial". Agil hunched and rolled his eyes as her voice grew more distressed.

"Sersi", he raised his voice to interrupt her. "Do you love the people of this planet? Because at the moment it's either them or Tiamut. It's naivety to think that we can put the celestial to sleep and what? Do the same thing when he wakes up again? And when will that be huh? Five years? ten? maybe a hundred? maybe a thousand? another five centuries?"

"We can't!" Sersi shouted, the sudden noise stopping Agil in his tracks. She frowned at them all. "We can't". Agil glared at her, irritation and anger building in his stomach. This was where they had always clashed and why he had never gotten along with Sersi in the same way he had with Makkari or Thana. Sersi had no stomach for killing or for death. She saw the good in everything and was too hopeful for someone of their age. It annoyed him.

"Agil", Druig called gently. He turned to see the blue eyed man holding out a hand. The tension in Agil's shoulders faded a bit and he slouched over to the other's side to clasp it. Druig's hand was bigger than his and the other man squeezed it gently. "It's okay Sersi", Druig muttered, thought he did not look at her. "We'll figure something out".

"Agil has a point though", Gilgamesh spoke up for the first time. The man was still seated by the glass with Thana next to him. His skin was still pale and grey but he stared at them strongly. "We can't put it back to sleep forever. But whatever we do, I want to help".

Sersi had already turned away and was striding out of the room as a new argument broke out. "It will kill you", Thastos exclaimed.

"I'd much rather go out like this where I can help", Gil protested.

Agil sighed and leant his head on Druig's shoulder. He was tired and his chest hurt. "I believe we should let Gil choose", he muttered. "If he wants to help. He should be allowed to help". Gil flashed Agil a warm smile and the man smiled back, even though it hurt. He didn't want to see his older brother die too.

Thana reached out to rest her hand on Gil's shoulder. The man smiled up at her. "I should have died in that forest. We both know that". Agil turned away as she pressed a kiss to Gilgamesh's forehead, tenderness in her touch. He leaned his head into Druig's shoulder and sighed, their hands tightly linked and warm.

Unedited

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