

## **The Sun 101**

### Chapter 101 – Perception

Nick wasn't used to the extra weight on his legs and arms, but he was slowly getting used to it.

Since nobody could see Nick right now, Nick's speed was incredibly fast, considering that he was wearing 20kg on every limb.

The metal was incredibly durable, which was why it weighed that much.

Its density was no joke.

Nick continued punching and kicking the air for a while, and slowly, his movements changed.

Nick had been quite apathetic when he had just started, but the more he actually attacked, the angrier he got.

After a couple of minutes, his attacks actually got quite aggressive, and he even started to breathe heavily.

Originally, Nick just wanted to waste a bit of time until Wyntor arrived, but now, he actually wanted to see how strong his attacks could get.

'I wish there was something I could hit!'

'I haven't been able to punch or kick something with my full power for quite some time.'

Frustration joined Nick's anger when he realized that there was nothing he could punch.

Sure, he could probably punch the Dreamer's Containment Unit, but there were two issues with that.

First, even though the blades on Nick's wrist were very durable, stabbing them into something as unrelenting as a level two Containment Unit might actually dull them.

Something like this wasn't a concern for the back of the blades or the braces on Nick's shins, but a blade was way more fragile near its edges.

The other problem was the Dreamer itself.

While the Dreamer was a prisoner, it was still important that it was treated with a certain amount of respect.

Not because it deserved it but because working with a cooperative party was far easier than working with an annoyed or uncooperative one.

If Nick kept banging on the Dreamer's Containment Unit, it might decide to be less cooperative from now on.

As for the walls of the warehouse...

Nick looked at the stainless steel the warehouse was made out of.

Steel was great and very hard, but if Nick punched it with his power and something as durable as his weapons, it would still break or dent.

Sadly, Nick could only punch and kick the air for now.

"Whoa!" Nick shouted as he lost control of his arms.

The force behind his attack was so strong that he was pulled along with it, landing on the ground and sliding for a bit.

When Nick stopped, he slowly lifted his arm, but moving his arm felt much more difficult.

It was like the weights on his arms had multiplied.

Naturally, Nick knew what that meant.

He turned to the door of the warehouse.

Since his ability had just deactivated, it meant that someone had to be watching him right now.

Yet, surprisingly, there was nothing near the entrance of the warehouse.

Nick furrowed his brows and looked around.

He couldn't see anyone.

That was when Nick's ability reactivated.

Nick knew what that meant.

'Something has been watching me just now, but they retreated,' Nick thought as he looked around.

'My ability has been deactivated for nearly ten seconds. If any of the Specters heard me, it would have reactivated way earlier since pinpointing someone's location is only momentary if done by sound.'

'This means they have been seeing me.'

Nick narrowed his eyes as he kept thinking about whoever had been watching him.

Whoever it was, they weren't here with nice intentions.

'I have to tell Wyntor later,' Nick thought as he started to punch the air again.

Nick didn't want to seem like he had noticed something.

Yes, he had just looked around like he was searching for something, but this could have been for any reason.

Maybe Nick had been up to no good and had been looking around to make sure that nobody was watching him?

A couple of minutes later, Nick's ability deactivated again, but this time, Nick had been careful that he didn't use too much power.

Because of that, Nick didn't fall over, and his punch transformed into a slow and awkward movement of his hands.

Of course, Nick acted like it was supposed to be this way.

The good part about Nick's ability was that nobody could see his true power.

They always only saw him awkwardly shuffling around with his heavy weapons or falling over.

Nick just kept slowly punching around, not looking around a lot.

He was acting like he thought he was alone.

'Sure enough, my ability is still deactivated,' Nick thought after 30 seconds had passed.

This confirmed it.

Someone was looking at Nick at this moment.

After another couple of seconds, Nick bent forward and put his heavy arms on his knees while breathing heavily in exhaustion.

Nick could keep going, but he acted like he couldn't.

For the next couple of seconds, Nick's eyes rapidly darted around the floor of the warehouse.

Ironically enough, Nick wasn't searching for the watcher.

After breathing heavily for ten seconds, Nick's guess was confirmed.

'By lowering my head in exhaustion and looking around, my stalker would have immediately retreated if they were looking at me from below the floor. They would be afraid of me accidentally spotting them.'

'But since my ability is still active, it means that they don't feel threatened by what I am currently looking at, which is the floor.'

'Therefore, they are not below the floor.'

A bit later, Nick righted himself and stretched his back in relaxation, looking up.

As soon as Nick showed an inkling of stretching and looking up, his ability immediately deactivated.

'On the roof, maybe?' Nick thought. 'Although, it could also be somewhere in here.'

After that, Nick walked around and looked at the consoles of the Containment Units.

Ten minutes later, his ability deactivated again, and Nick narrowed his eyes.

"You're early."

Nick's expression relaxed when he heard Wyntor's voice coming from the entrance of the warehouse.

After slowly turning around, Nick looked at the central clock.

5:37 a.m.

Wyntor looked at Nick with a raised eyebrow.

Yet again, Nick was acting unusual.

Yesterday, he seemed very insecure, and now, he seemed quite cold and serious.

"We need to talk," Nick said.

Chapter 102 – Spy

Wyntor was a bit surprised that Nick wanted to talk to him with such serious conviction.

'Guess the day off helped with his issues,' Wyntor thought.

"Sure, come in," Wyntor said as he walked over to his office to open it.

After opening the office, Wyntor put down his stuff and sat down on his desk.

Nick also sat down and looked at Wyntor with a serious expression.

"Somebody has been watching me from the roof, most likely about 30 minutes ago," Nick said.

When Wyntor heard that, he furrowed his brows. "Explain."

"I came early and was bored, which was why I trained a bit with the weapons," Nick said as he shook his heavy arms a bit.

"After training for a bit, I felt my ability deactivate, and after a bit of trying some stuff out, I came to the conclusion that someone was probably looking through one of the many holes in the ceiling for the sunlight."

Wyntor nodded. "How did you find out they looked through the ceiling?"

"They didn't look away when I looked at the ground, but they immediately looked away when I looked at the ceiling," Nick said.

Wyntor nodded with an interested expression. "I actually never thought about using your ability like that. I always saw that as a weakness of your ability, but in a way, you can actually find out if someone is looking at you and even from where."

"There is actually a lot of potential for that kind of ability."

Nick didn't seem very excited, and his expression just remained even and serious.

After what happened the last couple of days, Nick was no longer that interested in joking around and laughing.

"What about the spy?" Nick asked. Updated from novelb(i)n.c(o)m

"Right," Wyntor answered calmly. "I'm pretty sure that I know where they are from, and you probably also know."

Nick narrowed his eyes. "Ardum?" he asked.

Wyntor nodded. "The other Manufacturers don't care enough about us yet to spy on us, and they also don't want to annoy my family. I would be very surprised if the spy turned out to be from them."

"But if it's Ardum, I wouldn't be surprised," Wyntor added with a sigh. "Every heir that manages to successfully earn enough money to purchase a portion of Kugelblitz is another person that shares the inheritance of the Melfion family."

"Three of my older siblings already managed to pass their tests and are working in Kugelblitz. They are already not big fans of me trying to get a piece of the inheritance, but they are also not the kind of people that would act against their youngest brother."

"But Ardum..." Wyntor said as he trailed off. "He always acts like he's confident and charismatic, but there's actually nearly nothing there to back his confidence."

"He's arrogant and believes that everyone else is beneath him, and when he sees someone else reach his position, he puts them in their place again. After all, they don't deserve to be in a similar position as him."

Nick listened with a solemn expression. "What can we expect?"

"Depends on our actions," Wyntor answered. "If we do nothing, the spy will keep delivering information to Ardum, and Ardum will probably try to make our lives worse."

"If we break the laws, he will tell the guards. If we go to capture a Specter, he might arrive with his team of stronger Extractors."

"However, he won't directly attack us," Wyntor added. "Right now, it's like we are arguing with each other. In an argument, the first person who becomes violent admits that they lost the argument. After all, if you can defend yourself with words, why would you need to use your hands?"

"But if we decide to attack the spy and kill them, it would be like punching Ardum in the face, and he will punch back just as strongly."



"Fairness and justice don't matter in this case. He got punched, and even if he deserves it, he will punch back."

Nick listened to Wyntor with furrowed brows.

Then, he thought about Jenny and Trevor.

They had their weapons now, but they were still inexperienced in wielding them, and on top of that, their abilities were not fitting for battle.

If they were to fight Ardum's Extractors, they would be at a significant disadvantage.

The only one that could really fight was Nick.

Nick had fought a great number of people in the Dregs, and he had also killed several.

Even more, as long as the enemy didn't see Nick, his ability was incredibly powerful.

One also had to remember that Ardum's Extractors were probably in the same position.

Ardum had one Adolescent and only two Hatchlings.

His Extractors probably were just as inexperienced in killing humans as Dark Dream's Extractors.

They were all pretty new to this job.

"What would you suggest?" Nick asked.

"I already have somewhat of a plan," Wyntor answered calmly. "I'm more interested in what you want to do. I want to know if you come to the same conclusion as me."

"Why?" Nick asked suspiciously. Ever since Wyntor had unveiled that he had been testing Nick secretly, Nick had become more suspicious of Wyntor's questions.

"This is not a test," Wyntor said, seeing through Nick's suspicion. "I just want to see if my plan is the most logical one. If you come to the same conclusion, it gives more strength to my own."

Nick raised an eyebrow, but his suspicions were alleviated.

Then, Nick thought about the smartest thing to do.

In a battle, they would lose.

If they took the initiative and attacked Ardum's people, they would also lose.

If they didn't do anything, they would fall into a disadvantage.

'The biggest problem is that nobody is used to battling other people. The others are still too new at this.'

Nick's gaze subconsciously went to the ceiling.

'But I really want to kill this guy.'

"Do nothing until everyone gets more used to their weapons. Prepare in secret. Then, we kill the spy and look at how things will develop," Nick said.

Wyntor nodded, and a small smile formed on his lips.

"Similar to my plan."

"Good."

### Chapter 103 – Difficult Choice

"For now, we are not ready to face them," Wyntor said. "We have to get stronger first."

"But we also can't just do nothing about the spy. If we just ignore them, they might do something bad, like freeing the Dreamer."

"Because of that, I will start hiring guards."

Nick furrowed his brows. "Why guards? I don't think guards can fight a Zephyx Extractor."

"That's not the primary reason," Wyntor answered. "A guard only needs to survive for long enough to alert any person of Dark Dream."

"While the spy might plan to do something like free the Dreamer, they won't dare to openly start a war with Dark Dream yet."

"You don't know how Manufacturers interact with each other, but directly attacking someone openly is frowned upon. Officially, attacking another Manufacturer is seen as attacking humanity since Manufacturers are responsible for containing Specters."

"Of course, in secret, all the Manufacturers are battling each other, and if a skirmish breaks out, the detectives either act like both Manufacturers are at fault in the conflict or don't even comment on it as long as it's not absolutely obvious what happened."

"If the spy gets found out and captured, the forces of Crimson Fungus City will side with us, and Ardum will have to either abandon his pawn or pay a hefty fine."

"Because of that, Ardum won't dare to send his forces in to mess with us as long as we have a couple of guards."

Nick listened intently. "When will you get the guards?"

"Today," Wyntor said. "With the increased output of Zephyx, thanks to the Screaming Coffin, I can afford to hire a couple of guards. It will cost us barely a thousand credits per day."

Nick nodded.

Then, Nick took a deep breath, but he didn't say anything.

Wyntor raised an eyebrow.

Nick looked like he wanted to say something.

"Yes?" Wyntor just asked with an expectant tone.

Nick closed his eyes and took another deep breath.

"I don't think I can take care of Horua anymore," Nick said. "It has become so difficult, and I noticed that it has started to interfere with my duties."

"I know that I am the one responsible and that Horua has become like this entirely due to my mistake, but I can't just continue like this."

"I need someone who can take care of him," Nick said with a tone filled with shame.

Nick felt like he had given up.

He felt like he had run away from his responsibility.

"It's good that you made the choice," Wyntor said. "To be honest, I would rather have someone else take care of the boy than you."

"I need you fully focused for your position."

Nick released a sigh, but he wasn't happy.

He just felt ashamed.

"Nick," Wyntor added, making Nick look up at him again. "But I think you are still not considering the entire picture."

Nick furrowed his brows.

"How old is the boy?" Wyntor asked.

"He will be twelve soon," Nick said.

Wyntor nodded. "And he has been in this state for how long?"

"Three months, give or take," Nick said.

"Three months," Wyntor repeated. "And he was eleven when he became like this."

"Nick, three months for an eleven-year-old is a significant amount of time."

"He has probably grown a couple of centimeters in that time, and his muscles have also atrophied by quite a bit."

"Just to recover from these three months would take another couple of months."

"In total, he already lost half of a year to this."

Nick became nervous. "What are you trying to say?"

"I'm saying that the time for being passive is over, Nick," Wyntor said. "How long will you let the boy continue being in this state? A year? Two years? Three years?"

"How long until the boy doesn't even recognize who he is anymore when he looks into the mirror?"

"Will you let him spend his entire childhood in this state?" Wyntor asked.

Nick narrowed his eyes. "I would help him if I could!" he shouted. "Don't act like I refuse to help him!"

"Nick," Wyntor said. "It's been three months. Doing nothing won't help him. Do you want him to spend the rest of his life like this?"

"What do you want me to do?" Nick asked with fear and annoyance.

But in truth, Nick already knew what Wyntor wanted.

He just didn't want to accept doing that.

"The Dreamer was the one that put him into this state," Wyntor said. "Maybe the Dreamer can help him get out of it."

"The Dreamer will kill him!" Nick shouted. "Specters have no empathy, and if the Dreamer sees an opportunity to kill Horua, it will do so!"

"Then, why did the Dreamer retreat before the boy started to have a seizure?" Wyntor asked. "You told me that the Dreamer stepped away before things were going badly."

"It seems like the Dreamer didn't want to kill him."

"Nick, while it is true that Specters don't have Empathy, it is also true that they are intelligent and do what is best for them."

"If the Dreamer knows that awakening the boy is the best thing to do, it will do so."

"It has worked with us for three months now, and it wouldn't want to ruin our trust in it by killing some random kid."

"It's going to try its best. Even if the only reason is that we trust it more, and it might gain an opportunity to break out of its Containment Unit one day."

Nick gritted his teeth.

The Dreamer had caused Horua to enter this state.

Sending Horua to the Dreamer again could only be bad.

Nothing good could come of this. Follow current novels on [novelb\(in\).com](http://novelb(in).com)

However, Nick also couldn't deny Wyntor's words.

Horua couldn't live his life like this.

'If Horua could talk, what would he choose?' Nick thought.

Silence.

Wyntor just looked at Nick, while Nick just looked at the table with an absentminded expression.

Some seconds later, Nick put his head in his hands.

He knew what Horua would choose.

Chapter 104 – Taking a Risk

'He would want to take the risk,' Nick thought.

'But if something happens...'

Nick couldn't imagine what he would feel like if Horua actually died.

At that point, everything Nick had done would be for nothing.

Nick had taken care of Horua for three months, but if Horua died now, all of Nick's efforts would have been worthless.

That would mean that fixing his past mistakes would be impossible for Nick.

If Horua woke up, Nick might be able to somewhat right his previous wrongs. Follow current novels on [novelb\(\(in\).\(com\)](http://novelb(in).com)

But if he died, that would become impossible.

And yet, Wyntor was right.

This was not a life Horua would want to live.



If Horua could see himself, he would probably speak the Sentence.

Every day, Horua was peeing and shitting his pants, and he was reliant on other people for everything.

If Horua were conscious, he would find this eternal boredom, humiliation, and monotony to be worse than death.

This was not a life he would want to live.

But if Horua died, it would also fall back on Nick.

After all, Nick was essentially making choices for Horua.

If Nick didn't agree, Horua wouldn't get sent to the Dreamer.

"Don't do the wrong thing because you are too weak to do the right thing," Wyntor said.

Nick's chest shook.

'Right,' Nick thought in pain. 'I know that what Wyntor said is right, and I also know what Horua would choose.'

'Yet, I am still hesitating.'

'Why? Because I can't bear thinking about how I would feel if Horua dies.'

Nick took a deep breath.

"You're right," he said as he looked at Wyntor.

Nick tried to show that he had made his choice with conviction, but his nervousness and anxiety still shone through.

Wyntor nodded. "Good," he said. "Nick, this is not a life that the boy would want to live. You made the right call."

Nick took a deep breath and nodded again. "I just hope he won't die."

"And even if he does," Wyntor said, "you still made the right choice."

"Even if the boy dies to the Dreamer, you know that you have at least tried to make his life better."

Nick gritted his teeth, but he nodded.

He knew that doing this was correct, but the thought of Horua dying still scared him.

"When do you want to do it?" Wyntor asked.

Nick took another deep breath. "It doesn't matter. For Horua, it doesn't matter when it happens. His life is perfectly monotone."

"Might as well do it right now," Nick said with a shaky voice.

"Fine," Wyntor said. "Then, get him. I'm going to wake Trevor."

Nick nodded, gritted his teeth, and walked out of the office.

Nick's emotions were going crazy again, but his determination was keeping them under control for now.

Nick felt like he was doing the wrong thing.

What if something happened?!

What if Horua died?!

What if Nick had essentially killed Horua?!

Yet, Nick's rationality kept telling his emotions that it was the right choice, regardless of the outcome.

But that didn't make it easier.

Nick absentmindedly climbed the stairs and reached Horua's room.

Nick wished there were more stairs.

After opening the door and walking through the hallway, Nick entered Horua's room.

Right now, Horua was asleep and clean.

Whoever Wyntor had hired had taken good care of him during the night.

When Nick saw Horua, he took a deep breath and walked forward.

"Horua, wake up," Nick said as he shook Horua a bit.

After moving Horua's eyelids open a bit to wake him, Nick slowly lifted Horua's light and weak body.

Horua had lost a lot of weight in the last three months.

"Today, we are going to change your life," Nick said softly. "For better or for worse."

"Living like this is not what you want, and I know, if you could talk to me, you would also make this choice."

"We have to take a risk. In this state, you might as well be dead. Letting you stay like this wouldn't be much different from killing you."

"You deserve a chance, and we are going to give you one!"

Nick opened the door to Horua's room as he carefully walked out with him.

"I just hope that I can have a real conversation with you when the day is over."

Nick took a shaky breath. "And I also hope that you will one day be able to forgive me for my stupidity."

As Nick walked down the stairs, he felt like he was walking towards his execution.

His feelings were screaming at him that he was doing the wrong thing, but his rationality was screaming back that it was the right thing.

Humans were not machines, and many times, their feelings were in direct opposition to logic.

Every human experienced battles between what their head thought was right and what their heart thought was right.

Nick walked out of the hotel, and Horua's body came into contact with the outside for the first time in three months.

But just moments later, Nick entered Dark Dream with Horua.

After entering the warehouse, Nick saw Trevor standing beside the Dreamer's Containment Unit with a worried expression.

Nick just walked to the Containment Unit.

"Nick, you're doing the right thing," Trevor said, and Nick stopped walking. "I wouldn't want to live such a life."

Nick's eyebrows relaxed a bit. "Thanks, Trevor."

Trevor nodded. "No worries. It will work out. The Dreamer won't dare to kill the kid."

Nick nodded without saying anything and walked through the employee entrance.

After entering, Nick saw Wyntor standing in front of the Dreamer.

As soon as Nick entered, the Dreamer turned to look at Nick.

And then it focused on Horua.

Nick furrowed his brows, took a deep breath, and walked forward.

"Dreamer," Nick said, stopping in front of it.

The Dreamer didn't answer, and it only kept looking at Horua.

"I am asking for your help," Nick said.

"This boy can't interact with the outside anymore, and I know that you can enter his mind."

Nick took a deep breath and put Horua down in front of the Dreamer.

The Dreamer kept looking at Horua.

"Please, save him," Nick said as his voice became shaky.

"Show me that my trust in you is not misplaced."

"Please, make him wake up."

"Return him to me."

The Dreamer just kept looking at Horua.

Chapter 105 – Wake Up!

Nick looked at the Dreamer with an imploring look.

He only hoped that Horua wouldn't die.

If Horua died...

Nick wouldn't know what he would do.

For the last couple of days, he had already been feeling horrible, and being the reason for Horua's death would make things only worse.

Nick slowly took a couple of steps back, showing the Dreamer that he didn't intend to attack it.

The Dreamer slowly turned to look at the boy lying in front of it.

Then, the Dreamer slowly turned to look at Nick again.

"Please," Nick repeated.

After that, the Dreamer looked at Wyntor.

"Do it," Wyntor said with a nod.

Lastly, the Dreamer focused on the boy again.

A moment later, it took a step forward and lowered its head to focus on Horua's eyes.

Right now, Horua's eyes were half-opened and blankly staring at the ceiling.

The Dreamer kept focusing on Horua.

A couple of seconds later, Horua's eyes closed on their own.

When Nick saw that, he became excited.

Horua couldn't close his eyes himself, but just now, he had actually closed them!

Horua was still alive!

The fact that he could close his eyes meant that he was still in there!

Nick's heart rate increased as more time passed.

A couple of minutes of silence passed.

Nick felt like these minutes were hours.

"Ugh..."

Nick's eyes shot open when he heard a groan coming from Horua.

Horua's voice sounded incredibly hoarse and coarse, but that was to be expected after not talking for over three months.

However, the important thing was that Horua had actually said something!

"Argh..." Horua groaned in pain.

While the earlier groan had been one of discomfort, this had definitely been one of pain.

It sounded like Horua had just tried to stop himself from screaming.

Sadly...

"AAAAAAHHHHH!"

Nick's eyes looked with fervent intensity at Horua as he screamed in absolute agony.

In his entire life, Nick had never heard a human scream in so much agony!



The only scream that was more intense came from the Screaming Coffin.

Worried that Horua might die, Nick charged-

"Nick, stop!" Wyntor shouted, holding his arm in front of Nick.

Nick could barely hear Wyntor's voice due to Horua's loud and terrifying scream.

"It knows what it's doing!" Wyntor shouted. "Trust in the fact that it knows what the optimal course of action is for its survival!"

Nick's body shook.

"AAAAAAHHHHH!"

Horua's scream was terrifying, and Nick felt like he wanted to either punch the Dreamer or run away.

No matter the case, Nick felt like he had to do something!

Suddenly, blood shot out of Horua's mouth as his vocal cords broke apart and leaked blood.

"STOP!" Nick shouted with all of his power.

Nick was just about to push Wyntor to the side when the Dreamer actually turned to look at Nick by only moving its head. Its body was still hunched over Horua.

The Dreamer's intense but dead stare focused on Nick's eyes as Horua kept screeching in agony and pain.

"Nick, stop- ugh!"

Wyntor was pushed to the side by Nick as he ran towards the Dreamer.

When the Dreamer saw Nick approach, it jumped backward with quite a bit of speed and landed in the corner of the room.

In an instant, Nick arrived between Horua and the Dreamer.

Nick wanted to attack the Dreamer so badly, but since the Dreamer had already stepped away, the immediate issue was solved.

So, he turned around and focused on Horua.

That was when Nick saw that Horua's eyes had shot open in terror and agony.

Horua's eyes were completely red with blood, and his body entire body was rigid as all his muscles strained.

His scream had become silent, but his mouth was still opened in an expression that perfectly reflected someone screeching in agony.

But most shocking of all, Nick saw Horua's pupils rapidly moving around.

He was awake!

"Horua!" Nick shouted as he quickly knelt beside Horua to grab his hand. "Everything's okay! You're awake again!"

However, Horua didn't notice Nick and just focused on the ceiling as his entire body strained.

"Horua!" Nick shouted as his grip on Horua's hand tightened.

That seemed to do the trick, and Horua's pupils seemed to fight and strain as they tried to focus on Nick.

Time seemed to stand still as Nick just looked into Horua's eyes.

After seemingly an eternity, Horua's mouth slowly moved.

No sound came out.

However, Nick could tell what Horua was mouthing, and his heart nearly broke into pieces.

"I'm... sorry..."

That was what Horua was mouthing.

Nick knew what this meant.

As a child, Horua believed that Nick was causing him this pain, and the only thing Horua could do to stop Nick from causing him even more pain was to submit and apologize.

The pure terror in Horua's eyes told Nick as much.

"No, Horua! You're going to get better!" Nick shouted as his grip on Horua's arm relaxed.

Horua stopped mouthing words and looked at Nick with strained pupils.

An eternity seemed to pass.

"Horua!" Nick shouted again.

And then, Horua's pupils suddenly moved upward, losing all focus as his body lost all strength.

"Horua!" Nick shouted once more as he started to shake Horua's shoulders.

Horua didn't move.

Next, Nick put his ear to Horua's mouth to listen.

Silence.

Five seconds of silence.

"He's not breathing!" Nick shouted in panic. "What do I do?!"

"Is his heart beating?" Wyntor asked urgently.

Nick put his ear to Horua's chest.

Nothing.

"It isn't!" Nick shouted.

"Make way!" Wyntor shouted as he pushed Nick away.

Nick rapidly moved to the side and looked at Wyntor with hope.

Wyntor immediately started to push on Horua's chest in a certain rhythm.

"Go to my office and get the Recovery Liquid in the lowest drawer!" Wyntor shouted.

Nick nodded and immediately ran out of the Containment Unit.

After entering Wyntor's office, Nick immediately opened the lowest drawer and quickly found the small green bottle.

Nick raced back with the bottle and saw Wyntor still performing CPR.

"Give it to me," Wyntor said.

Nick gave the bottle to Wyntor.

Wyntor opened it and poured a couple of drops on Horua's head and some into his throat.

Wyntor had already stopped performing CPR and just watched Horua with Nick.

This would decide whether Horua lived or not.

Chapter 106 – It's Over

Nick and Wyntor looked at Horua with bated breaths.

The Recovery Liquid could heal all kinds of physical injuries, and if there was anything wrong with Horua physically, it would get healed very quickly.

These Recovery Liquids were for Extractors, which meant that they were designed to work on people several times stronger than the average human.

Using several drops on a child was a huge waste since the child couldn't possibly absorb all of it, but Wyntor used that many anyway.

Seconds passed.

Nick waited with gritted teeth.

Right now, Nick's feelings were going crazy.

Horua couldn't be dead!

It had to work!

After around 30 seconds, Wyntor put his hand on Horua's chest again.

"Nothing," Wyntor said with a sigh.

Nick became more fearful and panicked as he kept looking at Horua.

"It can still work!" Nick said.

"Theoretically, yes, but something like that is very rare," Wyntor said as he stood up. "I'm sorry."

When Nick heard Wyntor's apology, he felt like he had entered a dream.

It was like none of this was real.

This couldn't be real, right?

Nick just kept looking at Horua.

Soon, Horua would open his eyes, right?

His breathing would return, and his heart would start to beat again, right?

Nick just looked at Horua.

Right now, Horua's eyes were still open, but his eyes had rolled into the back of his head.

His body had completely relaxed.

'He'll wake up, right? The Recovery Liquid can still work!' Nick thought.

Wyntor moved to the corner of the room and leaned against it with a sad expression.

A minute of silence passed.

Nick kept looking at Horua.

"Let it go," Wyntor said. "It's over."

"Not yet," Nick said urgently as he kept looking at Horua's body.

"Nick, it's been over two minutes without a heartbeat. It's over," Wyntor said with a sigh.

Nick kept watching Horua's body without answering.

A couple more seconds passed.

"You tried your best," Wyntor said. "Even though it ended up like this, you still did the right thing."

Nick didn't answer.

"Maybe he would have preferred death over the state he has been in the last three months," Wyntor added.

"Maybe it's better this way. If he had survived, whatever he had gone through might have been too much for him to bear."

"If he actually survived, he might have even spoken the Sentence."

"Maybe there was actually nothing we could have done."

Silence.

"Maybe the boy died three months ago," Wyntor slowly said.

"He has a name," Nick said.

"Huh?" Wyntor repeated in confusion.

"He has a name, you know?" Nick repeated with furrowed brows as he looked at Wyntor. "You always keep calling him the boy. Why do you refuse to call him by his name?"

Wyntor raised an eyebrow in pity. "You want to know that now?"

Nick gritted his teeth as his rage exploded.



However, he quickly realized that he was actually just venting.

Wyntor hadn't done anything wrong.

"I'm sorry," Nick said with a restrained voice as he looked back at Horua's body.

Several seconds of silence passed.

Nick just continued looking at Horua with hope.

Soon, he would wake up.

Another two minutes passed.

"You don't need to stay here," Nick said. "You probably have something to do."

"I'm not leaving without you," Wyntor said.

Nick sighed. "You don't need to worry about me."

"I'm not," Wyntor answered.

Nick furrowed his brows in confusion and gazed at Wyntor.

Wyntor gestured to the Dreamer, which was still standing in the corner.

"I'm worried about it. I don't want you to attack it out of rage," Wyntor said. "I trust in your ability to get through this, which is why I'm not worried about you."

When Nick heard that, he gritted his teeth as he turned to look at the Dreamer.

Nick still remembered how the Dreamer had looked at Nick while Horua was screaming.

It was almost like the Dreamer was taunting Nick!

Nick clenched his fists so hard that he nearly started to bleed.

"Nick," Wyntor said with a serious voice. "The Dreamer didn't do anything wrong."

"How do you know?!" Nick said in a loud voice.

"Because there is no reason for it to kill the boy," Wyntor said. "On top of that, it didn't show any sign of attacking Horua."

"But didn't you see how-"

"Because you shouted at it!" Wyntor interrupted Nick before he could finish.

Wyntor knew very well what Nick was about to say.

"It taunted me!" Nick shouted in rage.

"It looked at you in confusion!" Wyntor answered with a serious voice. "You shouted at it with all of your power. Of course it would look at you!"

"Even more, when you charged at it aggressively, it just flew back without even preparing an attack! Otherwise, the alarm would have gone off!"

"The Dreamer has been cooperative this entire time!"

"While we still have to be careful of it since it's a Specter, it hasn't done anything wrong this time!" Wyntor shouted at Nick with a reprimanding voice.

Nick gritted his teeth.

He felt like the Dreamer had been taunting him.

He felt like the Dreamer had deliberately killed Horua.

Yet, he couldn't argue with Wyntor's assessment.

Wyntor was right.

It didn't seem like the Dreamer had killed Horua on purpose.

Nick could only grit his teeth and look at Horua's body with shock, rage, frustration, and hope.

Maybe, Horua would wake up soon.

Five more minutes of silence passed.

Horua hadn't moved.

His body had turned even paler than before.

No one said a word.

"Let it go, Nick," Wyntor said. "There's no reason for you to continue staying here."

Nick's fists clenched even more.

He wasn't willing to leave.

He couldn't believe that Horua was dead.

After everything he had done in the last three months, Horua had still died?

Nick had taken such good care of Horua.

But now, he was dead.

Nick's rapidly moving thoughts seemed to scatter, leaving behind indiscernible but calm snippets of thoughts.

This wasn't real, right?

Another minute passed as Nick just kept looking at the corpse.

How did things end up like this?

Chapter 107 – The Corpse

After a couple of minutes, Nick stood up.

By now, over ten minutes had passed.

Horua's heartbeat hadn't returned.

He was dead.

There was no denying it anymore.

"Did he have any next-of-kin?" Wyntor asked from the corner.

Nick slowly shook his head. "No. His parents died, and he didn't have any friends or family..."

"Except for me," Nick said quietly as he looked down.

Silence.

"What do you want to do with the body?" Wyntor asked.

When Nick heard that, he felt the void in his chest return, darker than ever before.

Right now, Nick felt like he could never be happy again.

In one way, he felt like he had been hollowed out, but at the same time, he also felt like the entire world was putting immense pressure on him.

Nick felt like reality wanted to crush him.

His body?

This question felt so surreal.

Nick had to decide what to do with Horua's body?

It was so strange.

How was any of this real?

How had any of this actually happened?

For a while, Nick didn't answer.

There were no cemeteries in the Dregs.

If anyone died, the body had to be handed over to the officials.

Nobody knew where the bodies ended up.

Most likely, the bodies were fed to a Specter.

It sounded cruel, but what alternative was there?

There was no earth in the city, which made burying the body impossible.

Burning the body was also not possible since none of the fires one could start with the available materials was strong enough to actually turn the body into ash. It would just leave a charred body behind, making things even worse.

Keeping the body was also bad since it would rot.

Additionally, the Parasite would probably just consume the body when nobody was looking.

Might as well feed it to a useful Specter.

Nick wanted to keep Horua's body, but he knew that this was not realistic.

"Give it to the coffin," Nick said with a shaky breath.

It sounded cruel, but it was the only thing Nick could think of.

Wyntor nodded.

"Do you want to say goodbye?" he asked.

Nick looked at Horua's corpse.

A nearly twelve-year-old boy.

Horua was so thin and pale.

Nick still remembered how he had defended Horua from the gangs when his parents died and how they had been living together for almost a year.

Even though it had only been a business relationship at the beginning, they had quickly become friends.

Nick also remembered how hopeful Horua had been when Nick had told him that he could turn him into a Zephyx Extractor.

And then, tragedy happened.

'It's all my fault,' Nick thought as he looked at the corpse with pain.

"I'm sorry," Nick said quietly as he kneeled beside the corpse.

Nick gently held Horua's hand.

It was ice cold, soft, and thin.

A child's hand.

"I'm sorry, Horua," Nick said with a shaky voice.

"Wherever you are now, I hope you won't meet someone like me."

"This is all my fault."

"If I hadn't been so stupid, you would still be alive."

"I'm sorry."

Several seconds of silence passed.

"Thank you for being my friend."

"I'll miss you, even though you probably wouldn't want to see me."

"I'll leave you alone now."

"Goodbye."

Nick took a shaky breath and stood up.



Wyntor stepped forward and put a hand on Nick's shoulder.

Nick didn't move for a while.

Eventually, Nick took a deep breath.

"Thanks," he said as he gently pushed Wyntor's hand off his shoulder. "I'll need some time to deal with this."

Wyntor nodded. "You can have the next three days off. I know this is difficult on you."

Nick didn't answer.

Then, he turned around and quietly left the Containment Unit.

After Nick left, Wyntor looked at the corpse for a bit before putting it over his shoulder.

After that, Wyntor turned to look at the Dreamer.

The Dreamer looked at Wyntor.

Three seconds later, Wyntor turned away and left the Containment Unit. Updated from novelb(i)n.c(o)m

When Wyntor came out, he saw Trevor looking at him with sadness.

"Nick left?" Wyntor asked neutrally.

Trevor nodded. "Yes. I'm worried about him."

"Nick is strong," Wyntor said. "He went through worse things in the Dregs."

"Someone that has lived in the Dregs for their entire life can handle death."

Trevor raised an eyebrow.

He didn't seem like he was fully believing Wyntor.

After all, Trevor had also lived in the Dregs.

To Trevor, it seemed like Wyntor was making assumptions.

However, Trevor didn't correct Wyntor.

After all, they were not friends.

Trevor was an employee, and Wyntor was his employer.

"I hope you're right," Trevor said.

Wyntor nodded.

"What about the Dreamer?" Trevor asked.

"Nick won't be here for the next three days," Wyntor said. "I'm going to wake you up in the morning. For now, only you and Jenny will be working with it. Your shifts won't change."

"Okay," Trevor answered. "Do you need me for anything?"

"No, you can leave. Good work today," Wyntor said as he walked by Trevor.

"Alright. For all that it's worth, I wish you a happy workday," Trevor said.

Wyntor snorted.

He assumed Trevor was joking.

While Trevor left, Wyntor walked over to the other Containment Unit.

After opening the door, Wyntor looked at the Screaming Coffin.

Right now, it was just silently lying in the middle of the room.

Apparently, it was currently digesting a corpse.

By now, the Containment Unit had started to take on a slight smell of dead bodies.

After all, the corpses were not always immediately consumed by the Screaming Coffin.

Additionally, the ventilation of the Containment Unit wasn't the best.

Wyntor looked at the Screaming Coffin for a bit.

Bang!

Then, Wyntor unceremoniously threw the corpse in front of it.

His expression was neutral.

For a bit, Wyntor looked at the corpse with a cold expression.

That boy had been a burden on Nick for long enough.

Finally, Nick could move on from it.

Then, Wyntor turned around and left the Containment Unit.

Chapter 108 – Eternal Regret

Nick walked back to the hotel absentmindedly.

For some reason, he felt like everything that had happened today wasn't real.

Yet, he knew very well that it was real.

Would he even question whether or not this was a dream if it were actually a dream?

Probably not.

Nevertheless, Nick felt like nothing had changed.

He felt like he was about to go back to Horua's room to check up on him.

After entering the hotel and climbing up the stairs, Nick stopped in front of his room as he looked over at the door to Horua's room.

For a couple of seconds, he just watched.

Then, he walked to Horua's room and entered.

After opening the door, he just saw an empty bed.

The blanket was still in the same position as when Nick had left.

Yet, there was no Horua.

For many seconds, Nick just stood in the room, looking at Horua.

From time to time, a whiff of a bloody smell entered his nose.

Ever since Nick had killed Pator, there had been a slightly bloody smell in the room that appeared from time to time.

Naturally, whenever Nick smelled it, he was reminded of the day he killed Pator.

'Another child,' Nick thought.

Horua had been a child.

Pator had been a child.

'I've killed two children,' Nick thought.

'Although the other one would have died anyway.'

Nick released a sigh.

'But Horua's fate was my doing.'

'If I hadn't pulled Horua into Dark Dream, he wouldn't be dead. He would probably have continued living somewhere in the Dregs.'

'Sure, it wouldn't have been an easy life without me present, but he would have survived. After all, I also managed to survive.'

'But I just had to get Horua to become a Zephyx Extractor, huh?'

Nick just looked at the empty bed with an expression filled with regret.

At the same time, Nick felt the dark void in his chest return with even more intensity.

It was like the muscles and organs in his chest were constricting with all their power.

Regret and guilt.

Nick was filled with so much regret and guilt.

Nick had committed horrible mistakes, and there was no way to fix them.

He would never gain a chance to make things right.

Horua was dead.

And he had killed him.

His stupidity had caused Horua's death.

He should have known.

But he didn't.

And now, Horua had paid the price.

'I can't fix it.'

Silence.

'I can't make things right.'

Nick just kept looking at Horua's bed.

'If I could, I would give so many things to get an opportunity to make things right.'

'But I can't.'

'With the powers of the Specters, many impossible things become possible, but death is still final.'

Nick wanted to right his wrongs so badly.

He was willing to do everything.

But it was impossible.

'I'm so sorry, Horua,' Nick thought as he lightly moved his hand across Horua's bed.

'I couldn't fix it.'

'I couldn't help you.'

'I'm sorry.'

Nick's eyes began to water, but he quickly shook his head and gritted his teeth.

He remembered what had happened the last time he had cried.

The last time he had allowed his emotions to break out was when this black void appeared in his chest, which was still haunting him.

If he cried again, things would only get worse.

So, Nick pushed all his sadness away, burying it deep inside.

Yet, the black void in his chest never left.

It was still there and just as noticeable as ever.

For nearly an hour, Nick stayed in Horua's room, just looking around and remembering things.

They had only known each other for a bit more than a year, but they had still been friends.

Horua would never be able to find out what exactly had happened to his father, who had just vanished at one point.

Nick was certain that Horua's father had probably just been thrown into the sewers by somebody, but it had never truly been a certainty.



Horua would also never be able to truly own his house.

Yes, he was essentially the owner of the house, but as soon as Nick left, the gangs would steal it since Horua was just a kid who couldn't protect such a valuable asset.

Maybe in the future, Horua would have become a big and strong man who would fight against the gangs for his childhood home.

But now, none of that would happen.

All of Horua's dreams died with him.

Eventually, Nick left Horua's room and entered his own.

After entering, Nick put his weapons to the side and just fell into his bed.

He had just woken up a couple of hours ago, but he already wanted to go back to sleep.

Why was life like this?

Why did one bad thing after the other happen to him?

Problems, problems, problems.

He was just so tired of all of these problems.

'If I weren't that stupid, I wouldn't have so many problems,' Nick thought as he lifelessly looked at the ceiling above his bed.

'If I were strong enough to contain or isolate my empathy, I wouldn't have so many issues with Pator's death.'

'If I were not such an idiot, Horua wouldn't have died.'

'Maybe life isn't actually cruel.'

'Maybe it's just my incompetence and idiocy that makes it cruel.'

'Maybe I'm just too dumb to have a good life.'

All of the memories that Nick associated with negative emotions shot through his mind.

When one was surrounded by darkness, one often didn't even try to search for light.

At this moment, there were no happy moments in Nick's memories.

The intense regret and guilt colored the bright moments grey, making them seem meaningless.

When Nick had gotten his job, it didn't matter since his life only became worse from then on.

When Nick caught the Dreamer, it didn't matter since the Dreamer would end up killing Horua.

When Nick became rich, it didn't matter since all the money in the world couldn't make him happy right now.

All the good things were meaningless.

All the bad things were painful and dominant.

'I wish I had the guts to say the Sentence,' Nick thought as he lifelessly looked at the ceiling.

## Chapter 109 – Switched Places

Time passed.

Hours passed, in which Nick just kept thinking about things.

At some point, Nick's stomach even started to hurt, which made him remember that he hadn't eaten anything for quite a while.

But it seemed so unimportant.

He just didn't care.

Also, in a certain way, the pain of hunger felt justified to Nick.

Nick was just too consumed by regret and guilt.

Feeling happy in any way felt unfair to Horua.

After taking away Horua's happiness and future, Nick believed he didn't deserve to have one of his own.

It was only fair.

"Man, you look like shit."

Usually, Nick would jump up in surprise at the voice that had suddenly appeared behind him on the bed.

Yet, Nick just didn't care a lot, and he also quickly realized who it was based on the voice.

Nick didn't answer.

A moment later, a rat entered Nick's vision, and he saw it looking down at him with interest.

"What happened to you?" it asked.

"Don't you already know?" Nick answered with a deadpan and lifeless voice.

"No, I don't," the Parasite said. "I might have many eyes and ears, but it's difficult to check the Outer City. Too many guards and Extractors, you know?"

"Why are you here?" Nick asked emotionlessly.

"Checking up on my favorite Extractor," the rat said with a big grin. "I usually see you walking around from time to time, but you haven't shown up in a while."

"Why would you care?" Nick asked.

"You're my important business partner," the rat said with a smile as it rubbed its little claws together. "Your health is important to my business."

Nick snorted. "You tried to convince me to kill myself more than once before."

"Yeah, but that's in the past," the rat said dismissively. "Things change, you know?"

Nick just kept looking at the ceiling without answering.

"Man, life really got you by the ass, eh, Nick?" the rat said as it leaned on Nick's elbow.

Nick didn't move.

"Oh, wow," the rat said in a bit of surprise. "You're not even angry that I'm touching you. That's a new one."

The next moment, the rat jumped up on Nick's chest and looked at his vacant and disinterested eyes.

"Huh," the rat uttered after a bit. "To think that you would actually reach that point. After that one incident two years ago, I thought that you would never consider suicide."

"Things change," Nick said. "You said so yourself."

"And so they do," the rat said as it moved around Nick for a bit, looking at him with interest.

"Can't bring yourself to go through with it, huh?" the rat asked.

Nick weakly nodded without looking at the rat.

"You know, those are my favorite customers," the rat said. "Like, I don't even have to convince them. They just let me do my thing."

The next moment, the rat started to scratch its tiny chin with one of its claws.

"But things are tricky in this case."

"First, you are worth far more than just your corpse. You are a business partner that can bring me tens, if not hundreds, of corpses, you know? Having you die right now would be a huge waste."

"Also, you're already no longer a normal human. Look at this."

Then, the rat suddenly bit Nick's arm and started to tear at it while trying to scratch it with its claws.

Nick felt like someone was pinching him.

"Can't get through," the rat said after stepping away. "This body is just a rat. I can kill a guy, but I can't kill an Extractor."

"Sure, if I claw out your eyes and crawl up your skull, I would be able to do so, but you would never let me. Even the most depressed and suicidal person goes crazy when a rat tries to eat their eyes. Trust me, I tried."

"I mean, you could try traveling to my main body..." the rat said as it trailed off.

"Nah, forget it. You'll never survive the journey," it said a bit later with a dismissive wave.

"Also, I don't want you to die. I still need me some corpses, you know?" the rat said with a wide grin.

Even though Nick didn't care a lot about anything right now, he still noticed the irony of his current situation.

"You're trying to convince me to stay alive," Nick stated.

"I mean, sure," the rat said with a shrug. "Why not? Maybe you'll donate some corpses later when you feel better?"

"A rat's gotta make a living, you know?"

Nick almost felt like this wasn't real.

The Parasite.

A powerful Specter.

Someone who tried to convince as many humans as possible to let it consume them... nove(l)bi(n.)com

Was trying to convince Nick not to kill himself.

How had things turned out like this?

"So, what's been bugging you?" the rat said. "By the way, where's your little statue boy? He's usually positioned right here."

Nick took a deep breath.

"Ah, there it is," the rat said after seeing Nick's reaction. "I get it."

"Little statue boy broke."

"So, you broke a statue. Big deal. Make a new one," the rat said.

Nick's eyes narrowed in anger.

The rat immediately jumped away from Nick. "Oh boy, someone's getting uppity."

"His name was Horua!" Nick shouted at the rat after explosively sitting up. "He was a real human with a real name! He's not a statue, and he's not just a boy!"

The rat blinked a couple of times in surprise. "I feel like that was only partially targeted at me."

Nick snorted and looked to the side. "It doesn't matter anyway. He's dead now, and I killed him."

"So?" the rat asked.

Nick clenched his fists again. "He was an innocent boy, and I killed him!" he said through gritted teeth.

"What? So if you killed him seven years later, things would be different?" the rat asked. "Dead is dead. Who cares?"

Nick just looked forward with furrowed brows, not facing the rat. "You wouldn't understand. You're a Specter."

The rat scratched the side of its head a bit in thought.

"I guess so?" it answered with uncertainty.

Chapter 110 – Therapy

"But so what?" the Parasite continued. "Life is life. Who cares if you understand shit or not? You just continue living and doing your thing."

"It's not that simple," Nick answers.

"How is it not that simple?" the rat asked. "Everyone's only eating and drinking to survive, and they work to eat and drink. Apart from that, people kind of just want to fuck or become rich."

"But in the end, none of that matters," the rat added. "You die anyway."

"Whether you have killed a million people or saved a million people. When you're dead, none of that matters. You're just a corpse at that point anyway."

"Whether you are alone or surrounded by family, you are just a corpse."



"A dead man can't hear their family's cries or their enemy's laughter."

Nick furrowed his brows as he kept looking forward.

In a way, the rat was right.

Nick couldn't really find a counterargument.

"Same thing with time," the rat added. "Whether you lived for ten years or a thousand, a million years from now, both of these times seem equally as tiny and inconsequential."

"Oh, boohoo, the little kids are dying everywhere," the rat spoke in an overdramatic voice. "They had such beautiful lives and hopes in front of them. Oh no, how tragic!"

The rat snorted. "Who gives a shit? Dead is dead. When billions of people die, who cares about a single child?"

"When millions of years pass, who cares about one child?"

"When all life ceases to exist, who cares about one child?"

"So, why should you?" the rat asks.

Nick just kept looking forward.

The rat's logic was sound, but it felt wrong.

Its ideology was so pure, basic, and sterile that it couldn't come from a human.

'Although, there are probably also humans that think like that,' Nick thought.

Nick could only sigh.

He couldn't get on board with that ideology.

"That seems too bleak of an outlook," Nick said.

"You're the one that wants to kill himself," the rat said with a snort.

"That's different," Nick answered. "I have control over my life. You are talking about ending the lives of others just because their existence doesn't matter in the grand scheme of existence."

"Eh, dead human is dead human," the rat said with a dismissive wave. "Why are you making things so complicated? Two dead human is more than one dead human."

"What about morals?" Nick asked.

"There are no morals," the rat said. "Can I touch morals? Can I see morals? If morals actually exist, they don't have power over me, in which case, why would I care about them?"

"Something is morally wrong? So? I'll do it anyway. Nothing will change." Updated from  
novelb(i)n.c(o)m

Nick thought about the rat's words.

Then, the Dregs appeared in Nick's thoughts.

With that mindset, the existence of the Dregs actually made sense.

Was it morally correct to take advantage of the poor people like this?

Impossible.

And yet, that was still what happened.

'Morals only have an effect on people who care about them,' Nick thought.

This made the world appear even more desolate and grey to Nick.

Everything seemed so rotten.

It was like the world had been created by some sadist.

Everything Nick could see was shit.

"So, you feel better?" the rat asked.

Nick was pulled out of his thoughts as he looked at the rat with furrowed brows. "Why would I feel better?"

"We talked, right?" the rat asked. "People feel better when they talk about their problems."

Nick looked away again.

He didn't want to admit it, but for some reason, he actually felt a bit better.

Instead of just lying in bed while constantly thinking about his regrets and guilt, he was actually thinking about the world.

Even more, Nick felt more annoyed and disgusted than depressed right now.

"It changes nothing," Nick said.

"Why not?" the rat asked. "You humans constantly kill yourselves because you feel sad. If you don't feel sad, you won't kill yourself."

Nick sighed. "But the cause of the pain is still there. Also, I feel bad about feeling good. I stole Horua's happiness."

"Who?" the rat asked.

"The boy that was here."

"Oh, statue boy, got it," the rat said. "Back to that topic, are we? I thought we already solved that issue."

Nick closed his eyes and took a deep breath to calm down. "We solved no issues. I killed Horua. I killed an innocent child who trusted me."

"You killed a guy," the rat said. "You killed many guys. What makes this one different?"

"He was an innocent child," Nick said with a bit of aggression.

"So? We already went over this," the rat said.

"It's different," Nick said.

"Dead human is dead human!" the rat stated with conviction.

Nick wanted to argue, but he stopped himself.

"You won't understand. You're a Specter."

The rat scratched the side of its head with annoyance. "Okay, so statue boy is different from some other dead humans."

"Let's presume that statement holds true," the rat carefully said. "Let's presume that statue boy is somehow more valuable than one dead human."

"How much more valuable? How many dead humans do we need to equal one statue boy?" the rat asked.

Nick furrowed his brows. "It doesn't work like that."

The rat groaned in annoyance. "Would you rather kill a thousand people or one statue boy?"

"If the thousand people are murderers and rapists, I would kill the thousand people," Nick answered.

That surprised the rat a bit. "What if they are not?"

Nick furrowed his brows as he looked down.

A thousand strangers or Horua...

Nick thought about the Dregs.

In a way, Nick felt like he would rather kill the thousand people, but his mind was telling him that he wouldn't go through with it.

Killing Horua for a thousand innocent people...

When the rat saw Nick thinking so intensely, it only had one thought.

'Damn, statue boy is that valuable?'

In the end, Nick sighed.

"I would probably kill Horua, but I would feel horrible," Nick said.

CLAP!

The rat clapped its tiny hands. "There you go!"

"What?" Nick asked with annoyance.

"Go save a thousand people," the rat said. "Save a thousand people, and you will have repaid your debt."

"Makes sense, right?"