

# **Beloved by the Goddess (Genesis Rhapsodus x Reader)**

**By shadowkat2407**

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*A series of Genesis oneshots featuring reader inserts. They tie in with each other, so feel free to read them all! Romance abounds~!*

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<b>Chapter 1 - Beloved by the Goddess</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Chapter 2 - Nothing Shall Forestall My Return</b>	<b>10</b>

# 1 - Beloved by the Goddess

Sorry and all, but this was written for an editor that supports HTML, so instead of italics you'll get word. My bad.

Completely un-beta'd, so expect mistypes.

Genesis (C) Square Enix and...probably Gackt, too...

A first, they said. Nothing like it had ever happened before. Maybe in the Turks, yes, but no woman had ever joined the ranks of SOLDIER before.

It had its ups and downs, being the subject of so much publicity. On the upside, you were being recognised for the first time in your life. On the downside, you had to double-bolt your door at night to keep the men out of your room. After all, you were probably the only woman they could get near at night. The receptionists were lucky; they could go home after dark. You, however, were stuck in the ShinRa building with a bunch of horny guys.

You rolled on to your side to look at the door of your room. The usually light keyhole was no longer visible in the darkness, meaning that, yet again, someone was watching you sleep.

"Shoo!" You yelled indignantly, pulling the sheets up to cover your chest. The returning of light to the keyhole was accompanied by hurried footsteps, rushing away and up the stairs. You were in half a mind to chase after their owner, but Kunsel's promise stopped you from doing so. \_\_\_\_\_, he had said, I'm on security tonight, so I'll keep a special eye on your room, okay? Anyone that goes near it is gonna get a beating from me!

Safe in the knowledge that if anyone tried to undress you with their eyes again they'd be mauled to within an inch of their life, you turned away from the door and drifted off.

A loud knock on the door woke you up. You blinked a few times before finding the energy to get up and unlock said door. Behind it stood another anonymous infantryman, this one holding a message.

"Strange," You mumbled, "Usually they don't have a message."

The infantryman laughed. "I'm not as much of a perv as most of the others," He said, pulling off his helmet to reveal a shock of messy blonde spikes. "I'm Cloud, by the way." He held out his hand to you, meaning for you to shake it. You glanced at his eyes before taking the hand, shaking it lightly. He didn't say anything when you pulled your hand from his and slammed the door in his face.

"Thanks, Cloud!" You called out to him.

"No problem!" He shouted back, and you listened to his retreating footsteps.

On the way back to your bed you tore open the letter the infantryman had given you. In slanting script, it read;

Miss \_\_\_\_\_,

The 3rds are being given a pep-talk from one of our legendary 1sts later today. Although you are not officially a member of SOLDIER until next week, I wish for you to attend the talk. After all, the 1st is eager to meet such a pioneering woman.

Signed, Director Lazard.

You screwed the note up and threw it at the waste paper bin on the opposite wall. It bounced off of the

rim and back at you, rolling under the edge of the bed. You groaned and led on the edge, reaching underneath the bed in an attempt to pull the ruined paper out. You pulled your hands up with a gasp upon nicking your finger on a nail. You placed the finger in your mouth, sucking the blood off before getting up, deciding to ignore the paper and concentrating instead on rousing yourself. Didn't even tell me a time, you reflected as you picked up a clean towel from the dresser and made your way in to the bathroom. Despite the cool Midgar air, you were fond of cold showers, finding that they helped to wake you up, and more importantly keep you alert. That in combination with a mug of coffee, and you were ready to face the day's trials, challenges and perverts.

You cursed under your breath; waiting for the elevator had not been part of your battle plan. Thoughts of lateness filled your head, soon followed by thoughts of punishments at the hands of a 1st. You shivered, pummelling once more at the control panel beside the elevator doors. Much to your surprise, the doors slid smoothly open and the faces of a pair of Turks greeted your death glare with raised eyebrows. You ignored them and shoved your way in to the elevator, hammering the button reading '35' and directing your glare at the controls when they proved too slow.

"You okay, kid?" One of the Turks asked. This one was tall and skinny, his hair long and flame-red. You noticed two distinctive tattoos under his eyes before the doors opened again and you were sprinting off to the meeting room.

It didn't take long for a fast runner such as yourself to reach your destination. You were safe, but only just; the last of the SOLDIERs were lined up outside the door, waiting to enter. You slunk over to them, joining on the back of the line just in time. As soon as you were in place, the men moved forwards and in to the dimly lit meeting room.

Inside, the rest of the men stood in rows, facing a projector screen at the front of the room. You expected to be stood behind the rest, being one of the last in - the last, actually - so you were slightly surprised when you ended up on the end of the front row, furthest away from the door.

The room waited silently, breath bated and chins held high. Impressively, the whole of the room was managing to continue pulling the standard ShinRa salute, even while they were so...what were they? Nervous? Excited? Terrified? Awed?

And...what were you? You thought over the question in your mind and settled on one answer; curious. Who would the 'legend' that was to be lecturing you be? What would he be like? Would he...hate you? Your thoughts were overrun by nerves when the door opened on well-oiled hinges and a youngish man entered the room. He was still too far away for you to see his face, or even determine his hair colour, but you could identify two things; one, he wore a long red coat, probably leather, over the standard SOLDIER uniform, and two, he carried on his back a sword with a flame-red blade. The metal shimmered and twinkled as he made his way along the ranks, inspecting all he passed.

As he neared you, you were able to pick out more and more details; his hair was not quite red, more of an auburn colour, and he was definitely young. Probably no older than twenty-two or twenty-three. Only a year or two older than me, and yet look what he's accomplished. And then look at me...

You only realised that the man had stopped in front of you when you heard the footsteps stop. You allowed your eyes, which had been firmly focussed on your own feet, travel to his, and then up his body until they reached his chest, where they ground to a halt.

"You must be \_\_\_\_\_," He said, his voice like silk. "I've heard so much about you. My name is Genesis Rhapsodus. I'm pleased to make your acquaintance." The man held a gloved hand out to you, and you took it. Somehow, the gesture gave you the mental strength to look up at Genesis's face; you were shocked speechless.

Pale, but not unnaturally so. Neatly brushed hair, chin length, which framed his face perfectly. Pearly white teeth revealed themselves when he flashed you a smile. But best of all were his eyes.

Although you knew that every SOLDIER had to go through a process of mako fusion, never had you seen such clear blue eyes. Never had you seen eyes which suited the face of their owner so well. His eyes enhanced his beauty, rather than having the effect they had on most others; making him look monstrous.

"Thank you, sir," You said quietly, allowing your eyes to slip back down to your feet. Reluctantly, you removed your hand from Genesis's and linked in with your other, hoping to replicate the feeling that he had sparked in you. You had no such luck.

"If you don't mind, I'd like to find out more about you," Genesis continued, and you weren't sure if he was blind to your sudden feelings for him, or if he was a good enough actor to hide his recognition. "The first female SOLDIER would make an interesting friend, I'm sure. Good day, \_\_\_\_\_." And with that he was gone, striding back down to the centre of the line and the projector. He began flicking through slides of a recent mission, talking about the hardships he'd have to overcome to complete it and the problems the men before him would face, but you didn't listen in any great detail. You couldn't help but think about the brief conversation you'd held with him, if you could really call it a conversation.

He wants to be my friend? you asked yourself, silently pleading that this was real, not a dream, please not another dream. No...it couldn't be a dream. Your mind could never dream up one as beautiful, as powerful, as perfect as Genesis Rhapsodus.

The meeting passed slowly. Although he glanced at you once, it was with the air of one looking for miscreants rather than one seeking friendship. Even afterwards, when the slideshow was over and the pep-talk complete, he didn't make any attempt to talk to you. He merely departed as quickly as he had appeared, out of the door in seconds.

"Alright, you lot! Of you go!" One of the 2nds called from the far end of the room, and gradually the men began to disperse. You looked back once more, wishing that Genesis would return, but saw only the empty stage.

Wait.

No, not quite empty.

On the very edge of the platform, as near to the dead centre as it was possible to be, lay a single black feather. You snuck through the last group of SOLDIERs without receiving one suggestive comment - a new record, perhaps - and took the feather from the stage.

Slipping it in to your pocket, you made your way back out of the room and to the dorms, thoughts filled entirely with Genesis.

You tied the final knot and admired your handiwork. Ah, the things one could achieve with a simple hair tie and some ribbon. And, of course, a certain special feather.

The hair band, once plain black, was now adorned with a black silk bow. The bow, embroidered with tiny silver stars, was in turn adorned with the feather. It was simple, yet elegant, and completely gorgeous. You ran the brush once more through your hair before reaching for the band and tying your hair in to a loose ponytail. As soon as it was done, you felt somehow more refreshed, more alive. Probably something to do with that feather...

It was strange, but ever since you'd picked the thing up off of the stage five days ago, you've been more energised. Far less negative, too. Even though it only looked like a feather, you couldn't help but think that there was something more to it.

You shrugged to yourself and picked up a coat, ready for your first mission as a SOLDIER.

"...And," Lazard finished, "You'll be going with Genesis."

Your heart leapt with joy, although you didn't let it show. Genesis! He really must have been serious

about wanting to get to know me! "Yes, sir!" You saluted, allowing a hint of excitement to creep on to your face.

The Director smiled warmly at you and began to explain the procedures of the mission. Meet Genesis in the training room in quarter of an hour. Take a chopper to Kalm. Infiltrate the anti-ShinRa troops' base there and take out the commander. Simple, right?

You nodded in what you assumed were the right places, trying and failing to remember all the instructions you were being fed. Lazard seemed to pick up on your struggle, for as soon as he was finished he added, "I can write that down if you need me to." You nodded gratefully and watched him as he scribbled a few hurried notes on a scrap of paper.

When he was finished, Lazard folded the paper and placed it in your hand, closing your fingers around it as if he thought you were going to drop it. "Fare well," He said formally, although the tone of his voice was softened by another kind smile. You returned the gesture and marched out of the room, head filled with thoughts of your first mission.

A quick check of your watch told you that you had only five minutes until you were due to leave. You muttered a string of curses under your breath and began to jog over to the elevator. One glance and you'd decided that there was no point waiting for it and risking lateness; instead, the best policy was to sprint down the stairs. You only needed a few things from your room - a hair brush, some spare bullets and a knife. Even if it seemed like the whole ShinRa building was against you, not much could go wrong with that.

You were right. In fact, only a minute after jumping down the steps three at a time you were running back up, hair brush in hand. Hell, you'd need it as soon as you reached the top.

You slowed your pace when the stairs ended, concentrating instead on running the brush through your hair in a sad attempt to neaten things up. You tucked in to your pocket when you reached the training room, not wishing to look pathetic in front of such a famous (and good-looking) SOLDIER.

The door was opened by a mildly irritated looking Genesis before you could even reach for the handle. He glanced at you before brushing past you and in to the hall. "Ah, \_\_\_\_\_," He snapped, "I was just going to look for you. You should be more punctual, or people could get the wrong idea."

Inside you wilted with shame, but you managed to keep your voice flat. "Sorry, Sir. Won't happen again, sir."

"I should hope not!" He said, this time with a little less venom. "Come. We have to leave or we'll miss our ride." Genesis grabbed your wrist and practically dragged you to the elevators and from them to the roof. On top of a raised platform sat a helicopter emblazoned with the ShinRa logo, and from what you could see being driven by a Turk. The man in the cockpit turned around to face you and you saw that it was the redhead who had tried to talk to you when you were late for the lecture with Genesis. He stuck his tongue out playfully at the pair of you and you giggled. Genesis, however, only rolled his eyes, even though the corners of his mouth were slightly turned up.

You pulled out the notes Lazard had given you and read over them again as you took a seat. Kalm.... You thought, I've heard of it... But as hard as you tried to think of the town, all you could manage was a vague recollection of the name.

"Ten minutes!" A voice - presumably the redhead's - called from the cockpit.

"Thank you, Reno," Genesis replied, so quietly that you didn't think the pilot would be able to hear him. No matter how hard you tried to think of something to say to the SOLDIER, your mind remained blank, so instead you settled back in your seat and watched the clouds fly past out of the open door. The wind, strong due to your speed, was entering the chopper through the door and buffeting Genesis's coat, making it flap gently against your legs.

"I'm sorry that I was so harsh with you earlier," Genesis said suddenly, shocking you out of your daze.

"No need to apologise, sir. I should have been there on time," You replied.

"There is a need. I didn't allow you enough time to prepare yourself, and for that I apologise. Besides, you're new," He added as an afterthought, "You weren't to know what to expect."

"Thank you, sir," You said quietly, glancing quickly at Genesis's face. He was looking over to the cockpit, obviously waiting for the pilot - Reno..? - to land the helicopter so he could get the mission over with. On cue, the redhead shouted an incomprehensible order from the front and Genesis rose, walking to the edge of the floor and beckoning for you to follow. In a matter of seconds you were beside him, looking down at the ground below.

"I can't help but notice," You began a little sarcastically, "That that ground is still a good twenty metres away. Are we going to land?"

Genesis shook his head with a small smile. "No. We are going to jump."

He said nothing more, only meeting your eyes with a reassuring look before leaping gracefully out of the door.

I can't make it, you thought as you watched the SOLDIER descent gracefully to earth, spinning and flipping as he went. And plus I'm sure he's showing off...

"Hurry up!" Reno called.

"But I'll die!" You yelled back indignantly.

You could practically sense Reno rolling his eyes. "He'll catch you, no worries!"

You closed your eyes, moved your lips in silent prayer and tumbled out of the chopper.

"You should have been more careful earlier," Genesis scolded yet again as soon as he was comfortable, lounging in one of the armchairs in your hotel room with a copy of LOVELESS in his hand.

"I was scared," You snapped, but quickly realised that your tone was probably inappropriate and corrected yourself. "I mean," You ground out, "Sorry, sir."

"I told you earlier, no need to apologise. You have much left to learn." The man paused for thought for a second. "Also, you don't need to be so formal. Even if purely for the duration of this mission, I'd like to think that we could be friends."

"I'd like that!" You said a little too quickly, at which Genesis snorted in to his book. You were grateful that he didn't say anything, but still, you were also more than a little embarrassed.

"Now sleep," Genesis ordered, "We have to begin our mission tomorrow."

You collapsed on to one knee, clutching the sword you'd been given tightly to your chest. The assassin was still approaching, his gaze never wavering. Your breath came in shallow gasps, and already you were shaking with fear.

You tried to stand, to lash out, to move, but nothing happened, and then you realised; you were going to die, here and now. The slimy little man in the pinstripe suit stood before you was going to destroy you.

"Goodbye," The man said, pulling a gun out of his pocket and aiming it at your head.

You clamped your eyes shut, not wishing to see his eyes as he pulled the trigger. With your eyes shut, you only heard the blade as it sliced through the air - and the man - in front of you.

You risked cracking one eye open, although you kept it aimed at the floor. A foot in front of you laid the body of the assassin, although his head was nowhere to be seen. You slowly looked up, and were comforted by what you saw; Genesis stood in front of you, still re-sheathing his sword.

"Thank you," You croaked, getting shakily to your feet. As soon as you were stood up straight, you felt your right leg give out on you and you were back on the floor again. From your new position you could see the worried look on Genesis's face as he saw you fall.

"Don't push yourself," He cautioned you. You nodded mutely and watched him draw closer, eventually coming to a stop right next to you. The SOLDIER knelt down and slipped an arm around your shoulders, hauling you to your feet.

"Don't put any weight through that leg," Genesis warned you as he began to walk, "I think it may be broken."

You winced as his words sunk in but nodded, seeing the sense in his advice. You wrapped your arm around his waist - purely for support, of course - and leaned in to his shoulder. You felt his muscles tense for a second and nearly let go of him completely, but he quickly relaxed again and started to move faster.

You opened your eyes and looked around. This wasn't the hotel room...

Now, you were led on a bed in a bright white room. You couldn't see a door or a window, but you most certainly could see the tray of sharp implements that was perched beside your head.

You tried to sit up, but to no avail. Although you couldn't tell exactly, the strong reaction your body was having with nearby mako suggested that you were being held by mako bonds, which suggested ShinRa technology.

"Ah, you're awake!"

You gasped and looked around frantically, trying to detect the source of the voice. As you looked, a face appeared above your head. It was that of a man, middle-aged but appearing older. His lank, greasy hair fell over his face and tickled yours in a way which was most revolting.

"Where--" You asked, and he answered before you could even finish the question.

"My name is Hojo. I'm ShinRa's head scientist. And this is my operating theatre." On 'this', Hojo stood up and spread his arms, gesturing vaguely to the room.

"Why--"

"Since you needed surgery to fix you leg, I decided that this would be a good time to perform the mako infusion operation," Hojo stated blandly, again cutting you off.

You didn't say anything this time, neither did you move. You were sure, however, that if you had been able to move you would have recoiled in horror. Since you couldn't, you settled for allowing your eyes to widen almost comically.

"However, I had to wait for you to wake up. So now . . ."

Your eyes widened more - if possible - as Hojo picked up one of the needles from the tray and filled it with blue-green liquid. Giving it one squirt for dramatic effect, the scientist plunged the metal in to your neck.

Pure mako liquid was not a pleasant substance to be in. No, it slowed your movements, your breathing and even your thoughts. It was like the liquid was sucking your life out, slowly but surely.

Hojo was stood outside the tank again, this time making notes on a clipboard. You mouthed a curse at him, but thanks to the mako liquid it was so slow that he probably couldn't understand it.

Hojo waved a hand at one of his assistants, and the boy scurried over to a keyboard. He tapped in a few letters and you saw a bubble of gas enter the tube in which you were being held.

You managed half a sigh before the bubble reached your mouth and you passed out.

"Up, up! I have no space for you now!"

You groaned and sat up. A flustered Hojo stood beside you, directing people around the room. When you had managed to clamber clumsily to your feet, Hojo shoved you towards the door and muttered something about you being waste of space.

You leaned on the wall outside as the door slammed behind you, wiggling your fingers in an attempt to regain feeling in them.

"That always happens after exposure to mako," A voice said from around the corner, "It's nothing to worry about."

That's... You began to think, and as soon as you'd said his name in your head Genesis rounded the corner.

"I'll help you back to your room," He said, picking you up bridal style and cradling you to his chest. Your arms automatically snaked around the man's neck, pulling yourself closer to him.

You ignored the shocked whispers of the secretaries and SOLDIERS alike as Genesis carried you through reception and to the elevators, which he obviously preferred to the stairs. He didn't even reach out and press the call button, merely waited for the lift to be called by someone else.

"Hey, are you two..?" One of the nearby SOLDIERS asked Genesis.

"Perhaps," He replied, and right then you were glad that your face has hidden by Genesis's body; he was hiding your blush.

The SOLDIER laughed manically and you were sure you heard the click of a camera shutter before he meandered off - from the sounds of it, to sell that photo to the press.

The cheerful ping signalled that the elevator had finally reached the ground floor. The doors slid open, revealing a pair of young girls, probably secretaries as well. One - a young blonde-haired girl - giggled manically and dragged the other, who was trying to leave, back inside, mattering words to the effect of, 'Stay, look, he's hot!'

Genesis rolled his eyes but told one of the girls to press the '48' button. She complied, and as soon as she had Genesis turned his back on the two secretaries and stared at the door. You could both hear the girls muttering again, so you occupied yourself with thoughts of Genesis and soon, you were in the hall being carried to your room.

A couple of the SOLDIERS wolf-whistled at you, but a single glare from Genesis and they lapsed in to silence. All too soon, he was placing you deftly on the floor outside your room.

"Snog 'er!" Called one of the men, of whom you'd developed a tail of sorts. By that, I mean that a long line of them were trailing you. Naturally.

Genesis paused in thought for a second. "Perhaps I will . . ." He said slowly, leaning gradually closer.

"Whoo, go Genesis!" Was the last thing you heard before his lips pressed against yours. From that moment, you were lost in him. You stepped closer to him, pressing yourself against his chest, and he in turn placed one hand on the back of your neck and the other in the small of your back, holding you even closer, were that possible.

You ignored the wolf whistles when he broke away and pulled Genesis down for one more heated kiss before you finally let him go. You were both flushed and, much to your surprise, he was smiling like a giddy schoolgirl.

"Good fer you, mate!" The SOLDIER member who had unwittingly initiated the kiss yelled.

"Genesis . . ." You whispered, catching his eyes.

"I've always loved things that are different," He said quietly, brushing his hand against your own. "There is no hate, only joy; for you are beloved by the goddess," He quoted dreamily. "It seems that I am beloved, to have found someone like you."

You blushed bright red and waved to him despite your dream-like state, closing the door on the catcalls of the SOLDIERS to contemplate your future.

"D-deserted?!" For the first time in your life, you stuttered.

"It would appear so," Lazard confirmed with a sad shake of his head. "Somewhere near Wutai."

"Genesis . . . deserted?" You asked again. For now, you reused to believe it.

Lazard sighed with exasperation. "Yes. Genesis. Has. Deserted."

"He wouldn't . . . why?"

Lazard shrugged and tapped a few keys on the keyboard in front of him. On the screen at the end of the room, a picture of Genesis's face popped up, the legend 'M.I.A.' covering the bottom of the picture.



"This is everything we have," Lazard said, hovering the cursor over a small box in the bottom right of the screen. In it was a list of places, dates and times relating to the SOLDIER 1st Class's disappearance. Because that was what it was - a disappearance. Definitely not a desertion. Genesis wouldn't desert . . . "Wutai, three days ago?" You pondered aloud. Lazard nodded and glanced at you, probably wondering what you were thinking.

If only he knew . . .

You spared the picture on the screen a final longing glance before sprinting out the door. Yet again, you chose to take the stairs, five at a time, and you reached the ground floor and the exit in record time. A glance at the clock in the lobby told you everything you needed to know - five minutes until the next train to Wutai left. If you ran as fast as you could, you could just make it.

I'll find you, Genesis. No matter what.

## 2 - Nothing Shall Forestall My Return

Again, HTML. Sorrehz. T.T;

The training was finally paying off. The soldiers in Wutai were far inferior to the one assassin you had encountered on your mission with Genesis Rhapsodus - you shivered visibly as the name flitted across your mind - before you left Midgar, so you were having no difficulty taking care of them.

Swinging your sword around in an arc above your head, you decapitated the guard stood in front of you in complete silence. You were careful to catch the body before it hit the ground, stuffing it haphazardly under a bush before continuing on your journey through the woods.

You'd heard as soon as you reached Wutai that Genesis was nearby. New hadn't reached the mainland yet - news never did travel quickly away from the island which Wutai was on, being as no Wutaians ever really left - so the citizens weren't aware of it yet, but it seemed that the SOLDIER 1st class had decided to side with Wutai for a while. In a way you were angry at him for leaving ShinRa so easily, but in another, you could see his point; where peoples as protective the Wutaians were concerned, it was a good idea to make sure they weren't going to attack you on sight if you wanted to work near them. You, of course, hadn't taken that precaution.

Something rustled in a bush nearby, and you halted suddenly, your breath catching in your throat. You couldn't hear voices, but it could easily be a very stealthy guard. Slowly and silently, you turned towards the noises and moved your sword in to a defensive position, ready to parry should an attack come.

All was silent for a few long moments, but then the rustling changed direction and headed away from you, back to the fortress that was Wutai. You let out the breath you'd been holding a little shakily and relaxed your posture. They were leaving . . . they hadn't seen you.

You took a while to regain your composure after that . . . well, you, at least, regarded it as a near miss. Every time an animal moved, you stilled, not breathing, body refusing to move until the 'danger' had passed.

You were glad when you finally reached the house of which you'd been told. It was a small affair, no bigger than one of the houses in the slums. Considering that it was constructed entirely of logs and leaves, you reflected, it was very well made. You skirted around the trees and slammed your back against the wood of the cottage, biting your tongue against the pain of the splinters that stabbed in to your back.

Shuffling around the edge of the building, you kept an eye on the woods, watching, even now, for the guards who a dark part of your mind told you were following. The other eye was watching the cottage, waiting for the door to come in to sight.

When it did, you got quite a shock; it was open, swinging on its hinges. Your grip on your sword tightened as you drew nearer and glanced around the edge of the gap, in to the dimly lit room.

On the far side of the room, a solitary oil lamp burned brightly from its perch on the windowsill. An upturned table took up most of the floor, what little space remained out of its reach covered in paperwork. You picked up the sheet nearest your feet and scanned over it before letting it flutter back to the floor. Nothing important on it, just area maps.

You took one more look around before leaving, slotting the door neatly in to its frame before you disappeared back in to the woods.

Banora . . .

That was where he was going. Or, at least, that was where he was going according to a Wutaian guard with a knife pressed close to his throat. You looked out of the window of the plane, watching the waves crashing against the shore of the mainland. You were sure that if you looked out of the other window you'd be able to see Midgar, so you kept your eyes firmly glued to the ocean. You didn't want to see that city again, not now, not since you couldn't go back.

SOLDIER were strict on deserters.

That's what you were, now. A deserter. SOLDIER just assumed that you'd followed your beloved Genesis. Even though that was true, you resented the fact that they didn't consider anything else first. The pilot screeched something in Wutainese which you assumed meant you were landing soon. Your idea was confirmed when the plane banked steeply to the right and you were all but thrown out of your seat and on to the floor.

You hauled yourself to your feet and stumbled over to the door, swinging it open and relishing in the blast of wind that threatened to suck you out. You spared a thought for the soon-to-be bemused pilot before stepping over the edge of the plane and plummeting towards the ocean.

You were still massaging your bruised ribs when you rounded the edge of the canyon and came face to face with the factory. It was bigger than you'd expected.

You wandered up to the edge of the cliff and looked down over it, seeing a large number of ninjas scuttling around and carrying barrels of . . . something. You didn't want to know what. It only took seconds for you to find a back entrance and sneak down the cliff face and inside the building.

You found yourself standing on a steel staircase, in the back corner of the factory. Considering that it was so busy outside, you were amazed to find that there was nobody inside. The emptiness was eerie, almost surreal. A shiver passed down your spine, but you ignored it and hurried down the steps to the factory floor.

On the opposite side of the room you could see a small door, so you made your way towards it, pausing only to glance around the factory. There was nothing much inside; a few piles of crates, some weapons piled up in a corner and, for some obscure reason, a drinks machine.

On the other side of the door was a dark room. You stepped inside and screeched as you slid down the first few steps of a steep staircase. You clambered back up, shaking slightly, and ran your hands over the walls by the door in search of a light switch. You didn't find anything, and for a second you were tempted to go back to the town, but then you remembered; Genesis could be down here. Dispelling your fear, you felt your way down the steps.

A distinct empty feeling at the bottom of the staircase alerted you to the fact that you were in a room, now. You turned again searched for a light switch, this time finding one. You flicked it on, and a blue light filled the room, being emitted from an egg-shaped capsule at the back of the room.

Your steps were light as you wandered in, gasping when you saw the piles of SOLDIER members' files on the desks that stood against the walls. You flicked one open at random - Ricky Mitch, a young boy from Edge who'd graduated to SOLDIER along with you. He was supposed to be one of the people who'd gone MIA with Genesis . . .

You put the file back down and continued to look around the room. It was obvious that Genesis wasn't there, but it couldn't hurt to look around a bit, see what you could find.

"There's nothing that would interest you, \_\_\_\_\_."

You jumped at the voice, easily recognised, and span around so that you were facing its owner. You tried to speak, tried to yell, scream at him, but nothing came out. Shock was keeping you silent, and you were sure that Genesis was glad of it.

"You don't need to be scared, \_\_\_\_\_," He practically purred as he walked strode across the room to you, covering the distance far more quickly than you could.

"But . . . Genesis, you . . ."

An amused smile played across the redhead's lips. "Really," He laughed, "I'm not going to hurt you."

"Genesis . . ." You whispered, reaching a hand out to touch his face. Surprisingly, he allowed you to complete the motion. He even placed his hand over yours, guiding it along his jaw and down his neck, eventually letting it come to a halt over his heart.

"Tell me," He said quietly, "Do I feel normal to you?" You raised an eyebrow, questioning him. "Do I feel like . . ." He ground to a halt.

"Like..?" You prompted, pressing your hand harder against him so that you could feel his heart, pumping slowly.

"Like a monster?" He finished, his eyes meeting yours. You could see inside him through his eyes. You could see anger, more than anything, but there were flashes of other things. Depression. Worry. Even . . . fear.

"No," You answered honestly. You were sure he wasn't a monster, whatever that meant. No . . . he could never be anything other than perfect, and monstrosity wasn't perfection.

"Then what's this?" He asked forlornly, stepping away from you to stand in the middle of the room.

Before you could ask him what he meant, his face contorted with pain and he collapsed on to one knee, his hands snaking up to grab at his left shoulder. You tried to move towards his but he held up a hand, telling you that he was okay, that you could stay where you were. That you should stay where you were. You watched in horror as a black appendage slipped out of a tear in his coat's left shoulder, snaking its way in to the light between Genesis's fingers. It grew slowly larger, eventually showing itself for what it was; a wing, fashioned from black feathers.

Genesis rose slowly to his feet, his face still tight from the pain. You, however, weren't watching him.

You were pulling the hair tie out of your hair. The black feather on it . . .

"Where did you get that?" Genesis narrowed his eyes dangerously, all hints of pain gone. Had he been faking it?

"I . . ." You struggled to remember for a second before it finally clicked. "I found it on the stage, after that talk you gave the SOLDIERs."

Genesis 'hnn'd and turned his back on you, flexing the wing experimentally before folding it back up, allowing it to disappear in to his shoulder. You watched his walk; he seemed more purposeful now, his steps longer, faster, sharper.

"What have you done?" You pondered aloud.

"I have become a monster," Genesis said quietly, turning to face you once more. "I'll be in Midgar in a few days," He added as an afterthought. "If you can bear to be back there, it would be nice to see you again."

With that he was gone, taking the steps two at a time until he was out of sight, back in the warehouse. You sighed sadly and followed him, ready to make your way to Midgar. There was no way you'd miss another chance to speak to Genesis.

It was good that you'd managed to dodge around the creatures, and even better that they were mostly on the lower plate. Now that you'd reached the upper plate, and the ShinRa building, you were pretty much safe.

You shook the rain out of your hair as you stepped in to the staircase. You only glanced up once before mentally cursing yourself for choosing the back entrance - you couldn't even see the ceiling from here. With a resigned sigh, you started climbing, dreading the ache you were sure to feel in your legs once you reached the top.

"Here."

You smiled as a heavy leather coat was placed over your head, shielding you from the rain. Despite the miserable weather, you were happy; the view from the top of the ShinRa building was amazing and, even better, you were with Genesis.

"You'll be cold," You said, not meaning anything by it. You were disappointed when it seemed that he'd taken the comment seriously, as he lifted the edge of the coat up. He didn't take it off of you, however. Instead, he slipped under it with you, pulling you closer to him so that both of you could fit underneath.

"Not any more," He said quietly, giving your shoulder a squeeze.

You didn't say anything for a long time after that, content merely to watch the creatures running wild below. You chose to turn your head when someone was attacked, keeping the illusion of peace and beauty intact. Nothing should be allowed to spoil what felt like one of your last moments with Genesis.

"Genesis," You said quietly, pulling your eyes away from the city in front of you to look at the ex-SOLDIER's face.

"\_\_\_\_\_", He replied, catching your eye from a moment before looking back towards the creatures below.

"Why did you desert?"

Genesis's grip on your shoulder tightened and you immediately regretted asking your questions. His grip relaxed, but he didn't say anything - a reaction which you considered very good, being as his temper was quickly becoming short.

"Sorry . . ." You whispered to him. The redhead ignored you, even when you slipped out from under the coat and in to the rain. He only spoke when the click of the door shutting echoed across the roof.

"Don't be."

You were panting hard when you reached Gongaga village, since it had been a long run. The damn helicopter had decided that dropping you off two miles away from the village was a good idea, especially since your stamina was terrible. Then again, maybe he wasn't being malicious. Maybe he was just scared . . .

You leaned against a tree and linked your hands behind your head, and immediately your breathing became lighter. You allowed your eyes to drift towards the sky, across which you saw a figure fly. For a second your heart skipped a beat, but then you saw the silver of the wing and your hopes were shattered - not Genesis. That Angeal guy . . .

Genesis hadn't said much about him. In fact, you were surprised that Genesis had mentioned him at all in the short amount of time that you'd had together on the roof of the ShinRa building. Maybe he thought it was important or something.

He'd said that they'd been friends, he, Sephiroth and Angeal. The three pillars of SOLDIER, inseparable and unstoppable. He mentioned in passing the similarity between the three of them and the characters of LOVELESS, and it was then that you saw how deep his obsession with the poem ran. Sure, you'd had your fair share of obsessions over the years, be it with a book or a celebrity, but nothing had ever been as important to you as LOVELESS was to Genesis Rhapsodus. It was like he lived, even breathed the words, and his constant quoting only strengthened your argument.

For a minute you entertained the thought of telling Genesis that you thought he was obsessed, imagining the indignant look on his face as he vehemently denied. You snickered quietly at the thought and pushed yourself away from the tree on which you were leant and continued following the path to Gongaga.

When you reached the village, it was in chaos. The people were running from house to house, screaming and crying. You grabbed one to ask what was going on, but she only sobbed louder and cast

a terrified look at the path leading to the edge of the town. Deciding that a look like that could mean nothing good, you released the woman (who promptly collapsed on to the floor, earning you some curses) and sprinted down the path.

Even when you were in the town, you could tell that Genesis was this way. The feather in your hair could tell. It was like it reacted with his very existence, picking you up when he was nearby, giving you that extra burst of strength you needed to reach him. In a way, you found it sweet, but ultimately it was sinister.

You watched black feathers similar to yours floating down the path, carried by the wind, and you were sure that Genesis was waiting for you at the cliffs. Sure enough, as you skidded to a halt on the top of the cliff you spied Genesis, hovering in the air some hundred meters away.

"Genesis!" You yelled, raising your voice to be heard over the wind, which was picking up now.

Subconsciously, you were impressed that Genesis was managing to stay so still with the gusts buffeting him around so much.

Even over the distance between you two, you could see a smile grace his perfect lips. You returned the smile as he swooped towards you, although it faltered slightly when you saw his hair. It was peppered with streaks of silver - you refused to call it grey - and it looked lifeless, not the gorgeous red locks they had been when you first saw him.

"Shocked?" He asked with a sad smile as he landed gracefully, folding his wing behind him but not withdrawing it completely.

"I . . ." You didn't know what to say. Instead, you inspected his hair more closely, although your eyes eventually settled on his coat, which itself was greying, deteriorating.

"I know," He said simply as he walked towards you, placing a finger under your chin and pulling your face up to look at his.

"Can I..?" You asked, looking at his hair. He nodded sharply and you reached slowly towards him, burying your fingers in his hair. It felt like straw, now, dead, limp and lifeless. You twisted a few strands of it absent-mindedly between your fingers, again looking at his coat. It seemed that the damage it bore was from over-use more than anything else, so it wasn't as unsettling as his hair.

"Strange, isn't it?" He gestured to his head, his shoulders, the strange colourlessness that covered them both.

You nodded, pulling your hands out of his hair and using them to tug him closer to you, close enough for you to embrace him warmly. He in turn placed his arms around you, his coat almost completely covering you, your form small compared to his.

"I might not be alive for much longer."

The sincerity of Genesis's words shocked you, so much that you pulled away a little in order to get a good look at his face. It was almost free of emotion, but you were sure that you could see a tinge of sadness in his eyes.

You sighed, the gesture sounding as sad as his voice, and brushed your lips against the redhead's, oh-so-slowly. "You were always so positive," You whispered to him before nuzzling your face against his neck.

"I try to be, but I can't bring myself to lie to you, \_\_\_\_\_," He said, his voice nearly as quiet as yours.

Despite the sadness of the situation, you cracked a smile at that. "I really do love you, Genesis," You said, barely loud enough for him to hear it.

"And I think that I love you," He replied, his voice far stronger than yours. "Banora next," He told you as he stepped back, breaking your hold on him. "I'm quite impressed that you managed to find me here, though."

"I have my sources," You shouted, forced to raise your voice since Genesis had leapt in to the air, his one wing extended. A few more feathers floated down to land on the ground beside you, and you

noticed that he was losing more every time you met him before he was gone. You mock-saluted at the space where he had been, muttering, 'Sir!' before you left, mind already set on finding someone in this godforsaken village capable of telling you where you could hire a plane.

As you sat in the Gongaga inn the next morning, you thought about Genesis.

Silver hair . . .

What was happening to him? He said he was going to die soon . . . did that have anything to do with it? And the wing . . . was that related?

You thought up some theories in your mind, although none fitted but one. You decided to believe that he'd wanted the wing, since he'd wanted to fly, but it'd backfired on him and began sapping his energy away - hence the lack of colour.

It fitted, but it still seemed a little off . . .

Someone knocked on the door and called something out to you, although you couldn't hear what it was. You swung your legs up, over the edge of the bed, and made your way over to the door.

When you opened it, a short woman babbled something incomprehensible and dragged you off downstairs. It was then that you realised how impressive it was, that she wasn't scared now. They'd all seemed terrified yesterday, so to get over it so quickly was abnormal at best.

You looked around and found that you were being led out of the inn and in to someone's back garden. Seated on a short wooden bench was a middle-aged man, balding slightly. You almost laughed when you saw the pair of flying goggles perched comically on the top of his head.

You tried to speak, but nothing came out. All you could do was stare at the body of Genesis Rhapsodus, leaning against a chair under the Banora White tree. His hair had returned to its normal vibrant red, and his coat was free of damage, but there was nothing else good about this scene.

You shuffled over to him and sat awkwardly beside his body. With a gulp, you picked up his hand and pressed your fingers against his pulse, praying that you'd feel something. But . . . nothing.

You screamed quietly when the hand you were holding tightened around yours. "Shh," Genesis whispered weakly, his eyes still closed.

"You're alive?" You asked him as you placed his hand gently on his lap.

He smiled at you, a more genuine smile than any you'd seen in a long time. "They couldn't kill me that easily, \_\_\_\_\_."

You grinned childishly and sat a little closer to him, close enough to lean forwards and rest your head on his chest. "What happens now?"

Genesis shook his head slowly. "I don't know. I suppose I wait here for something to happen . . ."

"You can come with me!" You said, a little too quickly.

"No," He argued, "I feel like I'm destined for something else." Your face fell, but not as much as your heart. You were careful to hide it at least a little bit, though. "I'm sorry, \_\_\_\_\_." He added.

"It's okay."

Genesis managed to find the strength to hug you, although you noticed when his arms were resting around you that they were resting, and not just holding. He needed you there to support him. You moved a little closer to him and lifted your head up to look him in the eyes. His were open now, and you noticed that the mako glow was just that little bit stronger, enough now to light up the shadows around the blue orbs.

"You're going to be okay . . . aren't you?" You asked after a while. Genesis moved his head back to look at the sky, and as he did so the feather blew out of your hair and fluttered down to rest over Genesis's heart. He smiled slightly and closed his eyes, tilting his head back so his face was pointing towards the vast expanse of sky above.

"Even though the morrow is barren of promises, nothing shall forestall my return," He stated, and you were pretty sure that, yet again, he was quoting from LOVELESS.

"I'll take that as a yes," You laughed, and he began to laugh too, but his joy was cut short when he doubled up, coughing loudly and dislodging you from your perch on his chest.

"Genesis?!" You gasped as you hit the floor. Immediately, you were kneeling beside the redhead and patting his back, whispering words of comfort. The hacking and wheezing gradually slowed until the only remnant of his coughing fit was his deep breathing.

Carefully, already sure that he was out cold, you lifted Genesis's body up and leaned it back against the chair. His head fell to the side when you let go of him, so you lifted it up again, giving him one more loving gaze before resting his head against the seat of the chair. You planted one last gentle kiss on his forehead before you stood up and backed away from the chair and in to the bushes that surrounded the last dumbapple tree of Banora.

You were sure to cover yourself with leaves before relaxing to watch events unfold. You wouldn't have been so careful, but as soon as you'd let go of Genesis you'd been sure you heard helicopter blades nearby and there was only one company that that chopper could belong to; ShinRa.

The distant buzzing became slowly louder, and within minutes a black army helicopter was rising up over the horizon. Its blades were only just blurred, and from that you could deduce that it was going to land near by. As of yet, you couldn't see the ShinRa logo on it, but you were sure that you'd see it in seconds.

You were tempted, for a second, to run out of your hiding place and grab the man - the man you loved - ready to carry him away, running from the helicopter until you found shelter. You could change your names, settle down, live a peaceful life. You could see in your mind's eye what your children would look like; there were two, not twins. One was a teenage girl, about fifteen, tall and slim like her father, but with your mother's chestnut brown hair. The other was a young boy that you were carrying on your hip, who'd inherited his father's auburn locks. Both were smiling and laughing, much like you and Genesis.

You snapped out of the vision just in time to see the door of the chopper opening and two SOLDIERS jumping out. Since you were too far away to hear their voices, you spared a glance at the side of the helicopter. The ShinRa logo was emblazoned on the side, the red a stark contrast to the black of the metal.

One of the men lifted Genesis up on to his shoulder, an impressive show of strength in anyone's book. That one was a young man, maybe only a couple of years younger than you and Genesis. The other fell in to step with the one carrying Genesis as they wandered back to the chopper, not saying anything. When they reached the doors, a figure in blue lycra reached down to take Genesis, hauling him easily in to the darkness of the helicopter. The silver-haired man said something to his companion, who replied loudly. Over the slow rotating of the blades, you thought you picked up the work 'brother' before the two climbed in to the body of the chopper.

The door slipped shut and the blades picked up again, the wind they created almost blowing your cover away. The craft lifted up off of the ground and turned around, and it was only then that you saw the other logo.

This one was electric blue, the shape similar to that of the ShinRa logo but the text different. This one read 'Deepground', and although it had to be something to do with ShinRa, seeing as it was written on ShinRa machinery, you'd never heard of it before.

You tried and failed to commit the logo to memory before the helicopter flew across the horizon, taking the man of your dreams, the perfection that was Genesis Rhapsodus, with it.

You scrambled out of the bushes and brushed a few stray leaves off of your clothes as you jogged up the hill, only to sit on the chair that Genesis had abandoned and bury your face in your hands.

He was gone . . .



A few stray tears trickled down your face and dripped to the floor, forming a damp puddle under the chair.

"Genesis . . ." You whispered. "Genesis." Louder, this time. "GENESIS!" You shouted it the last time, jumping to your feet and stamping on the ground. It didn't matter to you how much you looked like a little kid throwing a temper tantrum - he was gone and you'd never see him again. You swung your fist in to the Banora White tree, hearing a bone or two splinter but not feeling it, your anger, your depression numbing the pain.

"GENESIS!" You screamed again, hoping, wishing that he could hear you, praying that you'd see him again.

You sat back down on the chair, the tears flowing freely now. As you turned your face to the ground, something caught your eye. The lone feather that had blown out of your hair was lying on the edge of the chasm that had once housed the factory, ready and waiting to be blown over the edge. You gasped and scrambled to the edge, plucking the feather from the edge of the cliff and clutching it tightly as you walked back to the chair.

A thought had passed through your mind as soon as you'd seen the feather; it reacts to him. Maybe, with that feather, you could find him.

It was a nice thought. Although nice didn't seem like quite the word, your mind was too hazy to think of anything else - too much had happened too fast.

Absent-mindedly, you pulled the tie from your hair and tucked the feather back in to it, checking that it was secure before tying your hair in to a loose bun.

Deepground . . .

You grabbed your phone from your back pocket and sent a few emails, a split-second decision making you utilise the contacts you'd picked up during the last few weeks. You sent them all the same email; Deepground. Possible sub-section of ShinRa. Blue logo. SOLDIER uniforms. Research. Will give reward for good info.

You clicked your phone shut and knocked the chair over, more in a symbolic manner than for anything else. You took a glance over the edge of the cliffs and decided that there was nothing worth seeing down there, so you turned on your heel and began the hike to the nearest town, wherever that would turn out to be.

"Don't worry, Genesis," You said to the tree, "I'll find you. Don't worry about that."

And then, sooner than you had expected, your phone buzzed in your pocket. You jumped slightly and pulled it out, only just managing to skim over the first message before another reached your inbox. Time to start paying up.