

Creatures & Master

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a book-like story i am creating.

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1. Joe's Troubles

Chapter One

Joe's Troubles

Joe picked up another brick and placed it on the cement that was spread on the brick under it. He was building the ten foot wall his father had told him to build. He had to make the wall go all the way around the yard, except for the ten foot locked gate. He had been stacking bricks and laying cement for three hours at least, and he only had barely two rows done. If I don't finish this before tomorrow, he quietly said to himself, I am dead.

You'll be dead by seven o'clock if you don't give yourself a break, Joe's friend, Shimaki, said.

I can't take a break, Joe said, still looking at the wall. If my dad sees me resting on the job with those hawk eyes of his, I will be done for earlier.

Joe felt a tap on his shoulder and dreaded the fact that his father might have heard him talking to someone nobody but him can see. When he turned around, he realized it was just his six-year-old sister, Sarah.

Do you have any more cement left, she asked. I don't have any more.

I m sorry, Sarah, I just ran out. As Joe looked at the fresh bumps and bruises on Sarah s skin, he dreaded how she must be hurting just walking. They were working very hard just to have another disadvantage to themselves. They were building a brick wall so they couldn t escape the yard. The gate had a lock only their father could open so only he could get in and out.

Why should he care if they should escape? He doesn t care a penny about them, anyway. They wouldn t run away, though. Even if they could, neither of them had anywhere or anyone to run to.

Let s go mix some more, Joe said, taking Sarah s hand.

As they walked toward the cement mix, their father broke their path.

What are you two doing, he asked.

Making more cement, Joe said.

Are you helping one another? There was a hint of ferocity in his voice.

Yes, Joe said calmly.

You know you re not allowed to help one another. That is why you two are on opposite sides of the yard!

Why aren t we? Joe tried to hide his ferocity in his voice.

Shimaki was furious and wanted to jump at their father. He knew why. Their father wanted them to get hurt more than they would if they worked together. He wanted to see his children (who he obviously didn t care about) in pain.

Sarah moved over to Shimaki to calm him down. But this made matters worse. Her father moved toward her and kicked her hard in the back.

Don t you walk away from me when I m speaking, he said.

Joe s ferocity grew. He didn t care if his dad hurt him; he just didn t want him to hurt Sarah. And since Joe had also known why they had to work separately, he was finally fed up with his father.

Joe went over to Sarah to help her up. Before his father was able to hit either of them, he blocked the attack. Joe picked Sarah up and took her away from their father. He knew that wouldn't really do anything, though.

Are you okay, he asked.

I'm fine, Sarah said.

Their father hurried towards Joe. When he reached him, he turned Joe around and pulled him up by the collar of his shirt.

What do you think you are doing, he asked furiously.

I don't care what you do to me anymore, Joe said. I just won't let you hurt Sarah.

I can't believe you just had the courage to say that to your own father.

It doesn't take courage to stand up for yourself, friends, or loved ones; it takes common sense. Besides, you are not much of a father. You keep us locked in our rooms when you can't think of anything for us to do. If you do give us something to do, you tell us to finish it before the day is

over. And if we don't finish it before the day is over, you abuse us. Joe pulled away from him.

I will let you know that I loved your mother very much and I love you two very much.

Oh, yeah. That's why you left her out in the rain to die and you abuse us.

I did not leave her out in the rain to die! She chose to go!

I was seven years old. Don't think I don't remember. You just used a kind woman who loved you, but you didn't love back. You used her to make two child-slaves for yourself. Then you dumped her like yesterday's dinner.

Where did you get smart and learn to block anyway?

If you would've paid attention, you would have known I was always smart. And a friend taught me to block.

But you don't have any friends!

I have one.

You've never met anyone besides myself and your stupid, puny little sister.

He moved his leg to kick Sarah. Sarah sat there with her eyes closed shut, not going to do anything. But Joe grabbed his leg while it was in mid-air.

You want to fight, Joe's father said, we'll fight.

Joe! Sarah wrapped her arms around his stomach. Please don't fight!

Don't worry, I'm not, Joe said, turning around to give Sarah a comforting hug.

If you won't, Shimaki said, I will! He was the maddest he had ever been.

Joe let go of Sarah to whisper to Shimaki. Don't, he said. You know he can't see or hear you, and that would be weird and suspicious if nothing attacked him.

Shimaki tried to settle down. But that was really hard when you are a dog-like animal.

You are just as you always were: a wimp, their gather said.

I m not going to fight, Joe said, because of Sarah.

Joe picked up Sarah and put her by the cement mix. He walked back over to his father until he was right next to him.

But I you try to hit her again, Joe said, I will fight you when she is not around.

You wouldn t have the common sense to fight me, Joe s father said.

Yes I definitely would, Joe said, James.

James grabbed Joe by the collar of his shirt again.

Don't call me by my first name or you will be hurt so bad that you wouldn't be able to do a single thing, James said.

When he let go of Joe, Joe headed over toward the cement mix.

I already do, Joe thought.

Joe started to make his cement while quietly talking to Sarah.

You and James aren't going to fight, Sarah said, cautiously, are you?

I can't promise you anything, Joe said.

I don't want you to fight, Sarah said with hints that tears were forming behind her eyes. Why would you fight? You don't need to protect me. You made it through this age, and so can I.

Sarah, when I was your age, I had extra help, Joe said. Mom was around and that was to my advantage. She didn't know where by bumps and bruises came from, but she always cleaned

them up. And with Mom around, James found much less time to torture me.

Why didn't you tell Mom about James?

He had threatened me that he would do horrible things to both me and Mom if I told her. We wouldn't be able to leave, so I couldn't.

Why wouldn't you be able to leave?

We didn't have enough money. The day you were born, James kicked Mom out. All of a sudden, all of this money pops up. James divorced Mom and left her out in the streets to die.

You don't have help, and James can torture you much more than he had tortured me. Since I was abused slowly, my body was able to get used to it and strengthen. I'm afraid that if you get abused too quickly, your body will react in negative ways.

What does that mean?

Don't worry about it right now. But I am protecting you because I'm worried about what could happen to you. I can't take care of your wounds because James has all the medicine and things locked up in his room, so you could get damaged easier.

At least our hair is dark brown so that if it gets dirty, no one can really tell.

Joe smiled.

They silently finished making their cement, poured it into their buckets, and went to their walls to try to finish them.

When it turned dark, James called them in and gave them each a tiny, gross-looking dinner. Then he sent them off to bed with an unpleasant good night. Joe had only gotten five rows done, and Sarah barely had three rows done.

Joe, Shimaki whispered when Joe turned out the tiny light that illuminated his tiny room, you don't want to stay here, do you?

If I left, I wouldn't leave without Sarah, Joe said.

I know, but I can get you out of this horrible disaster in a way that you won't abandon Sarah, Shimaki said.

How s that? Joe was very curious of what Shimaki was talking about.

I could take you to my homeland

No way. I would be abandoning her that way.

No you wouldn t. A friend of mine used a spell. Whenever we leave, time everywhere, except for The Creature Islands, will be stopped. It will be like you were never gone.

What if I stayed for twenty years?

You will not grow older.

I won t unless there is a strange reason I am needed there.

There is, Joe! We need you down there. You are one of very few who can see us, and we need you to help us. We are in danger, and if it isn t stopped before it destroys us, it will go on to the humans!

Seriously? I mean, you're not joking, are you?

Of course not! But, I can't tell you yet. Me and some friends will explain.

When?

When we get there, of course!

Okay, I'll go. But there's just one problem. How are we going to get out of here?

You'll see. Shimaki transformed into a larger dog-like animal that barely fit in the tiny room so Joe could climb on him. The very second Joe did, time stopped. Only Shimaki and Joe were moving. Not even wind was blowing on the trees' leaves.

They quickly started off, with Joe almost falling off of Shimaki. It seemed like they were going about 200 mph.