

To challenge the night

By SweetxinsanityxSarah

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A tale threaded by the maidens of Fate that shows how far one would go to gain what is lost, to love, and stand up for what is right; even if you have to face the demons of Hell itself along the way....

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1 - Prologue

Just like within our world that lies on the other side of the portal, or gate as it's known to those who stand before it, there are things that exist within the realm of Amestris that also blur the lines of myth and fact. The Elrics have come to know the beasts called Homunculi; beings who cannot die by simple means and live for over centuries; who thread dark webs to lure humans to do their dirty work in making philosopher stones for them. However; there are other immortals that walk among us too. They look simple, some beautiful, others ghastly, they can be your next door neighbor, your mailman, even the girl you secretly admire but are too scared to ask her out. They go by many shapes and forms and are called many things, all wrapped in myths from all over the nations ranging from central to ishbai. Some can be terrifying in nature, living only to kill; others are just there to live a normal life like a human...but all have one thing in common; they all are children of the damned.

Werewolves, dragons, witches, zombies, ghosts, aliens, and even vampires. Yes they all hide in the shadows, keeping to the strict codes the immortal world follows for unlike earth; an immortal's rules like with alchemy are to be followed at all cost, less you seek to meet the reaper himself.

Some immortal races have simple rules to follow, others far more strict.

But no matter the rule...there is always someone who wants to break it for rules are made to be broken.

This story is about what happens when those rules within the night are challenged. For if the rules weren't disobeyed, this wouldn't be a very interesting story now would it? Read on my friend and rest easy for I will weave a tale for you that was many years in the making, and don't worry about no lame sparkly vampires showing up, or flexing shirtless werewolves. Only guy that will be sparkling and shirtless around here is Armstrong. ;P

Flashback to many centuries ago when knights fought for the sake of god, and demons roamed freely within the world....

"I am rather disappointed Leon. I thought you of all people would understand me. Death...he's all yours." A raven haired man exclaimed, adorned in a fur boa black as night and silk dark green robes of nobility, a red stone hanging around his neck, his icy blue eyes twinkling in amusement, yet also disappointment. He turned and morphed, turning into a black raven as he took to the air, flying through an open window within the throne room they stood.

"Wait!" A blonde haired youth known as Leon yelled, wearing a medieval outfit of red and white, the cross symbol upon his jacket's back, and boots of black, along with a whip strapped to his belt. However before he could pursue the other man; the reaper himself, blackish red cape flowing in an unseen wind and hat made of skulls, and ribs moving about like an insect's legs rushed in front of the other male, teleporting them both to a dark realm, where a long and intense battle took place. However, the knight Leon had managed to literally defeat Death, as they were returned to the throne room.

"To..think I would be...." The reaper hissed out, panting weakly as his cape wrapped around his body, torn and burnt as he clung to his scythe for support from falling.

"My whip has the power to destroy all related to the vampires. Though you have divine powers, you are

no exception!" Leon exclaimed as he pointed to the lord of death with a firm glare.

"That may be so, but as long as my master survives, I shall rise from the dead..." Death retorted, grinning as he clenched his one boney fist as he stood to his full height. Leon's eyes became half lidded as he then chuckled, calming some, knowing Death was pretty much defeated and wouldnt try to keep fighting.

"Is that so? Well then, give him this message: "You have become an acursed being...and I will never forgive you...This whip and my kin will destroy you someday. From this point on, the Belmont Clan will hunt the night!" Leon then declared, clenching his fist, his blue eyes intense with determination. After he spoke these words, the reaper crumbled to dust, screaming as he did so while the castle began to shake violently. Leon knowing better than to stand around, turned and retreated through the door, running through the castle with great speeds to avoid the cave in of the enormous structure. After he escaped, he slowly walked through the forest as the dawn slowly crept over the fallen castle and forest that hasent seen the suns rays for centuries, a firm and solem look on his face. Leon's clan had fought the man who has called himself "King of the Night" for many centuries, many have suffered greatly on both ends. It was because of the vile man who turned his back on Leon Belmont that vampires and other immortals have become hated and feared greatly, forcing them to lurk withen the shadows and for rules to be forged to keep the peace between the races. However, those rules that have been created are about to be broken by the same male who stepped into the realm of god to try and be one himself, to bring back his fallen mother and lost an arm and leg along the way....

2 - The one who smiles in the rain

Ah welcome back friend. I see you were kind enough to stick around to hear my dark woven tale of love and loss. Take a seat, care for some tea? I apologize for not putting this up so quickly, considering I have a busy schedule plus im quite lazy from time to time. However if you are a newcomer, please go read chapter one of my tale, otherwise you will be utterly confused.

It's like watching a movie right when you miss the important details to the story, it makes no sense to you, seems reasonable right? But anyways to those who are loyal let me continue my tale. Now for those who are confused, this is *not a Castlevania fanfiction*. If you payed close attention to the details in my story, you'd see this was actually a Fullmetal Alchemist based tale, with many crossovers being from themes to characters themselves. But the main area where this will be held is Amestris; the Elric brother's homeworld. And I would like to greatly add that I own NONE of the characters that appear; heh if I did, you think I'd be sitting here? No no friend I'd be rolling around in my money. Only three are original hand crafted characters. Abel Constantine; Sarahfina Fair; and Louis. I would tell you more about them, but I dont wish to ruin their roles in the story. Well now that that's out of the air, let's continue, get comfy for this is a long chapter tonight and it's rather rainy outside. Kind of sets the mood huh?

Let's do a tiny recap while we are at it. Edward and Alphonse have yet to find the stone, and three years have passed since then. Ed now eighteen but still short as ever still brandishing his automail limbs, while Alphonse is still trapped withen a suit of armor being a gentle giant as he always is. But they are stubborn as ever and still searching for clues for they made that promise to each other and vow to keep it. Edward has raised up in the ranks; surprisingly becoming a Colonel after all his hard work and dedication, though at the same time still holding onto his "Hero of the people." title he earned rather well amongst the citizens. Though Roy is still at the same rank, much to Ed's displeasure at him still lording over the young alchemist.

Overtime he eventually crossed paths with a woman who ran a bar called Seventh heaven. Yup you Final fantasy fans guessed it, Tifa Lockhart. She gladly took Ed and Alphonse under her care and sees the two as little brothers she always wanted and in return they help her around the bar when they can when it comes to simple things like stocking the shelves, or picking up deliveries of more wine and other spirits to closing the bar at night.

Right now Edward and Alphonse are returning from another wild goose chase that led to a dead end about the stone, only to find out it was sadly a hoax like the others. However on this rainy day Edward and Alphonse's lives are about to change forever. Read on my friend for I can feel you smiling in anticipation at my words, so who am I to deny you?

Edward let out an annoyed sigh, rubbing his shoulder to get the pain out of his automail crafted shoulder due to the rain's humidity effecting his stumps while him and Alphonse stepped from the train after it had just pulled into central, the rain pouring down relentlessly as ever.

"Gah. Figures just my luck it would start pouring here. No doubt a bad sign..." Edward muttered, pulling his suitcase over his head to block out the cruel rain that threatened to soak his navy blue military uniform that he now wore instead of his trademark red jacket and black pants while Alphonse chuckled

lightly as the rain pattered off his steel body. The big metal man leaned down and picked up his suitcase too before looking towards the dark heavens that rumbled softly with the threat of lightning.

"Yeah, let's hope Roy is merciful brother, after all how were we to know it was going to be another fake?" Al stated gently while the two began walking along through the crowd to head to their destination which was central headquarters.

"Damn they are making those hoax red stones like they are going out of fashion nowadays, it frustrates me that idiots do this cause then I have to put up with Roy's nagging!" Ed then said rubbing his forehead, just imagining the man's smug smirk as he chewed Ed out for wasting more time on a thing that probly didnt exist as it made his stomach turn. They passed by a small group of people, Ed being annoyed as he was failed to pay attention to them but Al got chills the minute his pinkish red eyes met with two of the stranger's hues. They both wore coats of black, with red clouds outlined in white on them. And what appeared to be japanese shade hats, with red bells hanging from one side of the hats, with white slabs of cloth hanging off the hats to block out most of their faces. One was blonde obviously with ice like blue eyes, bangs covering one side of his face where as the other looked odd in nature, being shorter than his brother surprisngly and giving off the appearance of a grumpy hermit. Plus he had a black bandanna wrapped around his mouth. They both looked to Alphonse with amused smiles as he continued watching them as he walked.

"Hey Al hurry up!" Ed called over his shoulder as Al snapped from his daze seeing he was starting to fall behind.

"Oh right coming!" Alphonse said nodding as he began to hurry after his older brother, however he got further unease when he noticed the two males that he had just seen, where gone from their spot. As if never there to begin with.

After the long walk to central, Ed sighed scratching the back of his neck, hating to go in but he had no choice.

"You know you dont have to come in with me Al, I can handle the lord of douches myself. How about you go greet Tifa and let her know we're back so she can get our rooms ready?" Edward then said with a light sheepish smile to his brother as Al chuckled and nodded some.

"Sure I bet she misses us. She always scolds us when we are away from central for too long besides, it's our home away from home." Al said, turning as he took off waving to Ed while the blond alchemist sweatdropped and murred.

"Didnt have to agree soo quickly ya traitor." Ed muttered but just shrugged it off and sighed. "Well time to face the music." He said to himself as he headed into the building, unaware a pair of ebony blue hues was watching him with a coy smile on pale pink lips.

"So he's back....mmm good I missed him." The female whispered to herself with a light snicker as she then vanished into the shadows, knowing where to head to next.

Once Alphonse got to the bar, he opened the door and waved to Tifa. "Hey Tifa, we're back." He called as the brunette red eyed female looked up from cleaning a shot glass, adorned in a black sleeveless top with matching short pants with a sort of dress like accessory hanging from the back.

"Well now, there's a sight for sore eyes! Welcome back Alphonse, where's your lil brother? Dont tell me, had to go report to ol Roy huh and sparred you his lecturing to take it on himself?" Tifa asked quirking a brow while Al nodded lightly while taking a seat at the bar.

"Yeah he's always like that. But I dont mind, kills two birds with one stone, after all he said I should come alert you that we are back anyways." he then replied back while Tifa laughed shaking her head.

"I give him props, kids got some moxie. I'd be terrified if I had to go in alone to tell my boss I failed yet again at getting something that I was looking for on working time. I just hope Roy's in a good mood today, shot him down again when he tried to ask for the hundredth time to get a coffee with him." The bartender said in amusement as Al sweatdropped before laughing alittle.

"I hope soo too, but knowing him he'll just bury brother in a mountain of paperwork." Al then stated.

"Paperwork that Mustang should be filling out instead of oogling women." Tifa added while they both chuckled.

Roy at this time was reading over a report that was sent to him, before his dark onyx hues looked up to see Ed walking in, soaked and not very happy looking while he smirked.

"Glad you could make it Fullmetal....so I presume no luck...again?" He asked slyly while Ed scoffed and sat down on the couch in the center of the room folding one leg over the other, his arms resting on the back of the dark blue sofa.

"Spare me the remarks Mustang, it's not as easy as you make it sound. Now what do I have to do that I've missed?" Edward stated bluntly while frowning lightly in irritation as Roy just chuckled.

"Well arent we moody this lovely day. Did you loose an inch in height or something?" Roy said smirking, but quickly ducked when Ed had thrown a lamp that was sitting on the coffee table near the couch aiming for Roy's head as it missed by mere centimeters, shattering behind Roy on the wall.

"Shut it ya sexist womanizer before I beat you in the head with a chainsaw!" Edward growled out twitching as Roy just laughed.

"Someone's happy as ever. But you are starting to run out of rants it appears, must be a slow day for you. And if you insist, fine then I'll give you a case that needs to be cracked and fast besides alot of paperwork of course." Roy then said, leaning down in his desk as he pulled out a few big files and tossed them to Edward as the other shorter male quickly caught them. "It's an S rank case. Pretty much looks like copy cat works of Scar's murders; however only difference is there is no alchemists solely being attacked, just random cilivians. Not to mention the victems usually are drained of blood besides their skulls being blown up. There has been twenty deaths and counting so be careful Fullmetal. This person is much more sneakier than Scar since we have yet to place a face with the murders. Plus the last two that went to search the case ended up dead in the back alleys of the city. I'm counting on you to find this person Edward." Roy stated firmly while Ed chuckled abit, tucking the folder under his arm.

"How sweet, I come back after a month or two of searching for the stone, and you send me on a

possible suicide mission. Yeah you are quite the card Mustang. But sure I'll take it on, and I'll find the person faster than the others. I won't tolerate random acts of violence. If that's all then I'll get on it right away." Edward muttered, flicking a wave as he got up and left the room while Roy chuckled some. Yet again Edward had played into his hands and was doing his work for him, considering the mission was originally assigned to Roy himself.

Once Edward left the central headquarters, he pulled the suitcase over his head again while he walked, muttering at how devious the flame alchemist was, forcing him to do this crazy mission not to mention tons of paperwork in the process. Due to not wanting to get a cold, he decided to cut through the cemetery leading towards the bar Seventh heaven. Luckily the trees farther back into the location of one's final resting place were thick enough to where he could walk without getting drenched as he walked normally now. He looked about while he roamed down the cobblestone trail seeing crosses and vast obelisks of family plots and lone graves. One tombstone peaked his curiosity though as he squinted through the misty rain. He could have sworn he saw someone standing in front of the tombstone, a female looking figure to be exact. From what he could tell her hair was pitch as night, and her back smooth and white as snow and she wore black garments that were a skirt and tank top. But when he came within ten yards or less of the tombstone she was gone.

"Heh weird. Must be my mind playing tricks on me from lack of sleep." Ed said nervously, trying to shove out the thought of ghost quickly before he looked towards the statue mounted on the tombstone. It was of a woman of Greek structure and clothing, holding a wreath in her hands while her head was tilted to the left side with braided hair falling over her right shoulder, face solemn and sorrowful. The eyes weirded him out however, then again statues like this always had creepy eyes that seemed to follow you wherever you go. He then looked down to the name, before he caught what the phrase at the bottom said after the death date. *Until the day breaketh....*

"Ok well I better get moving!" Ed said, chills running down his spine as he then hurried along, not wanting to stick around in case some banshee or zombie popped out of the ground anywhere as he picked up his pace, starting to run a bit. However as he retreated out of sight while the mist swallowed him up that gathered from the rains heavy downpour. A maiden with long black hair and ebony blue eyes, skin white as cream and clothes gothic and dark as the shadows themselves watched in amusement while she sat on top of the tombstone next to the statue of the woman, lips pursed in a playful smirk while her chin rested on her open palms, nails long as daggers itching her cheeks.

"Such a delicious little boy. If he's afraid of a few spooks, then he's going to have a heart attack when he sees what's in store for him." The girl purred out, giggling in amusement while she said this.

3 - The infected warrior, glutton, and emerald seeker

Glad to see you have returned to hear another chapter of my tale good friend. Now as you can tell I introduced a few familiar faces to you. One being new considering I own the character. Don't fret though I have more to introduce who will play important roles in this tale I weave. Now let's continue where we left off, Edward was returning to the bar/ex orphanage him and his brother Alphonse reside at with their friend Tifa that looks after them. Little does he know he is about to meet more creatures that go bump in the night.

A dark raven haired male with red streaks through the spikes of his hair watched quietly from his perch on a rooftop as the blonde alchemist ran past down below with suitcase over his head to avoid getting wet. The man looked in his mid to late twenties at latest and wore a black hoodie with torn off sleeves, the hood having white fluff around it while wearing what appeared to be white wrist cuffs. His pants being of black leather with matching boots and his eyes dark as blood.

"Heh, a little late today isn't he? Wonder if she's following him...as if I have to ask." The male muttered while watching Edward run off none the wiser. A fat very familiar looking tan male with white pupil-less eyes and clad in black too sat next to the other.

"Can I eat him tonight?" He asked while sucking on his finger like a child, the other man chuckled.

"No; doubt he would fill you up Gluttony. Besides there probably won't be anything left of him when I tear him to pieces." The man replied as Gluttony let out a soft whine.

"Ey Shadow! There you are, you two have to stop disappearing on me like that! I have some good stuff worth selling yo, one of the items might peek your interest." Another male called out as he came onto the rooftop behind the males revealed to be Shadow and Gluttony while both turned to the newcomer. He wore a dark hoodie too, the hood being down at the moment to reveal long sleek shoulder length black hair and dark eyes. His skin was fair and he wore pieces of duct tape under both his eyes, why I shall reveal later. The male's age was somewhat misleading, he looked to be around Shadow's age, however was a bit shorter and had a muscular build that was the same as his comrades. His pants were tattered and ripped in the knees and baggy, no doubt on purpose.

"What you got Louis?" Shadow asked boredly while the other male known as Louis grinned and dumped his sack of stolen goods out. He rummaged a bit though the combination of jewels, cds, wrist watches, and rings before holding up an emerald the size of a golf ball.

"This is what you are looking for right?" Louis asked while Shadow twitched in annoyance, whacking the other upside the head as he yelped while Gluttony snickered.

"Idiot, the emerald I am searching for is MUCH bigger than this. Plus this is just a piece of costume jewelry, not even real." Shadow muttered, flicking the gem at Louis's forehead while the male yelped and glared.

"Well jeez give me a break holmes! Do I look like some kinda jewelist to you? Ah maybe I can fool the pawnshop owner again. I need some dough after all." Louis said with a sigh, gathering up the items back into his bag, swatting Gluttony's hand away when the homunculus tried to grab at something that looked tasty to him. "By the way, when we casing that bar? Bet they got some good shoot in there." he then asked while looking to Shadow again, as he slung the bag over his shoulder once more.

"Tonight, I've waited long enough. And I won't be intimidated by that ice brat...besides, she's hardly fed for a good while and that means she'll be a sitting duck and won't be able to protect him." Shadow said with a smirk while he looked off in the distance, smirking as lightening flashed through the skies, making his expression all the more eerie.

Meanwhile; Tifa and Alphonse looked up from their conversation as Ed came walking in. "Hey Tifa, what's you got for eats im starving!" Edward exclaimed happily while Tifa just laughed some.

"Well hello to you too Ed. I got some steaks cooking, going to take awhile though so I hope you don't mind waiting." she replied while Ed waved a dismissive hand.

"No worries I got plenty of time. I can just go through my paperwork abit while I wait." the blonde responded before he took a seat near the back, pulling open his suitcase giving out a sigh. "Damn this is going to take months. Damn bastard just loves making me do his paperwork for him doesnt he?" Ed stated to himself. He suddently felt as if he was being watched and got chills. After a few more good minutes of this he then glanced up from his writing, spotting a man that was farther in the back, adorned in a cloak of black with red clouds outlined in white, shade hat atop his head while onyx hues watched Edward calmly. From what Ed could tell he had lines under his eyes despite his young age, and his hair was a glossy brownish black. The alchemist only sent a glare back towards him while the man then returned his dark eyes to the book infront of him. "Neh...freak." Ed muttered, getting up after Tifa called him up to the bar to eat while he took a spot next to Alphonse who was skimming through an alchemy book. "Say Al....who's that guy in the back with the jellyfish looking hat?" Ed whispered to his younger brother while Al stole a small glance to who Edward was speaking of.

"Oh...that's just one of the patrons Tifa serves. He usually pops up when we are upstairs or sleeping late at night though which is why we rarely see him from what she has told me. He also comes in early near dawn too but all he does is read. Only thing he'll drink when he feels like it is red wine." Alphonse replied back softly before something struck him when he recognized the coat and hat. It was the same type of outfit those other males were wearing at the train station. "Brother...do you think there is some sort of club or organization around here?" Al then asked Ed, his brother swallowing a peice of his steak before thinking.

"Why is that?" Edward asked, looking to Al curiously now while Alphonse shrugged.

"Well...I saw two guys earlier in the train station wearing the same outfit as that man brother. They were really creepy." Alphonse whispered while Ed then murred.

"I dont know, bah it's probly nothing for us to worry about. Don't read too much into it, last thing we need is some jellyfish hat wearing weirdos chasing us for putting our noses where they don't belong. Bad enough we had those homunculi freaks after us for awhile." Edward replied as he returned to eating, Alphonse giving a light nod as he stole one more glance towards the male in the back before returning to

reading his book to further his knowledge on alchemy. Unaware that the male was now smirking in amusement towards them.

Once night had come to rape the daylight, and cover the landscape in its cloak, the time came to close up the bar, two a.m. as with every other bar. Edward by this time had fallen asleep at his desk again due to exhausting himself over the paperwork Mustang had given him. His dreams once more were confusing yet interesting. He found himself in tonight's dream walking through a misty landscape, ruins of ancient buildings lay around him as he passed. He was literally walking on water, but as he walked his feet made no sound as the water let small ripples pass through it, or even when it splashed.

"This place again..." Ed muttered. For the past year he had been visiting within this realm at night, walking endlessly it seemed. He would never get to see why he was here before he would wake...that was until now. He squinted when he saw a figure in the distance sitting with their back to him. Edward could make out what sounded like weeping.

"It's...not fair." The figure whispered, though he was far away he could hear her clear as a bell as her voice echoed through the area. When he got closer he saw that the girl had flowing long back hair that layed around her pale form, covering her legs while she gazed downwards, her hands resting out in front of her as her tears caused small ripples, the only source besides her voice and shaking shoulders to hint she was forlorn.

"Hey you alright...?" Ed said, concerned for the girl while he stood ten or twenty feet behind her, talking loud enough for her to hear him as he reached out, taking a few more apprehensive steps forward.

"Stay away!" The girl yelled out, covering her face while she turned her back further to him. But Ed continued moving forward, determined to know why she was here. However the ripples in the water began to increase and rise as the area began to shake and suddenly a huge beast rose out of the water behind the girl. Huge wings unfurled as a beast of silverish white with gleaming blue eyes, draconic in nature flew at Edward as it roared, jaws opening to swallow Edward whole as he screamed in terror.

A loud crash was heard downstairs as Edward's eyes snapped open, head jerking up as he then rubbed at his face. "The hell was that?!" he said getting to his feet quickly while he ran out into the hall, soon joined by Alphonse.

"Brother....someone's breaking in!" Alphonse whispered while Ed snorted.

"No duh, but who?" Edward stated, only to jump a few good feet when a gloved hand wrapped around his mouth.

"Be quiet both of you." Tifa muttered in annoyance, she too having been woken by the rude intruder. "Come with me." She whispered then, creeping along the hallway quietly while the two followed close behind, Ed getting his automail ready while eyes glared with determination despite the fact he was shaking some from his previous nightmare.

"*Who was that girl?*" Edward thought to himself as they moved along, heading now towards the downstairs ready to face whoever dared break into Tifa's bar...however unbeknownst to him he would be

getting an answer to that question, and a few others along the way.

4 - Decisive battle at the tavern

Ah, had a feeling you would return after that tease of a cliff hanger. Aw what's with the face? I hope I didnt keep you waiting too long my friend. Well before you end up strangling me for my cruel tricks let's continue...hey put that knife down.

Edward's heart was pounding in his chest like a drum with each step the trio took down the stairs that only seemed to wind longer as they moved onward. When they finally reached the bottom for what seemed like ages, Tifa noticed right away where the break in was. It was hard to not notice, after all there was a huge hole behind the bar on the wall.

"Son of a....grah they are going to pay for that." Tifa growled out. All three jumped when they heard a clattering in the kitchen followed by a few curses in spanish, a clang of metal on something hard and a loud whimper.

"I told you holmes dont eat that! That stove could be worth something!" A male then bellowed out, showing they werent exactly good at keeping quiet. Edward frowned some at the whimpering noise...he swore he heard that voice somewhere before, but he couldnt place where.

"Ed, Al. You two go handle whoever's in there. Dont let them get away. I'll jump in incase they try to run." Tifa stated while Ed and Al both nodded in union, making their way carefully towards the kitchen. They saw two figures in the darkness, one was a hooded male and it was very hard to make out his features; but he was packing heat no doubt about that, since there was a huge gun strapped to his back that appeared to be a rifle. The other was easy to recognize, a big fat round male who's face was in the fridge. The blonde paled when he got a good look at the shorter of the two robbers.

"Alphonse...th..that's not who I think it is..is it?" Ed whispered while Al nodded.

"I think it is brother...but why is he here?" Al whispered back before Ed shook it off.

"Doesnt matter though, we have to protect this place come on." Ed stated, dashing out from his hiding place as he clapped his hands, a fist shooting up out of the ground as it sent Gluttony flying who in turn slammed into the hooded male, squashing him under the fat homunculus who was flailing dazed. "Who the hell do you think you are, coming in here?!" Edward snapped, transmuting his automail arm into a blade while he pointed it towards Louis who was trying to shove Gluttony off his back.

"Ey relax homey....dude's gotta get a few dollers you know what I mean? Besides looks like ya'll hardly use this stuff hehe." Louis said nervously when he saw the blade pointed at his face, slowly reaching for his gun with the arm that was out of Ed's sight. However Alphonse noticed the smirk appear.

"Brother look out!" Al yelled, shoving Edward out of the way just as Louis had shoved Gluttony fully off of him and grabbed his rifle, shooting at the older Elric. But thanks to Al's fast reflexes his brother had rolled to safety whereas the bullet pinged harmlessly off of Alphonse's armor.

"Dammit, not gonna make this easy are ya? Get em Gluttony, but dont kill short stuff, boss wants him." Louis said as Gluttony grinned evilly, charging after Al as he shoved him through a few tables while Ed snarled.

"WHOYOUCALLINGSOOSMALLHECANMARRYAFLEA?!?!" Ed roared out, dashing after Louis while he dodged another gunshot and then punched said male hard in the gut before he brought his elbow up, knocking the rifle from his grip.

"shoot man you got a temper on ya dont you?" Louis said after regaining his breathe, backing up when the blonde alchemist had cornered him yet again. "Hey..hey now easy. I didnt mean it like that." Louis then stated flailing abit, damn he knew he should have brought more weapons.

"End of the line theif, looks like the stoney lonesome for you. Let's hope you dont drop the soap." Ed stated darkly while grinning as he brandished his automail blade and cracked his knuckles. But before he could even land a single hit on the other male, another explosion rang out right next to the two as the wall blasted out, knocking both a good distance. A male walked in through the new entrance, eyes glowing a deep red and a spider like insigna adorning his back. The ravenette with red highlights cast his eyes on Louis.

"I told you not to make a scene, or get caught." The male growled out while Louis got to his feet and ran over to the other male's side while Ed shivered abit when he saw the newcomer.

"Who the hell is this guy?....nevertheless he cant be human..." Edward thought uneasily.

"Ey man not my fault if Gluttony cant control that damn stomach of his Shadow, he's probly the one who tipped em off!" Louis said defensly while jabbing his finger over at a certian homunculus who was currently trying to escape the armored Elric as he held him in place with a large bind of chain he transmuted from the chrome on the stove.

"Nevermind that, get what you need and leave. I'll handle the brat." The male known as Shadow then said while Louis nodded and quickly took off out of the kitchen, only to get clothslined by Tifa who then knocked him out before he could recover. Edward paled as the male then turned his red hues on him and began moving towards him. "Let's not try to struggle, i'm not in the mood to play around." Shadow then stated darkly while Ed growled covering his fear as he got to his feet.

"If you think you can beat me, you're sadly mis-" Edward then coughed and hacked, panicking when he saw the male had his one hand already around his throat, holding him up high in the air while Ed kicked his legs in a frenzy, stunned at how fast this male was.

"Brother!" Alphonse yelled, turning as he went to charge but stopped when the ravenette glared darkly at him, tightening his grip on Ed's neck.

"I wouldnt boy. Less you want your brother to die quicker. Now stay put and tend to Gluttony, cause it looks like those binds arent going to hold much longer." Shadow said boredly, and just like he mentioned Gluttony broke free and whirled around, forcing Alphonse to block the other beast's onslaught while returning a few punches of his own.

"B...bastard." the blonde hissed out while he still attempted to free himself while Shadow murred.

"I hate people who dont know when they are beat. Oh well guess I have to show you the easy way. Say hello to your mother for me." Shadow stated, his grip growing much tighter than before as Ed yelled out in pain. That was til a black blur came dashing through, and a foot connected with Shadow's face causing him to go tumbling back. He crashed into the counter with great force while letting go of the older Elric's neck as said male dropped to the ground, gasping like a fish out of water as he tried greatly to regain his stolen breath.

"Keep your hands off those children. You're in MY bar so it's me you want. Or do you pick on kids so you dont have to face the big dogs?" Tifa stated darkly while she clenched her fists, standing infront of the male as he rubbed his jaw sitting up. Damn now that was a shocker, never had he expected someone to sneak up on him this easily, let alone a human. His inner demon of course was none too pleased either. He then smirked and vanished before reappearing behind the woman, a flurry of fists dug into her back, more than one could count with the naked eye as he then spinkicked, sending her flying into the fridge across the kitchen, said female gasping out in agony as she spit up blood.

"What was that you were saying?" Shadow said slyly as this only angered Edward.

"Son of a dog! I'll teach you to hit women!" Edward yelled out, getting up as he clapped his hands, sending a large spiked fist towards the male after he slammed his hands into the ground. He only gawked however, when Shadow brushed the fist off, sending it flying into the wall nearby as it made another huge hole in the building.

"Want to see me use both hands?" Shadow then said, which only infuriated Ed who then charged blindly towards the other with automail blade raised.

"Brother no!" Alphonse yelled, knowing this was what Shadow was planning, to lure him into attacking again. But none saw what came next as a loud crack rang through the room and a puff of smoke appeared, a male darting out of the smoke as he elbowed Shadow hard in the gut, knocking him backwards before he then held his arm out infront of Edward.

"Stay back....he's too strong for you Fullmetal." A calm voice exclaimed while Edward blinked regaining his composure as his anger subsided. He noticed the male looked somewhat like a ninja due to his outfit. He wore a white protective guard over a black shirt, and matching black pants with kunai strapped to the lower legs. His hair was tied back in a black ponytail and he wore what appeared to be a japanese animal mask that looked like a wolf or fox.

"Y..yeah sure just get him out of here." Edward then said while the male nodded.

"He's after you so that was my intentions." The male then said while Shadow hissed and pushed himself up, glaring at the male angrily.

"Of all the people; she has to send *you* to fight her battles. Nevertheless I've been dying to get back at you weasel." Shadow barked out while the other male chuckled.

"Then come at me, unless you are afraid." The ninja stated smoothly which only aggravated the other as

he growled and dashed at him, grabbing the ninja by the face as he raised him up. The other struggled some before Shadow crushed his head in like a grape when he added more force, blood spurting everywhere as Edward went white. But to his surprise, the male then puffed away in a cloud of smoke before a kunai came from Shadow's left, digging into his shoulder as both turned to see the same exact male crouching on the kitchen counter.

"Damn those clones, you ninja love to fight dirty huh?" Shadow snapped as the other just smirked behind his mask, dashing forward as he grabbed the other by the throat, pinning him to a wall while Ed backed away since they had gotten too close to his location, all the while wondering who the hell were these guys and why the one was protecting him.

"I thought she told you to stay away from him. Or do you want to meet the reaper soo quickly before you get your precious jem?" The ninja said darkly, Shadow only hissing in response as tendrils of black and red began to shoot out of his back, causing Edward and Alphonse to freak, the armor having spotted this too once he subdued Gluttony by a swift punch to the head to daze him.

"The hell is that?!" Ed yelled out while the raven haired ninja frowned behind his mask.

"Hard way huh? Very well....Tsukiyomi..nightmare realm." the ninja stated, his eyes beginning to turn red as Shadow's eyes widened. The two of them stood there like that keeping eye contact for quite a few minutes, til Shadow roared out in pain, the tendrils retreating into his back again as he collapsed onto his knees panting weakly as the ninja then stepped back looking boredly down at his opponent.

"Consider that a warning....now leave before I get serious." The male then said calmly. Shadow glared up at him, oh how he wanted to pummel this prick but he didnt want to endure another attack like that, so instead he'd get the squirt when they least expected it, and when he was fully recovered.

"Dont think this is the last you heard of me. I'll be using your spine as a back scratcher the next time we meet Itachi." Shadow hissed out while he gripped his chest rising to his feet. He then stood to his full height and snapped his fingers, Louis and Gluttony vanishing along with him in a green burst of energy. Edward and Alphonse only stood there in shock while the male then looked to them through his mask.

"No need to thank me....also you better tend to your friend and the bar." Itachi said calmly before he vanished in another puff of smoke. Ed blinked a few times confused, jumping when he realized Tifa was still hurt as both Elrics rushed over to help her.

"Tifa! You arent hurt are you?" Alphonse asked in a worried tone, Tifa being Tifa just shoved Al's hand lightly away and chuckled weakly getting to her feet slowly.

"It's alright, I've felt worse. Dont worry after some of my medicine I'll be fine. Go get me some Ed, it's the one marked mega potion." Tifa said while Ed nodded and hurried to get said container from the back room.

"Who do you think they were?" Alphonse asked while Tifa shrugged.

"Dunno, but I have a feeling they'll try again soon to greet us." She replied.

Meanwhile off in an old warehouse, long forgotten by the city of Central Shadow, Louis and Gluttony reappeared. Gluttony quickly ran off when Shadow roared out, punching a good hole into an old forklift as it creaked and groaned, falling over onto its side with a loud crash. Louis was still out so he was spared the stream of curses that flew from the raven haired male's mouth. "DAMN THAT OVERCONFIDENT WEASEL! DAMN THAT ICE BRAT SENDING HIM AFTER ME! DAMN THEM ALL TO frackING HELL!" Shadow roared out, now punching a nearby wall into oblivion while Gluttony cowered behind a nearby pile of junk shaking like a leaf.

"Shadow angry...?" He mewed out while Shadow scowled and took a deep breath, gripping his chest again while he sat down with his legs crossed rubbing his temples.

"No shoot....what's worst of it is not only did I get schooled by that arrogant Uchiha...but a human nonetheless....though she did have quite a kick to her." Shadow muttered before rubbing his jaw from where the brunette had struck him. He did admit now that he thought about it, she was rather impressive, only person from what he could remember that could catch him off guard was that accursed blue blur...but now he was interested in this one. She might be a good fight if he were to go after the Elrics again. "Heh, this should be fun." He then said smirking while Gluttony blinked and sweatdropped tilting his head, wondering just what was going on in his master's head.

The next morning and day had dragged by slowly. But thanks to Alphonse and Edward's alchemy they had easily fixed up the spots in the bar that had been torn to hell and back, too bad it had taken a whole day to do the repairs. Edward was sitting at the bar, going over more of the dreaded paperwork while Alphonse sat next to him looking through some documents himself.

"No luck yet brother; still cant find any information on those two males." Al said with a light sigh as Ed groaned rubbing his forehead.

"Dammit who were they?! And what the hell did they want with us?" Edward whined out while slamming his head into the bar in defeat as Al chuckled abit before shrugging.

"I dont know...but I wouldnt want to find out. Seems though like that guy wanted to kill you...and who was that other guy?" The younger Elric then said curiously while Ed shuddered at the thought.

"Proibly some grudge against the military...otherwise I havent the slightest clue." Edward muttered as he then flipped through more papers and looked them over to see which ones he needed to sign. Both returned to finding out what they could once more, unaware of a newcomer entering the bar as a light ding went off over the door due to the bell above it. She walked quietly by the Elric's as she headed for her destination in the back of the tavern, long black hair flowing like a curtain behind her, ebony hues twinkling with mischeif as they landed on Edward while her ruffled goth black miniskirt rose and fell silently with each step she took in her stringed boots.

"Hello little lamb...your mary is here." A soft female voice purred out mentally in Edward's mind as he blinked and looked up, his head turning as he instinctively looked behind him, gold hues landing on the girl now sitting at a table in the back before they widened. He had seen this dark haired maiden once before, the very same girl in his dream!

5 - There's a She wolf in the closet

Greetings once again. I see you are displeased with yet another cliffhanger I gave you huh? Now now what fun would it be to end it on a dull note? I would much rather keep my viewers wriggling in anticipation waiting for a new chapter, like a large bass on the hook of a fishing line. I'll reel you in, and give you some slack before fully drawing you back in at the sight of a new chapter. Now have a seat and get comfy, and I'll please your senses with another thread in this vast story I knit on the air of this cold summer's eve.

As we left off in chapter four; our height challenged blonde comes to a startling discovery that he has found the girl of his dreams in the tavern he stays at...literally. But puns aside let's continue the tale without further delay.

Was Edward exhausted? Or was he just over-reacting? Right there in the back was the same girl that he had seen the night before, the one who had weeped endlessly, while forbidding him to draw closer. And a huge winged dragon emerging from the waters to swallow him whole when he dared disobey the girl's pleas. The hair was unmistakable, it shimmered and was like a blanket around her form it was that damn long. And that skin; pale as a pearl from the ocean but not a chalky white. But just that right sort of tone that made her glow so to speak. He could feel himself shaking a little, why was she here? For that matter why was she in his dream?!

"Brother...?" Alphonse asked, tilting his head when he noticed his older brother was staring in a mixture of shock and curiosity towards the back at someone. Edward blinked, snapping from his daze while he rubbed his one eye.

"Erm sorry I zoned out for a second. Thought that girl looked familiar...she a regular too Tifa?" The blonde then asked, glancing to said woman when she came over as he nodded towards the back, not wanting to point to be rude or draw attention. Tifa blinked before she cast her red hues towards the back on the gothic girl who was flipping through a manga it appeared while the radio blared on the eighties station next to her spot.

"Oh her? Yeah, she comes in late at night along with that other fella with the lines under his eyes. Sometimes they are joined by two or three others at times. Don't worry though she's very quiet and harmless. Usually is caught singing along with the radio when she's in a good mood. Why you ask Eddie?" Tifa stated, cleaning an empty glass, while she cast a playful smile towards the blonde as he blushed. He then forced his face to turn back to it's normal color and looked away murring.

"N..nothing, I was just curious that's all yeesh." Ed said in a defensive tone. He really couldn't tell her he *dreamed* of this girl...god that would defiantly not help his situation. That would be like sticking a fork in a bug zapper to try and get a lodged in twig out of it. Still though it was gnawing at his mind that the girl was here. Nah it couldn't be her he was probly just too tired and was making a mistake. But still...that dream was clear as a bell, much more than his other dreams of that world. It had to be some sort of sign.

"Brother...you are staring again." Alphonse said as Ed jumped when his brother tapped him flailing.

"Would ya stop doing that you're going to give me a heart attack!" The alchemist snapped gripping his chest while he growled in annoyance, his utter uptightness and defensive behaviour however was very clear to their big sister of sorts who in turn laughed and patted Edward on the top of his head.

"Edward quit oogling the girl like some weird painting you are trying to figure out and go talk to her." Tifa stated slyly as Ed just growled in response, growing irked at Alphonse's and the brunette's playful grins as he then hopped off the barstool.

"Fine I will, if it will get you two off my back!" He snapped, only to surprise Tifa and Al who figured he would chicken out or make an excuse. However this gave Ed an opportunity to see the girl up close, and listen to her voice. If this was the same girl from his dream, then there had to be a reason she was here. However the closer he approached he felt his knees grow weaker, sweating abit. What the hell was he going to say to this girl?! He may have been an expert with alchemy, and a good people person, and one hell of a fighter. But he like most bookworms was terrible at talking to the opposite sex, especially ones as breath taking as this. *"God dont screw this up...just..just keep it cool. Hopefully she wont laugh me away."* Ed thought to himself swallowing hard as he continued walking towards the back towards the mysterious ravenette.

Said female was tapping her right foot lightly to the beat of "Sweet dreams" that played on the radio, other leg crossed nicely over the other, her eyes glued to the Vampire Knight manga that she held with one hand. She hummed alittle with the beat, too enthralled in the comic to sing at the moment. The raven haired girl then frowned when she heard footsteps coming her way and just assumed it was Tifa the barkeep..however the footsteps were alittle off, the left sounding heavier than the right foot. Growing curious she drew her eyes away and raised them, they widened some when she saw who was coming her way.

"What's this? I didnt think he would be brave enough to approach me, and why is he up this late?!...calm down he's probly helping Tifa out or something." the girl thought to herself trying to calm her nerves. But no there was something off, he was shaking and nervous; she could tell this just by his heart rate. No doubt he wanted to talk...but why? This was the first time he had seen her and she was not even trying to use a charm spell on him to lure him over. Something wasent right. Nevertheless she placed a smile on her face when he came over, as she then placed her book in her lap after putting the book mark in it to save her place. "Yes sir? Is there something you want?" She said in a polite tone, tilting her head to the side curiously.

Oh god, the voice was even a perfect match! Dammit this just made things worse...no he had to keep calm. Taking a deep breath he then regained his composture the best he could and smiled back meekly. "Uh hey..mind if I pull up a chair?" Edward asked in a small voice while the girl chuckled and nodded.

"Sure sir, but why would a big solider like yourself want to talk to me? I didn't do anything wrong...did I?" The ravenette asked in a soft worried tone while Ed shook his head lightly, sitting across from the girl while smiling abit.

"No no. And please call me Edward Elric or Ed for sho-..or Ed." The alchemist stated with a slight smile, it was hard to look at her, those dark blue eyes, it was if they were looking right through him, picking his

thoughts apart and watching them like a lab specimen. The girl just sighed in relief placing her hand on her chest while relaxing in her chair.

"That's a relief, I'm Sarahfina Fair. It's nice to meet you...Elric you say? Like the Fullmetal Alchemist? I heard of you, the hero of the people right? Huh weird...you're a lot taller than they say you are." Sarah then stated blinking as she looked to him with curious eyes. Ed was about to rant, however stopped and looked at her surprised.

"She complimented me, on my height?! Ok fifty points for her." Ed thought smiling inwardly, he then just laughed and scratched the back of his head meekly. "Yup that's me alright. Guess I'm quite popular huh?" He stated, defiantly feeling better now about talking with this goth vixen.

"Well your brother sure is one for flattery huh?" Tifa said boredly, knowing damn well the girl was just trying to get on Edward's good side...considering she was taller than him, it was obvious telling by him just sitting by her.

"Yeah...let's hope it doesn't go to brother's head. But at least they are hitting it off." Alphonse said sweatdropping though he couldn't help but chuckle watching the two of them.

"So soldier, telling from your stars, you're a Colonel now huh? And why did you trade out your red jacket for that big ol uniform?" Sarahfina then asked in a curious tone, leaning forward some while she rested her chin on her folded fingers, resting her elbows on table, eyes still holding that innocent curiosity in them. Edward laughed nervously, it was getting harder to avoid those eyes but he just closed his own and shrugged resting his cheek on his left hand.

"Ah something about gotta show off my rank when I'm in HQ. After all I'm not a major anymore. I'm a lot higher up so it makes sense. But it's not like I wear it all the time, I usually wear my old threads if I am relaxing or out on a mission." He responded honestly while the female then giggled lightly and smiled.

"That's good, I always admire a guy that wears clothes that are comfy; plus black is very attractive on a man." Sarah purred out in a playful tone, only to grin when the blonde's face went a dark red as his eyes snapped open.

"Um...thanks?" Edward said shyly while Sarah waved a dismissive hand smirking.

"Don't mention it. So; you're quite something, being that high up in the ranks at your age. I bet your mother is proud of you protecting your nation." she said in a sweet voice, only to frown some when she caught the glimpse of sadness in Edward's eyes.

"Yeah..she probably would be...She passed away long ago." The blonde said quietly, usually not one for talking about his mother as his eyes rested on the candle at the center of the table.

"Oh I'm very sorry...I didn't know." she replied back with a slight frown looking down herself. So one of his parents passed away tragically too. Guess it was a small world, this Amestris. "I know how you feel though...my father was my world...he was a great Soldier you would have gotten along well with him, he too was considered a hero of the people of sorts; went by the name Zack Fair. He..passed trying to protect me and my mom from a former friend that abandoned the army. I miss him dearly, he didn't

deserve what he got." Sarah then stated, squeezing her hands a little as they now rested on her lap feeling her nails dig into the skin of her palms, thinking about that bastard that took her father's precious life. Edward looked up, a frown marring his face as he felt a twinge of sadness for the girl. He then chuckled a bit while closing his eyes.

"It's alright, and I bet he was a great guy your father. But you shouldn't be so depressed when speaking of him. I bet if he's anything like me; he'd want you to talk about him with a heart swelled with pride, not mourning his loss. After all if he was doing his best to keep you from getting harmed by whoever this guy was; than he didn't die in vain cause you are still here right?" Ed then said with a grin while Sarah looked up in surprise before she then smiled softly and nodded trying to suppress her tears.

"Yes...daddy would defiantly say that if he was still here. Thank you Edward that helps alot." Sarah then said sweetly while Ed laughed.

"Don't mention it. Now let's get off this gloomy subject." the blonde youth said while offering her a friendly grin in return. The two had talked through most of the night, he even introduced Alphonse to her, calling him over when he went past them to help Tifa stock some things. However to Ed's secret dismay it was time for the tavern to close up for the night. Sarah got up and tucked her book away, looking to Ed with a serene smile.

"It was nice speaking with you Edward...I had a very nice night." She said while walking past him, and without warning trailed her fingernails along his cheek gently before she tickled his chin. "Hopefully...we can do it again sometime. Later soldier boy." Sarah then said in a darker playful tone as Ed's eyes became half lidded at this action, chills of pleasure coursing through his body at her voice and touch, watching her walk off.

"Um..yeah." He said dumbfoundedly, blinking when he heard the ding of the bell, the door already swinging closed as she was out of sight. Tifa smirked walking up behind Ed, tapping him as he jumped three feet into the air yelping.

"Hey short stuff, pick your jaw up I gotta mop." Tifa said slyly as Edward scowled and chased after the barkeep as she laughed, running quickly from the angry blonde.

"I'll show you, get back here!" Edward roared out while Alphonse tried to stop him.

"Brother cool down please!" Al whined out, only to run the other way when Ed turned and chased him, telling him not to order him around.

Later that night, Shadow was roaming the darkened streets, red eyes fixed on any moving targets. Seeing a late night worker who was taking a smoke break he grinned wickedly. Moving up behind the man, he grabbed him around the mouth to muffle his cries, yanking him back into the shadows, tendrils of black sprouting from his back as they wrapped around the horrified man, jabbing him all over like needles as the man was drained dry. Once this was done, he then rubbed his shoulder wincing a bit. "That should do for the night..." He muttered, only to yelp when a loud hiss rang through his mind, his body wracked with pain.

"No it's not. I will tell you when it's enough. Do I look like I want to be on a diet you cur?! Now give me

more!" A dark voice hissed out mentally to Shadow as he just scowled in response.

"I cant you idiot. The city is crawling with soliders due to those copycat murders. It's far too risky!" he shot back, only to gasp and grip his chest, the tendrils shooting out as they began to lash at his body, cutting him and feeding off the broken skin.

"Fine then, since you are my host you'll provide me enough food for the night. Since you are such a coward and wont go kill another measly human for me." The icy voice shot out snickering while Shadow panted and growled through his pain.

"Gluttonus bastard...I cant wait to seal you fully away." He muttered. He got to his feet then and continued roaming..he couldnt risk being seen like this, plus it was dangerous roaming about this time of night. But due to his blurred vision, he felt his body give out, falling as he slammed into a side of a dumpster, the thunder roaring overhead before the rain burst through the clouds a few minutes later. Tifa came into view an hour later, a few garbage bags in her hands, heading over as she swiftly swung the large things as they landed with loud 'plunks' into the trash holder as she wiped her hands off on her pants. She was about to turn and head back to the bar, but stopped and tilted her head seeing a foot jutting out near the side of the dumpster.

"Oh great another hobo...better get the poor sap out of the rain before he dies from phumonia." She muttered, walking over to the side, only to jump back when she saw a bloodied and bruised Shadow, the same Shadow that had nearly killed Edward and was chased off by that masked male. She was half tempted to beat the snot out of him for what he did...but it seems someone already beat her to the punch. After thinking it over, and seeing how helpless the man looked she sighed and leaned down, yanking his half concious form up and slung his arm over her shoulder, dragging him along towards the Seventh Heaven. Shadow frowned abit; he could feel himself moving...but he wasent working his feet to do so. Opening his eyes he then saw someone was helping him along...but the scent didnt belong to Louis, and the being was too tall to be Gluttony. He then took a daring look, eyes widening some when he saw it was that girl. The one who gave him a sore jaw for a good few hours. What the hell was she doing? He nearly killed her AND that squirt but here she was, bringing him to a warm place to rest.

"What are you up to? I thought I was your enemy...you insane or something?" Shadow muttered weakly while Tifa just rolled her eyes.

"No I'm helping you out. Enemies can show each other respect too you know. Besides; didnt want you to bleed to death out there and stink up the place with your carcass." Tifa said with a chuckle as Shadow just scoffed at the girls dark humor.

"It's gonna take alot more than that to kill me. But I have a feeling you won't let me get off easy for this." The duel haired male responded with a light smirk, knowing Tifa wouldnt be that foolish to let him into her home to recover. Once they had made it inside, and the brunette had dragged him into a spare room, helping him to sit down on the bed she then headed for the bathroom to fetch some first aid.

"You sure are sharp. And yes you are right. In return for this favor, you keep your hands off Edward and Alphonse; dont even sneeze in their direction offensivly. Less you want your jaw broken next time." Tifa said after she came back into view, a dark glare in her red hues. Shadow frowned some at the threat, his hand reaching up to touch his jaw instinctivly. No he wouldn't want that...plus for some reason...he didn't

want to upset this girl...sure he could handle fighting her. But it was something else. He then jumped a little when he felt her remove his jacket.

"H..hey what are you doing?" He muttered, trying to hide his blush while Tifa murred swatting at his head for such a dumb question.

"Oh shut up, i'm going to patch you up, don't want you bleeding all over the damn sheets. Plus you'll heal faster if your wounds are properly treated." the barkeep said in annoyance as she went about to tend to his wounds as he surprisingly allowed her to do so. If it had been Louis trying to help him he would have dropkicked him across the warehouse, telling him to quit being motherly and that he'd heal on his own. But once again it perplexed him why he was letting this girl get soo close. Maybe it was those vast lovely crimson hues, that fair tender skin..or that long luxiourus brown mane of silken hair. He then grunted and shook his head, looking away when he caught himself eyeing her up, allowing her to fix him up before she turned after finishing, heading for the door.

"Hey." Shadow stated, causing Tifa to stop and blink looking towards him with a quirked brow in question. "Thanks...and I wont hurt em..my debt to you." He then muttered while staring out the window as the storm continued to rage on outside. Tifa smiled and nodded in response, closing the door lightly behind her, while she then headed back towards her room for the night.

Meanwhile Edward was back to doing more paperwork at his desk, dispite Tifa's orders of going straight to sleep since she didnt like when Edward sacrificed a good night's rest just to please the military. He was still a growing boy and needed his health. He sighed some tapping the pencil against the paper wondering what to jot down next for his report, his mind in a fog. He then jumped and cursed when a loud crack of thunder rang out, the lamp next to him going dark. "Great...guess that's a hint to hit the hay..." Edward muttered, sighing while he then stacked up his paperwork, tucking into a drawer on the desk before he then got up and went to change out of his uniform into his night wear. Unbeknownst to him, a pair of ebony hues watched him from his window, a raven haired figure with flowing back hair sitting on the rooftop across from the tavern, eyes locked on his form with a playful smile.

"Soo lovely. Mmmmp; I cant wait to dig my claws into that chest...those eyes filled with fear as I steal his innocence and drain him of life. The thought just thrills me thinking of it." Sarah purred out, nails digging deep into the bricks that made up the ledge she perched on, lightning streaking across the skies as her face held an eerie expression of pure lust and homicidal tendancies.

Off in a distant alleyway; Gluttony was digging through a garbage can, whimpering as he looked for something to eat, Louis with his hood raised standing nearby waiting on the fat creature. "Would you hurry up Glut? This place is crawling with pigs, and I dont wanna get caught just cause of that damn unquenchable appitite!" Louis snapped as Gluttony just retorted with a light growl, biting into a pipe withen the trash can. Both then jumped when they saw three figures in the same cloaks and hats come into view.

"You are in our turf...I thought we told you before to stay away..." The red eyed male said darkly while the blonde smirked under his hat.

"Maybe we didn't kick their asses good enough Itachi yeah." The blonde said playfully with a snicker while Louis glared backing up some reaching for his gun.

"That won't do you no good boy, you'll just tickle us with those bullets. And Shadow isent here to protect you either...so I suggest you run." The shortest male with the scarf around his mouth hissed out in a cragly voice that sounded like it belonged to a heavy smoker. Damn this wasent good and Louis saw they proved a good point. They would just tear Louis apart and Gluttony though immortal too would just get battered into a pulp by them; that is unless he was angered enough, and he was just downright scared of these guys and made it more evident with his whimpering.

"Alright...we don't want trouble..we'll leave. But I hope for your sake you dont cross Shadow fellas. He isent in the best of moods tonight." Louis growled out before he and Gluttony quickly turn and left, knowing when they were outmatched. Sure they were tough as nails, but they werent stupid, they had scuffled with these guys before a few times and barely came out alive each time. Once they disappeared from sight, the scarfed male looked to Itachi with his bloodshot eyes.

"What's taking Sarah soo damn long? I thought she'd be here already. She knows I hate to be kept waiting." The male snapped, the raven haired male just pat the other on his head.

"Patience Sasori, the boy is probly still up. She did say he's an owl and likes to stay up studying. That is probly the reason for the delay, that simple." Itachi stated as said male scowled.

"Like Hell! She had a whole damn year or two to kill this blonde haired brat, and she's still dragging her feet! If she doesnt kill that fullmetal runt I'll do it myself!" Sasori exclaimed in an annoyed tone as the blonde just snickered more picking at his coat idly.

"Maybe she's molesting him un...you know how she obesses over the kid. It would make sense she'd want alittle fun before snapping his neck or bleeding him dry yeah." The blonde replied playfully, only to yelp when a metal tail shot from underneath the back of Sasori's coat, smacking the blonde upside the head.

"Quit being such a damn pervert Deidara. I like it better when you ramble on about how your art is better than mine. Least then you are acting somewhat smart and not like a teenager with raging hormones." Sasori scoffed out while Deidara glared rubbing his head.

"What! You know it and I know it's probly the reason she's late un! Studying my @\$\$ yeah, she turns into a blob whenever she watches that kid, especially in the shower un." Deidara muttered while Itachi cleared his throat and turned.

"Enough both of you, let's get moving. Like Louis said, there is solider's roaming about. We'll give Sarah another hour before fetching her." Itachi stated while the other two nodded, all three vanishing in the blink of an eye, flash stepping back to their hideout. However unbeknownst to them, Louis was standing behind a few large stacks of boxes, thankful the group was busy bickering and didnt sense him or Gluttony still lurking.

"Crap homles this aint good. Better get ahold of Shadow." Louis muttered as he turned and dashed off, regretting that he had left his cellphone at the warehouse.

Back at the tavern, Edward after staring at the ceiling for a few more hours, finally drifted off to sleep, a

peaceful smile on his face while he curled up under the covers to protect himself from the cold. He was none the wiser as his window slid up quietly, a figure crawling through it on her hands and knees, long black wet hair covering her face while her eyes glowed silver as she cast them on the blonde's resting form. She then rose up to her full height and slowly stalked towards his bed, fangs baring into an eerie grin with each step she took towards his bed....

6 - Into amystica

Oh good to see you again, I see you keep falling for my cliffhangers. Very good I got you caught now. But do not think this is the last time I will spring one on you. Yes every well trained author to be knows how to keep their audience wanting more and more with each breath they take as they read the tale woven for them. Like the spider I will slowly spin you in my cocoon, keeping you there for my entertainment while I wait for another to fly into my web. I mean this all in good actions of course for I will let you go once my tale is told. But it gets lonely up here in this dank castle, and I enjoy sharing a good yarn with a fellow soul. But anyway before you fall asleep from my drolling, let's continue onwards....

Edward sleeps like a helpless newborn while Sarah looms over his form like death itself; will she silence this innocent lamb? Or will spare him from the wolves? Let's find out.

He was quite a sight to behold..even in his sleep. Like a sleeping cherub you see in those old fashioned paintings from the dark ages. Sarah smirked, moving ever more closer to him. She had to calm herself though, due to the fact she sensed another aura in the tavern that seemed threatening. The power level at the moment was low, but she had to be careful and surpress her's so as to not alert the other one. Leaning over the sleeping alchemist, she gently sat down next to him, hands at both sides of his head. Sarahfina hesitated a few moments when he groaned sleepily before turning his head to the left before he continued to breath steadily once more.

"What are you dreaming of little angel?" Sarah thought in amusement, her senses running rampant when she leaned down further. Her lips were now centimeters from his throat. Taking in his scent she purred in content, it was purely intoxicating, the scent of cherry blossom and wild bamboo. This tickled her inwardly that he would use body washes more suited for a female than the old spice brands. Baring her fangs she slid ovetop of him now, shivering as her senses went wild as his heartbeat rang through her very keen ears. However she stopped in mid motion when her hand had strayed, resting upon Edward's chest over his heart. Sarah's mind was assaulted with images now due to her rare ability to see into one's heart besides just their minds.

A vision of two little boys running up towards a house on a hill near sunset, one defiantly being recognized as Edward while the other was a tiny bit taller and had darker gold eyes. This of course as Alphonse before he was transferred to that suit of armor. A woman with a serene smile greeting them, long brown hair and soft eyes wearing a soft purple dress and apron.

Edward and a young Alphonse watching as their mother looked concerned towards a tall man with a ponytail in a brown overcoat. It was hard making out his features but she could tell he had glasses. The man was holding a briefcase. He looked quietly towards Ed and Al before saying something to their mother as he turned and left...no doubt this was their father.

Edwards point of view no doubt, watching in terror as his mother lay on the floor, a bowl of fruit laying next to her scattered on the hardwood paneling as Ed called out for her in a panic along with Alphonse.

Their mother smiling softly at Edward, holding his hand before asking the young boy if he could make

her a thing of flowers like their father used to do. Her eyes then closing and her hand slipping from the boy's grasp.

Edward and Alphonse now in a dark room, the suit of armor she spotted right away in the corner as the two were doing the forbidden...transmuting their mother or at least hoping to. Dark purple streaks shooting through the air before Alphonse's scream rang out, dark little hands yanking him away from Edward as the older brother reached for him, only to watch in horror as he vanished from sight along with Edward's leg. Then the boy looking onward to what he created, screaming in terror as the beast reached towards him hacking and screeching before then dying itself. He then with a determined will knocked the armor over, using his blood to draw the seal, and brought Al's soul back from the gate.

Then the vowed promise to one another as they trained their new bodies. Alphonse swearing to never leave Edward's side, that they would find a way to get their bodies back no matter what and make things right again.

And the last image, a flicker of a young girl of either five or four with long brown braided pigtails playing with Alphonse and Edward as they stayed with her father and pet dog Alexander while they studied for the Alchemy exam. The little girl looking to them as her big brothers. Then Edward screaming in rage as he punched the girl's father, due to him having been so twisted as to turn his daughter and the family dog into a chimera that is forever in pain. The chimera begging a mournful Edward then to stop hurting her daddy. Then Edward helping to free the chimera, having used alchemy to flip the car she was locked in over when altering the road..the chimera running into a scared man with red eyes and tan skin. His hand resting on the beast's head...the last flicker then...of Edward looking on with horror as what was left of the chimera was splattered against a wall in a gory bloody mess..having been blown to smithereens from the inside out by the man with the X mark on his forehead. Edward then weeping while it started to rain...saying he wasnt even able to help save a little girl....

"My god....who am I to put an angel through more torment...when the Devil himself used you as his entertainment in his greek play and tore your wings from your back..." Sarah said aloud weakly.

"Finally! Hope he picks up..." Louis said, panting in exhaustion from running five blocks straight back to the warehouse as he dialed Shadow's cell.

Said male growled some when he heard "Monster" by skillet go off on the nightstand on his black cellphone that had a flaming skull on the front of it, eyes blinking as the phone rang. Snatching it up he flipped it open, sitting up a little. "This better be fracking important Louis. You know better than to wake me." he hissed out in a sinister tone.

"Yeah it is...wait where you at homles? Aint like you to go to a hotel since you are trying to lay low." Louis asked as Shadow growled more.

"Get to the friggin point." He snapped tapping his fingers against the bed with his free hand.

"Aight aight relax. Anyways me and Gluttony ran into those cloaked creeps. I fooled em into thinking we gave em the slip..and I overheard that brat is making her move. So if ya wanna get Ed first better hurry!" Louis stated. Shadow tensed hearing this. Dammit that lil ice dog was sneakier than he pegged her for. But what annoyed him more is that he promised to not hurt the kid to the tavern's owner in exchange for

his recovery. If she killed Ed and left, he'd be in hot water...and for some reason this made him uneasy at the thought of Tifa being angry with him. It wasn't fear, hell no, but it was something...else.

"Damn alright on my way. I'll meet up with you in a bit, move your @\$\$. " Shadow said, hanging up before he jumped from the bed. He soon regretted this since he wasn't one hundred percent yet. Grunting and rubbing his back he hurried about the huge halls trying to track the young alchemist's scent.

Sarah continued to sit over Edward's form, she felt horrid now. She looked down at him while tears welled up in her eyes. "I...I just can't do it...i'm cruel...but i'm not evil..." Sarah said then before panicking a little when a few tears strayed from her face, falling onto Edward's cheek. She cursed mentally when he stirred at this, gold eyes snapping open and staring in surprise into ebony blue ones.

"S...sarah?" He asked. She moved upwards and away quicker than his eyes could follow, and things only got worse when Shadow kicked the door open, red eyes glaring at Sarah.

"Touch him and I'll snap your frackin' neck Fair. No way in hell you pinning this on me." Shadow growled out, Ed nearly jumping out of his skin when Shadow was now in his room.

"The hell is going on?!" Edward said in a panicked voice as he pondered if he was dreaming.

"Damn furball ruining my fun!" Sarah barked out at Shadow, she then made a few hand signs, turning back towards Edward as she pointed forward with her left index and middle fingers. "Nirvana temple Jutsu!" She yelled, feathers shooting from her fingers as they smacked him in the face, Edward's eyes instantly drooping before he fell face first back into the covers of his bed out like a light. "This isn't over. I will have him. Consider yourself lucky I had a change of heart at the last moment." Sarah growled out at the dual haired male then, turning while then bolting for Ed's window, leaping out of it before Shadow could catch her. Said male swore and went to give chase, running over and looking out the window, only to see a few black feathers flutter down from the blackened raining sky.

"Dammit...annoying little dog." Shadow muttered. He then jumped when he heard Tifa's voice while she came into view, her crimson hues glaring at Shadow. He then whirled around to face her shooting his hands up in defense. "Look it's not what it looks like. Someone tried to off him but ran off when I came in." He said quickly, but felt like an idiot saying it as he saw her doubtful glare. Sighing he then turned his back to her when he noticed Louis and Gluttony running down the alley just below Ed's window. "Don't believe me if you want...but I kept my promise. Thanks for helping me out..." He then said, he then perched on the windowsill and crouched down. A sad smile spread across his face before stealing another glance Tifa's way. "It was nice meeting you...hope this isn't our last encounter doll." with those words of farewell, the ravenette then sprang out the window and did a flip in the air, landing next to Louis before they retreated out of sight into the vast city. Tifa had ran over to the window watching this. For some reason she felt bad for doubting the man...true he didn't kill Edward since the boy was fine, just sleeping.

"Gah...friggin weird brute. First he wants to kill him...then he doesn't. But why would he want to hold a promise to me when he barely knows me?...ah well at least he's gone..." Tifa said aloud to herself...but for some reason she was a bit bummed at Shadow's departure, hell she didn't even get his name. Turning she then tucked Ed's form back into the bed since he was halfway slumped over it on the verge of falling out as she then shut his window and left the room. She then had to tell a panicked Alphonse who was

just coming in at the tail end of everything to calm and explained the situation to him. But she then had to make him vow to keep quiet about this to Edward. Last thing they needed was Ed to be paranoid about going to sleep for fear of Shadow or someone else to come in to kill him while he rested.

Off near the outskirts of a huge forest, the three cloaked males waited quietly. Itachi looking up first when Sarah walked into view with a solemn expression on her face. He frowned a little upon seeing this. Something was up.

"Did you finally do it? Can we now get on with our lives?" Sasori asked while he too looked to the female ravenette. Sarah glared at him before she continued walking past them.

"Couldnt....Shadow..interfered and I had to bolt." Sarah said quietly. Sasori scowled angrily while Deidara groaned in annoyance.

"Give me a break! You could have just snapped the brat's neck and pinned it on the hairball!" Sasori roared out while then ducking when Sarah whirled around, blasting an icy wind at him with her one hand.

"Lay the frack off! I..I just couldnt alright? I fracking panicked sue me!" Sarah snapped, her power levels rising while Itachi rested a hand on her shoulder when he approached her.

"Patience Sasori...the time will come. This was just a minor setback. Let's just go rest up. We'll get him next time." Itachi whispered, calming Sarah's frayed nerves as he then led her and the others back to the hideout. He knew why Sarah had hesitated though...she never was like this before. Always quick and cunning with her killings. The Uchiha just grew all the more uneasy inside as they walked along through the darkened forest.

"I sure do hope you know what you are doing Sarah...." Itachi thought to himself as a frown marred his face though it was hidden well behind the collar of his cloak.

The night before was a huge blur to Edward, well the remainder of it. He was working on some of his reports while one hand rested against his forehead to support it from slamming into the table he sat at. Was he dreaming about Sarah sitting over him? He must have been considering the girl gnawed at his mind like a starved dog to a peice of raw steak. But if so why was she crying? And he felt the tears nonetheless. Man this was going to bother him for days on weather it was real or not, Sarah's visit into his room that is. He was soo frazzled he hadent even touched his breakfast, wanting to get the paperwork out of the way first to shut Roy up was his excuse to Tifa who scolded him. He even tuned her out when she told him he'd stay short for the rest of his life if he continued having bad eating habits along with not drinking his milk. Alphonse came to sit beside Ed, having recieved a few documents from Havoc when he bumped into the male earlier that morning when he was fetching groceries for Tifa.

"Um brother, more information came about that Scar Copycat killer." Alphonse stated while he placed the notes next to Ed on the table. The older Elric blinked and turned to said files.

"Oh, thanks Al, hopefully it's some good leads." Ed replied opening the orange envelope and slipping the files and reports out. The paperwork would have to wait now since after all he was assigned to this mission. Not to mention he wanted to solve it to rub it in Roy's big nose that he could do a mission the flaming homo alchemist couldnt. He quickly scanned over the reports from a few eyewitness accounts.

His heart then skipped a few beats when he read the passages from three different citizens. All of them saying they saw a raven haired girl appearing to be in her late to mid teens in gothic attire lurking about some of the streets an hour or thirty minutes before some of the slayings. Some even saying her hair was down past her ankles. No...it couldnt be her...Edward was shaking some as he read the reports; so much so that Alphonse noticed.

"Brother...?" Al asked softly, concern lacing his voice before Ed shook his head and looked down trying to keep his voice from cracking.

"Nothing...it's alright Alphonse. Just that I feel like a sucker now. We have to find that girl. Better wait til she pops up again though." The blonde said, a tad bit of anger in his voice now. There was many things you shouldnt do to Edward. One was obvious; dont call him short. Another was to act like you knew him and compared yourself to him. And the last was to never make him look like an idiot and pull the wool over his eyes. He had secretly gotten a crush on the fair skinned beauty. And now he felt stupid for wearing his heart on his sleeve. It scared him too, knowing now that it wasent a dream the night before, she WAS in his room that night...and she was probly planning to make him her next victem. The night slowly crept up on them all. It seemed the dreary mood was contagious considering Tifa too was seemed distracted by something. Ed was now currently reading through one of his alchemy books, wanting to get his mind off the reports at the moment since he already knew who might be the killer. He didnt even notice someone pass by him before they stopped. It was the man in the red clouded black cloak with the lines under his eyes. However his head certianly shot up when the man spoke calmly.

"You seek the stone...even though it's bathed in the blood of millions of lost souls...correct?" He said softly, Ed then turning in his chair, casting a glare at the taller man adorned in the black coat and shaded hat.

"The hell you care?" Edward growled out, still creeped out by this guy. But nonetheless he wouldnt let him know about it. The man then closed his eyes and chuckled softly.

"If you are willing to believe in such a fairy tale...tell me do you seek other ways of getting your wishes too? There is more than one way child...the stone is the bloodiest path above the other's though..." The man then asked, dark empty eyes locking on Edward's honey colored ones. This sent chills up his spine. Not to mention the words he spoke baffled him abit.

"What...other ways are there?...tch the hell am I asking you. I screwed up using alchemy, so I going to fix my problems with alchemy. I'm not taking an easy way out so piss off." Ed then snapped, turning to look away, now really annoyed. Itachi only sighed some...well at least he tried. He then turned alittle, but not before resting his hand firmly on Ed's right shoulder, leaning down though his gaze remained forward and not at Edward.

"Words of advice little lamb. Be careful where you wonder for what you seek. For wolves with empty stomachs and bared teeth wait near the forst that is never blessed with heaven's rays. Ready to punish those who stray too far from the flock that dare try to enter the temple of sins that stands outside the city of miracles. Be hopeful you find a wolf with a wounded foot that will be willing to share their power... with you to protect you from the hungry pack." Itachi said in a stern yet calm tone. After saying this he stood at his full height, leaving without another word as Ed sat there watching him walk through the door.

"The hell...was that about..?" Edward whispered, now more shaken than ever. Did this man just give him information on where the stone was?

A few days had passed since then as day slowly turned into night, Tifa left the Elrics to watch the bar for a few hours as she herself had driven off in her pickup to a warehouse where a delivery truck would stop to drop her off more supplies for more beverages for the tavern. Alphonse at this time was cleaning the bar top off as Edward sat on a stool reading more reports. The suit of armor gasped softly when looking up as a tinkle of the door's bell went off softly, the ravenette beauty walked towards the back as always. "B...brother she's here." Al whispered when he passed his older sibling, pretending to go stock a few things behind the bar to not make his actions so obvious in case Sarah was watching.

"I know Alphonse..." Edward whispered back, having spotted her first since his eyes were glued to the door the whole time and not his reports. Not wanting his actions so obvious either he returned his eyes to the papers in front of him, waiting for the right moment. Sarah sensed the hostility in the air. The aura was so thick you could cut a knife through it. Boy when this kid was pissed...he was PISSED. It shook her up some..and she was far more powerful than the young alchemist. After a few minutes passed she smirked inwardly deciding on what to do. Getting to her feet and tucking her book away, she walked towards the door. Her speed picking up when Edward began to follow.

"Good boy...follow the bait..." Sarah thought inwardly in slight amusement.

Meanwhile Tifa was leaning up against an old abandoned car, tapping her foot in annoyance. "Dammit...I really wish these guys would stop dragging their asses." Tifa muttered, hating to wait, especially in the middle of practically nowhere in the dangerous part of Central. She paused then, hearing a slight growl before a fat beast came dashing into view from around the corner. Tifa jumped back but reacted quickly to the sin's surprise ambush, yanking her fist back before slamming it hard into his face. She felt bones crack in the male's face as he yowled and was sent rolling, slamming into the abandoned car hard.

"Well...that takes care of me pummeling the fatass myself. I told him not to touch you. Louis must not be feeding him good enough..." A familiar voice stated, Shadow turning the corner with his hands tucked in his pockets, smirking when Tifa looked at him in surprise.

"Hey hold it...I have a few questions for you. And I want them answered." Edward said sternly, having called out to Sarah when she was a few yards away from the Seventh Heaven bar. Sarah paused before smirking slyly, ebony eyes locking with his.

"If you catch me I'll talk. Think you can keep up short stuff?" She replied back, turning and dashing off afterwards.

"Dammit I said hold it!" Edward yelled out, cursing up a storm inwardly at her while he gave chase. Zig zagging about alleyways and jumping over fences. "Holy frack is she some kind of cheetah chimera or what?!" he yelled to himself, starting to get a little winded from chasing the raven haired girl. He then thought a few moments, grinning when he got a good view where he stood at the allies ahead. Jumping down he turned and went east instead of west. Edward then crouched down out of sight and waited, when Sarah turned to the mouth of the alley he was on the opposite end of, he skidded into view. Clapping his hands he slammed them onto the wall next to him while the energy shot through the walls,

sealing both exits. "I say that's checkmate dont you think? Cant run now ya emo dog. Now let's talk..." Edward said panting heavily from being worn out from running soo fast for soo long.

"Heh...he's a smart one...to bad for him though...he caught a shark in his net this time." Sarah thought. When Ed came closer, only a few feet away now Sarah's eyes grew wide before her lip quivered. "Oh please Eddie....dont hurt me...I dont like it rough!" Sarah said between soft uneasy cries, looking away and closing her eyes. She then started to unzip her top when he was unphased by her act. "Alright if you insist..but no cutting." She then mewed out...ha the minute she did this the blonde's face went pure red as he stumbled back.

"Whoa...the hell you doing?!?!" Ed stuttered out in shock. That hesitation was all Sarah needed, doing a quick handsign she then grinned darkly.

"No..I have checkmate squirt. NIRVANA TEMPLE JUTSU!" Sarah yelled, feathers flying from her fingertips once more and striking Edward as he gasped, wobbling before he crashed down onto the pavement, eyes sliding shut as his body was overwhelmed with fatigue, his last sight being his pocket watch rolling away and Sarah smiling in amusement down at his form.

"...Al..hel..p." Ed said softly..his vision going black then. The ravenette chuckled softly, kneeling down while her fingernails gently raked his cheek.

"Got you now my little lamb..." Sarah purred out in his ear. She then slid her hands under his body, picking him up with great ease bridal style before a swarm of feathers made of ice wrapped around them both, as they vanished from the alleyway, Ed's watch being the only thing left behind...

7 - Nothing I wont give

Welcome back, where we last left off, our little alchemist; Edward Elric was in abit of a pickle. First off the girl he recently met had been reported to have been a key suspect to the Scar copycat murders. And secondly when he cornered her she knocked him out with a sleeping spell only to then spirit him away to a place unknown. And not only that but Tifa has once again ran into Shadow who mysteriously saved her from turning into Gluttony's chewtoy. What shall happen next you ask? Well let's continue onward with my tale....

Alphonse was growing worried, it had been three hours since his older brother had bolted out the door after that girl. Edward wasent one to drag his feet. Something must have happened for sure. Al did his best to calm his thoughts on what could have happened, getting paranoid never did help him after all. It was due to his paranoia at one time that he was led to believe his soul wasent even real; thanks to a certian insane butcher by the name of Barry.

"Calm down Al...he's probly taking her to Central headquarters...yeah that's it." the large suit of armor stated aloud to himself, thus continuing to call out for Edward's name, hoping he was heading back down towards the tavern and would hear him. "Right now he's probly going to turn the corner and tell me to stop being soo loud, cause I'll wake up the neig- oh no!" Al then said, feeling himself shake abit when something glinted against the street lights on the ground a few feet ahead of him. Running over towards the object he knew what it was without a doubt as he picked it up, the fear withen him only escalating.

"This is brother's watch! He'd never leave it lying around. That settles it, I have to get help!" Alphonse thought to himself, clenching his hand tightly around the watch before he turned and dashed off to where Tifa said she would be going for the delivery drop off. "Don't worry brother help is on the way!" Alphonse said aloud in a determined voice as he dashed through the quiet streets of the city.

Tic...tock...tic...tock...gong!...gong!...gong!..

The loud clock gonged nine more times, before returning to it's normal tic,tocking. Midnight, god how long had he been out? Edward grunted, slowly opening his eyes as they adjusted. He could see that he was in a dark room, the moon peering in through the stain glass window being the only source of light besides the candles. Sitting up the blonde rubbed his forehead, all the while letting his eyes adjust further to his surroundings. The room he was in felt like it was straight out of some novel by Mary Shelly. The large stone columns that held the room up had busts of demon's heads carved from the columns, tongues hanging out of their sneering jaws. A large black bearskin rug layed underneath him, it's jaws opening in a silent roar and it's eyes glassy and blank. The carpet that adorned the whole room itself was a deep mouve. Candle albra's were nearly everywhere some lit others not. A huge fireplace was behind him, a coat of arms of a dragon holding a shield was just above it and the carving of a wolf was withen the mantle itself. Embers were crackling and spitting softly withen the belly of the fireplace, no doubt a sign it was lit for awhile. The window when he turned to look at it again was quite impressive, actually it was five seperate windows. Two of them were side by side, the other two paned ones were on both sides of the previous two. The largest sat above them all in a circular shape and made of stained glass. First shape inside the circle was a flower of red and purple, than a diamond of green and blue, and finally in the center finishing off the whole window was a huge black spider.

"Heh...this place feels like it should be from one of those cheap horror movies." Edward muttered to himself, standing up as he glanced towards the walls. Some of them had huge suits of armor standing against them, others had paintings. He couldn't make out all of them from where he stood...but one caught his eye once the moon fully shone on it once the clouds pulled away from it. A being stood in the painting surrounded by red roses and clock gears. He wore a jacket of blood red with its hood up over his blonde locks, his golden eyes holding a bored look to them while his braid spilled out from the hood on his right shoulder, the flamel symbol on his bare chest that peeked out from the inner opened black jacket with white trim. He was looking at a painting of *himself*! Eyes widening the alchemist stumbled back, and forgetting of the bear skin rug's head at that time he tripped over it and yelped hitting his head hard. "T..the hell is that!?" he said, panic rising in his body. Oh damn he was really freaked out now.

"You don't like it? I worked very hard on it you know." A familiar voice stated, Edward turning his head in the direction of the voice as its owner Sarahfina stepped into the room, a playful smile on her face. Edward just growled as he pushed the pain away and sat up.

"Don't give me that! What the hell kind of sick game you playing?! Not to mention that was a dirty trick you pulled earlier!" The blonde snapped, remembering when Sarah had nearly flashed him in order to make him drop his guard. This of course got a light laugh from the female before she slowly walked past him, planting herself in a large black chair that was just out of Edward's sight while she crossed her legs leaning into it.

"All is fair in love and war. Thought Roy taught you that Fullmetal. And it's not a sick game, I just love to paint is all. And you boy are a good subject let's just say." Sarah replied smoothly, a smile playing on her features while the moon shone on her form, making her glow almost. That smile though made Edward uneasy.

"Whatever, but anyways you didn't answer my questions. And now that we are alone I want you to do some talking." Edward replied, hiding his fear as he smirked and got back up, transmuting his arm into a blade while he pointed it towards her. "And don't think that just because you have me in your home means you have the upperhand." He then snapped as Sarah chuckled again, dark blue eyes looking to him calmly.

"Put that thing away...I don't wish to hurt you Edward. I brought you here so we could talk without prying ears listening in on us. Now what are your questions?" She then said softly while giving him a bored gaze, catching Ed off guard before he snorted. Damn girl reminded him of Roy somewhat with her confidence.

"Fine then. A few citizens said in my reports that you were spotted lingering around a few of the murder scenes *before* the murders even took place. Now I ask you Sarahfina Fair. Are YOU the one killing these people?!" Ed then exclaimed in a firm voice, gold eyes boring into ebony blue. A few minutes of only the clock ticking filled the large room as Sarah then sighed lightly and closed her eyes.

"What if I did commit a few of them? I have a reason you know. I need to do it to survive." She exclaimed as Edward snapped.

"No reasons give you an excuse to commit murder! Survival of the fittest my @\$; you can't go killing

people when you feel like it!" Ed growled out as Sarah glared at him then.

"No Edward, I really mean I *need* to kill in order to *survive*...plus it was my master's orders. You think I enjoy it? No I can't help it, but it's in my nature." Sarah exclaimed, her tone growing darker while Edward tried to register what she meant in his mind. His heart only leaping now as he looked to her uneasily but still he kept that fiery anger in his eyes.

"What...other reason did you bring me here? I doubt it was just to talk. If you wanted to tell me something you wouldn't have lured me away from Alphonse or brought me to who knows the hell where. I'll tell you one thing, I won't be easy to kill or silence. They'll know if I'm gone." Edward then stated in a firm voice, thinking that Sarah was planning on killing him after telling him the truth that she was the killer, or part of a mafia gang or something and the boss wanted him dead. This of course earned a laugh from Sarah which confused Edward even more. She then gazed to him with playful eyes while resting her hand on her cheek.

"Edward you sure have a keen eye for things. Yes I brought you out here for another reason too. No I didn't bring you here to snuff you out or whack you or anything like that. I am offering to you something much greater. A friend of mine told me of his little run-in with you a few days ago. Let's just say...I am that wolf with the wounded foot." Sarah said, her eyes only glinting with more mischief when she saw Ed's eyes light up with surprise as he walked a few steps towards her.

"Yo..you mean what he meant...was the philosopher's stone? That he knows where it is along with you?!" Edward said stunned, his heart racing now with excitement as the ravenette slowly nodded her head.

"Not the philosopher's stone, but a stone just like it...only so much stronger. In fact it was rumored to be the very stone that inspired the philosopher's stone. It is called the *Crimson* stone. It was forged from the souls of thousands of powerful warriors lured to a fortress by a wicked man. It is said that he who holds this stone, controls the Grim Reaper himself. But there is a catch. No mortal can wield the stone for it is too great a power for them." Sarah explained as Edward looked to her baffled by her last words.

"Then what's the point? Seems pretty useless if I can't even use it." Edward asked as Sarah murred and looked to him more seriously.

"There is a way Edward...I said no *mortal* can wield it. The man that holds it now is no ordinary man. And I along with my comrades aren't actually human ourselves....do you know what I am Eddie? And no I am not a homunculus, nor are any of my comrades or our master." Sarah then said, her voice becoming playful as Edward looked to her confused. If she wasn't a homunculus...what was she? He started to register what she said along with the events up until now. That guy, Itachi who faced off against Shadow, he showed they were super fast. Plus they hardly moved about during the day. They appeared around dawn or late in the night. Most of time he saw her or Itachi visit they hardly ate anything. Only a few snacks here and there, rarely a large dinner. Both were pale. Plus Sarah said she needed to kill in order to survive....it then clicked as he felt silly at the end result but he just had to ask.

"A....vampire?" Edward asked, ready to duck in case she flung something at him for daring to compare her to those sparkly freaks in the Twilight movies. Instead he looked to her stunned when she smirked, pearly white fangs glinting in the moonlight while she laughed softly.

"You sure are a bright one. Yes I'm a vampire, and no I don't sparkle like your pal Armstrong. What I offer to you Edward....the reason I brought you out here...is to give you the ability to get your arm and leg back and your brother's body. The price though; would have to be sacrificing your humanity in order to wield the crimson stone after you defeat my master. It is not so bad though Ed, beautiful and young forever, and strength and speed beyond your wildest dreams along with a few other perks. I want to know though...will you take my deal?" She then asked curiously, tilting her head to the side while she waited for Edward's answer as he closed his eyes upon hearing this, wanting to know what he should do....

"The heck you doing out here this late anyways?" Shadow asked Tifa, glaring towards Gluttony who tried to inch towards Tifa as said sin whimpered and backed away again. "No Glut, she is off limits." He growled out, sounding more dangerous than he wanted. Tifa snorted as she waved a dismissive hand.

"Not like I was stalking you big boy so don't get your hopes up. I am just waiting for a delivery truck to drop me off some more supplies for my tavern is all. I should be asking you that question though." Tifa retorted, a smirk coming to her lips while her red hues eyed the raven and red haired male before her. Shadow murred some as he looked off to the side tucking his hands into his pockets.

"I live in that warehouse that's why. Gluttony caught you sniffing around our turf and without my permission tried to take an unwanted sample taste out of you. Think of him as a big hungry guard dog." Shadow exclaimed calmly while he then pat the homunculus on the head. "Don't worry though, he won't hurt you less I give the say so." He then added when he sensed the bruntte's unease towards the chubby fella who was currently sucking on his index finger. When the truck finally came pulling into view Tifa then smiled towards the other.

"Alright, and hey want to help me lug these things into the back of my truck? After all Alphonse and Ed aren't here at the moment, plus it would get me off your turf faster." Tifa asked as Shadow shrugged and nodded, going to help her with the aforementioned task. When the last three crates were loaded into her truck, Shadow looked over his shoulder with curious eyes when he heard a loud clanking ring through the street then saw Alphonse come around the corner.

"I think you are a little late, we got this handled Al so don't worry." Tifa stated to the suit or armor who shook his head then at her statement.

"N..no no it's not that. It's brother he's in trouble I think!" Alphonse stated, opening his previously clenched fist to reveal Edward's silver pocket watch. "He went chasing after that girl Sarahfina three hours ago. I went looking for him and I found this in one of the allies! Brother would never let this lay around, she probably kidnapped him or something!" Al said in a shaky voice as Tifa's eyes widened before she pat Alphonse on the arm.

"It's ok Al calm down. We'll find your brother keep your cool. Ed wouldn't want to see you all shaken up like this. Let's just go get Mus-"

"No...I know where he is. He isn't in trouble. As far as I know about Sarah he should be doing alright...let's hope so at least if he took the offer." Shadow said, cutting off Tifa while both looked to him with curious eyes.

"W..what offer? What do you mean?" the armor asked, voice still shaky as the older male turned and walked towards the warehouse.

"You just head back kid, I'll find your brother for you. All you have to do is keep an eye on Tifa. Don't worry he's probly doing fine. Depending on his answer though to Sarah...he might have something in common with you once he comes back." Shadow stated. Before Alphonse could ask what he meant, all four jumped when gunshots rang out in the warehouse along with a string of curses. "Dammit Louis, that idiot needs to get kicked in the head!" the male then hissed, dashing inside followed closely by Gluttony. Tifa and Al being curious too also went to see what the ruckus was about. When they got there they could see Louis pointing a gun at the two males Alphonse saw from the train station in the black coats and shade hats. The blonde was hiding behind the crouched down male who had a huge tail jutting from the back of his coat at the bottom and a dead body of what looked like a baker or a chef lay nearby.

"We don't want any trouble, we were just dumping our meal un! Those military guys are sniffing too much around our old dumping spots so we had to put it somewhere else yeah!" Deidara yelled out as Sasori nodded.

"We chose here because that fat thing would hopefully eat it, and dispose of the evidence. Trust me we didnt want to sneak onto your turf boy, but we had no choice!" Sasori growled out, both looking to Shadow when he walked over and placed his hand on Louis's gun, lowering it.

"As long as it's that, and not trying to pin us for the killings, than alright. But mark my words, you try to get us in trouble and I'll make you all regret it." Shadow said darkly as Deidara nodded quickly as Sasori just scoffed, unphased by Shadow's threat.

"M...meal?" Al said, both him and Tifa looking very confused now, then looking away when Shadow sent the large sin over to gobble up the dead man as Shadow then looked back to the duo.

"Oh by the way, you know where Sarah is? I need to fetch the runt, obviously she didnt give Alphonse the memo she gave you and me." the raven haired male asked as Sasori and Deidara looked to each other as the shorter man then looked back to Shadow.

"Probly at her old mansion near the outskirts of the city. I wouldnt brother dashing straight in there though, she made it so you cant bust right in. Considering the fact she has a barrier up. After all she wants to make sure there are no inneruptions when she gives Edward the offer." Sasori said calmly as Shadow snorted.

"Well I'll give her thirty minutes when I go there, if Edward isent out by then, well I'm busting down that barrier. After all that kid is to be kept alive for a reason, he made a promise to his brother." Shadow said before he turned and headed out of the warehouse. "Louis, take Tifa and Alphonse back to the tavern and wait there with em. If I aint back in a few hours come with your best weapons." Shadow yelled over his shoulder.

"Tch dont get my hopes up holmes." Louis said with an amused grin, getting up as he slung his gun over his shoulder, following Tifa and Alphonse back out to their truck. When Al went to ask the two others what they meant by meal, once again they were out of sight, having vanished. The ride back home was quiet, but Alphonse didnt know what to say to a guy that tried to shoot them a awhile ago. Once they

headed inside Tifa and Alphonse went to stack the bottles in their rightful places, surprisingly even Louis helped them out.

"You know you dont have to...you are the guest after all." Tifa said with a smile as Louis shook his head emptying another crate as he began to stack the wine bottles.

"Nah nah, aint nothing cool about being a freeloader; ya smell me holmes? I want to put my part in too." Louis said with a grin as Tifa nodded, after all he had a point. And who was she to object? Once the bottles were all stacked, Alphonse sat down next to Louis, looking to him uneasily.

"Um...about what those guys said...what did they mean by...meal? And what is Sarah offering my brother...?" Alphonse asked softly to the latino raven haired teen. Louis sighed at this, closing his dual colored eyes.

"Well big guy...all I can say is that there is scarier things out there far more terrifying than Gluttony. Dont worry though your brother will still be himself when he comes back...he'll just be on a liquid diet is all." He stated, only further confusing Alphonse who then looked out the window with a nod.

"I...hope so. I just hope he is doing ok...wherever he is." Al stated while he clasped his hands together nervously, trying to calm his nerves.

After a few minutes of quiet that filled the dark musty room, Edward then looked up with a wide grin. "You had me at the ability to be one step closer to get my brother's body back. Sure immortality is a nice touch, but if I have to sacrifice my humanity in order to use this all mighty stone that makes the philosopher's stone look like a piece of cheap costume jewelry, then so be it! I would give up my soul to the devil himself if it meant the return of my brother's body. I'd do anything to set my errors right. So let's have this power, I'm not afraid." Ed said in an excited yet confident tone. Hearing this surprised Sarah, she had thought Edward would refuse it, saying it was wrong or call her a demon; something along those lines. That he would try to run or try to fight her. Boy this kid sure was full of surprises. Smiling she got to her feet, then vanishing as she reappeared behind Ed, wrapping her arms around his shoulders, fingers lacing the top buttons of his uniform.

"Are you sure about this Edward? There is no turning back once I strip you of your humanity. No way to turn you into a human again." She asked in a soft voice just next to his ear. The alchemist blushed darkly at how close she was to him. Smiling he shrugged while chuckling.

"Hey I committed one ultimate sin already, giving up my humanity shouldnt be that big of a deal. After all you have to break a few eggs to make an omelet." Ed said calmly, causing Sarah to smirk further before she guided the shorter male over towards a nearby couch that was a dark red, and looked as if it hadnt seen a duster in years. Placing him down on it the raven haired girl wasted no time at all, yanking the uniform jacket top off Edward's body while she then pulled his black muscle shirt's left strap down, the girl now sitting in his lap. She smiled at him playfully, making him lean back against the couch more while she slid her fingernails down his cheek. Edward could help but blush deeply at this. After all he hadnt been this close to a girl since...well never.

"Just relax Eddie...it will only hurt for a few moments. Then it will feel quite nice afterwards." Sarahina whispered into the blonde's ear as he gulped giving a nervous nod. His eyes widened when he saw her

eyes silver, pupils turning catlike as her fangs were bared. Then in a flash they dug into his left collar bone as he let out a cry of pain, head jolting back while he shut his eyes tightly. It felt as if he was getting jabbed with two needles and a deep fire was getting injected into him. However just as she had promised, the pain began to fade, a sort of soothing sensation, like a tingling began to replace the burning as his body relaxed. He could feel himself all the while growing colder and weaker, his vision beginning to blur. When we began to teeter on the line of consciousness he then felt her pull away, and watched as she then bit down into her wrist, enough to draw a good amount of blood as the red liquid dripped onto the sofa's cushions next to his leg. She then looked to Edward and reached out, leaning his head up as she held her wrist up to him.

"Drink...drink from me Edward and eternity shall be your's." She then whispered soothingly. Ed wrinkled his nose at the penny-like smell of the liquid. To drink someone's blood made his stomach rile up a little on the inside. What was he thinking of?! No he didnt want this now. But then a flicker of Alphonse shot through his mind. How Alphonse needed him. This panicked him, no he made a promise to Alphonse that he would get his body back no matter what. There was nothing he wouldnt give. Leaning up with the firey determination that was his only means of moving him now, he bit down into the bleeding wound and began to drink from it like a calf to it's mother's udder. At first it tasted like he had a mouth full of pennies in his mouth...but then the taste became more welcoming. As he fed he could see memories..memories that didnt belong to him flash through his mind's eye.

A man with raven spiked hair and deep blue eyes, wearing a purple sleeveless turtle neck with matching baggy pants, a huge sword strapped to his back. He was laughing as he tossed a little raven haired girl up in the air before catching her again. A woman with silver hair and green eyes sitting not too far off in a victorian blue and red dress. No doubt the little girl was Sarah, the two older beings her parents.

Another man stood nearby, long silver hair and green eyes adorned in a black trenchcoat with knee high matching boots. Metal shoulderpads on his shoulders and a long katana strapped to his belt on his right hip, two other males beside him one looking like a slightly older version of Sarah's father only with his hair smoothed back more, and a scar on his face. The other no doubt was closer to Sarah's father's age, long brown shoulderlength styled hair, bright blue eyes, and a jacket of red with black trim. No doubt it was Sarah's birthday they were attending, due to the cake that was on the picnic table nearby. Everyone looked happy and content, a young Sarah happily chasing after the silver haired man with her toy sword, jabbing him in the knee as the man acted like she wounded him, falling over dramatically as everyone laughed. "Haha got you uncle Seph! I am the best warrior now!" The young Sarah exclaimed.

"You sure did little one. But you have a long way before you can beat me." The silver haired man said, sitting up as he ruffled the little girl's hair. Sarah nodded as she then flailed her arms.

"You just wait uncle Sephy, I'll be as strong as my daddy one day. The best soldier ever in the whole wide world!" Sarah exclaimed proudly causing said male to grin hugging her from behind.

"That's my lil angel!" he stated.

Another memory now came, this one much different. Fire was everywhere, screams of terror rang through a burning city as the buildings crumbled in on themselves, unable to withstand the intense flames. A young Sarah was curled up in her mother's arms, crying loudly as she reached out towards her father who was kneeling down, holding onto his sword for support, covered in blood. A man stood a

few feet away, the silhouette and the sword making it obvious who the man was. It was this Uncle Seph from the earlier memory.

"Daddy no dont! Come with us he'll hurt you! Uncle Sephy went bad please daddy dont fight him!" Sarah screamed out, tears streaming down her face as she tried to pull away from her mother's arms. The man turned, giving her a soft smile as he wiped some of the blood from his forehead.

"Dont worry baby girl. Daddy is going to be ok. You and mommy get to safety ok? Daddy Zackers doesnt want this creep to hurt you. There is nothing I wouldnt give to make sure you are out of harm's way, I promise. Now please let daddy keep that promise ok? I love you both very much." The man now known as Zack said, turning as he then charged towards the silver haired male, sword raised high as Sarah screamed out reaching for him more as the mother turned and ran, the smoke that rose blocking out her vision of her father.

"Enough!" Sarah yelled withen reality, yanking her arm away from Edward as he yelped and fell backwards, landing on the floor with a hard 'thunk'. His heart was racing a mile a minute and he was doing all he could to keep from crying.

"Tho..those visions...they felt so...so real." Edward said weakly as Sarah nodded rubbing at her wrist as it started to rapidly close up.

"Yes those were my memories. When a vampire is turning another; their memories are shown to the one consuming the life blood of the doner. I'll explain them later if you wish. Right now though you have to brace yourself." Sarah said then as Ed looked to her curiously. However before he could even get out the question a sharp pain jolted through him as he gasped, his head shooting back as he dug his hands into the carpet, a scream of pain escaping his lips. His whole body felt as if it was being put through a meat grinder. Dammit why didnt she warn him about this?! Well if she had he probly would have backed down. No darn it he made a vow, no matter what he'd pull through, for Alphonse. He could feel his heartbeat start to slow down to dangerous levels, he could hardly feel it but he knew it was still going, just barely. The nails on his left hand, they became longer and sharper, glinting in the light now as they felt hard as diamond. As he let out another cry of pain, his canines grew and sharpened, now officialy fangs that set the whole look off. All the while his senses became stronger, but all at once when this hit him it left him dazed. Once the pain started to fade away and he finished thrashing about on the floor, he sat up and rubbed his forehead, sweating up a storm. When he looked around, he could hear soo much better. He could hear clocks all the way downstairs in the rooms below as if he was standing next to them. His eyes, it was like he was looking at everything in high definition, not even the small mouse nibbling on a piece of bread in the shadows down the hall could escape his eyes. The scents now, they were soo strong he could smell that the bread the mouse was nibbling on was texas garlic bread. Wow...this was defiently a step up the ladder.

"You have been born anew Eddie, welcome to the night life." Sarah said playfully moving up behind Ed as she rested an arm on his shoulder, causing said blonde to smirk at her words as his gaze still held on the rooms before him.

"Thanks for this. Don't worry Alphonse....before you know it you'll be in your old body in no time at all. I promise." Ed said aloud while he closed his eyes.

8 - Myth and realities fine lines

It is good to see you again. I am sorry to have kept you waiting so long. But even I myself get slightly distracted with everyday life from time to time. However let's not keep you waiting any longer. As you should know, Edward was just turned into a child of the night, an immortal vampire. What powers will he now possess thanks to this dark gift, and what future events await him and his brother as their destinies intertwine with that of Sarah's clan and Shadow's group? Let's find out.

Shadow stalked through the vast city of Central, this was such a pain. Why couldn't the brat have bit him somewhere closer? No she had to go all the way to her damn mansion near the edge of the city. Such a pest she was at times. Not to mention he couldn't risk speeding through the town, what with all the soliders still roaming about. However when he passed a nearby alleyway...something felt off. He stopped and looked towards the black shadowy area for a few minutes. Seeing nothing moving he just pegged it for a cat and continued walking, not noticing a hooded male with dark greyish skin and red eyes creep out from the alley, watching him as he sneered with a row full of sharp teeth glinting in the moonlight.

At the mansion Shadow was headed for; Edward was currently resting on the couch, head in Sarah's lap while she had an ice pack on his forehead. This of course was due to the fact that after a human is turned into a vampire, they obtain a massive headache. That is because they are still trying to get used to their super enhanced senses. It would be like putting on a pair of super powerful prescription glasses somewhat for a weak eyed person. After a few more minutes of the clock ticking being the only sound in the dark dusty room, the blonde decided to break the silence while he stared out the window.

"So; I'm curious. What is fact about a vampire, and what is fiction?" Edward asked in a soft tone, glancing up at Sarah who in turn chuckled softly, eyes locking with Edward's as she smiled.

"I don't blame you for being curious. And it would be wrong of me not to tell you. So ask away Elric." Sarah exclaimed with a playful smile to her features, said alchemist nodding as he thought.

"The stake thing, true? Not to mention the mirror thing too." He asked, sitting up a little since he was starting to feel the headache subside just a tad bit as he now held the ice pack to his head himself while he awaited Sarah's response.

"If the stake is stabbed into the heart and left there yes. Otherwise if it's removed, the heart will quickly mend itself and we'll revive. So in other words it is a sort of half death state we are put in when staked. The mirror thing is very silly. We can see ourselves clearly in the mirror as anyone else can. If we couldn't, we wouldn't be such wonderful dressers." Sarah replied in a playful tone causing Ed to nod, feeling silly for asking the mirror myth now since she proved a great point.

"Alright then, holy artifacts, silver, and shapeshifting?" Edward now then asked after thinking for a few minutes, Sarah being quick to respond to this as she boredly looked at her nails as if she had been interviewed like this a hundred times before, which probably no doubt she was.

"Only truly evil black hearted vampires; such as my grandfather will get hurt by objects blessed by

saints and what not. Otherwise they are harmless to good hearted vampires such as myself and defiantly you. Silver is meant for lycans, not vampires so no it wont hurt us. Now the shapeshifting, it varies on the vampire's age and of course power. Mostly fledglings such as yourself will morph into something...eh something domestic. But with enough practice and training you would work your way up to something large and powerful such as a grizzly bear or tiger. And if you let enough years pass with more training, you could morph into a huge demon or dragon like some of the legendary purebloods of this world. Also time is limited in morphing. If you train well enough you could work your way up to a good hour or so. But if not you'd have ten minutes at least before morphing back to your orginal state, which wouldnt be good if you were out in public, since a vampire lacks clothes when they morph back. But with enough training and power at your disposel, you could make it so that days pass before you have to revert back to human state." Sarahfina then exclaimed, all the while being careful at saying the dreaded 's' word around Edward when it came to what type of animal he would be able to morph into at first. This was due to the glare Edward shot her way when she nearly said it; however managed to quickly save herself by saying domestic instead.

"Alright...how about mind reading and telepathy?" Edward asked, leaning back against the couch alittle more now while he continued to watch her, his headache starting to fade completly now since he was getting used to his senses.

"Unless the person has a very strong mental will power, we can read minds like home movies and open books." Sarah stated softly, stretching her hands over her head idly.

"And yes we can mind speak...or use telepathy as you stated. Fledglings can do this well enough without training, not to mention it comes in handy in situations where a vampire pack is split up and need to locate one another." Sarah then said to Ed mentally as she gave him a coy smirk.

"Interesting, wish I could read minds without having to train though, bet you have quite an interesting life story." Edward responded back mentally himself, catching Sarah off guard that he was already a natural at this for a first timer. Then again he probly read about telepathy in the tons of books he's obtained over the years when it came to myths. However she murred lightly at his statement, closing her eyes as she flicked her fingers, causing Edward to yelp as he was shoved by an invisible force off of the couch, faceplanting.

"Try it and see what happens you lil peeper. They say if a theif is caught stealing, his hands are cut off. Your fate would be much more grim I do think so. Dont try me, cause I would cut your eyes out with no hesitation Eddie." Sarah then said in a sweet yet creepy tone, causing the blonde to gulp lightly as he laughed nervously rubbing his head.

"Ehehehe I was just kidding...no need to get touchy. But anyways, what the hell did you just use there?" Edward said, getting to his feet dusting his pants off before looking to her once more with curiosity.

"Telekinesis. The abilty to move objects of any size or shape with one's sheer mind power. There is also the TK blast, which is a small focused blast of power sending said object flying away from the user. This also comes in handy in day to day life, plus it helps greatly in battle. There are also other uses of telekinesis too. Itachi would be happy to show you these abilities considering it's been awhile since him and Sasori trained a fledgling." Sarah stated, smiling calmly as she stated this as Edward beamed at the mention of training.

"That's perfect! And we could train downstairs in Tifa's hidden room we built for such a thing. Trust me it's big enough to fit an army in there, plus we are always expanding the room. We even put in a lounge next to it for relaxing after a long day's work out." Edward stated, being somewhat thrilled at the thought of being able to test out his new abilities with skilled vampires such as Itachi. After all, what he did to Shadow that night was very impressive, he disabled him with just a look. The thought of doing that to Roy made Edward smirk evilly as his mind drifted. Or better yet, morphing into a huge monster of some sort as he chased the skirt chasing colonel down for daring to call him a midgit all these years.

"Edward...of course you know you have to keep this a secret from the military. You don't want to be a lab rat do you?" Sarah then said, having read Edward's thoughts even though she pretty much didn't need to since his evil sinister grin said it all on what he was thinking. Upon hearing this Ed's face dropped as he turned around.

"Aw damn...can't I at least mess with the jerk a little? Like tk blasting him down a flight of stairs...or ambushing him in the guise of a crow or dog and chasing him down the street?" the blonde then asked with a meek hopeful grin, this of course getting a laugh out of the ravenette who covered her mouth.

"I don't see any harm in that. Just don't kill him. But anyways, onto other matters. Feeding; yes we need blood. It sometimes varies on the nature of the vampire though. If they are super evil or a fat glutton they will usually be biting others like crazy or raping red cross blood banks. However if it's a good natured or old vampire, then usually a month or two will pass before they need to really feed. Otherwise we sustain ourselves with food here and there to get by. And also vampires don't hate garlic, I in fact love garlic toast. However a fledgling needs to feed right away. If a week were to pass and it hasn't fed, the vampire would starve and perish, falling into a death like state until blood were to touch it's lips. Another way to kill a vampire, is death by fire and scattering of the ashes. If the ashes aren't scattered the vampire will come back to life again. And the most violent way is to rip it's heart out and destroy it. Because even if the heart is ripped from the vampire's body, it would still be able to function if it were placed back inside it's chest. Without the heart the vampire cannot go on, makes sense right?" Sarah said, causing Edward to nod as he shuddered at the thought. Damn even decapitation couldn't stop a vamp. He assumed as with Greed from what Alphonse said; that their heads just grew back like a freaky lizard hybrid.

"So...how old are you exactly?" Edward asked, soon regretting this when he got a pillow to his face, a heavy one, oofing and falling back on the floor twitching while Sarah snorted, her left eye twitching.

"You should know when it comes to talking to a woman never to ask their age Fullmetal. But if you must know, I'm around 467 years old. But you know damn well I look good for my age!" She snapped as Ed held his hands up defensively.

"Easy easy I was just curious is all and yes you look very good for your age..." Ed said quickly, blushing then when he realized how that came out which earned him a playful grin from Sarah as she tilted her head.

"Well you just saved yourself there Eddie. And also I saw you were curious on regeneration, yes our heads would grow back. Plus if one were to get hacked to bits, they would reassemble. Not even one's hair can be cut off without it growing back in a mere few hours. So if you had plans of your hair being cut

short, kiss them goodbye cause it's just going to continue growing now." she then stated making a playful waving motion with her left hand as Edward sighed in relief. Now if that bastard Mustang tried to burn his ponytail off like he did a year ago on April's fool day, he'd be in for a rude awakening to see it wouldnt have an effect for long. He was ready to ask another question about what other powers a vampire possessed, when he blinked and looked to the right towards the door, sensing an immense power level coming towards them.

"What's wrong?" Sarah asked, getting to her feet when she saw Ed's hard yet curious gaze. That question was soon answered when the door was kicked open; Shadow stepping through it with a bored look, hands in his vest pockets.

"Good you're still alive. So you took the offer...smart kid." Shadow said, Edward's eyes narrowing as he clapped his hands, shifting his automail arm into a blade as he then pointed it in Shadow's direction.

"The hell you doing here?! Back for more of me are you huh? Well I'm not going to be soo easy to kill this time around!" Edward snapped as Shadow gave him a dull look, walking up to him as he shoved the blonde backwards, knocking him into the couch with such force it flipped the whole thing over as Sarah jumped squeaking, her dark blue eyes glaring at Shadow now.

"Put that away and quit acting tough shrimp. I'm not here to kill you. I made a promise to your big sis of sorts to not hurt you or Alphonse when she mended my injuries awhile ago." the raven haired male exclaimed, idly scratching at his ear while he spoke, wanting to be anywhere else but this dusty old oversized shack.

"DONT CALL ME A SHRIMP YOU EMO JONAS BROTHER REJECT!" Edward barked out, leaping up over the couch while had to be held back by Sarah while he struggled. "Then why the hell are you here? I doubt it's to mock me!" he then asked after calming his nerves, Shadow then turning to walk off.

"To fetch you, since Alphonse is worrying like crazy along with Tifa about you. Considering the ice brat over here forgot to mention to Al and Tifa that she was taking you over to her home." Shadow then said, eyes locking on Sarah who in turn gave a nervous laugh.

"Whoops...my bad." She said, letting go of the Elric as he cursed and sweatdropped.

"Oh damn Alphonse! He's probly worried sick...and Tifa's gonna clobber me for making her worry. Yeah we better head back." Ed stated, praying to the highest heavens Tifa wouldnt send him through the wall for forgetting to check in during the seven whole hours he had stayed here. Turning he quickly followed after the taller male. He stopped however and looked over his shoulder. "Hey Sarah you coming?" he then asked, surprising her. You'd think he'd say bye to her and want to check in later. This blonde constantly confused her with the way he wore his heart on his sleeve. And another thing baffled her too...how was Edward able to locate Shadow's aura before herself? Especially when he went to the trouble of surpressing it.

"Oh right, coming!" Sarah stated, smiling to herself as she joined up with Edward, all of them managing after awhile to head back to the tavern. Alphonse was the first to greet Edward, running over and hugging him tightly as the blonde eeped and flailed.

"Brother you're alright! I was worried you were dead or hurt or something worse!" Alphonse stated, Louis

chuckling at this scene as it brought back faint memories of his own past that he shared with his cousin. Shadow walking past the others while he then took a seat at the bar.

"Ack Al it's good to see you too...however you are crushing my ribs!" Edward said between gritted teeth, said suit of armor sweatdropping as he placed his older brother back on his feet chuckling.

"Sorry...just that I was worried is all. You gave me quite a scare...are you alright? You look alittle pale." Al stated, noticing the change alittle in Ed's skintone against the tavern overhead lights, Sarah looking away some while Edward himself nodded smiling.

"I'm just fine...I'll tell you later though incase you are curious. Right now though I am beat. Very long night it was that's for sure." The older Elric exclaimed with a loud yawn, covering his mouth while he did this so Al or Tifa couldnt see his new longer canines.

"What about Sarah...? Did she kidnap you?" Alphonse then asked after a few moments, turning his gaze to the female who had taken up a nearby chair as she sweatdropped feeling the suit of armor's gaze on her. Sure he was harmless in nature. But if he wanted to he could really kick some tail, and her kidnapping his brother would give him a good reason to pummel her if he was that type of person. Luckily Edward stepped in and patted Al's arm.

"Nah she's clean Al. She took me to her house and I asked her about everything. She's innocent of the crimes. Though this means we are still on a goose chase with that copycat killer." Edward then said, being very quick to think up a lie on the spot. Though still he didnt like to lie to his younger brother...however he couldnt exactly tell Alphonse right now what Sarah was...what he was.

"Oh alright, I'm sorry to have accused you of kidnapping my brother miss Sarah, I hope you can forgive me." Al then said, turning as he gave a light bow to the girl who smiled and waved a dismissive hand.

"Dont worry about it, I'm used to people judging me too quickly anyways. It's not really your fault." Sarah stated as Tifa smiled walking over to both Elrics, lightly clonking the older one upside the head as he yelped.

"You could have saved us both a few hours of worrying by calling you know. I gave you that cellphone for a reason." Tifa said in a stern yet gentle tone, Edward grumbling as he looked away, Tifa's red hues now resting on Sarah. "Plus I guess you would like to shack up here too? Shadow told me it's quite a hike up to your place, and I wouldnt want you taking forever to come here each day to see Eddie. So how about it, I got a few spare rooms anyways that are just collecting dust." she then added, Sarah blushing some at the mention of her coming to just see Edward while Alphonse gave a playful chibi hamper face at Edward's dark blush too.

"I would love to stay to be with all of you. It would be selfish to be here just to see the cute alchemist. You all seem like a wonderful kind bunch to hang with." Sarah said in a sweet tone, Shadow snorting at this statement since she had him pegged way off as Louis snickered at Shadow's response. "Also a few friends of mine are coming over too, to help Edward with some training." Sarah then added. But before Tifa could get out the question of what type, Shadow got to his feet when someone had walked through the door. His hardened gaze on the hooded man was very unnerving.

"Hey the bar's closed fella, sorry to have fooled you with the lights and all." Tifa said to the man. However he did not move, his gaze resting on Shadow as he breathed heavily behind his scarf. "Didnt you hear me...? I said the bar is clo-" Hoever she didnt get a chance to get the last part out, the man letting out a loud inhuman screech as he dove towards Shadow, claws and teeth being bared as he tackled the duel haired male into the kitchen, the others getting to their feet quickly as more howls rang out, more hooded figures leaping in through the windows while more came barreling through the doors.

"The hell is going on?!" Edward yelled, eyes widening as four of the hooded males with razor sharp teeth surrounded him, Tifa, Alphonse, and Sarah. However the group had no clue that was far more threatning things heading towards the bar, massive hulks of humans that let out rib rattling roars as they stormed through the streets like massive bulldozers. On the otherside of the city two figures stood, one bald and over muscular while the other was short and stout with black spiked hair, both adorned in samurai looking white and gold armor.

"The hunt is on. Let's see if that little clan can withstand our new army." The shorter of the two males said, both males then bursting into wicked laughter that carried on the harsh winds.

9 - Thriller Night; awakening of the unholy sin

Good to see you again my curious lover of stories. I do apologize for keeping you waiting, once more I have been distracted with everyday ho-hum life. Plus the paper and pencil also have a habit of beckoning to me. To make up for my absence, I shall not keep you any longer. Where we last left off, the gang had encountered a nasty surprise of monsters invading the bar and city. Not only that but it seems a much more threatening power is controlling them, plus Edward will gain a new ally of sorts to help him defeat this threat. But whom? Well let us find out shall we?

"What's going on, what the hell are these things?!" Edward yelled over the screeches of the hooded creatures, managing to punch a few away with his automail fist, Alphonse throwing kicks and punches and sometimes the beasts themselves in order to protect his brother, Tifa, and Sarah. All four ducked however when one of the hooded male's heads was blasted clean off, then turning to see Louis standing on the bar holding his sawed off shotgun.

"They're undead holmes, or to be more specific, hunters. Someone's either brought that damn virus here, or is leading those things here through my homeworld." Louis replied, growling as he kicked another hunter hard in the face before blasting it through the gut, the creature collapsing dead.

"Y...you mean zombies?! Great what else you going to tell me, the tooth fairy exists and is sharing an apartment with the great pumpkin?!" Edward hollared, clapping his hands as he then transmuted his arm into a blade, spearing another hunter in the face, ducking when Sarah sent a blast of ice at three more of the creatures whereas Tifa managed to get a clearing as she headed for the kitchen.

"Well sometimes fact is stranger than fiction." Sarah responded, following after Tifa. Both stopped however when the hunter from earlier was sent flying out of the room, before five green glowing arrows shot from the kitchen, impaling the zombie-fied human.

"Damn pests...thought I'd be rid of them here." Shadow muttered, stepping out of the room as Tifa looked to him. He noticed her expression as he then waved a dismissive hand. "I'm fine, i've tangled with these things before." He then stated, looking up when a loud roaring filled the air as the glasses on the racks began to shake. "The hunters are the least of our worries it appears. Ed, Al, Sarah, Louis. Let's go, before those things try to trample the bar." Shadow stated, eyes narrowing as he walked calmly out of the bar, Alphonse looking to him uneasily.

"What...things?" he asked nervously, not liking the sound of those thunderous roars as Sarah didn't ask questions, following after the ravenette with Louis close behind and Edward bringing up the rear.

"Tanks holmes. And trust me they aint a walk in the park. Good thing I had snatched more ammo before this heh." Louis replied, only making the two Elrics all the more uneasy with his words. Well at least Shadow wasn't nervous. If he had been they'd defiantly be worried. Tifa had decided to stay behind, someone needed to watch the bar incase more hunters came bursting in. Luckily they had finished off all of the hooded freaks before they had left. Once the group had run a three good blocks, they soon understood why this verion was called 'Tank'. The two hulking beasts were enormous and brimming with

gross bulbus muscles of rotting flesh and had tiny heads just barely peeking out of their shoulders. Try to think of Mr. Hyde from League of extraordinary gentlemen for their appearances, only grey and rotting.

"Well...there's something you dont see everyday." Sarah exclaimed, making a face at seeing them while Ed just smirked some, getting over his fears a tad bit.

"They shouldnt be too hard if they are all muscle. Bigger they are, harder they fall, right Al?" Edward then stated, nudging Al as the older brother gave a light nod.

"Enough chatting, let's dust these freaks." Louis yelled, firing off his shot gun which alerted the beasts. Turning they roared and hammered their chests likek giant apes before thundering towards the group, one grabbing a nearby car and flinging it violently towards them. Reacting to this, Ed and Alphonse ran forward clapping their hands and slamming them onto the ground. This caused a huge wall of concrete to shoot upwards, the car ramming into said wall and exploding in a firey blaze. While this happened Sarah and Louis ran from both sides of the wall, Sarah blasting ice shards towards the beasts while Louis shot round after round at them. Shadow leapt over the top, literally diving at one of the beasts as he dropkicked it hard in the jaw, defiently taking Ed off guard at how strong he was considering the tank was sent flying like a rag doll.

"Remind me not to piss him off again." Edward said to an equally surprised Alphonse before he then dashed out from behind the wall, clapping his hands as he slammed them into the street again, sending a row of jagged spikes at the dazed tank. Being too large and unable to move in time, the beast was impaled on one of the spikes, roaring and flailing like a helpless wounded animal. This gave Louis a wide opening who greatfully took it, sneering as he blasted half the tank's face off, killing it on the spot. "That's one. Now the other." Ed then stated, readying himself since the next tank had noticed it's comrad's death was Ed's handywork. It roared and slammed it's fist into the ground, causing said ground to shake as Ed yelped losing his footing. Thankfully Sarah ran out infront of him, smirking while she sent a whip made of freezing water slashing across the monster's face. It howled staggering backwards, having been temporarily blinded by this as Alphonse helped Ed up.

"Brother are you alright?" Al asked, Ed nodding as he regained his composure.

"Thanks Sarah. I owe you one there." Ed then called, Sarah nodding to this as she kept assaulting the tank before Shadow moved in to make the finishing blow, smashing the beast's head in like a rotted melon. Wiping his hands off on his pants, Shadow then looked about with a frown.

"There has to be more of them freaks around here. I doubt there would be just a few hunters and tanks." Shadow muttered. As he said this, Edward blinked, feeling a tingling sensation all over him as his heart pulsed. Looking towards the east he then glared.

"There is, somewhere that way; there's a bunch of those big guys and a few more different zombies. They're attacking another location it seems." Edward stated, running in that direction as Louis and Al quickly followed.

"He did it again...how is he doing this?" Sarah thought to herself in surprise, considering Ed had once more sensed something before her. Maybe it was one of his dark gifts he had recieved who knows. Nevertheless she couldnt stand around and think about it. Picking up her pace she followed after

Shadow as Ed led the way. The group had reached a long stretch of alley that was devoid of street lights.

"Hey...does anyone here...crying?" Edward stated, swearing he could hear a few women sobbing. Thinking it was civilians being wounded he picked up his pace, however Louis yanked him back glaring ahead of them. "The hell? What are you doing someone's in trouble!" Ed snapped, only to oof when Louis bonked him upside the head with his gun.

"Shaddup hormiga; that's not people in distress. That's a pack of witches up ahead. It's another type of zombie...nasty agile types with super long claws. You alert them and they'll chase you down, not stopping until they're dining on your flesh." Louis stated, now crouching down as he searched his pockets for his sniper scope. "You have to take em out before they notice you, less you want a hard fight on your hands." he then added. Alphonse and Edward gulped at this, Al backing up a tinybit. However due to his loud clanging feet and the sensitive ears of said creatures, they managed to hear his echoing footsteps as they let out banshee like wails.

"Crap!" Ed yelled, panicking when five of the scrawny females came charging towards them with bloodied teeth bared and glowing eyes as becons in the night. Louis wasted no time, firing off his gun repeatedly. He managed to take down two of them; however there was still three more to deal with. Luckily they werent all that bright, having gone for Alphonse instead of the flesh ones of the group. Alphonse eeped, punching and kicking them away considering their claws were indeed sharp, having left deep claw marks across his chest. Sarah ran over and grabbed one of the witches by her hair before she punched her hard in the face, causing it to stagger back howling and hissing. The two other witches quickly joined their sister of sorts, now circling the group. Shadow glared, getting ready for their next move. Though the group didnt expect what happened next as a shadow flew over the alleyway.

"Take cover un!" a voice yelled from above, Edward nodded, not asking who yelled this as he then trasmuted a hut mave of stone over them all before seeing a flock of white birds go soaring at the witches before attaching to them. Then a heartbeat afterwards they were engulfed in a huge fireball, screaming all the while as they were burnt to ashes. Once the coast was clear, the group came back out, only to be greeted by the blonde from earlier with the ponytail and long bangs. "Hey there un, seems they're all over yeah?" he stated as Sarah sighed.

"Well arent you a sight for sore eyes Deidara." Sarah exclaimed, looking to a curious Edward and Alphonse. "This is one of my comrads I was talking about. Deidara the explosives expert. Dei...as you should know this is Edward and Alphonse. They're joining us." Sarah stated, introducing them to one another as Al gave a small wave while Ed nodded. Deidara quirked a brow before he grinned.

"Ah so you decided to tu- OW! Why'd ya do that un?!" Deidara yowled out, wincing as he hopped around, due to Sarah having kicked him in the shin rather hard.

"Let's not stand around, if those zombies are all over like you claimed then we have to get going. Edward, lead us to where you sensed more of those zombies." Sarah stated, ignoring Deidara's question causing Alphonse to grow curious. Edward sweatdropped at Sarah before he shrugged it off.

"Right, let's move Al!" Ed exclaimed dashing off ahead while the gang followed. Once they made it to said location, they indeed noticed there was an increase in zombie activity. About six tanks were

rampaging about, with hunters dashing about along with a new breed. They appeared to have swollen faces, were hacking, and had super long tongues.

"Wonderful, smokers too. Well at least there's no sign of those damn spitters." Louis muttered, causing Shadow to smirk.

"Lets not jinx us now Lou." Shadow stated, dashing off into the fray to take on the large tanks, leaving Edward to think he was indeed a fan of fighting considering no normal minded person would be so hyped for this. Edward then caught the sight of explosions going off, followed by huge earth shattering attacks.

"Oh god not him..." Edward muttered, making Sarah look to Ed curiously whilst Deidara and Louis followed after Shadow, also taking on the huge tanks. Sure enough Edward's fears had been realized as Roy came into view, snapping his fingers as he sent about seven hunters up in flames. "Dammit why'd it have to be him?! I'd have settled for that brute Armstrong instead but the king of douches?!" Edward then hollared to himself, Sarah sweatdropping now as Alphonse gave a weak laugh.

"Well brother we cant be picky at a time like this. It's better to have more on our side than less. Now let's go help him get rid of these things." Alphonse pointed out, causing Edward to give in as they dashed off in the direction Roy was considering he was getting the attention of more and more of the rotted monsters. Sarah quickly followed after them, freezing the ground at their sides when hunters and smokers attempted to dash towards them, only to faceplant and trip up one another.

"Look out colonel!" Edward yelled, transmuting part of a car nearby as it's grill turned into huge razor sharp blades, Sarah then using her telekinesis to send the blades flying at the smokers and hunters cornering Roy, jabbing them in their stomachs or backs of their heads as they keeled over, lifeless once more. Roy blinked in surprise upon seeing this before smirking smugly towards Ed and Al.

"About time you showed up. Slacking off again I see Fullmetal." Roy said snidely as Edward growled, always hating being around the egotistical jerk.

"Shaddup! You should be thankful I saved your @\$\$ instead of scolding me like a child!" Edward snapped, having to be held back by Alphonse since he was ready to pummel his commanding officer.

"Um guys, now's not the time to bicker!" Sarah yelled, pointing out that about five more smokers had surrounded them during that short amount of time that had transpired.

"Good job fullmetal. Your doging caught their attention." Roy stated, getting into a battle ready position as Ed snarled, doing the same as they glared down the beasts.

"Shove it, if anything it's your show offy attacks that alerted them." Ed shot back, Sarah and Al sighing at this. Sarah quickly summoned up a fleet of ice shards, ready to fire them off. But the smokers were quicker, lashing out their huge tongues as three of them bound her around her arms and waist. Sarah freaked feeling this, losing her concentration as the ice turned to water. This of course didnt go to well for a certian flame alchemist when it drenched him along with the others.

"Argh! Dammit this is not a good night for me." Roy yelled, twitching since his gloves had been soaked

and he had failed to bring a spare pair. Edward would have been laughing at this, but he was busy hacking away at the tongues binding Sarah as the smokers attempted to drag her towards them. A fireball then shot out of the left alley, engulfing the three smokers in the process. Leaving nothing of their bodies behind, except maybe for their tongues which were still attached to Sarah.

"Thanks there colenol, that was a close one." Alphonse called, only to sweatdrop when he noticed Roy was soaked.

"I didnt do that as you can tell." Roy stated, this also stumping the shorter alchemist. All of them then turned when they heard another voice.

"Unlike you flame alchemist. I am just as deadly in a rainstorm as I am on a hot summer night. Plus I dont need gloves to spark my fire." Itachi stated, turning the corner while Sarah beamed.

"Thanks for that Itachi, you're indeed a lifesaver." she stated, allowing Ed to help get the binded tongues off her as she made a slight gagging noise, not a fan of that experience it seemed. Roy however didnt enjoy the statement, snorting lightly as he looked away.

"I dont hear a thank you. You should be lucky we are here at all colenol." Sasori said, coming into view now as he stood next to Itachi, glaring towards Roy with those bloodshot eyes of his.

"Well whoever you are, thanks for your assistance." Roy said in a grumpy tone, not like being outdone by another fireuser. Edward blinked recognizing the red eyed male with raven hair.

"Hey it's you!" he said, pointing to Itachi, but before they could continue the discussion, a tank went flying over them, smashing through the building. Shadow then coming into view followed by Deidara and Louis.

"These attacks cant be random, someone has to be controlling them. Plus they have the scent of your realm Louis." Shadow said, dusting himself off while Louis frowned.

"Who could be behind this though holems? Cant be the guys from before, they're pushing up daisies." Louis stated, scratching his head while Itachi glared some.

"I have a theory...could be those two pests again. They are planet travelers after all. They must have opened a portal and are bringing in those beasts from the otherside." Itachi stated, causing Sasori to snarl.

"No doubt about it, those lil saiyens have been itching to get more turf. Plus they've got no style when it comes to attacks like this. Where could they be though, and where is the portal? They cant be that stupid as to be in the same location as said portal." Sasori then explained as Itachi thought. As the group conversed, Edward felt another twinge. Then he felt as if he was gazing at the town from above before focusing on one spot, zooming in on it as he saw two males standing atop the roof of a building. One was bald and had a mustache, another was short and had gravity defying black hair. Both wore gold armor with blue bodysuits and white gloves.

"I see them! They are on the otherside of the city west of us....and the portal thing...it's to the east of

them. They're a bald guy and a bobblehead spiked hair one. They feel powerful, but not as strong as shadow seperatly." Edward said aloud, alerting the others to them. Roy and Al along with Louis looked baffled at Edward. However Itachi rose a brow before glancing to Sasori.

"Well look at that, we have a dowser in our midsts...that just makes things easier for us." Sasori then stated with a laugh while looking to the blonde. Ed of course looked confused at this statement, but didnt question it when Itachi spoke up.

"Looks like we're going to have to split up. Deidara, you take Louis to the portal and blow it up. We cant have anyomore of those things getting out. Sasori and myself, and Al will head back to the tavern, all the while taking out more of the zombies along the way. Edward, you take Sarah and Roy with you to where those saiyens are. Shadow feel free to step in if they are too much for them." Itachi then stated, Shadow giving a glare towards the other ravenette.

"I'll fight the punks when I feel like it. And i'll have you know fullmetal, the bobblehead is my kill. You can take on baldy." Shadow retorted, turning as he dashed off in the direction of the sayiens. The group watched him take his leave as Deidara then stepped up.

"Well let's not waste time un. Let's go Louis yeah!" Deidara said, bringing out a tiny clay bird before he tossed it into the air, said bird then poofing into a larger version of itself as it then swooped down, Deidara leaping onto it's back as he yanked Louis up onto it too.

"Ack wait I get airsick!!" Louis yelled flailing as they flew off towards the east.

"Right, well we should get moving too. Be careful Fullmetal those two are deadly...and it's the shorter one you should fear." Itachi stated, then turning to dash off. Al turned quickly to Edward.

"Be careful brother, I'll go check on Tifa with them. Show those jerks no mercy!" Alphonse stated, him and Ed bumping knuckles like they always did before the suit of armor ran off after the other two cloaked males.

"Well let's get going. I think Deidara had the right idea." Sarah then said, stepping forward as she bit into her thumb causing it to bleed. Then she pressed said thumb onto the ground as a weird circle formed from the blood. Stepping back a huge puff of smoke exploded from the ground. When the smoke settled Roy and Ed looked on in shock and awe, considering a huge white owl standing at 30 ft with huge orange hues was infront of them. "Shirahago, gonna need a lift if you dont mind. We have to go deal with some pests." Sarah called up to the large bird. It looked down, tilting it's head to the left.

"Indeed it seems so, this air reeks of evil. Let's just make it quick, and you better give me something good to snack on for carrying this human and weak mongrel." the owl replied, causing Ed and Roy to murr some when they sensed those comments were directed at them. Then leaning down Shirahago allowed the three unto her back before she took to the air once they held on tightly. "Now you said they were west right Ed?" Sarah called over the gusting winds, Edward nodding at this. Flapping her wings, the immense owl then flew in said direction as the three held on tightly.

"This is defiently a crazy night. First zombies, now aliens and giant owls." Roy said with a weak smile as Edward chuckled.

"Join the party colenol. I'm going to need to have this all explained to me too once this night is over." Ed replied back, Sarah chuckling to this. It didnt take long for Itachi's group to return to the tavern. They looked around, Al panicking since he had seen signs of a struggle.

"Tifa, are you here?" Al called, eeping and ducking when a smoker went soaring over his head, crashing into a set of tables before he dashed into the next room, just in time to see Tifa body slam another smoker into the floor, crushing it's skull.

"Oh there you are. You guys doing alright out there?" Tifa asked, looking as if she was justing having a regular training session. There wasnt even an ounce of sweat on her let alone an injury. Alphonse went chibi faced in surprise at this while Sasori chuckled.

"Well seems she can take care of herself." Itachi stated, smiling in amusement behind his coat collar.

Off on the otherside of city the two saiyens stood. The bald one murred boredly as he watched the destruction from afar. "Hey Vegeta...when we going to kick some @\$@ ourselves? I mean sure I dont mind those things doing the dirty work for us...but I've been feeling flabby lately." The bald male stated to the shorter of the two. Vegeta sighed, looking off to the side as he tapped at his red colored scouter.

"Patience Nappa, if there is at least one bright one in that group of simpletins, then they'll come sniffing us out in no time and then you can have your fun." Vegeta stated to the male now known as Nappa to grinned eagerly. Vegeta went to say something else, but was cut off when his scouter beeped a warning. "Hmm? Oh what's this? Seems four power sources are coming towards our location. Well looks like your training session is going to kick in sooner than you thought Nappa." Vegeta then stated with a smirk. Sure enough the owl came soaring into view as the two readied themselves.

"Is that them Ed?" Roy asked, Edward nodding to this upon seeing the two. Right in the same location he had seen them in his vision. How he saw that though he had no clue...probly something having to do with what Sasori said.

"No doubt about it. They're giving off much stronger readings than the dead beats attacking the city, they have to be the ones pulling the strings." Edward exclaimed.

"Look at that, one's shorter than you Fullmetal....wait no he's taller due to the hair." Roy then stated, Edward twitching as he was half tempted to shove Roy off the side. Sarah shook her head at this as she sent the owl lower, said owl flapping her wings rapidly. As she did so her feathers released from her wings, shooting like icy shards towards Vegeta and Nappa. The two reacted quickly, leaping out of harm's way just barely, landing on another rooftop.

"Ha ya missed bird brain!" Nappa yelled towards them before the owl landed, glaring at the bald male while Sarah Ed and Roy hopped off it's back.

"Well well well, if it isnt the ice brat. I thought your reading looked familier. And here I thought it was threatening." Vegeta said, laughing in amusement, Sarah murring at this.

"If it isn't the bratty Saiyan prince Vegeta. So after getting your tail kicked around you came crawling back here huh? What's the matter, Goku too much for a big bad monkey like you?" Sarah retorted, causing Vegeta to glare.

"I'd watch your mouth if I were you wench, less you want me to rip out that tongue of yours." Vegeta hissed out, Edward glaring at the man's choice of words before he stepped forward, transmuting his automail arm into a blade.

"Must feel pretty big insulting a female. How about you try taking me on bobble-headed freak?" Edward shot back, smirking as he got into a fighting stance.

"Huh...Vegeta that lil dwarf is smaller than you!" Nappa said, pointing to Ed as Edward twitched. That did it. Roaring he then charged at the bald-headed male, headbutting him as Nappa oofed, being sent rolling as he slammed into a AC system nearby. Vegeta of course laughed in amusement at this.

"Well someone's got some spunk to him. Nappa take care of the bratty blonde. Let's see how tough he is." Vegeta stated, tapping at his scouter while he looked to Roy and Sarah. "I won't bother with you weaklings. Sarah only having 397, the human having 68 and the giant chicken has 300 as power readings. And the blonde has only 400. So he shouldn't be much of a threat to you Nappa." Vegeta then stated, causing Roy to gawk.

"How am I 68 and fullmetal is over 400?! That can't be possible he's human too!" Roy said in utter confusion, snarling as he snapped his fingers. Only to forget that his gloves were still wet causing Vegeta to laugh and Sarah to sweatdrop. She knew why Ed was so strong, but she wasn't going to tell Roy that's for sure. Nappa groaned, sitting up whilst he rubbed the bump on his head, grinning to a seething Edward.

"Heh right-o boss. I'll teach you for making a fool out of me dwarf!" Nappa hollared, dashing at Edward faster than his body let on. Edward quickly ducked just before a fist could connect with his head as he spinkicked. However that wasn't a bright move, considering Nappa had caught him by the leg grinning. Then spinning he flung Edward. Ed yelped, flailing a bit before he caught a flagpole just barely, and using it he propelled himself forward, slamming his foot into Nappa's face. The large male growled and winced, punching Edward hard in the ribs as the alchemist yelled. He swore he felt one of his ribs crack, and that was from just one punch. Despite the pain he kept swinging and punching, matching Nappa hit for hit, unaware at his great increase in speed. Then Nappa started to grow annoyed. "Argh enough! I'll burn you to a crisp, try this on for size shrimp!" Nappa bellowed, now blasting out energy orbs known as Ki blasts. Ed of course didn't expect this, panicking as he dove about to avoid the immense blasts. However this gave him an idea. Thinking quickly he did a few transmutations before taking cover from the next hailstorm of ki blasts, Sarah and Roy taking to the air atop the owl again to prevent getting hit by Nappa's tantrum.

"Grrrr. Where are ya runt?! I'll obliterate ya!" Nappa snarled out. Seeing something in the distance he then dashed towards it. "Ha gotcha!" he yelled, slamming his fist into the blonde, cracking his head clean open. However he blinked noticing his skin felt harder...like steel.

"Nappa you idiot that's a decoy!" Vegeta barked, and just as he said that, the water pipe made to look like Ed burst, assaulting the bald Saiyan in a powerful stream of water as he choked and coughed.

Only to howl when Edward came up behind him, kicking him hard in the shins.

"Thought you could use a shower smelly! Now eat this!" Ed hollared, then slashing Nappa hard in the legs, cutting clear into his tendons as he felt them sever. Said male yelled in pain, punching Edward in the side as he sent him rolling, trying to get to his feet though it was no use.

"Th...the hell you do to me brat?!" He yelled as Edward grinned meekly as he panted.

"I cut the tendons in your legs and sent an electrical jolt through em, they're useless now. So this fight is over." Edward said weakly, slowly getting to his feet. Nappa snarled, the hell it was over. He wanted to tear that midgit apart now. However before he could try to get up again, he looked up upon seeing Vegeta standing next to him.

"Indeed it is. How disappointing you are Nappa. I'd have thought you'd be able to take on a weakling like this with ease. But not only could you do that, but you let him permanently cripple you. And a crippled saiyan is useless to me." Vegeta said, pointing his open palm towards a stunned Nappa. A huge violet colored ray shot off, Nappa screaming in agony before he was incinerated. "Pathetic, seems I have to do everything myself." Vegeta stated, kicking at the ashes a tad before he looked to the blonde, noticing he was glaring daggers at him. "What's with the face? That should make things easier for you now that there is one of us. Well least that's what I would think." Vegeta then said with a light smirk.

"That's not the point! He was your comrad and you outright killed him like a filthy dog! What kind of friend does that you inhumane sadistic bastard!" Edward hollared, getting a laugh from Vegeta who folded his arms.

"Friend? We weren't friends. He worked for me, and when he failed to carry out his orders I eliminated him that's all. Besides even if I had let him live, he would have been useless with those crippled legs. Who's the inhumane one here? Last I checked, you were the one that did that to him runt." Vegeta stated, causing Edward to growl as he dashed forward with automail blade raised. The saiyan grinned, moving out of the way before he reappeared behind Ed, punching him with such a force that it sent him flying off the edge of the building and crashing into another one.

"Edward!" Sarah called, panicking as she went to try and fly after him on the owl, Roy yanking her back.

"Don't, if he can do that to Edward, imagine what he can do to us. Besides you heard the guy; Edward is stronger than us. Don't worry Ed is just getting his second wind. And let's not forget our secret weapon." Roy then said, muttering the last part as Sarah realized what the colonel meant, nodding as they remained watching from the air as Vegeta followed after Edward who had staggered into the warehouse below.

"Dammit...what the hell is this guy?! He makes Armstrong look like a friggin joke." Edward muttered, limping as fast as he could away from Vegeta, trying to find a nice spot to rest so he could catch his breath, all the while thinking up a way to defeat him.

"Aw what's the matter runt? Too scared to fight now? Where's that big mouth now hmm?" Vegeta called out, following Edward's aura via his scouter as he grinned, blasting away obstacles that stood in his path as he casually followed, grinning since he could sense Edward's power level dropping a bit. He then

came to what looked like a dead end. It appeared the blonde had nowhere else to go. "Such a shame, dying like a stray mutt in a cold corner from starvation. Oh well, it's what you get for daring to stand up to someone stronger than you. Time to learn your place boy." Vegeta then stated, turning the corner...only to come face to face with Shadow.

"Hi there...been awhile bobble-head." Shadow stated, smirking as he decked the male hard in the face, sending him reeling backwards as he crashed into a forklift.

"Argh....how the hell did I not pick up on your aura!? Dammit you must have disguised it!" Vegeta roared out, spitting the blood from his mouth whilst he got back up glaring at Shadow as Ed sat nearby panting.

"Thanks Shadow...thought I was a goner for a sec." Ed said weakly as Shadow chuckled.

"Against this guy? Please dont flatter him Fullmetal. Now excuse me I have a score to settle. You just sit tight." Shadow stated, dashing towards Vegeta at blinding speeds, the prince meeting him halfway as the began to battle in mid-air, fists and legs flying in black and blue blurs. Shadow then managed to get another powerful hit in on Vegeta, sending him reeling backwards as the saiyan howled in anguish.

"Grah, pesky rodent...I'll wipe that smirk off your face! Eat this, GALIC GUN!" Vegeta roared out, Shadow glaring as he dove backwards, his own hands glowing now.

"Chaos spears!" he yelled, sending a fleet of glowing green spears towards the huge purple energy orb that was sent his way. Both attacks went off once they met, sending them flying backwards as Ed had to duck for cover behind a huge run-down bulldozer. However they were back at each other's throats again, Vegeta managing to get the upperhand now as he slammed Shadow's face against the wall, the ravenette retorting with a spinkick to Vegeta's stomach which sent him flying back abit. He slammed into a hanging chain, which gave him an idea. When Shadow went flying at him again, he vanished, causing Shadow to slam into it as Vegeta reappeared, binding him in the chain. "Ha..you think this will hold me runt?" Shadow said in amusement as he only got uneasy when Vegeta smirked.

"No, but this will!" Vegeta yelled, blasting off a ki at the other male, causing him to crash into the ground, as Vegeta then kicked a huge large crane over as it toppled over onto him. "Ha...take that you smug jewel loving rodent." Vegeta stated, only to yelp when a huge hand shot out of the ground and seized him, turning to see Edward was the cause.

"Dont forget about me spikey!" Edward yelled, panicking when Vegeta blasted out of the hand, reappearing right infont of Ed.

"Oh dont worry, I havent!" He snapped, kicking Edward hard in the stomach as the blonde screamed in pain, before Vegeta began to punch him repeatedly, and then flinging him onto the one wall. Shadow growled, having gotten caught under the huge crane halfway. Dammit, he couldnt get out, he could only watch in anger as Vegeta relentlessly chased after Edward who was trying desperatly to fight him off. "Come on little boy fight me!" Vegeta snapped, swinging at Ed while the blonde dodged and ducked the best he could. He couldnt risk getting hit anymore or he'd be in deep trouble. Sure he was immortal..but damn it hurt when he got hit! Plus still being a fledgling his regeneration powers were still weak and slow acting. "Oh cant fight me unless I have my back turned, is that it coward huh?" Vegeta snapped, ready to swing on Edward who then reeled around, punching him hard in the jaw.

"I'm not a coward! And you're one to talk, having to trick others to get the upperhand!" Ed snapped, only further angering Vegeta who rubbed his jaw, glaring daggers at Ed as he dove at him, grabbing his automail arm as he snapped it clean off, grinning when he heard Ed scream in agony at this before he literally backhanded him with said arm.

"You dare to call me a coward?! I am a saiyen prince of a powerful bloodline. You are just a weak little mongrel. I'll teach you to know your place in life!" He hissed out, snapping Edward's other arm now as said alchemist screamed loudly. All he could do was kick a nearby stack of metallic junk as it toppled onto the ruthless man. After this he limped away, trying to find an exit but his vision was blurring due to having lost too much blood plus he was no doubt bleeding internally. He yelped, feeling himself trip up on an old bike tire as he rolled a few feet before laying there weakly. Edward then panicked when he heard footsteps, his face turning to horror as Vegeta walked towards him smirking darkly. "That wasn't very bright. All you did was further anger me. I'm going to enjoy destroying you little mutt. Ha look at that face; did you piss yourself from fear? How embarrassing." Vegeta said, laughing as he then grabbed Ed by the throat, punching him a few more times in the stomach before he slammed him into the wall, Ed's mind racing, doing his best to keep conscious.

"Dammit...i..I cant die here. Not at the hands of this jackass. No I dont want to..die." Edward thought weakly, his vision going in and out as he saw Vegeta's smug face as he gathered up energy for a ki blast.

"Well looks like it's the end for you brat. Don't worry, I'll have the ice dog join you if you want. She's going to be just as fun to torture. Maybe I'll have her eat your heart once I rip it out of you." Vegeta said in a sadistic tone. These words of course had an effect on Edward...how he didn't know but he remembered a great anger rising in him before everything went black. That was much different for Vegeta however. A wave of dark energy pulsed through the air as Vegeta blinked, he growled ready to shoot off the ki blast, however Edward reached forward, literally knocking it out of his hand as it crashed into the crane nearby. Before Vegeta could react he felt a fist connect with his face before he was sent rolling. "T...the hell!?" Vegeta yelled, realizing just now that he had gotten decked, and hard since his nose was bleeding. He then heard his scouter beep like crazy as he tapped it. "Who's energy level is this? It's skyrocketing up to 589 and still going!" Vegeta then hollared, only to look on in disbelief when it was coming from Ed who was getting surrounded in a black mist. "I..impossible, how is that runt getting stronger?!" Vegeta then roared out in a panic as he watched the transformation take place.

A new flesh arm had seemed to replace the metallic automail one Vegeta had ripped off, not only that but the blonde's skin had become pale and red markings had adorned his skin. His clothes even changed, going from torn and ripped to a black tank top with matching leather pants and fingerless long sleeved gloves that seemed to have formed from the darkness itself. His hair had come out of its braid, and his eyes became glazed over and lifeless looking. The newly transformed Edward then stood to his full height, holding his left hand out as a huge black scythe materialized from the mist too as the chain wrapped around his waist that was attached to said weapon.

"Wh...what are you?!" Vegeta yelled, wincing as his scouter had gone haywire from reading the power level, though he could have sworn he saw 666 as a last reading before it short circuited and billowed out smoke, being useless now as he tore it off and flung it aside.

"I am the sin Pride...and the one who's going to dig your grave...." The blonde replied back, smirking

slightly as he spoke these words.

10 - Aftermath

I apologize for have kept you waiting once more. But I get very busy here and there you know. But I wont keep you waiting any longer so let us continue. We last left off with the gang fighting off hordes of undead, not to mention finding the source of the problem. However before Edward would fall victim to Vegeta, a darkness long dormant awoke in him, unleashing the homunculus known as Pride. Let's see if Vegeta can fair against sin itself when it comes to who is the darkest warrior.

Vegeta glared, trying to surpress his unease. "I..impossible! Y..you were a mangled sorry mess moments ago; how can this be?!" the proud saiyen prince barked out in disbelief. He couldnt even see a scratch or bruise on the youth. And to make matters worse the automail arm he had torn off had been replaced with a new flesh one. But what really was unsettling was the way the blonde was looking at him. His eyes werent fierce, or angry. They were lifeless and blank....like a doll's eyes. They just gazed at him with that listless expression.

"You awoke me. I am Edward's counterpart. I got tired of your boastfull comments and decided to take over from where my other half left off. Besides I was yearning to shed blood for awhile now. So rejoice, you'll be my first victim." Pride stated calmly, walking forward now with his scyth raised. Vegeta glared then, not amused by the brat's know-it-all attitude.

"You think so? I doubt that!" Vegeta roared, blasting a round of ki energy at the spot Pride stood, soo much soo that dust had kicked up making it hard to see for a few minutes. "Ha, arrogant lil punk. All bark but no bite." he then said while getting to his feet as he wiped the dust from his armour.

"Dont be soo quick to celebrate." Pride whispered, standing right behind the saiyen, but before he could react, he felt a mind numbing pain shoot through his body, the sin's hand having penetrated his armour and was sticking out of his abdomen. "Pity, the way Edward fought against you, I mistook you for a threat. You are just a chatty monkey though, how droll." Pride then stated, yanking his hand out roughly as the saiyen howled in pain, collasping in a writhing heap on the ground, hacking and coughing up blood.

"You..you wont be soo confident when I do thi..this!" Vegeta hissed out, having spotted the moon outside. Damn; it wasnt entirely full but it would have to suffice. He attempted to change into his demonic saiyen ape form, only to scream when he felt his tail get hacked clean off. Who did it he did not know, until he heard the person's voice that was.

"Nice try Vegeta...but im not in the mood to fight off king kong tonight." Shadow stated, tossing the wriggling tail off to the side as the prince glared daggers at him. "So this is Ed's other half. Thought I felt something off about him when I first saw the runt. That was you it appears." the raven haired male stated, looking to said homunculus who gave a nod.

"Yes, I was created when Edward stepped into the red water in lab five and temporarily gained immense inhuman power. However I wasnt able to fully awaken until Sarah turned him immortal." Pride said calmly, staring out the window now before he began walking. "Let's get going, the other's might need

assistance." he then added as Shadow gave a nod. Both however stopped when they heard Vegeta laughing.

"What's so funny?" Shadow asked the wounded male, who only grinned.

"You aren't leaving this place alive. If I am going to hell, I'm taking you two with me!" The prince roared out, putting all his energy into the last galic gun he could muster, shooting the ray up towards the support beams. The already weakened beams gave away in no time, the building beginning to shake and rumble as debris began to fall towards the three.

Deidara and Louis after a good hour or two of flying, managed to find the entrance of the portal. "There it is un, that place is giving off a massive evil energy that only a portal of darkness could give off yeah." Deidara called to Louis over the wind gusts as they flew towards the one old warehouse.

"That must be how they are sending the dead beats through to this world." Louis stated, glancing to Deidara then. "How we going to go about this holms?" he then asked, Deidara thinking for a few moments.

"Hmmm you could take out the freaks since you know them well yeah. Meanwhile I'll go to close the portal since I'm familiar with that method of transportation un." Deidara then said, Louis nodding to this.

"Sounds good to me. Let's go!" Louis said, leaping off the bird without warning as Deidara flailed. Sighing he jumped off after the other male. Once landing safely on the roof, Deidara wasted no time and blew a good sized hole into the roof. Once inside they then went to work, Deidara covering Louis by having a fleet of his explosive grasshoppers take out a good amount of hunters as the latino mixbreed fired away at the two witches that had barely managed to make it out of the large black hole in the center of the room.

"Keep em busy un, I have to concentrate for this!" Deidara yelled towards Louis, turning his attention towards the large swirling black void, sending two shadow clones to assist Louis as said male ran about keeping the remaining hunters on their toes. Doing a few handsigns the blonde bomb expert began to mutter something inaudible, eyes closed as the portal began to shake and twist.

"Hurry up, there's a tank trying to get through!" Louis yelled, ducking out of the way of a hunter that leapt his way, before busting the back of his gun into it's mutated face to stun it before he then kicked it into three others. And as he stated, the tank's hand was reaching out towards Deidara, the blonde opened his eyes and called out something in latin, the portal diminishing as a scream rang through the air, the large muscular arm being sliced clean off as it fell to the ground.

"That was close yeah." Deidara muttered, sweatdropping as he and Louis watched the arm wriggle about like a beached whale for a few moments before going completely limp.

"Indeed. Try not to let it happen again buddy. Now let's get moving, there's still more clean up to do outside." Louis said, picking his shotgun back up before he turn and headed for the exit, Deidara close behind him.

"Damn where are they? I don't see them." Roy said, squinting as he tried to find Shadow and Edward

amongst the smoke that was billowing from the building.

"We can't risk going down closer or we'll get pulled in from the force of the collapse. You sure they are still in there?" Sarah yelled to Roy as the owl did its best to keep above the violently shaking building. Sarah could only worry as she bit her bottom lip. Damn it that runt had best get out of there alive, he didn't sacrifice his humanity just to die at the hands of that damn monkey prince. Plus the absence of Shadow made her nervous too.

"Wait...I see them! They're coming out the side balcony!" Roy yelled, pointing to said spot as sure enough Edward and Shadow both came into view. There was something off about Ed though. Sarah knew right away though, his darker half was in control it seemed. She couldn't risk Roy seeing him like that though. Making a quick hand sign she purposely elbowed the colonel in the face before sending her nirvana temple jutsu towards the homunculus. Sure enough it hit its mark as the sin toppled over out like a light. Seconds later Edward's body reverted back to normal, right arm vanishing along with tattoos of blood red color. After this took place, Sarah steered the owl over towards the balcony, Shadow sending a glare the ravenette's way.

"Get on before the place caves in!" She called, Shadow nodding as he picked up Edward and leapt with ease onto the back of the owl before it flew up, and just in time as the large factory crumbled like a house of cards.

"He took a beating, but other than that he'll live." Shadow said, nodding to the unconscious form of Edward as Sarah breathed a sigh of relief. Roy smiling a tad bit too.

"Good, let's go see if the others are doing any better." Roy said calmly, while the owl swooped over the town, its riders checking to see if they could find anymore of their comrades. They all looked to see Deidara's clay owl fly up beside them, Louis riding unhappily behind the blonde looking as if he needed a doggie bag.

"Did you get rid of the portal?" Sarah called, Deidara giving a thumbs up.

"Yup, all thanks to mister trigger happy over here un. You get rid of the monkeys yeah?" Deidara called back, Shadow and Sarah nodding to this.

"Good, let's head to the tavern un, we picked off the rest of the small fry after we got rid of the portal. The town should be somewhat calm now un." Deidara called back as the group did just that.

Alphonse wasn't too thrilled to see his brother unconscious and lacking an arm. "W..what happened to him?!" Al yelled out, flailing as he ran over to his brother's side. Shadow murred before patting the suit of armor on the shoulder.

"Relax kid, he may look like he lost; but he managed to best the bobblehead. He's going to be ok, he'll just need some rest and then he'll be good as new." The dual haired male stated calmly as Alphonse stared uneasily at Edward before giving a nod.

"Um..ok. But I'm still going to give him an earful when he wakes up! We made a promise to be careful and not die before we get our bodies back to normal." Al then said before he took a seat next to his older

sibling on the couch while Sarah went about treating his wounds with the first aid kit Tifa provided her.

"Did Vegeta make it out of there? We saw the building collapse from here." Sasori then asked Shadow who gave a shrug.

"Doubt it...but knowing that sneak he probably managed to get out and run off. Which isn't good since he'll be even stronger now thanks to that royal beating he took." Shadow said with an annoyed expression on his features as he stared off out the window.

"Well, since everything looks secure here; I'll be rounding up some troops to help clean up the rest of the city. We can't risk assuming there isn't anymore of those lifeforms running about. Let me know when Fullmetal is up and ready to battle again considering we might be needing him." Roy then stated, turning as he walked out swiftly, Louis snorting at the male.

"Tch, acts like he did all the @\$\$ kicking when in reality we had to save his ungrateful hide when he got soaked." The dual-eyed Latino muttered as Shadow patted his shoulder.

"Easy Lou, be thankful he didn't recognize you due to your habit of money making." The older male informed as Louis murred looking away, Tifa quirking a brow.

"He better not swipe anything from me, less he wants a fist in his groin." Tifa said calmly while helping Itachi pick up the tossed-over tables and chairs. Louis sweatdropped, quickly shaking his hands up in front of him.

"Sorry no ma'm I may be greedy; but I ain't loco. I saw how ya clocked Shads and I really wouldn't want to be on that side of your fist." he said with a weak laugh, Shadow twitching some at this. But of course this got a smile out of Tifa who chuckled.

"Well that's good to hear. However this won't be your hangout to hide your stash either. So how about a job? I need some extra hands around here; and less clumsy ones." She said, Alphonse mewling upon hearing this.

"H..hey! I don't mean to knock the bottles over sometimes, it's just that I'm so big!" The armor explained whilst waterfall tearing, the brunette bartender laughing to this.

"Easy Al I didn't mean it that way. It's just that I need some more helpful hands around here and to prevent him from stealing; Louis can cut out the middle man and get a paycheck working here. How does that sound?" Tifa explained, looking to Louis then who thought for a few minutes.

"Hmmm...does sound good. Plus no risks. Ah what the hell, sure I'll be glad to help ya. I hope you pay well." Louis then said with a light grin as Tifa smiled.

"Oh I do. And maybe you can be a bouncer big guy." Tifa then said to Shadow to just murred.

"Maybe, but I'll just lurk around since Louis is no doubt going to stay here. After all he goes where there is money." Shadow muttered as he looked off to the side.

Sarah meanwhile sweatdropped. She really didnt like the thought of grumpy ol Shadow lingering about. But he did help get Edward out of that factory...so she guessed he could be trusted. She looked down at the alchemist, frowning while she inspected his arm, or lack of arm that is. "Yeesh, Vegeta did a number on this thing. Luckily he didnt do too much major damage, just tore it clean off from the looks of it." she said while inspecting it as Alphonse looked down at his brother.

"Looks like Winry will have to pay us a visit. She wont be happy with this." he said with a light sigh. He could imagine it now, Winry ranting up a storm about how Ed ruined her perfect automail in another suicidal battle and then clonking him with her wrench and telling him she'd charge him out the @\$@ again.

"Tch dont bother, I'll do it. I do make puppets for a living after all." Sasori then said, causing both Sarah and Al to look up as they saw him also looking over Edward as he stood in front of the couch. "Doesnt look too hard; just enough of the previous material I can use to make a new arm from scratch." the puppetmaster then said, his tail poking lightly at the shredded parts of metal that hung from Edward's shoulder.

"Wow..you mean it? But why?" Alphonse then asked in surprise as Sasori shrugged.

"Call it a whim, besides I like to challenge myself against other people's workmanship. I had to admit when I saw the arm it looked quite intriguing, indeed someone with great skill could only muster up such a work of art. I want to see if I can top it, besides I need to work with this material more anyway since wood and clay is growing dull to me. I'll do it free of charge too. However if he complains about the results im going to make him flat broke." Sasori then stated, getting a light chuckle out of Sarah as she patted Edward on the forehead while the cloaked male scooted off already thinking up new redesigns for the arm.

"Guess his training will have to wait til he get's his new automail. Though I'm glad he's alright." Sarah stated, Alphonse nodding to this.

"Yeah me too. However...im curious Sarah. What exactly...is brother now?" Al then asked the female ravenette, she tensed some at this and remained quiet for a few moments.

"I think you should ask Edward yourself. He would want it that way rather than you ask someone behind his back." Sarah then said as she sent a smile the suit of armor's way. Al sighed some before giving a nod.

"Yeah..you're right."

"But dont worry Al, he's still the same big brother." she then said, patting Al's large hand as he then managed to chuckle.

"Yeah, I dont think he'll ever change, especially in size..ack!" Al meeped out, being nearly kicked off the couch due to Edward's foot that moved out of reaction to the statement. This of course got the two laughing then, settling their uneasy feelings for the moment. Though as the group settled down in the tavern, a loud hoarse roar rang through the city, a hulking beast, bigger than most of the tanks looking over the city as it snarled before heading deep into the nearby forest.

11 - The masked blissful baka

Well it has indeed been awhile huh old friends? I do apologize again for my prolonged disappearance. Ah time is a sneaky thing, loves sneaking up on you to perform a wedgie and what not. But now that I am *somewhat* back, I decided to bear you a gift this year. That gift is yet another chapter of this long intense story of bonds and determination to defy even god himself. Now where did we leave off? Ah yes, Edward has just managed to defeat Vegeta. However in the process he got quite a tail whipping. The portal to Louis's world has been closed off thankfully, but more undead still lurk about. But there is good news, Edward has vamperic training to look forward too and some free automail modifications. Yet before he can get to that...he has to let Alphonse know what he shares with his younger sibling now...that being immortality.

A soft chirping greeted Edward's ears. He groaned and squinted when he felt the warmth of the sun and it's glare shining in on him. Wait...the sun! Immediately Edward yelped and flailed diving under the covers the best he could. Damn he forgot for a minute he was a vampire and he read sun and bloodsuckers didnt exactly mix.

"Relax kid, we dont burn up in the daylight. You're too stuck on the fairytale hooaha crap." A red haired male exclaimed, sitting at Edward's desk as he was tinkering with something. Edward blinked, peeking out of his covers when he saw the male. He was indeed new, his hair looked messy but short. His eyes were a dark reddish or brown in color and his skin was pale. The male's voice also appeared to me calm and relaxed, like Itachi's. Nope he hadnt seen this guy before, but he felt that he knew him somehow, the aura was familier.

"The hell you doing in my room while I'm sleeping!? There's something called privacy ya know!" Ed then snapped twitching, oofing when the pillow next to him smacked him in the face. When it came to this, he was a pillow's dog. That was twice now he ate pillow cloth.

"This is the only spot I can work quietly. And shut up I'm working on your automail, thanks to that monkey it got wrecked to hell. By the way incase you didnt take the hint yet from my aura, i'm Sasori." The red head exclaimed, not once looking up from his work as the alchemist blinked in surprise.

"W..what?! But your voice...and your appearance. I dont get..."

"That was one of my puppets idiot. I move around in him most of the time, helps for when I have to lay low. So when people are looking for that appearance, I step out of it in my true body. Besides the hands on that one dont work as well since it's a puppet modified for combat rather than repairing things." Sasori said, cutting Edward's questions off as the blonde nodded, eyes resting on his arm on the desk infront of Sasori now. Not only that but his leg was next to the arm!

"H..hey what the heck you doing with my leg too?! My leg wasnt busted!" Ed then yelled twitching more as he looked down seeing he had a spare prosthetic that Winry had givin him that he could wear when his other leg would get snapped or broken in a fight. This was so that he could walk around while she fixed his leg up, since he didnt like to sit around very long as most would know by being around him.

"I need to modify it. You aren't a human anymore. Sarah told you that you can shapeshift right? Well I am putting a special element in your automail that allows it to correspond with the transformations. We wouldn't want you to morph into a horse and have a human arm and leg now would we?" The puppetmaster then said calmly. Upon hearing this Edward brightened up. That's right he forgot almost about the training.

"Oh yeah, say when can we get to training? I can't wait to be able to use new ways to show up that smug obnoxious @\$@ Roy." Edward asked, grinning at the sheer thought of this as he wobbled over to look at the handiwork. Sasori grunted and shoved Edward away from the table a little, not being one for close contact or over the shoulder people, aka rubbernecks.

"In a few hours, till then get something to eat and let your brother know you are ok. Tin can keep peeking in on you every damn ten minutes. I had to throw a book at him last time." Sasori muttered, Edward sweatdropped at this before chuckling.

"Ah he's just worried is all. And don't be so harsh to him, he's stronger than he looks you know. Besides you can't hurt him even if you tried so that just got him emotionally." Ed said with a light grin before he walked towards the door.

"I know his situation so don't think I'm surprised with his state. And Edward..." Sasori replied back, raising his voice to catch the short male's attention. Turning Ed raised a brow out of curiosity.

"Tell him. He'd be mad at you if you kept secrets from him. I doubt Alphonse will fear you. You are his brother after all." The red head said in a serious and firm tone, eyes of deep brown meeting gold. Edward flinched at the words, but Sasori was right. He couldn't keep his from Alphonse any longer. He had to tell him what had become of his older brother. He swallowed hard, eyes lowering to the floor. Giving a nod he turned and headed out of the room after he pulled the door open slowly.

"Yeah...just hope you are right." The blonde muttered weakly under his breath. Heading out of the room Edward started his walk down the hall. Sure enough, next to his own room Alphonse was sitting, staring out the window with his empty eyesockets that were lit with pinkish white orbs indicating eyes. Hearing the creaking of the floor, Al turned and his eyes widened a bit.

"Brother! It's good to see you up. We thought you'd be out for another day at least." Alphonse said in relief. Ed blinked in confusion before it registered.

"I was out for a whole day?!" Edward said in shock as Al nodded chuckling.

"Yeah, Itachi said you needed that time to rest and recuperate. All the while I kept an eye on you with Sarah. Tifa came in to see if you needed food but you were out like a log. However Sasori got irritated with the new guy bugging him and came up in your room to work on your new arm and leg. You must have been out, considering you didn't even flinch when he took your leg off without drugging you first." Alphonse explained. Edward laughed some as he then gave off a shrug.

"What can I say, felt like I ran through the whole desert non-stop with that last fight. Wouldn't be surprised if I was sacked out for that lo- wait what new guy?" Ed then asked, raising a brow while

Alphonse sweatdropped.

"He's another friend of Sarah's. I'd introduce you...but he creeps me out too much." Alphonse stated shivering as Ed eyed his brother. Now he had to see this guy. Then he remembered why he approached his brother in the first place.

"Wait Al....there's something I have to tell you first. It's about my body and what not. You've been asking before, so I'll tell you now." Ed said, tone becoming quiet yet firm. Alphonse tensed up at this. He was glad to hear he'd be let in on this secret. But uneasy at the same time. Turning, the suit followed after his shorter yet older of kin into his own room Tifa had given him. Moving over towards the window, Ed stared out the window a few minutes. The silence was like torture to Alphonse. Only the ticking of the cuckoo clock hanging on the wall that was modified to have a kitten come out and mew on every hour hung in the air.

"Brother...what is it? What have you...become?" Alphonse asked, stepping forward a tiny bit as Edward sighed scratching the top of his head. How would he tell Al this? Well he couldn't let him hang any longer so he had to tell him before Al started to panic again.

"Alphonse. I have something uncommon with you now. The others have probably hinted at it but they kept quiet so I could tell you." Edward said, taking a deep breath before he turned, gold hues resting on the suit of empty armor now as his face was calm and collected. "Alphonse. I'm an immortal vampire now, just like Sarah, just like her friends. It explains how I endured so much punishment at Vegeta's hands yet came out fine after a day's worth of sleep. Look not even a scratch on me." Edward stated, nodding to the marks on his arm and body, well lack of marks. Al's eyes widened in surprise and shock. Of course, it made sense now. A few moments of silence passed before the suit of armor laughed lightly. Ed frowned and twitched jabbing a finger at him.

"What's so funny?! Aren't you scared of me? I just told you I'm a friggin bloodsucker, someone who takes life in order to live!" Ed snapped as Al shook his head and looked to his older brother again.

"I'm relieved is all. I was scared you would say you were some mutant alien or something was happening to your body. Besides I know you brother, you'd never kill another in order to sustain yourself. Best bet is you'd raid the blood banks." Al explained while sighing in relief, Edward twitching at this more. Still Alphonse held a valid point. He just scoffed and chuckled, sending his younger brother a grin.

"Ah shaddup you know it all. Now how about we go greet the others? I'm friggin starving! Tif's cooking bacon now c'mon!" The blonde exclaimed, drooling at the smell that greeted his nose as he headed for the stairs after bolting from Al's room. The suit of armor nodded and followed after Ed, surprised at his burst of speed. Then again, for being a small fella Edward was always fast on his feet anyways. However he was indeed glad to know nothing too terrible had happened to his older brother. But that made him worry about the others. Sure Edward was a saint...but were they when it came to their liquid thirst craving?

"Ey Tif im up so give me everything you have cooked up!" Edward hollared as he dashed down the stairs. Tifa who was busy cooking the aforementioned bacon looked over towards the blonde when he stood in front of the bar since most of the seats were full. Shadow occupying the one next to where the blonde stood.

"Good to see you up. Give me a minute and I'll have a big breakfast ready for you kid." Tifa said with a relieved smile. Shadow kept quiet, sipping at some coffee from what it looked to be as Louis was behind the bar, passing out drinks.

"Hmm, he helping you Tifa?" Ed asked, noticing Louis's actions as the brunette nodded.

"Yep, he's got a job here so he can be a good boy." Tifa exclaimed, the japanese/mexican mixbreed waving to Edward when he noticed the alchemist was up too.

"Ey good to see you up holmes. You had us thinkin you'd be out a whole month or somethin." Louis stated as Edward grinned shrugging. However before he could get a reply out, he heard a loud annoying male voice ring out.

"TOBI A GOOD BOY TOO!" The male yelled wearing a orange mask and messy black hair and in the same outfit as the others, diving through the kitchen door as he slid in through the main room on his stomach. To the Elric's despair the floor was freshly waxed. Alphonse meeped flailing his arms in an attempt to hint to the male to slow down. However the male named Tobi failed to adhere to this warning, unable to slow his bellyslied or steer it to the side as he crashed into Al's feet, causing him to stagger before he fell literally ontop of a screaming Edward who was squished by the large armour. "Ooopsy. Tobi's fault sorreh. Wanted to test out the shiny floors I did!" The weird male exclaimed, sitting ontop of the armour as Al sweatdropped.

"Eh it's alright, just an accident. Dont do it again though please." Alphonse said weakly as Tobi flailed his arms.

"But it was funnnnn~!" he called out like a ten year old just getting off the latest rollar coaster.

"If you two dont mind...could you GET THE HELL OFF ME!" Edward hollared, the suit quickly eeping and jumping off his older brother as Tobi went rolling.

"Ack im sorry brother!" Al said, helping Edward up to his feet as the blonde murred dusting himself off.

"It's ok Al dont worry about, wasnt your fault. I suppose this is the new guy you told me of?" Ed then asked his brother who nodded looking to Tobi. Tobi tilted his head to the side, looking at the blonde before he scooted closer, too close for comfort. Edward megasweatdropped as the masked male prodded his forehead. "Um, there's something called personal space, and you're in my bubble pal." he then muttered twitching when Tobi was now tugging lightly at his antenna thingy in his hair. Without warning he then picked Ed up by the back of his shirt collar and flailed his free hand frantically while turning in the direction of where Deidara and Itachi were sitting in the bar.

"ITACHI AND DEI SAMA, LOOKIE TOBI FOUND A LEPURCHAUN, WE GONNA BE RICH! SEE I CAUGHT HIM!" The masked dunderhead exclaimed in a joyful tone. Shadow could only smile in amusement as Alphonse would have gone pale if that were possible. He just opted for meeping and backing away to a safe location. Itachi and Deidara clearly knew this male wasnt bright in the head, only chuckling as they looked away again.

"Dead man walking un." Deidara said to Itachi. Tobi tilted his head, wondering why his comrades werent

phased by his amazing discovery. He learned in a moment when he heard felt a swift foot to his jewels. This of course caused the masked male to double over and dropped his tiny discovery who then proceeded to lift him up over his head. Tobi squeaked and flailed frantically at this surprised by the tiny male's strength. Not to mention it was just with one arm!

"YOU'LL PAY WITH YOUR DAMN SOUL FOR THAT YOU MASKED ADD RIDDEN frackMOOK!" Ed hollared, literally flinging Tobi like a football as the male screamed, soaring through the air like a missile before slamming hard into the jutebox which then fell down on the cloaked ninja. Alphonse sweatdropped, running over to hold the blonde back before he could do further damage. Shadow just glared at the gawking customers.

"Quit staring less you want to be next. Kid's got a fuse shorter than his height. One wrong look and your mincemeat." he muttered to those closest to him, this of course caused them to yell for their checks or pay their bills.

"Brother easy he didnt mean it! Besides Tifa will skin you if you keep it up." Al said, cooling Edward off right away when he realized his actions. He meeped and turned to see Tifa glaring from across the bar.

"D..dont worry I'll fix it when my automail is back in top form!" he said quickly. Tifa nodded but still held that firm motherly glare before she continued to cook.

"Damn holmes, guess you're dangerous even without the automail heh." Louis said with a laugh as he walked over propping the jutebox back up to it's normal standing position, Tobi still knocked out cold. Ed just scoffed and headed over to where Itachi and Deidara were sitting.

"Yeah well he was asking for it. No one calls me short and gets away with it." he growled out, planting himself in the open chair at the table where the other vampires sat. Sarah was also there, currently giggling herself silly as Itachi sighed.

"He wont learn from it though Edward. Tobi is alittle...." Itachi started, trying to think of what to say as Deidara cut in.

"59 watts short of a 60 watt lightbulb yeah." This of course got Sarah to giggle more before she smiled over at Ed

"Good to see you are up. Hope Sasori wasnt too much of a douche. I mean that's your room he's working in after all. Then again you cant blame him...Tobi kept poking at your automail and asking if Sasori was making a robot or iron man suit." Sarah exclaimed, causing Edward to sweatdrop as he eyed the male who Al was picking up and placing on the couch at the lounge on the otherside of the tavern.

"Just how weird and childish is that guy?" Ed asked, causing Deidara to snicker as Sarah smiled.

"He's not very bright, but he does have potential. We dont take just anyone into the clan you know." Sarah then said as Deidara nodded.

"Yeah, he's and idiot that makes Paris Hilton look like a neuro surgeon and you have mind numbing height to almost look mirco in siz-OW!" Deidara hollared, rubbing his head as Edward twitched cracking

his knuckles.

"Dont push your luck, I can still put a hurting on others even with just one arm. Or did you miss how your friend kissed the jutebox?" Edward hissed out that dark voice of his as Deidara scooted away. Itachi however stopped Ed before he could continue hitting Dei when the longer haired blonde shafted him when far enough behind the table.

"Dont waste your energy Edward, we need you at fullpower so you can train. Eat up and restore your physical strength. You probly depleted abit of it flinging Tobi like a nerf football. Then rest for abit and Sasori should have your new appendages done soon." Itachi said firmly as Ed murred and nodded, taking his seat again as he relaxed.

"So, while I wait for breakfast and for my arm and leg, about this stone. Can you tell me where it is and what not? Cause once I get my training out of the way...I want to get it badly." Edward asked, Itachi looking to Deidara and Sarah before he nodded.

"We had a feeling you'd ask that. Sarah was right at saying you were a busy body. The *crimson blood stone*, as it's fully called so as to not confuse it with that cheap amplifier you encountered in Lior, is located in a castle on the otherside of this city deep in the heart of the woods of oblivion. This is our main stronghold of our leader." Itachi then stated as Ed raised an eyebrow.

"Woods of Oblivion...I heard of that place before." Edward stated, recalling it's name one time in a book he read through a good while ago.

"I heard of that place too. Isnt that the place where if you go into it, you never come out again? That or you come back out completely insane and a mute?" Al asked, walking over as he just got into the conversation. Ed nodded to his brother's explanation while Deidara and Sarah nodded too.

"Yeah that's the place un. Master chose that place for a reason yeah. Infact, the forest is like that due to o-"

"Deidara, not too much information." Itachi muttered, kicking the male in the shin as he yelped and whined, sending him a glare.

"What, he's joining so why keep it a secret un?!" Deidara snapped as Itachi hinted at the fact there were nosey customers about.

"Later we'll tell you. Right now go eat; your food is ready Edward." Itachi then said, ending the conversation as Ed frowned. He wanted to know more right now but the older male had a point. Getting up he followed after Al and sat at the bar where he happily filled up on Tifa's cooking.

A few hours later, Ed was currently trying to surpress his pain when Sasori was hooking up his nerves to his automail. Sarah and Alphonse on both sides of him helping to keep him from writhing around in agony. Tobi sitting behind him awake once more and messing with his hair out of boredom. This due to Shadow scaring him off when he dared to go near him asking if he could braid his hair. "Oh stop it, you'll live you baby." Sasori muttered as the blonde twitched. He was half tempted to kick the puppet master in the face...however he didnt want to have to pay a fortune since Sarah warned him to be nice to the red

haired asshat.

"You...you'd think this wouldnt hurt anymore...ha well this sucks." Ed said between gritted teeth while Sarah held his flesh hand, chuckling as he squeezed it when Sasori put in the last connection.

"There, now quit whimpering. The automail is much stronger and lighter. But try not to overuse it too much with your tasteless transformations since it's a prototype. You can still bring out arm blades and gattling guns etc. But refrain from turning it into something like a giant tazor or tower of blades. It's strong as hell now, but still a first attempt from me. Also as I said before, it can endure the shapeshifting." Sasori explained, Edward nodding as he moved his arm a few times along with his new automail foot.

"Feels pretty damn good. It's as if it were Winry's work on steroids." Ed said with a grin, glad to have his arm back again. This new arm which he happily used to whirl around and clock the masked ninja knocking Tobi off the couch who then faceplanted in a dazed heap. "Ha! Strong as hell too, coulda swore I heard that @\$s's nose crack." he then said proudly, Sarah facepalming as Al shook his head chuckling.

"Careful brother...let's not have Winry catch wind of you praising another mechanic." Al said teasingly as Ed laughed nervously at this. However he was whimpering mentally at the scary thought of Winry taking him apart for the praise he just gave the red head.

"Whatever, she deserves the praise more for the amazing workmanship. Even in tatters it still held a good enough design for me to work with. But anyways I added some modifications to it." Sasori said, holding Edward's arm up as he then made him clench his fist. A soft click sounded in the arm before a katana shot out of the wrist. Making him clench the fist again the sword retreated back into his arm. Ed blinked in surprise at this before grinning.

"Well that will come in handy, saves me a few more seconds in a battle. Thanks Sasori." the alchemist then said before he rose to his feet, stretching and flexing abit more to get used to his new limbs. "AIIII right. Now that I got my new parts, im ready for training." he said, Sasori nodding to this before he rose to his feet, tossing Ed a cloak as Edward flailed managing to catch it in time. He looked it over sweatdropping, it was the same black large coat with the red and white clouds as their's. "The hell's this?" He asked as Sasori headed towards the back towards the pinball machine.

"It's your training clothes. I have yet to tailor you one so my scorpion puppet's coat will have to do for now. Let's get moving, I'll explain down in the training room what your coat is needed for." Sasori stated firmly. Ed blinked but shrugged at this, heading over towards the back as Sarah and Alphonse followed. "Tobi, wake up, you'll be needed too!" Sasori snapped, the masked male then hopping up scaring the crap out of Ed.

"YAY TOBI NEEDED, TOBI LOVED!" He yelled excitedly, oofing when Shadow smacked him upside the head causing him to yelp as he then skittered over towards Sasori and the others. Louis could only laugh at this while Tifa sighed.

"Good luck holmes, would watch ya but gotta make sure mister grumpy here doesnt eat anyone's souls since he's getting fat." Louis called, yelping and cursing in spanish when he forgot of Shadow's intense speed as said male had appeared infront of him, only to pour hot coffee on his crotch, the mixbreed

unfortunately having been sitting down at that time.

Edward could only laugh as he waved to Louis, Tifa, and Shadow. Turning he then slammed his fists against the buttons on both sides of the pinball machine, the floor below him and the group lowering into the next level of the building. He grinned as they headed for the training room, excited for what training they had in store. "Only a matter of time before we get that stone AI." he said, said armor nodding, he too looking forward to being one step closer to reclaiming what was lost.

12 - Intense training and bitter reunion

Well it has been awhile hasn't it? Again I apologize, life has a way of tying your hands from time to time. Anyways, where we last left off, Edward was heading to the underground training room with his comrades to partake in unique training to hone his vampiric abilities. However, he'll learn that it's not just strength and stamina alone that will help him in battle.

Once the small group reached the basement level, they exited the pinball elevator. As they entered the training room, they were greeted with quite a sight. The room looked like a desert based environment, loaded with large cliffs and even tumble weeds and cactus. The lights were even giving off the feeling that they weren't in a room at all but an outside battleground. (Think of Kisuke's training room in Bleach for this.)

"Well this is the place. Let's get started while I'm still up for it." Edward said, heading further into the room as Itachi nodded, following the blonde. Sasori stood before him and beside the raven haired male whereas Sarah stood off to the side with Alphonse and Deidara, Tobi happily bouncing along as he chased a tumble weed, faceplanting a few times in the process.

"First, we need to train your speed so you can be able to use flash step and other speed based formations." Sasori explained, Edward giving him a confused look as the red head nodded to Itachi. In a mere second Itachi had vanished, reappearing a foot in front of Edward who in turn yelped and fell hard onto his backside.

"That...is flashstep. It will come in hand greatly during evasive needed situations." Itachi stated while the alchemist tried to slow his heart beat at being startled so badly.

"Give me a warning at least next time damn!" Ed snapped before he rose to his feet dusting himself off. "So anyways, what do I need to do to get that fast?" He then asked raising a brow. Itachi looked to Sarah, motioning her forward. Sarah grinned and nodded, hopping to her feet as she walked over. Biting her thumb to cause blood, she then placed it on the ground, said blood forming a circle of kanji as a bright ray of light shone from the spot. When the light dimmed, a cute cactus-looking creature with a surprised expression and barely over a foot tall was standing in the circle.

"You are to catch this using nothing but your bare hands. No alchemy whatsoever." Sasori stated calmly as Ed sweatdropped looking down at the critter.

"What....is it?" Ed asked as Sarah chuckled.

"It's a cactuar. Don't let its cute face fool you. It can be nasty as hell when angered. Plus it's rather fast which is why we chose it for your speed training." Sarah explained.

"Kinda reminds us of a certain someone neh un?" Deidara muttered to Alphonse who chuckled in response but kept his voice down so Ed wouldn't hear. Said blonde just scoffed waving a dismissive hand.

"I'll have that thing caught in no time. Just you watch." the blonde stated. Itachi just smiled behind his collar, slamming his foot on the ground next to the cactuar. Said critter jumped, letting out a whistling noise before he dashed off with such a burst of speed it knocked Edward into the air when it ran underneath him. Faceplanting then, Ed groaned and sweatdropped watching a dustcloud already reaching the otherside of the vast room. "I think I spoke too soon." he muttered, getting a laugh from Sasori and Sarah. Growling then, he got to his feet and headed in the direction of the tiny summon. "Get back here you mutant midgit plant!" he roared after it, Alphonse sighing and shaking his head.

"This might take awhile." the armor stated, Sarah taking her seat by him again.

"Good thing I brought snacks." Sarah said, pulling said bag into view. However she had to yank it out of reach when Tobi tried to grab for it, only for the masked male to then faceplant into the dirt again. "Not this time you snack thief. You ate all my food last time, go mooche off Sasori." she stated as Alphonse chuckled watching this.

Back upstairs Shadow and Tifa were taking a small break, Louis eagerly working away as he was currently wiping down the tables. Shadow looked up from his drink, frowning when he sensed a dark aura off in the distance. Seconds later a loud roar sounded far off but just loud enough for even Louis to hear it. "Didn't think he'd be here." Shadow muttered, Tifa looking to him as he stated this.

"Who?" she asked, Shadow shaking his head.

"Don't worry about it. He's Louis's concern alone." The dual haired ravenette answered, watching as his comrade was staring towards the exit. He then glared before heading behind the bar to pick up his shot gun along with some cartridges of ammo. "Try to come back in one piece you hear? He nearly made mince meat of you last time when you tried to reach out to him." Shadow called as Louis nodded, heading out the door without a word as he made his way towards the outskirts of the city.

After an hour or so Louis reached his destination, he frowned seeing a few central soliders scattered across the ground. One torn clean in half, another having been crushed completely into the dirt and flat as a pancake. The area itself looked as if it had been hit by a bomb.

"No doubt about it, this is his handywork alright." Louis muttered, continuing to slink quietly through the warzone and destruction whatever beast left in it's wake. He cursed when he accidentally kicked a metal pipe as it clanged loudly sending echoes through the street. In an instant three hunters came springing from their hiding places, teeth bared and eyes wild. Louis ducked as one soared inches over him as he shot it in the stomach. Turning he pistol whipped another in the face dazeing it as he then shot it point blank. He then finished off the third by breaking it's neck when it dared get too close when he was handling the other two. Seeing as there was no other infected lurking around, or not wanting to wait for others to come running to see where the noise had come from, he continued walking. Reaching a large open area in the town, with only a fountain and a few statues of the town's founders etc, he found who he was looking for. Three large tanks were feeding off unfortunate soliders who dared to stand up to them all at once. The two were normal sized. But one was much bigger and it's skin was colored. Plus by just looking at the tank you could tell it was fiercer.

"To think you fell this far when you used to kick these things asses as a passtime." Louis muttered as he

watched the large tank. He looked about the area, trying to figure out a way to take out the other two tanks so he could face the leader alone. Getting an idea he then slowly moved through the area. Reaching his destination he then climbed up the one statue partway. Taking a deep breath he then concentrated his energy. Gathering enough of it up he then slammed his fist hard into the base of the statue. In no time the statue wobbled and fell towards the one tank, crushing it instantly as he then shot it in the face. Of course this alerted the large tank and its remaining comrad. Both roared as the smaller tank dashed towards Louis. Said male quickly ran, skidding out of harm's way moments before the tank could slam his fists down on him. He then ran in front of the other statue, the slow beast following. "That's it dumbass, come and get me." Louis called. Just as he expected, it ran straight for him as he jumped out of harm's way once more. Said tank then slamming into the statue which came crashing down on him, spearing the zombie in the face with the statue's sword as it died in moments. Panting and heart racing from the close calls, Louis then turned his eyes on the large tank that remained. "It's been awhile....Coach." Louis stated with a smirk. "To think that we'd have to meet on these conditions. Dont worry; I'll make it quick." he then said, loading his gun as the large tank growled fiercly. Such a fate Louis thought, that this is the fate his idol suffered in order to prevent Louis from dying at the hands of these beasts.

"Graaaaah gotc- ARGH!" Ed howled out, faceplanting for the hundredth time when the tiny cactuar dove from his grasp moments before the blonde could seize it. It made another whistling noise, dashing off once more. "God dammit! Cant I use at least a little alchemy?! That thing is insanely fast!" Edward then yelled weakly over towards Sasori and Itachi who were playing a game of poker with Sarah, Deidara, and Alphonse.

"No, you cant rely on alchemy for every little thing Edward. Catch it with your speed and intellect." Sasori replied back, smacking Tobi when the masked male attempted to peek over his shoulder at his cards. "Dont even think it, I know Deidara is making you peek for him." the red head hissed out at Tobi who meeped and scuttled over to hide behind Ai.

"Grah...you guys suck!" Ed hollared, twitching as he caught his breath, glaring towards the cactuar who was taunting him now by just running in circles. "All right, im going to catch that thing or my name's Susie Flanderbobbin, and it's not!" he then yelled, dashing towards the cactuar letting out a warcry. The cactuar of course heard this and sweatdropped, dashing off when the blonde got too close again.

"You'd think he'd want to sneak up on the thing and startle it." Itachi said as Deidara nodded neither of them looking up from their cards.

"Not much of a sneak attack of you announce it un." Deidara added. Eventually however, the alchemist managed to corner the cactuar when it accidently ran into a dead end. The blonde grinned as he walked up towards it, hands ready to reach out.

"Gotcha now you runty mutant plant freak." He said darkly. This was a mistake however, when he noticed the uneasy expression on said small summon change to anger. Steam came out of it as it whistled loudly, needles blasting off its body as it literally turned Edward into a walking pin coushin. "RAAAAAGHSLK The.....h-hell?!" Ed said weakly, laying there twitching as the cactuar had taken off once again.

"Should have warned you, it doesnt like being called small either. Though we did warn you it has a

temper. Dont worry the paralysis should wear off in a few minutes." Sasori called, knowing what happened to Edward without having to go see for himself. Once he fought off the pain of the needles and plucked enough of them out, Edward was back on his feet and chasing the small cactuar about. Tobi had decided to nap whereas Sarah and Al were listening to a few Cds she had brought down.

"Dammit how the hell am I going to catch this thi...wait i got it!" Ed thought, grinning when the idea dawned on him. Turning he skidded to a halt and dashed off in another direction. The cactuar stopped and looked about whistling, confused as to where it's chaser had gone to. However he failed to see Edward had done a circle around him, hidden by the large rocks and cliffs before it was too late as he turned and saw the alchemist sprinting towards him. When the tiny plant tried to turn and run he concentrated enough of his energy and speed, pushing it to the max as he imagined himself in front of the plant in the direction it was headed. Sure enough, he vanished in moments before reappearing in front of the cactuar as it bumped into his feet. Grinning he snatched it up as it squirmed in his hands whistling loudly. "Hahaha got ya you slippery bastard!" Ed hollared, hopping up and down as Al and Sarah looked up, al quickly cheering.

"Alright nii-san, way to go I knew you'd get him in no time!" Al called, oofing when Ed flung the cactuar at him hard.

"Nice try Al I saw what you were doing! Remind me not to root for you when you're training your @\$ off." Edward exclaimed with a snort as Sarah chuckled.

"Take it easy tiger. You were actually faster than most of us at catching that lil guy. Besides we were getting abit hoarse cheering for you at the beginning." Sarah stated to calm the blonde. Walking over she then dismissed the tiny dazed summon whereas Itachi and Sasori got back to their feet.

"Well done Fullmetal. Now for the next phase of your training. Catch another being using just flash step. Again no alchemy." Sasori stated as Edward grinned.

"Bring it on, I'll catch it in an hour tops! Or hell thirty minutes." the blonde stated; still rather pumped after catching the cactuar. Sasori and Itachi smiled to one another before the red head kicked Tobi in the side as he yelped and hopped up saluting them.

"Tobi you're up. Time to play tag with Edward." Itachi said as Tobi flailed about happily.

"YAAAAAAAY ED CACTUAR SAMA GOING TO PLAY TAG WITH TOBI!" The masked male yelled out, Edward twitching at the ninja's comparison of him to the tiny summon he just caught.

"What did you c-ACK!" Ed was cut off, considering Tobi had smacked him hard in the face with his open palm as he then vanished, reappearing yards away bouncing up and down.

"Come and get Tobi~! Let's play let's play!" he called out, twirling about as Ed growled twitching.

"YOU'RE DEAD YOU MASK WEARING FREAK!" Ed hollared, flash stepping towards Tobi and attempting to hit him, only to miss by seconds as the other male vanished and reappeared in another location, still twirling around.

"Tooo sloooooow Ed sama is!" Tobi then called out in a sing song voice, Ed roaring as he continued to chase him about in this super speeded game of tag.

"Thirty minutes eh? Give it thirty years." Sasori said to Deidara who snickered nodding, Alphonse sighing.

"Oh great, the blood has rushed to brother's head. That's always bad news." He mumbled, Sarah nodding in agreement as she nibbled on a cookie.

Louis yowled in pain as he was sent flying, crashing hard into the one building's wall for the hundredth time. Panting and bloody; he ducked moments before the tank's fist came hurtling towards his head. He then rolled and shot a few more rounds into the immense beast that was once his idol and father figure coach. "Damn, you sure can take one hell of a beating huh? Then again you always were hard to kill. Sucks that you still have that quality though holmes." Louis said with a weak sneer, the tank growling as it looked towards him after rubbing his wounded side, countless bullet wounds embedded in his dark skin. "Too bad for you, I share that quality with you." Louis then added, rubbing his own side, wincing as he felt he had a few broken ribs. Pumping his shot gun he then dashed out of the way when Coach roared and charged him. Then turning he unloaded another round of bullets at the tank's back. Hopefully he could hit the beast's spine to paralyze him. That way he couldn't get torn to bits trying to take off his head. But he only managed to hit his one shoulder, wounding it as coach grunted stumbling. This only further angered the immense tank who turned and snarled, picking up the one statue had served one of the smaller tanks it's demise as he chucked it towards Louis. The raven haired male cursed and dove behind the fountain for cover, the statue sailing overhead as it chipped off part of the fountain's decor. Then it struck him. Hopping up into view, Louis waved his hands frantically.

"Ey coach over here, come and get me or are you too chicken shoot?" He hollared, sure enough this caught the hulking beast's attention. Pounding his chest he roared and stampeded over, slamming his fists down into the fountain. And just as Louis had anticipated, crushing the fountain's top caused the pipes underneath to burst. And because of that a huge burst of water shot from the ground, smacking into Coach's face as he gurgled and flailed, giving Louis enough time to leap onto the statue and then point his shot gun point blank into the tank's ear canal. Moments before the trigger was pulled, Louis smiled when the beast looked towards him. "Later Coach, say hi to the other's for me will ya?" he stated, pulling the trigger as the infected howled in pain, blood spraying everywhere as well as brain matter, one of his hands striking Louis hard as the male was sent tumbling. The tank then finally fell forward, crashing into the fountain's waters as it's blood quickly changed the water to a deep crimson red, Louis coughing up blood himself as he gave a weak chuckle.

"I'll see you soon. Least you aren't suffering anymore holmes." He said, his vision blurring before finally going black.

Edward yelled, diving towards Tobi who was sitting with his back to him on a large cliffside. However it was in vain as Tobi quickly vanished as Edward went flying off the rock formation, only to faceplant hard into the ground. Tobi giggled, bouncing about yards away in victory.

"Ed sama soo slow, can't catch the mighty Tobi!" he called out as Ed groaned rubbing his head.

"Dammit how do I catch this guy? Speed won't help me here. And he's at least a little smarter than that damn plant." He thought aloud. Pondering a few more moments he then got another idea as he smirked.

Hopping to his feet he then teleported in front of Tobi who meeped, vanishing and reappearing a few more yards away out of reach. "Awww Tobi but Edward just wants a hug!" Ed called in an innocent fake tone. Tobi blinked a few times before gasping and appearing in front of him, glomping the blonde.

"Yay Ed sama wuffs Tobi!" Tobi called out cheerfully, Ed giving an eerie smirk that Tobi didn't notice but the other's did.

"And you know what else Tobi?" Ed stated.

"What Ed sama?" Tobi asked, yelping when Edward slammed his fist down on his head hard with his right hand.

"YOU'RE IT!" Ed snapped, Tobi faceplanting in a dazed heap. "Ok what else do you have for me. I caught the idiot and can probably flash step in my sleep now." Edward inquired, rubbing his hands and stretching as Sasori chuckled.

"My aren't you the ambitious one. Very well then, since you have speed mastered, let's work on telekinesis abilities. I presume Sarah as told you about that yes?" The red head asked, Edward nodding to this.

"Yeah, it's moving stuff with your mind right?" The alchemist said, Sasori nodding to this.

"Yes, and much more than that. You see only ones with very strong minds can do this and much more advanced tk powers. But for now let's work on the tk blast. It's concentrating on an object and blasting it in a general direction with a burst of telekinetic energy. This is a basic move for beginners." Sasori explained turning his eyes towards a random cactus as he glared, the cactus then getting a rush of wind knocked into it as it toppled over afterwards. "Now you try. Concentrate on anything in the room and hone your mind in on it, imagine it getting knocked back or over." Sasori then explained as Ed nodded, looking about for something to work with. Grinning he then rested his eyes on an unaware Deidara who had stolen Sarah's sandwich when she wasn't looking. Sure enough Deidara yelped when he was sent flying, crashing into a cactus before he hopped up and down in pain.

"Very good choice of target. Now let's see you move an object with your mind. Imagine it floating and moving about defying gravity. Holding your hands out to guide the object's direction and further help you in this." Itachi stated then as Ed nodded.

"Ack, brother put me down this isn't funny!" Alphonse meeped out, frantically flailing when Edward had decided to use him as a target now. Once he got him high enough in the air he then abided to his younger sibling's wishes chuckling.

"Sorry Al couldn't resist." Edward said innocently as Al just huffed folding his arms.

"That wasn't very nice. I'm not going easy on you next time we spar." Al retorted as Ed twitched.

"Since when have you ever went easy on me?!" The older elric hollared, causing Sarah to snicker as Itachi cleared his throat.

"Alright enough bickering, final step in telekenisis training is learning how to use kinetic shackles." Itachi then said, turning towards Deidara as the blonde yelled, being pulled into the air as his arms were moved outwards in a cross like motion, large white bands of energy wrapping around his wrists.

"Reinforcing your brute telekinetic abilities with exact technique will allow you to temporarily shackle your enemies in mid air with chains of force. This will come in hand greatly during battle and missions. It is a must know tk ability to have in your arsenal against vicious opponents." Itachi then said before letting Deidara drop back down to the ground, Sasori speaking up now.

"Your training session now; is to catch a moving target with this technique." Sasori exclaimed as Ed nodded, only to sweatdrop when the red head punted Tobi awake. "Edward wants to play tag again." he said as the blonde glared at Sasori, oofing when Tobi head butted him before taking off once more.

"You have to make it hard dont you?!" Ed snapped, turning and chasing after the masked male while Alphonse looked to Sarah.

"So you guys always train like this?" the suit asked, Sarah nodding.

"Pretty much, though it's gotten alot more amusing now that your brother has joined the fray. Though it's going to get real interesting when Itachi and Sasori step up to spar with him." She said with a light chuckle, Al nodding to this as he looked to the two.

"I agree, those guys are really strong." he stated in an honest tone.

An hour had passed, Tifa coming down the stairs as she peeked into the training room. "Hey guys, hope im not innerrupting anything but can you take a break?" she called, noticing that Tobi was flailing frantically in the air, having finally been caught by the kinetic shackles of a cackling Edward while the others were either playing cards or watching the blonde's actions. All turned to look towards Tifa however when she yelled to them, Ed losing his concentration as Tobi faceplanted hard into the dirt.

"What's up tifa?" Al said as the brunette nodded towards the exit.

"Roy called. He said he needs Ed and Al for a mission to Schlafrig Hobl. Says something about a massive infestation of zombies and other creatures are attacking the town and the troops there need back up asap." Tifa explained as Ed looked to Sasori and Itachi.

"Go on, you caught Tobi anyways and you trained enough for today. We'll teach you more tommorrow morning, Five am sharp so dont doddle." Sasori said as Ed nodded with a grin.

"Right, come on Al!" Ed called, Alphonse nodding and rising to his feet as the two Elrics headed after Tifa up to the first floor and then to central HQ. Little did they know what was waiting for them in the sleepy town of shadows....

13 - Demons of Schlafrig Hobl

Greetings, it's good to see you have returned; craving another chapter of this long and delightful dark fable. I do apologize again for keeping you hungry for a long time. But as you know it gets bothersome from time to time to try and carve out free time when we are all shackled to a busy predestined life. Anyways; let's continue our tale with no more distractions to halt us. Where we last left off, Edward Alphonse and other soliders from Central were headed to the dark dank town of Schlafrig Hobl. What is waiting for them there? And moreover, will they be able to tell the angels from the demons in this foggy little town?

A large male that was cyborg like in nature stalked through a dank dusty building that had seen better days. His black cloak dragging webs and dust over 30 years old along with him as he passed by two odd looking beasts that were adorned with the ouroboros symbol on their foreheads; they were standing guard at a set of double doors. Seeing the amber eyed masked cyborg they bowed their heads and stepped aside, allowing him to enter.

"M'lord, it seems those military dogs have called for backup and are sending in more troops to halt our plans." The cyborg exclaimed in a dark ominous raspy voice, his eyes resting on a tall silver haired figure standing at the end of the large library in front of a bay window that overlooked the city. The silver haired man didn't turn, but spoke nonetheless to the cyborg.

"It should not worry you. Send more of the infected after them or your droids. They are humans after all, nothing but twigs to our powerful vines." He exclaimed, the cyborg hesitating before speaking again.

"If that were the case I wouldn't worry you my lord...but upon overhearing the transmission I heard they were sending top ranked alchemists. The Strong armed alchemist, the Flame alchemist, and Fullmetal. I thought it would be wise to alert you to this." he stated in a truthfull tone. The silver haired man merely chuckled before shaking his head.

"They must be really desperate...to send out the big dogs. Yes there must be something very important here that they do not wish for us to find. Wipe them out with no mercy general. Show them that military dogs are nothing compared to the wolves of the night." The man then stated, the cyborg nodded, amusement in his eyes.

"Yes m'lord. I'll have fun while shredding them to peices; you can be sure of that." The cyborg general stated with a malicious tone to his voice. He then turned to head out before stopping when he heard the silver male clear his throat; a hint he wanted him to stop as he then glanced over his shoulder.

"But one thing...keep the one known as Fullmetal alive for me. For I need to...test him to see if he is the one that was spoken of by Master." The man then stated, turning his head just slightly, his bright green eyes having a carnivorous look to them as it sent chills down the cyborg's body; who then gave a quick nod before leaving the room.

The party that was dispatched to the town slowly entered it with hesitation. Edward, Alphonse, Roy, Alex

Louis Armstrong, Riza Hawkeye, and fifteen lower ranked soliders looked about at the destruction caused by some unknown force. Large trees were literally sticking out of houses. Blood splattered against most of the ground and walls of the buildings along with a few carcasses here and there. Fire of course was choking crashed cars and telephone poles along with buildings too. Crows were the only audible thing in the town, the beasts watching the uneasy group with their onyx oval orbs; wings fluttering every now and then.

"Damn...it's like a battlion and a hurricane hit this place..." Edward muttered to a whimpering Alphonse.

"It's far worse than what was reported to headquarters." Riza stated with a slight frown.

"Such devastation...who could do such a thing?" Armstrong asked, disgust and remorse evident in his blue eyes. Roy kept a firm face while looking to the soliders.

"Look for surviving members of the team that called us and let us know immediatly if you find them. Be on the lookout for beasts called Hunters, or Smokers. They are infected humanoids. And if you see a big hulking beast called a Tank; do NOT fight it, run without hesitation! These things are said to have been the ones that attacked this town so be careful and dont be swarmed by them. You have your orders now move out!" Roy stated, the soliders saluting him before they dashed off in pairs of threes in different directions of the destroyed town. The remaining four soliders and Alphonse then heading east towards a big rundown building that appeared to be city hall. As they walked along toward the center of town, most of them failed to notice another was following them...white orbs glowing in the fog as it leapt over rooftops to keep up. The being nearly tripped, having knocked off a chunk of burnt ply wood. Alphonse mewed having heard the wood hit the ground, getting a weird feeling before he turned to look in the direction of the entity.

"Al come on you're bumping into me! What's the matter you forget how to walk or something?" Ed asked with a tad bit of annoyance to his tone. Alphonse blinked and looked to his brother after not having seen anything on the rooftop due to the intense fog filling the air.

"S..sorry brother. Just that this town is s..scaring me. It gives me the creeps." Al said in a small tone, showing he was being sincere about this. Having heard this Ed blinked before laughing in amusement.

"What are you kidding me Al, you're getting the heebie jeebies? You're a big suit of armor, who would want to mess with you? Look at Lt Riza up there, walking all calm and collected and she's just a girl!" Edward stated, gesturing to said woman who hadnt heard him. Instead her focus was turned towards them, her gun pointing to their direction. Immediatly Ed panicked, flailing his arms defensivly. "Whoa whoa whoa put that away Luitenent I didnt mean to insult you! I was j-" he was cut off as gunfire sounded, Roy and Armstrong turning their attention to the three, Alphonse ducking for cover cowering. When the gunfire ceased, a hunter fell behind the blonde alchemist, bullets riddling it's body. Edward panted, horror in his eyes as he felt all over himself before turning his gaze to the dead beast. He turned then glaring. "Dammit you could have warned me that something was sneaking up on me!" he barked, jumping then when more infected came crawling out of the buildings.

"Wish they were this noisy when they are hiding." Roy muttered, pulling his signature white gloves on as Armstrong got into a fighting stance.

"No choice, looks like we have a fight on our hands boys so get ready." Riza then said to Ed and Al once they recomposed themselves.

"Not surprising, damn things are everywhere it seems." Ed stated, dashing forward as he kicked one of the hunters in the face when it got too close, all the while transmuting his arm into a blade as he then stabbed it into the zombie's throat to finish it off. Al meanwhile was charging through a throng of smokers, grabbing one by its tongue and swinging it into the others, dazing them before clapping his hands and slamming them to the dirt, spearing the things into the air with sharp spikes. Roy and Armstrong handled the others with their signature moves, fire, bullets, and sheer brute strength. Here and there Edward tested his telekinesis; slamming a few of the zombies into one another or impaling them on sharp objects within range. He was careful to do this when Roy, Riza, or Armstrong weren't looking of course.

"You're getting good at that brother." Al stated, finishing off the last of the infected; sending it through a building's wall killing it instantly.

"Yeah yeah now shush and let's get moving. We can't let em know remember?" Ed whispered to Al when the armor moved closer, said younger Elric nodding as they then caught up with the others as they continued their trek through the destroyed town. A few minutes later Riza stopped, pressing the communicator on her left ear when it beeped.

"Speak." She stated in a calm voice, the others stopping when they saw she was getting a transmission. Listening she then nodded before turning to Roy.

"Sir; one of the teams have found some surviving soliders to the west near a food market. They say we have to hurry for they need medical help." She exclaimed, Roy nodding as the group of five hurried in said direction, taking out any infected that got in the way. It didn't take long, thankfully due to small numbers of Hunters here and there and no Tanks in sight. When they got there, they noticed three badly wounded soliders and the rest were practically burned or torn apart. Alphonse backing away as Ed grimaced. The team that came with them saluted, gesturing them to the men.

"We found them like this, these three hid which was a good thing since they saw what attacked them. They say it wasn't those beasts from Central though." The one stated uneasily, Roy nodding as he walked over and knelt down to the injured soliders.

"What happened...what attacked you solider?" Roy asked, the brown haired solider looked up, coughing weakly as he held his stomach in pain. Taking a breath he then started.

"They...were ghouls. Or...looked like them at least. Glowing eyes...and antenna. They were streaked red...and had weird tattoos of dragons on their foreheads. Their arms...could morph into cannons or swords...soo fast too..we d..didn't stand a chance." He exclaimed, doubling over as he shuddered; pain overpowering him. The other barely alive solider spoke up then, black hair matted with blood due to his intense head injury.

"We tried to fight them off, we got a few of them but they...vanished like smoke upon being destroyed. And their leader.....he was a beast. Blades like fire and eyes like a demon's. He tore most of us to pieces when we sent that distress call out...all the while laughing. Please...avoid him at all...costs!" The

ravenette begged as his eyes then rolled into the back of his head, his body going limp. Riza quickly leaned over, frowning after she checked his pulse, shaking her head when Roy looked to her. Roy tried to interrogate the third who was bald but covered in blood. But he was far too petrified to talk; rocking back and forth in his spot whimpering.

"My lord...the hell these men were put through. And what do they mean...ghouls? Is it a new type of infected attacking?" Armstrong asked, looking about as Edward flinched.

"No...the symbol they mentioned. It has to be a type of homunculus or something. Only a homunculus would bore that symbol." Edward stated, Alphonse looking to him uneasily as he spoke this.

"Right then....we have to be on our guard. Solider, can you tell us where they are now?" Roy then asked the brunette, said male nodding.

"They are near the south gathered around an old library. That's where the master went after he killed most of us off. I think they are searching for something like a document." He stated, pointing in said direction. Roy's eyes narrowed before he looked to the others.

"They might be looking for old Central documents. Some of them were left here for safety measures should there be a raid on Central for information that could damn us. Let's get moving, take out these beasts but be careful; they can morph their arms into weapons from what was mentioned." Roy yelled before running towards the south, Ed and the others fast on his trail. It didnt take long for the group to discover these beasts. They indeed stood out from the infected. Most of them had their backs turned and were conversing but it was evident they were standing guard. Roy moved behind a building out of sight, the others following his lead as they peered around the corner.

"My god...they are indeed inhuman beasts." Riza whispered, looking the creatures over. They were very tall and pitch black in nature. Their bodies criss-crossed with odd streaks of red ,and their legs animal-like with three pronged claws on each foot. However they also looked robotic like in appearance, their chests and joints looking metallic along with their movements. Their jaws having sharp fangs jutting outwards and their antennas twitching here and there. And in clear view, was the mentioned ouroboros insignia on each beast's forehead between their glowing red eyes.

"Brother...look, there's the-"

"Yeah I see it Al. But are they homunculus or what? They look more like robots or chimeras if you ask me." Ed muttered.

"Whatever they are...there's about thirty or more of them. What could they be planning?" Roy asked. He then cursed silently when four of the creature's antennas started to twitch violently as they looked in their direction, Roy moving out of sight though it was no use.

"Intruders! Destroy the human scum as the General ordered, let no one pass!" The one yelled, the whole fleet dashing towards them now.

"Well thanks to your big mouth we have to fight Mustang." Ed growled out, Roy ignoring his statement as he came into view along with the others.

"And here I thought we could sneak past you ugly pests. Oh well, hope you like the smell of burnt skin." Roy said playfully, smirking as he snapped his fingers, instantly taking out five of the beasts. Armstrong dashed towards one, slamming his fist into its face dazing it. He didn't take notice of another behind him. Holding its arm out, it morphed from being clawlike into a huge gaping multi-eyed dragon head with a gaping maw that started to glow a bright purple.

"Crap! Major move!" Ed yelled, sensing that must have been the cannon mentioned as he dashed forward, shoving Armstrong out of the way in time as the huge fireball past inches by them, engulfing a building yards away. "Damn...that was close." Ed exclaimed, panting as he then glared towards the beast that did that.

"Alright my turn!" he yelled, clapping his hands and slamming his fist to the ground, as a huge evil looking skull emerged from the earth as it then came clamping down on the creature, crushing it instantly in its stone jaws. Riza and the other soliders stayed out of reach, assaulting the things with a hailfire of bullets and dodging their fireballs as much as possible.

"Damn there's too many! Edward you have to find the leader; he's gotta be in that library. We'll stall them as long as possible. If we all stand around dealing with these pests he might get away! Now move!" Roy hollared, jumping to the side as he blasted more of the dark creatures to ashes. Ed dropkicked another in the head as it crashed into Alphonse, said armor smashing it into the dirt.

"Right...you owe me for this Mustang; let's go Al!" Edward yelled, jumping over a few of the dazed creatures as he and Alphonse carved a path through the fleet of monsters. Running around to the side of the building, Ed then created an entrance via alchemy before they snuck through. "Alright...this place is kinda big. Al we better split up to cover more ground. If you find anyone in here that doesn't look friendly make a noise to let me know." Edward stated, Alphonse meeping at the thought of being in this place. However he did have a point.

"R..right. Be careful brother." Al said, turning as he headed towards the lower levels deep in the back of the library while Edward headed upstairs; a pair of white eyes watching him in the shadows. The blonde looked about as he tread cautiously through the bookshelves. He could tell the place hadn't seen a maid in at least ten or twenty years. Cob webs choked the corners and the dust hung in the air rather thick, he was even leaving footprints in the rug the lack of cleaning was that bad.

"Damn...this place is killing my sinuses. Should have brought a swiffer with me before we boarded the train if I knew this." He muttered, covering the lower half of his face with his one sleeve. Ten minutes passed of fruitless searching for the blonde before he stopped, sensing something. Instinctively he then ducked behind a shelf of thick books, peering over his shoulder through the one shelf when he saw someone moving about.

Meanwhile Alphonse walked about, peeking here and there in hopes of finding someone. "You think we'd be able to find someone who leads that pack of beasts...I hate searching for a needle in a haystack." Al exclaimed with a light sigh. He then hesitated, stopping when he saw someone perching on top of a bookshelf a few yards away. His back was to the armor and he was looking towards the direction Ed had gone. His messy raven hair gleamed in the moonlight that barely shone through the dusty windows. As the armor got a better look, he could tell by the thing's tattered wings and tinged

purple skin tone that it wasn't human in nature. "Hey you!" Al called, running towards the beast. Instantly it jumped up and glanced over its shoulder. Alphonse gasped when he saw the thing's face. "You look like....hey stop!" he then called, seeing the being leap over more bookshelves before it crawled through a cracked window in seconds, Alphonse fast on its trail.

Edward glared as he saw someone slowly walk about through the bookshelves, this must have been the leader. He could tell with his inhuman senses it wasn't human in nature. Its eyes glowed in the dark, and as it stalked about its cloak loomed ominously as it cloaked the being; making it harder for Ed to see it. Plus Ed could swear he could hear a slight whirring noise each time the thing walked. He could also sense besides it lacking humanity...that it had a bloodthirsty malicious intent to it and it was also very powerful; much more than the things that they ran into earlier.

"Damn...I can't take this guy head on. He probably can see in the dark so there's no use trying to sneak up in front of him. I better go re-group with Al and alert Roy. Taking this demonic bastard head on would be suicide; who knows what he's capable of..." Edward thought to himself. Looking around, he then grinned seeing an open window. Using his flashstep, he wasted no time in getting to the window and crawling out of it. Jumping then to the rooftop using flashstep once more, he then looked about sensing for Alphonse.

"Hey Al! Alphonse where are ya? Al!" Edward hollared, he could sense and hear the armor was nearby, but he couldn't see him that well; even with his vampiric eyes thanks to all the thick fog. And Alphonse lacking inhuman eyes no doubt was having even more of a hard time tracking Edward. "Dammit I told him to stay in the library!" Ed then growled out in annoyance, walking towards the center of the roof in hopes of getting a better view as he continued calling for the armor. As he hollared, the loud clanking footsteps got louder and louder. Ed sighed in relief; his back to the footsteps. "About damn time Al...I was worried I had lost you for a second there." he stated, freezing up when he sensed a firm clawed hand grab his shoulder tightly. The hand felt somewhat like Al's...yet not. Too scared to look down; Ed merely spoke his fear. "A..Al is that y-you?" He then froze up further when he heard a dark chuckle from behind him, a voice dark and inhuman speaking into his left ear.

"I'm afraid you're gravely mistaken boy. Too bad your friends will be too busy to come and save you." the voice hissed out as Edward gulped.

"shoot. What a time for mistaken identity." Ed thought uneasily. He then oofed when he felt a metallic hand punch him square in the back, causing him to double over as he then was sent rolling by a powerful kick. Rising to his feet then after catching his breath; he got a good look at the enemy. It appeared to be the same thing he spotted in the library but now he was getting a better look at him. He defiantly was inhuman. Though was more robotic than demonish like his lackies. Gold eyes of reptilian nature glowed through a mask that appeared fish man-ish in style. A dark black cloak wrapped around his body as a skinny robotic neck and metal cruel looking claws were the only things to emerge from the dark piece of wardrobe. This was indeed the leader, he held that evil aura to him that no doubt terrified the soldiers, Ed had to be careful.

"Your annoying barks alerted me to your location if you're wondering how I found you. Though I'm puzzled as to why a boy is amongst the troops they sent for help. Surely they must think us as pests to not send real opponents. That annoys and insults me. No matter though; I'll teach them for underestimating me." The cyborg hissed out. Stalking towards Edward as the blonde glared standing his

ground, readying to fight.

"Dont be so sure of yourself tin can. Or didnt you learn the phrase 'dont judge a book by it's cover.' ? I'm more insulted though; I thought I'd find some scarey monster but here I am facing a cheap Iron Man knock off." Ed exclaimed with a sneer, the cyborg's eyes flaring as he growled.

"Little brat! I'll rip that insolent tongue out of your skull for daring to mock me. I'm General Grievous; the slaughterer of more armies and warlords than you could ever imagine! I was fighting more warriors than the armies of sparta before you were even a thought in your father's head!" The cyborg hissed out, oofing when he got punched in the stomach, stunned at the speed on the blonde as he staggered back.

"DONT CALL ME LITTLE YOU RUSTED UP WALKING CAN! I DONT CARE IF YOUR FRIGGIN JESUS; NO ONE CALLS ME SMALL AND GETS AWAY WITH IT!" Ed hollared, seething with rage now as Grievous blinked and chuckled. It seemed the boy had a soft spot about his height. Good, he could use this advantage to infuriate the brat. However he had to be careful.

"Then isnt it proper to give the condemned a final request? I ask you this boy; what's the name of this brave fool that challenges me?" The cyborg then asked, ducking out of the way of another swing from the fast alchemist. The blonde glared in his direction before snorting.

"Edward Elric, also known as Fullmetal." Ed replied in annoyance as Grievous murred inwardly. Damn, his master told him not to kill this one. However; he didnt say he couldnt beat him to a dazed bloody pulp before escaping when he was sure the kid couldnt follow.

"Very well Fullmetal, let us see if you can keep to your promise of getting rid of me." Grievous replied in amusement as Ed glared dashing towards him. The cyborg jumped to the side, bringing his fist into the side of the blonde's head as he oofed, reeling. However before the general could land another hit; he was stumbling forward from a kick delivered by the blonde from behind. "The hell?!" he barked, that indeed was weird. How could the brat move THAT fast? It was impossible. Turning he swung at him again, only to yelp when the blonde vanished from view as he faceplanted. He then yelled when he felt himself get stabbed in the back by a blade.

"Come on rust bucket I thought for the slayer of thousands you'd be able to put up with a kid." Edward said in amusment, wincing when Grievous whirled around and grabbed him by the right arm. He then howled when he felt the cyborg's claws sink into the arm. Grievous then raised a brow when he felt no blood exit the wounds caused by his claws. Seeing Ed's sneer he then knew he made a mistake. "Gotcha!" Edward said, before punching him hard in the face with said right hand; making it worse it had a blade jutting from the hand. The cyborg reeled back and rolled away quickly. Rising to his feet he felt his mask; it had a tiny crack on it thankfully but still he couldnt ignore that for long.

"Little whelp! You'll pay for that!" Grievous hollared, dashing forward as Ed once again dashed out of sight, only to come up behind him and kick him hard in the shoulder, dislocating it as the robotic fiend yowled. Whirling around he dropkicked the blonde, sending him rolling. He then went about readjusting his shoulder, eyes glaring darkly at Ed. "You're quite the pest. But you dont seem normal either. Your arm and leg feel much like mine...robotic in nature." He exclaimed as Ed chuckled.

"You're rather observant arent you? We'll you're right about that. It's the reason I got my name. And

there's another reason I was allowed into the military at such a young age." Ed exclaimed, grinning as he clapped his hands and then slamming them into the ground; a row of jagged spikes making their way towards the general. Grievous's eyes widened before he leaped out of harms way, glaring as he then snarled.

"Damn, here I hoped you were a mere footsolder. Just my luck to run into an alchemist. Nevertheless, you wont leave here in one peice." Grievous stated, standing to his full height as Ed glared back just as darkly.

"Just what the hell are you guys here for anyway? I doubt it's a shopping spree." Ed retorted in annoyance, Grievous chuckling now.

"Ah now you ask that. But you're too late, we will get what we're searching for with our without your interference. We already won brat; so go home back to your mother before I change my mind in letting you live." Grievous stated, quirking a brow when he saw Ed bristle at the statement; dashing at the cyborg with murderous intent. Grievous quickly reaching out, slamming him into the wall hard as it knocked the wind from him. "Seems someone is sensitive about a certian subject. Foolish brat; dont you know only anger on a battlefield leads to death? Your leader must have been drunk to consider recruiting you." he then added, Ed growling as he dove towards him again with blinding speed, the cyborg rolling away from the powerful kick. Before he knew it, the blonde had stabbed at his chest, putting a crack in it. Panicking he immediatly kicked the alchemist off his form and away from him as he rose up to his feet again.

"Your speed isnt human. But that could be due to your size. Nevertheless you are getting annoying; so let's finish this. I'll show you the reason I dispatched your soldier's soo quickly." Grievous then exclaimed opening his cloak just slightly as he pulled out two objects that looked like flashlights at first. Then flicking a switch; lasors emerged from the hilts, one red, the other purple. He then began to stalk towards Edward; spinning the blades as they kicked up sparks from the roof as he neared the blonde.

"Crap...this isnt good." Ed muttered. He knew right then he couldnt get near those blades; if they were like the lasors he'd seen in traps in spy movies...then he'd be sliced to peices in seconds. Hell he'd survive..but it would still hurt like a dog. Backing away, he then stumbled alittle nearly losing his balance. Looking over his shoulder, he saw he was at the edge of the rooftop.

"No where to run boy. Dont worry I'll make it quick." Grievous exclaimed in amusement. Ed glared at him before holding his hands out in a wierd moving motion as he closed his eyes. Before Grievous could announce his suspecions, he felt himself getting blasted back by an unseen force; slamming into a stack of crates as he coughed and hacked. Sitting up, he glared furiously at Edward. "You...you have the same abilities as that brat Aniken! You arent a jedi though. But you clearly arent an average boy. Proibly the reason they recruited you. However..." Grievous trailed, vanishing as he appeared inches from Edward, grabbing him by the throat. "I'm not your average being either." He then stated readying to decapitate him with the one lightsaber still in his possession. Ed struggled and gasped. And as if on cue, a large fist emerged from the wall, slamming into the cyborg who was sent flying again and crashing hard into the rooftop.

"You leave my brother alone!" Alphonse yelled out, standing above the two on another platform on the library's roof. The armor then ran over towards Ed when he was sure Grievous wasnt moving as he

helped him up. "Brother...are you ok?" Al then asked, Ed nodding as he coughed, trying to get his windpipes to work properly.

"You're a sight for sore eyes Al. What took you so long?" Ed asked as Al shrugged.

"Sorry brother...I saw something wierd...I thought I saw that thing before so I followed it, but I lost it's trail so I headed back here. Good thing too." Al explained, then turning when Grievous rose to his feet.

"Careful Al...that's the leader and he's no pushover. He's got weapons that can really mess you up so keep your distance." Edward stated, Al nodding as he registered the warning.

"So another brat to deal with. No one mentioned a girl in a suit of armor tagging along. Nevertheless you'll regret that move." Grievous hissed out; Al flailing as he glared.

"Hey i'm not a girl; I'm a boy!" Al yelled, feeling hurt as Grievous chuckled.

"Could have fooled me with that voice. How about you come out of that armor and prove it? Or do I have to cut you out of it?" Grievous then asked, raising his lightsaber as he dashed forward. Ed glared, moving Al out of the way with his telekinesis while then punching Grievous in the stomach, the cyborg glaring as he grabbed him by the shoulders, trying to shove him away. However Ed was starting to show he was much stronger than he let on, making it hard for either of them to move. "Heh....stubborn arent you?" Grievous asked, ready to kick him only to be blocked by Ed's handblade as it clanged loudly though the fog choked air. "Tell me this boy...why are you fighting for this pest of a military? We do not threaten Central itself; they are merely fleas on the asses of our desired plans. So why are you risking your life and your brother's to interfere in something much greater than you can fathom?" the cyborg asked in annoyance as Ed glared darkly.

"I dont give a damn if you are attacking central or not. It's the fact you are harming innocent people to get what you want. And as the hero of the people I wont let you get away with that. And for your other question; me and Al merely want to restore our bodies for the mistake we made. We want to atone for our sins and make things right." Ed replied as Grievous then leaped out of the way when Edward clapped his hands, nearly spearing the cyborg through the stomach with another spike from the roof. Then he chuckled, standing to his full height again. He managed to get a good look at Edward's arm and leg now due to his shirt and pantleg being ripped up during the scuffle.

"Ah yes now I understand the reason behind your lack of using a circle for alchemy. And the reason why you have metallic limbs. I suppose due to your other statement about your brother...you mean he lacks an entire body yes? I've seen alchemy like that in action before. And I suppose the reason you bristled at my earlier statement...it has something to due with your mother hmm?" Grievous asked, and sure enough Edward tensed, his gaze hardening greatly. This caused the cyborg to chuckle darkly. "Yes it seems so...you did the forbidden taboo among alchemists didnt you? Very obvious. You wanted mommy back and you got kicked in the face by god when you both tried to play him." he then stated.

"Shut up! You dont know anything!" Ed roared, Alphonse looking down as Grievous cackled.

"Oh but I do. Dont deny it, I am right and you know it. But what confuses me is this. Why do you wish to return your limbs to their flesh state? You have better limbs right there infront of you. They cannot be cut

easily, they cannot bleed. Plus you can transmute blades and other weapons from them. Or...is it some way of trying to *hide* what you did in the past?" Grievous then asked, Edward's eyes leering as his fury rose in his chest.

"Just...shut the hell up!" he bellowed, dashing forward as Grievous using his own quickness caught him by the arm, slamming him into the ground as he spoke further to the blonde.

"I find that to be a simple minded way of going about things boy. No matter how you cover up your dark past...you can never ever wash away the blood of your sins and you know it. Your arm and leg and your brother's body may one day be returned to you...but they will be stained in blood like your previous limbs. Your automail is but a fraction of the burdon you carry Fullmetal." Grievous then said in amusement, Edward yelling in anger.

"Just shut the frack up..you..dont know me...you dont know me. YOU DONT KNOW ME!" He roared, whirling around as he tackled the cyborg. However his fury made him forget about the cyborg's powerful feet.

"Brother!" Alphonse yelled, gasping when he saw Grievous use his kangaroo robotic foot to raise Edward off him as he then slammed him hard against the wall of the one platform to the roof.

"Not soo tough now are you scrawny runt?" Grievous stated in amusement as Edward struggled. Ed then twitched, his one arm moving free of the foot at blinding speed.

"frack YOU TIN CAN!" He roared, slamming his fist hard into the General's mask at the same spot he had made the crack, causing it to spread further over the mask.

"THAT...was a mistake." Grievous hissed out, murder evident in his eyes as Edward panicked for a second. Before he could react, the light saber was hacking through the flesh of his left hand as Ed howled in pain, blood gushing from the wound. Grievous stepped back, admiring the view as he watch Ed double over in pain, shaking as he tried to cover the wound. "Let's see you hit me with that stump brat. Plus you can't transmute now. Face it, you're finished." he exclaimed, clicking his saber off. However that grin the blonde gave him despite being in intense pain was unsettling. And the fact the armor wasnt rushing to his side was also suspicious.

"Don't count on it." Ed exclaimed making Grievous quirk a brow. He then saw why the brat was soo confident, watching in stunned silence as a bony hand emerged from the bloody stump before muscle tissue wrapped around it along with veins. Then lastly skin and nails regenerated around the muscle; the hand being reborn anew.

"WHAT THE?!" Grievous exclaimed in shock and confusion, glaring then as he saw Edward flex the hand as if he just sprained it or it had fallen asleep. "Explain yourself boy! I cut your flesh hand clean off! How did you regow it as if I barely left a mark?!"

"Tch." Ed stated in boredom.

"Do NOT mock me, ANSWER!" Grievous then bellowed, pointing threateningly at the blonde. Ed just looked up before sneering.

"Well rust bucket you see; im no *ordinary* boy." He answered, grinning fully now as he revealed a pair of sharp fangs, Grievous's eyes widening as he stepped back a little.

"So...that explains your inhuman speed, force-like abilities, and regeneration. It appears I'll have to stop going easy on you." Grievous then stated as he turned his light saber back on, getting into a fighting stance as Ed chuckled.

"That should be MY line." Ed stated, dashing forward as Grievous barely ducked, swinging his foot out in hopes of kicking the blonde. Missing he then glared before dashing off, only to meet Alphonse halfway as the armor met him punch for kick, ducking and dodging when the cyborg attempted to strike him with the saber. Getting desperate Grievous then ripped off his cloak, throwing it at Alphonse as said armor struggled and flailed falling back as he tried to get the piece of clothing off him that hindered his sight and movement. By this time Grievous had ran over to reclaim his second light saber. Chuckling he began to spin both light sabers threateningly; dashing towards both Elrics. He should have known something was up when they didnt back off. However it was too late when they clapped their hands in union before slamming them into the roof; two large hands grabbing both of Grievous's arms, holding them in place as the cyborg cursed and struggled.

"Got em!" Al said, both he and Edward now running over to the robotic general. Ed punching him hard in the chestplate as Alphonse tried to open it. "If we get him out of his armor he should be a cake walk!" Al called, Ed nodding. Grievous wasnt going to have any of this. Not only would they find out he wasnt entirely human, they would find his weak point. Being quick, Grievous managed to separate two more arms from his previous ones, and before Ed could react, he already had grabbed two more light sabers from his person as he slashed them both; Al being hit in the chest and Ed's right automail hand being hacked clean off, knocking the Elrics back as they yelled in shock and pain. Then slashing his two extra arms upwards, he cut his constraints loose with ease freeing himself. The one large stone arm came slamming down hard on Edward, trapping him there. As he struggled, he watched Grievous turn his sights on Alphonse, his fear rising.

"Let's see how immortal you are...if you are what I think you are...you have a seal that is able to be destroyed with ease...let's see if we can find it shall we little soul?" Grievous asked, Al tensing as he got into a fighting pose.

"AL NO, RUN DAMMIT!" Ed hollared, having seen the cyborg's speed before. But it was too late, Grievous was already assaulting the armor with his blinding speed as Al could barely block his flurry of swings. Sticking his foot out then, Al yelled as he tripped over it, being knocked down hard as Grievous pinned him there with his foot.

"Stupid boy...you should have listened to him." Grievous exclaimed, hacking Al's arms off before he could clap them, the armor screaming in panic. Then to make matters worse he hacked off Alphonse's legs to prevent him from kicking or crawling away. After that he cut into his chest plate slowly; to torment Ed for he knew he was watching. Cutting it completely open and tossing it aside; there in full view was the blood seal.

"Dammit leave him alone! He's not your opponent I am!" Ed hollared, his voice filled with fear and horror, Al's screams of panic filling his ears.

"Someone...please help. I'd give anything to save Al!" Ed thought mentally, tears streaming down his face.

If Grievous could grin he would be doing it right now. Fullmetal had proven to be no real threat, and even his 'immortal' brother was about to fall to his glowing blades. So much for proving a threat to his mission. He pulled back the light saber and brought it down in a downward slash as hard as he could when he became privvy to an action that should have been impossible. Inches from destroying Al's seal; Ed stood there, his flesh hand shrouded in dark magicks that writhed and squirmed in the night like living tendrils of some dark beast, wrapped around the impossibly hot blade of the light saber, stopping it from killing his brother.

"Brother..." Alphonse breathed.

"Wha-" Grievous began when a hand, made of the same squirming darkness covering Ed's left hand, replaced his right, and slammed into his chest plating; sending the general flying back, having taken the most damaging hit that Ed had delivered that night. The alchemist began to move forward in a way that could only be described as...intimidating. His figure, though Grievous's internal sensors told him otherwise; seemed to grow increasingly large, the air growing thick with a feeling that Grievous had not felt for a long time.

Fear.

The fear of being devoured by a predator many, *many* times your better, and there was nothing you could do about it. Grievous looked into the eyes of Fullmetal, and saw only the glow of a carnivore about to feast. "Sp..spare me!" he called out, trying to back away as the alchemist remained silent. It seemed there was no reasoning with him now. He had the essence of a bloodthirsty beast. And one knew there was so pacts between lions and men. Then something unexpected happened. Out of nowhere a being emerged from the shadows, his glowing white eyes catching with Alphonse's as the armor gasped. Watching as the being dashed after Edward, pinning him to the roof. Edward gasped in shock, struggling as he managed to turn around once the stranger rose to his feet before pinning one of his cloven hooves down on his chest. The being looked emaciated and skeletal in nature, his ribcage and spine in full view to them all. His hair was messy and his bangs hung in his pupil and iris-less white glowing eyes. His skin was badly burnt and tinged purple-ish blue. It's ears were pointed and three claws on each hand. Bandages wrapped around both hands all the way up to the elbows and bronzed shin guards were just above it's cloven camel looking hooves. The lower half of the being's face and shoulders was wrapped up in a scarf with a mirrored white symbol on the brown scarf. And lastly tattered ripped wings hung limp on the small of it's back.

"You...I saw you before. Edward it was him I was chasing!" Al called out in panic. "Why are you here?" Al called then. The being glanced over his shoulder quietly before returning his attention to Ed, raising his right hand up as a white glowing ethereal blade appeared around the hand.

"Forgive me...but this must be done." The wraith like being said and before Ed could hollar; plunged the blade into his chest.

"BROTHER!!" Alphonse screamed in horror struggling as he tried to move though without limbs it was

an impossible task. However something was off, both him and Grievous noticed it. Ed didnt scream, no blood burst from the wound either. Instead Edward's body glowed as he felt a weird tingling sensation...as if his foot had fallen asleep or something to that degree. But there was no pain at all. Slowly then; the squirming darkness that was wrapped around him began to disapate as it seemed to have been sucked into the sword itself. Once it was completly gone, the being stepped off of Edward, helping him up then.

"The..hell was that?" Ed said in confusion, looking at the spot, and even feeling for a wound. But this was short lived as he heard Al scream in panic, Grievous rising to his feet and dashing towards him, light sabers spinning like crazy. He was about to run forward, only to be shoved aside as the wraith dove for Grievous; speed much greater than his. Instantly the general was knocked backwards and rolling, the wraith standing infront of him.

"If you are a noble general than you should know better than to hit a defenseless opponent." The wraith said in anger, Grievous chuckling as he rose to his feet, one of his arms missing; having been torn off by the spector before it was inches from striking Al moments ago.

"Who said anything about me being noble? Besides all is fair in war. It's killed or be killed. And that boy is a wounded rabbit to the wolves." Grievous said in amusement, raising his light sabers as the wraith glared in anger.

"Then if you are a wolf...lets see you take on a grizzly. An angry one." The wraith stated, his blade turning from white to a dark purple now as he dove at the cyborg, both fighting tooth and nail on the roof, matching each other slash for slash. To Ed's surprise the weapon could indeed cause damage, as it took off part of his armor on the cyborg's shoulder, and it could block the light sabers too. However he couldnt stand around wasting time. Running over to Al he helped him into a sitting position.

"Al hang on! I'll get your parts and fix you right up." Ed stated, pushing Al into a spot out of the cyborg's reach; incase whoever that guy was managed to lose him.

"B..brother I-" Al started, only for Ed to innerrupt.

"Not now Al, just point out your bodyparts to me okay? Then we can get the hell out of here!" Ed called as Al murred. "Oops...uh I mean tell me where they are." Ed stated sweatdropping.

"They're over there by the wall you cant miss them. Hurry!" Alphonse stated, Ed nodding as he turned to look for said spot. Grinning when he saw the desired limbs and chesplate, he concentrated hard, raising his hands as his telekenesis yanked the objects into the air before they flew toward them. Then placing the limbs at the desired spots he drew a circle into the roof with his own blood before slamming his fist into the ground. Instantly a flash of light swallowed that area; Al's body being fully restored to him. Getting up he then in return helped Ed up now. "Now let's get your hand back. It's gotta be over there somewhere. It shouldnt be hard to put back on right?" Al asked as they searched for the automail.

"I hope so...cause Sasori is going to murder me for ruining his automail on the very same day he made it!" Ed stated, shuddering at the thought of pissing off an already scarey red head.

Meanwhile the wraith slashed mercilessly at Grievous, matching him hit for hit as Grievous; already

winded from Ed's attacks was barely being able to keep up now. He then saw an opening and took it, hacking the wraith's arm off, laughing when he howled in pain. "Stupid ghoul! You cannot match the strength of a cyborg...especially with that pathetic body!" Grievous said; but soon regretted it when he saw the being's arm return in moments as he just barely dodged his claws as they swiped deeply into the wall behind him.

"Do not be so quick to judge cyborg. I'm stronger than I look...and that is my greatest element in battle." The wraith replied darkly. Grievous chuckled as he then backed away.

"You can only surprise me once demon...next time I'll be aware of your strength." he retorted, the wraith chuckling.

"I don't mean that...what I meant was my greatest element is surprise....and you won't be aware of it." He said before blasting Grievous back with telekenesis of his own. The cyborg growled, raising to his feet, only to watch the being wave his blade a few times...only to then vanish into thin air. The cyborg's eyes widened as he looked around quickly. He didn't like this...his sensors weren't picking up on the wraith's form. Getting defensive he started to spin his three light sabers around him so that it would be hard for the wraith to touch him even if he couldn't see him. He looked about, hearing his laughter in the dense fog. It echoed thanks to the way the rooftops were set up; making it difficult for the general to track him. And all the footsteps didn't help either that was a combination of Ed's, Al's and the demon's. Then he howled, being knocked forward again by the telekenesis as he nearly dropped his light sabers before he was stabbed in the side, then in the shoulder dislocating it again. He then oofed as he felt a deep slash pierce his chest plate as the wraith faded back into view; standing on top of the cyborg. "Where's your confidence now general?" he asked in a dark tone. Grievous glared, slashing at the being as he jumped back.

"You will not best me!! The rage of hell will feast upon you and I'll make it happen!!" Grievous bellowed, about to split the wraith in half with his sabers, only to flail when he was being yanked back by some unseen force, before his arms were slammed up against some weird humming object as he hung there. Getting a good look at the thing, he saw it was a huge magnet with a twisted smiley face on it. Growling he glared down at Edward who was standing next to the contraption with Alphonse.

"I hope you didn't forget about me rust bucket. I made you a present after all. I see you love it so much you're clinging to it." Ed said in amusement, Al sweatdropping at the lame pun.

"Insolent brat! I will tear your soul asunder and feed your corpse to the crows!!" Grievous roared, flailing helplessly against the magnet as Ed waved a dismissive hand before turning to Al.

"Good thing Satori's automail is more durable to alchemy otherwise I'd still need some repairs to it. Considering it was a sinch for you to fuse it back into my wrist. And a good thing too otherwise you'd be in trouble there buddy." Ed stated as he then turned to the wraith who chuckled uneasily.

"It would have hurt...but I think I would have survived. Nonetheless thank you." The wraith stated as Ed nodded.

"Don't mention it...you saved me and Al's asses after all. By the way what did you do back there? I had that jackass on the ropes." Edward then asked, the wraith looking away some.

"It had to be done...trust me you'll thank me later for it." The wraith replied, his voice firm. Ed nodded then before thinking..however before he could voice his next statement, all three jumped back when Grievous landed amongst them, missing another arm, said arm still being attached to the magnet. However instead of fighting, he shoved them all out of his way as he leapt over the side of the building, dashing off into the dense fog. Ed growled, ready to give chase only to be yanked back by the blue wraith. "No...let him be. He was stalling you. Your REAL enemy is at city hall. Like he said; he was only a General." the wraith spoke as Ed blinked and panicked.

"W..what?!...dammit so that's what he meant earlier. Gah damn come on Al!" Ed said, being yanked back again as the wraith glared.

"No! You leave that one alone...if you thought this man was hard..he is nothing compared to the one lurking at city hall. He is a demon...nay infact he makes a demon look like a lamb. Do NOT face him." The wraith exclaimed sternly as Ed backed away glaring.

"I'm not going to sit around while these bastards destroy this town! I want to help dammit, and besides i'm stronger than I look. Plus I'm not soo easy to kill." Ed argued, being cut off.

"Let your superiors handle him. You've done enough fighting Edward." The wraith retorted, Ed's anger flaring.

"No! I'm not going to let them go into a fight where they'll be slaughtered! I'll handle this bastard and all his robot and zombie lackies myself if I have to. Dammit i'm not going to sit around and let those close to me get hurt again! If you hold me back from this; your no worse than that prick that just ran off with his tail between his legs, and I'll kick your @\$@ if I have to, to get to this jackass!" Ed yelled out, eyes filled with determination as he glared the wraith down. The wraith returned the glare for a few moments before sighing gently as he nodded stepping aside towards the ledge.

"Very well. You have a point there. Fine I'll allow you to go to city hall. But be warned....the minute he draws his sword on you; please do not get near it otherwise you'll be regretting it. Do not underestimate him either; or fall to your fury from his words for he is very deceptive and cruel with them." The wraith said, before pointing east towards the rundown building from earlier. "That's where your destination is. Do be careful like I said before." The wraith then said before he turned and went to walk off. Ed nodded and then turned.

"Hey wait..." he said, the being stopping and looking over his shoulder.

"Hmm?"

"What's your name?" Ed then asked curiously. The wraith was quiet for a few moments, as if he was deciding weather to tell them his name or not. After a few more moments he then spoke again.

"Raziel." He said before he started walking again, vanishing into the fog. Alphonse watched with Ed as he disappeared from view before speaking up himself.

"Ed...I could have sworn I saw him somewhere before...but I cant remember where." Al stated, Ed

looking at him weird before shrugging.

"Ah he probly looked like one of those weird infected. Just a coninceidence that's all Al. Now let's get moving." Ed stated, hopping off the ledge as Al watched the spot where the wraith vanished from for a minute. "AL HURRY DAMMIT!" Ed called, breaking Al from his train of thought before he nodded.

"How...did he know Ed's name?" Al thought to himself then, this thought rising after he gave up trying to think of where he saw him before.

"Coming!" Al said, chasing after him. Ten minutes of intense running, and a few slayings of hunters and smokers later; Ed and Al had snuck their way into the city hall. Being careful not to make much noise; after they searched most of the bottom half of the building, they made their way upstairs. During mid walk, Ed froze up, his heart pounding.

"Brother...?" Al whispered as Edward regained his composure, though his face was still holding that frightened gaze.

"I feel him Al...this guy's aura is....intense. It's more evil than anything I imagined, worse than that General's. That Raziel wasnt fooling..." Ed muttered, a shakiness to his voice. Swallowing hard he then calmed his breathing. "Still though we cant let him get away with this. Let's hurry." He then whispered as they continued up the stairs then. Searching most of the rooms they found no one...alive that is, that left only the city documents room. Heading quietly towards it, they snuck through the throngs of books and towering shelves, jumping every now and then when they heard a squeak or rustle, only to find it to be the floor or a mouse. The Elrics then neared the end of the room, a large bay window coming into their sights. And standing at the center of the window was a tall long silver haired man in a black trenchcoat; a book in his gloved hands. Ed hesitated, watching the man as he pondered on how to approach the male without being detected. However the glint of the moonlight on the impossibly long katana blade, stretching out at least six feet in length strapped to the belt at his right side made Edward meep mentally. Yup...this was the guy they were looking for, and now Ed knew why the wraith warned him about the blade and staying far away from it. Not only was it long as hell...it looked like it was made from a super strong steel that was probly hard to break.

"I know you're there, so cease in hiding." The man stated, back still turned to the hidden Elrics. Both meeped quietly as they looked at each other.

"..H..how did he know where we were? We're hardly close to where he is!" Al mewed out as Ed retorted.

"The hell should I know!" He whispered back in annoyance.

"Do not make me repeat myself...I said come out; I KNOW you are there." The man said again; this time in a darker tone. Not wanting to continue hiding for fear of angering the man, Ed and Al quickly came out of hiding, carefully approaching him. Being just out of range of the blade, Ed spoke up in his best angry voice.

"The hell you doing here killing all these people? If you wanted a damn book you could have asked! Besides you might as well throw in the towel we have you cornered!" Ed said angrily as he pointed a finger at him.

"We dispatched your right hand and our friends are taking out your army and those infected so give up!" Alphonse exclaimed, getting into a fighting pose as Ed nodded.

"Yeah so dont go running to them for help coward. Hey you listening to us? Quit ignoring us!" Ed yelled, twitching when the man simply turned a page in his book, reading for another minute or so quietly.

"Dammit I said quit ignoring us! I'll shove that book up your @\$@ if you dont turn and face us!" Ed snapped, storming up towards the man as Al gasped, ready to stop his older brother. However Ed was already out of range as he had grabbed the man by his shoulder. But before he could turn him around, he couldnt even see him before he felt himself being lifted up by the neck as it was then snapped as his body was dropped to the ground like wet garbage. Gold eyes wide in shock.

"BROTHER!" Al screamed in panic. Stunned at the man's blinding speed at having dispatched Edward soo fast.

"Dont you know it's rude to bother someone when they are reading boy? I thought your mother taught you better than that." the man said in a bored tone, glancing down at Ed with his green eyes as Edward's neck readjusted itself as he gasped, being revived again before he coughed. Rubbing it he sat back up and glared, forcing his shaking to stop.

"You adressed us FIRST bastard. We were me-" he was cut off then when a boot was slammed into his face, sending him rolling back towards Al's feet.

"Did I say you could speak? You do not speak unless spoken to child. Unless you want me to do worse to you. Now then, since you rudely innerrupted my reading...what brought you here?" The man then asked, tucking the book away into his coat before turning fully to the Elrics. His skin was somewhat pale yet abit tan. His eyes were calm yet menacing and his gleaming silver hair hung down past his waist. His bangs had a sort of 'praying mantis claws' style to them and his coat, boots, gloves, and pants were all as black as night. For some reason...Ed swore he saw this man from somewhere before. But he couldnt recall where exactly.

"You are the one causing all this devastation. Why?" Al answered considering Ed was writhing in pain from his broken nose. The man chuckled before looking off to the side.

"A distraction of course. You think the staff at this building would have allowed me access had I just simply strolled in? Heavens no; use your heads. And the infected and Neo-droids along with my General caused the bloodshed to alert your troops to them while I killed the people in here. That way they wouldnt get in the way of my search." The man replid in a matter-of-fact tone as he smirked. Ed glared at the man then upon hearing this.

"A..distraction? You call that senseless violence and destruction outside a DISRACTION?! You sick heartless bastard. You dont deserve to live for that!" Ed hissed out, getting to his feet as Al tried to pull him back.

"Those brainless cattle will die one day unlike us. Think of it as doing them a favor; killing them in their prime instead of having to wait soo long for their destined demise." The man then said, Ed's anger rising even more now.

"Shut the frack up! Who do you think you fracking are to pass judgement on those innocent people?! The only favor that will be done here is me getting rid of a scumbag prick like YOU!" Ed roared out, clapping his hands as he brought a large spear from the floor and before Al could stop him, chucked it towards the man.

"Brother no!"

A sickening gush of blood sprayed against the window, the man's head leaning back as the spear was imbedded in his forehead. A few moments passed as Ed smirked confidently. However that smirk was replaced with horror as the man's head leaned back down as he looked to them both boredly. Then reaching up, he yanked the spear out of his head with ease before snapping it with his one hand; as if it were a twig. "I thought you were paying attention to my statement. I'm immortal and not as easy to kill as those brainless cattle called humanity. And I know you're immortal too." He then said, before his glare darkened as his smile turned to that of a twisted one. "But you'll be wishing you werent" he then said. Ed and Al both panicked, but before they could react the man was in front of them both in a shot; his blade hacking clean through Ed's arm and through both of Al's sides cutting him in half in seconds as they both fell to the ground stunned. Cursing Ed rolled out of the way before the man could slam his blade down on him again as he went to crawl towards Al. He yowled in pain when the man then stomped on his flesh hand when he attempted to reach for Al. Out of instinct he concentrated, sending a telekinetic shockwave upwards and sure enough the man was blasted off him, slamming hard into the chandelier, being impaled to it by the force of the tk blast. However his gaze turned to that of anger.

"shoot!" Ed yelled, grabbing up Alphonse's two parts as he dashed for the window; being blasted out of it by a fireball as they both screamed and landed hard on the unforgiving ground. Wheezing and gasping, Ed looked to Al. "Al...al are you alright?" He asked praying he was still there.

"I'm...alright brother. He didnt get near the seal. But more importantly are you ok?" Alphonse asked, Ed nodding weakly.

"Yeah he just got my automail arm unfortunatly. And I cant grow that back." Ed replied.

"Oh dont worry, I'll make sure to cut you both to ribbons by the end of this night." the man said from behind them, freezing Ed and Al looked up, seeing the man walking towards them; a bloodthirsty look in his bright green eyes as a sickening smile graced his lips.

"Dammit...what pefect timing." Ed growled out, getting to his feet slowly as he looked to Al. "Get out of here, I can last longer unlike you Al."

"But br-"

"You can still crawl Alphonse so get moving! I wont let you die; i'm your big brother after all." Ed said firmly, cutting Al off as the armor tensed before nodding. Quickly crawling off as best as he could to saftey.

"How noble of you...protecting your precious little brother. Dont worry, he'll be joining you soon enough young one. I promise you that." The man then said in amusement, Ed glaring as he dashed forward after

picking up a nearby weapon from the street. With little effort the man sidestepped, slashing his leg clean off as Ed howled in pain, blood gushing from the wound. Curling up, he winced and screamed louder when the man then stepped on his side and cut his flesh arm off, more blood staining the ground. Ed winced and yowled, focusing more as he sent the man staggering back with another tk blast as he inched away. Once his arm and leg regenerated he then rose to his feet and ran for a street light that had been knocked down; hopefully he could transmute a temporary arm from that. But the man was in front of him in seconds, reaching forward as he punched him hard in the face before slashing him up the side; Ed's screams filling the air as he writhed in pain while his arm and shoulder were hacked clean off.

"You sure are a tough little thing...but then again...roaches always are hard to kill. I wonder..." He trailed, stamping on Ed's chest as he screamed. "How many times will I have to step on this little roach before he rolls over and dies? Nevertheless I don't mind...the longer you last the longer your torture and my fun is prolonged." the man continued, stabbing Ed in the throat as he gurgled in pain, blood spattering against the man's form as he slowly cut downwards into Ed's chest now. But before he could steer it towards the heart, he then jumped backwards when a fist of stone attempted to strike him from behind. Turning around he glared; seeing Alphonse laying there next to the base of the fist's arm. "Persistent....another roach to crush." He said, walking towards Al; only to stop when Ed grabbed his ankle, holding onto it tightly.

"Y..you leave...him alone. Or are you that cowardly to strike down someone who can't..f..fight back?" Edward growled out, glaring up at the man although he looked in just as bad shape as Al himself. The man just paused, chuckling as he stabbed him in the face with his sword; Ed howling but still gripping his foot tightly in his left hand.

"Stubborn brat...release me or you'll regret it." The man then growled out, continuing to stab him relentlessly as Alphonse watched in horror. But before he could react, loud roars rang through the air as all three looked up seeing Tanks and other infected stampeding towards their position. Upon seeing this, the man then glared darkly at Ed who was sneering.

"You...really think I'm that weak in battle? I LET you stab me..to..draw m..my blood so those things could come running. And now..my blood is all over you. While my wounds are closed hehehehe." Ed stated before looking to Al. "NOW AL!" he yelled, said armor nodding as he clapped his hands and touched the stone hand's base. Moving again it picked up Edward as the man moved out of the way just barely while it then lifted the blonde high into the air out of harm's way. The man just managed to dodge a few of the rampaging tanks that attempted to tackle him; cutting them to ribbons. However the infected started to swarm the area, getting too close for comfort as he then raised his hands, a huge wall of flame shooting outwards as it sucked most of the infected towards it, burning them to cinders.

"Pests." The man hissed out, then leaping into the air as a huge black wing burst from his right shoulder blade flapping a few times; Edward and Al looking on in shock. "You'll regret that move." he then said, turning to Ed as he dashed towards the fist, zooming past while cutting it clean in half in a mere second. Ed screamed, flailing as he landed hard next to Alphonse; moving them both out of the way of the falling fist.

"What the hell is he?!" Ed yelled, turning his attention to the skies now as the man hovered in the air, the city square being blocked off by fire at every opening; keeping the growling and snarling infected from

getting through.

"I dont know brother...but he's a monster that's for sure." Alphonse mewed out, watching the man too as he looked down at them in annoyance.

"You are indeed a handful, and just as overconfident as that young idiotic rookie of a soldier who thought he could best me in battle. However though he may have helped his beloved and precious daughter to escape...I still managed to send him crawling away somewhere to die like the dog he was. And soon you will join him." The man then said, his eyes becoming more malicious now. Ed froze up when he said this...now he remembered where he saw this man. The memories flared back in his head again; the laughing man that pretended to be stabbed by a young raven haired girl, a man she saw as her uncle; and the same man who stood before the girl's father with that same bloodthirsty look in his eyes as the raven haired girl was carried away by her mother, screaming for her father to get away.

"You...you're the man that killed Sarah's father! You're Sephiroth!" Ed hissed out, Alphonse gasping in shock at this untold news to him before he looked to the man again who only smirked.

"Ah...I see my reputation proceeds me. Yes I am Sephiroth. But as I said..I let him crawl off somewhere to die...for he wasn't worthy enough to stain my blade with his dying blood. Would have rusted it anyway." He exclaimed boredly as Edward glared angrily.

"You fucking prick....I'll make you pay for that! Come down here and face me!" Ed roared out as Sephiroth chuckled in amusement.

"No little runt I won't give you that honor...For I grow tired of this and wish to wrap this up. Time for this old cat to stop playing with his prey and snap it's neck." Sephiroth then said, raising his left hand skywards as it began to glow a dark purplish black. Ed began to wince, his and Al's bodies freezing up as bright glowing halos appeared above their heads and a glowing red sphere appeared in their chests. But before the spell could reach it's finale, a gunshot rang through the air, Sephiroth wincing as he gripped his left hand in pain, looking over towards the roof where it came from. The halos and glowing faded from both Elrics as they could breathe again.

"About damn time Lt Hawkeye..." Ed muttered, looking in said direction..only for his eyes to widen when he saw a fluttering tattered red cape land in front of them, a man with long raven hair wrapped in a loose bandanna with a clawed gold left handed gauntlet and pointed golden tipped boots being inside said cape as he twirled his gun a few times. "The hell are you?!" Ed then hollared; more in confusion and shock than anger.

"The guy that's saving your @\$\$. Now shut up." The man replied calmly, then turning his attention back to Sephiroth who glared down at him in annoyance, making green eyes meeting crimson ones.

"Figures I'd find you lurking around here Vincent. Where's the rest of your little group?" Sephiroth then asked, said man reloading his gun idly.

"Cleaning up your pathetic excuse for an army. Raziell managed to catch up to your tin can of a general by the way. I do hope for your sake he doesn't sing like a canary about your plans." The man known as Vincent stated, a tiny bit of amusement to his voice as Sephiroth glared harder. He then dodged out of

the way when Vincent let out a round of bullets at him before he managed to clip his wing, the man scowling as he hit the one roof hard before getting up and whirling around to face them all.

"It seems my plans have changed. No matter; what I was looking for wasent here anyway. This time I'll let you all live so savor it while it lasts. Next time you wont be soo lucky." Sephiroth exclaimed while he then vanished in a blinding light before disapating into a cloud of feathers.

"Yeah yeah and your little dog too." Vincent muttered, placing his triple barrled gun back in it's holster on his belt as he turned to the Elrics. "You ok over there?" he asked while walking over. However Ed could barely hear him, due to having lost alot of blood and the constant regenerating; it had taken a heavy toll on his body. The red caped man was fading in and out of his sight, and Alphonse's voice was even fading on him.

"Dammit...I couldnt avenge you...I..I'm sorry Sa-" Ed weakly whispered before everything faded to black.

14 - Cry little angel

Welcome back once more, yes the time between us has been too long. But I promise to repay you with another chapter to my fable. Where we last left off, Edward had encountered the cruel General Grievous and black hearted Sephiroth. The one winged angel had proved too much for him; like the soul reaver Raziel had warned. But thankfully; a crimson gunslinger had made it onto the scene with a bullet for the fiendish devil. But before all was said and done, Edward had fallen unconscious.

But before we get back to Edward, let's see what was happening with the other members of his group while he fought the demons of Schlafrig Hobl with Alphonse and those who came with him to the dreary little town.

"Hello...is..is anyone there?" Sarah called out, rain pouring down around her as she walked through a rocky landscape. This place...it felt soo familier and ominous. She couldnt recall where though. Crows were the only ones to answer her, they fluttered about in the air, black feathers falling like the raindrops in the eternal storm. "Hey...where is everyone...hello? Come on this isnt funny!" Sarah called out, voice growing worried now as she began to pick up her pace. She then halted, looking down to see footprints in the mud, large ones...stained in blood. She shivered but for some reason, decided to follow them. More crows cawed out, as if warning her to turn back, not to follow those dark footsteps soaked in blood. Sarah hugged herself, shivering as she trecked through the what seemed like eternal canyon until she finally came out onto a vast hill, where she screamed in horror.

There, laying on the hilltop was her father's form...covered in blood and gashes; eyes devoid of life as they gazed out into the stormy skies. Now she remembered this location; it was the very spot her father had been found by her and mother. It was the area he had ran off to after facing Sephiroth...but his wounds during battle had been fatal, and he wasnt immortal unlike her and mother. "Daddy!" she cried out, running towards his form as she then yelped, falling to the ground when she tripped over something. She looked over to see what it was, only to scream again when she saw it was another body...Deidara's body infact. His blue eyes wide in horror as his lovely blonde hair and face were caked in blood. Getting up she then looked around, mouth covered as she saw more of her comrads corpses littering the area. Sasori and Tobi were a few yards away...a sharp stalactite was impaled through Tobi's mask, Sasori was torn to peices, his chestplate shattered. Itachi as hung upside down from a feeble looking tree, eyes gouged out and chest ripped open.

"What madness is this?!" Sarah screamed out, covering her eyes as she shook her head, the cries of the crows only growing louder. Then...a dark chuckle sounded a few feet infront of her. She gasped, recognizing that soft deep voice. Looking up, she felt her heart leap into her throat when she saw the other victem of this onslaught...Edward. He was strapped to a cross...face frozen in silent horror as his throat was torn out and he was practicly disembowled, his heart being held by the silver haired man infront of him, wing flexing every now and then as his cat like hues locked onto Sarah. "Y...you..what have you done?!" Sarah screamed out, anger in her voice rising though the terror was still evident, tears streaming down her pale face.

"Taking...what you cherish most. For it gives me great pleasure to do so. Before this day is done...your

little alchemist will have embraced the reaper my dear angel." Sephiroth replied, the heart in his hands turning to dust as he laughed, Sarah screaming as she covered her face.

"You monster!! I will not let you get away with this." Sarah yelled, Sephiroth laughing as he walked towards her.

"Oh but I already have....I promise you that." He replied smoothly, Sarah crying out more as she shook her head.

"You wont hurt him...he is mine you hear me; i'll avenge daddy and send you to hell!" Sarah then retorted, standing up now as she glared angerily. Sephiroth merely laughed more, walking closer now to her as she began to back away. He then grabbed her wrists tightly before she could strike him, smirking wickedly.

"You dont have the guts little girl...you are too tender. You are nothing but a lamb for this wolf to feast on. Now cry for me!" he then hissed out, morphing in mid sentance into a pack of crows as they screeched, flying at her and swarming her frame.

"NOO!" Sarah screamed out, tears streaming down her face as she shot up in her bed, sweat drenching her frame as she felt herself over a few times, checking for peck wounds or scratches. Seeing none of this she then proceeded to look around the bedroom, nothing was out of sorts; except maybe for the fact the room needed alittle more unpacking. She then hopped out of the bed, dashing out of the room; not caring that she was only in a tiny pink tank top and hello kitty panties. "Itachi sama, Itachi wake up!" she then cried out when she reached the bottom level of the tavern where extra rooms had been set up, pounding on the door to the room that belonged to said Uchiha. A few moments passed before the raven haired male answered the door, a haggared look on his pale features as he rubbed at his dark eyes.

"Sarah...do you know what time it i-" he was cut short, oofing when Sarah clung to him sobbing.

"I had another terrible dream about him. This time he killed all of you; and Edward too." Sarah wailed out, tears streaming down her face as Itachi sighed, patting her head gently.

"It's probly because the storm that kicked in a few hours ago; you always have bad dreams when this occurs...due to finding your father during a storm. That or too much sugar before bed again." Itachi said tiredly, Sarah whimpering as she shook her head firmly while glaring up at him.

"No; not this time...he interacted with me. He said he would kill Edward just like he killed daddy; and that I wasent strong or brave enough to stop him." Sarah mewed out while rubbing at her one eye. Itachi's gaze then firmed alittle, concern lacing his eyes for a a few moments.

"This isnt good. If he interacted with you then there must be something more to that nightmare. Perhaps it was a mental attack...a genjutsu sent from far away or something to that degree." Itachi then stated, scratching his chin as he then looked to her frame. "Tell me....did you feel pain or anything else during the nightmare?" Itachi then asked as Sarah went to recall the brutal vision.

"Yes...I could feel the rain on me...and when he morphed into a flock of crows; I felt them pecking and clawing me. I checked myself for injuries before I came here I was that badly shaken." Sarah then

replied as Itachi's frown only deepened.

"It was a genjutsu, he somehow managed to send it to you through a dream. How though I cannot fathom...not even I'm that skilled to do such a thing. He sent it as a warning. I have a hunch he's behind that attack on Schlafrig Hohl, otherwise how would he know of Edward?" Itachi then said as Sarah squeaked, covering her mouth now.

"No...not Ed. I cant let him take Edward!" Sarah then cried out, starting to panic as she went to run for the stairs, Itachi reaching out to stop her as he shook his head.

"It wont do you no good to go help him. Besides; if you unleash your full powers...you'll blow your cover to his human companions and you'd be locked up as a central lab rat. Besides...it's been hours now; who knows what has occurred. Sephiroth is probly long gone by now, we all know how fast he strikes and vanishes afterwards." Itachi then stated, hating to be blunt to Sarah though it had to be said. Sarah could only whimper and begin to sob, falling to her knees as she covered her face.

"I dont want to go to that train station to find Edward in a coffin because of him...why didnt I stop him from leaving?! Had I known Sephiroth in that town...I w..would have st-stopped him!" Sarah said between choked sobs, Itachi frowning more as he leaned down next to her, wrapping a protective arm around her shoulders, rocking her abit.

"Sarah...dont lose faith soo quickly...the boy has promise. Yes we know how strong Sephiroth is; but Edward can be quite hard to kill too. Sephiroth probly sent that vision to demoralize you, to make you run off scared like he did last time. Dont let that demon fool you...believe in Edward ok? He'll probly come back alittle bruised up and angry; prattling on about Sephiroth and what a cheap bastard he is and what not. Try to cheer up alright? Dont let every little thing Sephiroth says scare you; it's what he wants. Stand up to him, be a brave little angel like your father wants." Itachi then stated as Sarah calmed some at his words, a small smile making itself known when she heard his last statement. Yes, her father would want her to be brave. No more running, this time, the lamb would kick that sneering wolf in the teeth when he dared show his face in her next dream.

"Thank you Itachi sama...you're always good to talk to unlike Sasori. Even though you dont act it in public." Sarah stated, allowing Itachi to wipe her tears away, before he chuckled and poked her forehead lightly.

"Just dont inform the others of my tender actions with you...I'm not in the mood of them accusing me of being interested in you..or of being soft." Itachi stated before he walked alongside her, leading her back up to her room. Sarah giggled lightly, she was glad to see this side of Itachi showing itself again. Only with her did he show his true side, a compassionate big hearted teddy bear with a wise outlook on life. No he wasnt interested in her romantically, he made that clear when she asked him the one time if he was crushing on her. He said the reason he shown his true colors around her because for one; she wouldnt ridicule him for it, another was that she was like the baby sister he always wanted. And another was that she somewhat reminded him of his little brother when he was much younger...before he snapped and swore to kill Itachi and all that jaz. But Sasuke and his detierating sanity was a story for another time. Once they reached her room, he then opened her door and lightly scooted her back in, but not before poking her forehead again.

"Get some rest...I'll wake you so we can go greet Edward at the station tomorrow. If you have anymore bad dreams, let me know through the whisper (another term for telepathy fyi) instead of hammering on my door alright?" Itachi then said as Sarah sweatdropped and nodded, rubbing her forehead.

"Yes Tachi sama...and thank you again." Sarah replied, giving a light smile before she closed the door behind her, returning to her bed. Though she couldn't sleep for the rest of the night; those haunting green eyes embedded into her mind's eyes prevented that.

Sarah...I pray you dont get too close to that boy....for it's forbidden. But then again, you were always the rebellious type..and this one brings back old memories of your first human love doesnt he? Such a risk taker you are, heh you are more like my brother than you think... Itachi thought to himself, letting one more smile escape onto his face as he turned and headed back downstairs quietly as he shook his head.

During the middle of the day, Shadow and Tifa were alarmed by a rough pounding on the tavern door. Shadow went to answer it, but Tifa held him back and went to go get it herself. She squeaked when she saw a tall african american man in a central uniform, over his shoulder was an unconscious Louis, bloodied and bruised. "Is this mongrel your's?" The man asked in a gruff voice as Tifa glared.

"That's my newest employee yes. What's happened to him?" she then asked as the man walked over to the lounge, placing Louis there before turning to her.

"We assume he was attacked by those infected creatures. He took alot of them down though since his gun is nearly out of ammo. Plus the tanks on the otherside of town are all riddled with bullets, especially the big one that's been giving us trouble. Some orange haired woman approached us holding him in her arms. She said he was the one that dispatched them, hence how we know it was him and not our troops. We brought him here on eyewitness accounts that he worked here. I advise though that he leave the heroism to our boys before he gets killed next time. Cause im not scraping his carcass off the street." The man then answered, turning as he then stormed off without another word, slamming the door behind him.

"Some thanks...tch military dogs..get uppity when someone out does them in their own job." Shadow muttered, walking over to where Louis layed as he looked him over. "Neh..he's fine. Give him a day or two and he'll be up and doging in no time." Shadow then stated, waving a dismissive hand as he went back to his seat at the bar, Tifa sending him a weird look.

"He's immortal too I assume?" Tifa asked while cleaning out a glass. Shadow shook his head, a small smile forming as he took a sip of his shot.

"Nope...he's human...just very special." Shadow merely replied.

Edward squinted, the light was blinding in front of him. "M..mom?" He asked, seeing her form coming into view as she smiled, extending her hand to him. He then noticed her change. Her soft brown hair became jet black, her brown eyes turned ebony blue and her skin paled. "Sarah?" he then asked in surprise, reaching out for her; only to have his face stained in splatters of her blood. Eyes wide in shock, he saw her cry out in a silent scream, a blade sticking out of her abdomen as she fell into his arms as he looked up; Sephiroth standing in front of him with a twisted smirk.

"Shall I give you despair?" He asked in a wicked and amused tone.

Edward screamed out in panic, shooting up from his bed, oofing when his head collided with something hard.

"OWIE! Ed's face hurt me!" Tobi whined out, falling backwards onto the floor as he flailed about, rubbing at his mask a few times while Sasori and Itachi sat nearby, bored looks cast at the eccentric teammate.

"T..the hell. W-where am I?!" Edward called out, looking around in a frenzied panic before he winced and held his stomach and head, wobbling as he then slumped back down into the pillow.

"Home, you were out cold during your train ride back. We told your comrades we would take you to the hospital since we could get there faster. Mustang put up a little bit of an argument but Itachi managed to convince him not to worry." Sasori replied calmly, once again tinkering with Edward's automail arm as Ed murred weakly.

"It's a wonder you are awake at all. Since you are practically on the brink of having no blood in your body. You continue to surprise us Fullmetal." Itachi responded, looking to Edward with those calm black eyes as Ed then looked around weakly.

"Where...where's Al?" he asked as Sasori shook his head.

"Don't fret, he's downstairs awaiting your repairs so you can in turn fix him up. Deidara and the others are keeping him company so he doesn't panic too much. We heard from a certain gunslinger you had quite a fight on your hands." Sasori then stated, brown eyes resting on Edward for a few moments as the blonde frowned and nodded, flesh hand resting on what remained of his shoulder.

"Y..yeah. I ran into that Sephiroth guy....the one that killed Sarah's father. I kinda snapped and tried to fight him..you can see clearly that I didn't win though." Edward stated weakly, feeling that his pride was far more shattered than his own body. Sasori chuckled some as Itachi shook his head.

"Don't feel like a weakling...he's far more of a match for all of us. Not even I dare to stand up to him he's that powerful. He could probably kill us all in one sitting if he wanted to. Just be thankful Vincent made an appearance when he did. And try not to be so careless next time; he knows how to kill immortals." Itachi said warningly as the alchemist gritted his teeth and looked away.

"I know he was way outta my league...but dammit I couldn't let him get away with slaughtering all those innocent people! I'd be just as cruel as him if I stood by like nothing happened, and I wouldn't forgive myself if I ran off." Edward barked out, punching his left hand into the wall as Itachi rose a brow; Sasori chuckling more as he smiled.

"The defiant mouse standing up to the snarling lion." Sasori replied, returning to his work on Edward's arm while Edward scowled at the red head, looking away fully now.

"So where's Sarah?" Ed then asked after a few moments, Tobi popping up beside the blonde, causing him to nearly have heart failure since he forgot about the third occupant in the room.

"She's hiding in her room, Cacatur Ed sama being knocked out cold made her all sad and what not! She didnt want to see ya like this so she sent us to watch over you. I happily volunteered to watch you with these two lazies cause Tobi's a good boy! And watch you I did...till you bumped my head and gave me an ouchy!" Tobi exclaimed proudly, oofing when Ed kicked him in the face; twitching at the cactuar statement. "Owieeee...why must Ed sama be soo mean and give Tobi ouchies?!" Tobi then whined out, flailing on the floor again as the blonde looked to Itachi.

"She doing alright..? I hope I didnt freak her out or anything." Ed muttered as Itachi shook his head.

"Sarah...was alittle taken aback by your condition..but she was relieved to see you were still breathing. She did tell you to have this though when you woke..so you could regain your lost energy and not fall into acoma." Itachi replied, slipping a red blood packet of a fair size out of his coat before tossing it to the alchemist. He caught it and bit into it, not even taking a second thought to the action, guzzeling away. He did sweatdrop however when Tobi was eyeing him closely again.

"Your in my bubble again bub." Edward growled out, murring even more when Tobi prodded him.

"Why Ed sama soo worried about Sarah channnnn?" He asked in a cutesy voice, yelping when Edward snarled, punting him out of the window which happened to be open at the time.

"NONE OF YOUR DAMN BUSINESS!" he roared out, trying to hide the blush on his face while Itachi and Sasori smirked behind their collars. When he sensed their eyes on him, the blonde glared over his shoulder as they put their hands up defensivly.

"Easy tiger...it's natural for a fledgling to wonder where their master is. Though...I wouldnt blame you, she is a sexy little thing; ask Ita- ACK!" Sasori yelped, growling after his face was struck dead center by Itachi's elbow, who was looking away innocently.

"My apologies...involuntary arm spasm." the Uchiha exclaimed, though his aura held a warning to the red head not to run his mouth. Edward just sent them a confused look before shrugging, going back to sipping on his blood pack while he awaited repairs to his arm and leg. A few hours had passed and Edward was heading downstairs to where Alphonse was.

"Brother you're up! Wow...you sure heal fast. Even after the whipping you took." Alphonse exclaimed, looking up from his spot on the couch as Edward snorted, Deidara snickering at this statement while Shadow looked away to hide his smirk.

"Hey look who the hell is cut in half here! Maybe I SHOULDNT repair you and let Tobi wear you as a costume hmm?" Edward retorted as Al meeped and went chib hamster faced, shaking his head frantically.

"No no no please! I'm sorry brother I didnt mean that I take it back!" Al mewed out pleadingly as Ed sneered.

"That's more like it. Now hold still this wont take long." Ed replied, clapping his hands as he fused Al's body back into one whole form once more. After that was finished, he then ran over to get something to eat from Tifa...well after she chewed his hyde out for going into another reckless fight and what not. A

lecture and a meal later, Edward had managed to talk Itachi and Sasori into training him abit more with telekinesis since he wanted to hone his skills and so more training went on. After he finished that, he headed upstairs to go shower, blinking when Alphonse ran after him.

"Brother wait, I almost forgot!" Al called out rooting around in his armor as Edward quirked a brow. "Here...that Vincent fella gave it to me...he said that Raziel guy gave it to him to give to Sarah. But since you knew her, he opted to have you deliver it to her so he wouldnt have to take a train to central for just one little drop off." Alphonse explained, handing Edward a tiny pendant of a silver fanged skull with gold feathery wings. Ed nodded and looked the trinket over before shrugging as he stuffed it into his pocket.

"Sure I'll give it to her....when she decides to come out of her room. Itachi said she locked herself in there all day...cause I upset her by coming home hurt." Ed muttered, looking away with a guilty look. Him and Alphonse never were fans of making girls cry, hence the gloomy look on his face. Al merely nodded, patting him on the shoulder.

"Dont worry, she'll perk up..especially when she learns you sent Tobi through the roof in your training excercises before running from Tifa when she tried to pummel you." Al said with a light laugh as Ed murred.

"Gee thanks." Ed stated, getting another chuckle from his brother as he then headed for his room now. The hours had dragged by slowly, and the non-stop rain didnt seem to help the mood for the rest of the night. So the blonde had opted for retiring early that night while the others stayed up. That was til he heard a knock at his door. "Coming...." he muttered weakly, pulling himself out of bed as he went to answer the door; surprised to see Sarah standing there with an uneasy look on her face. "S..sarah? Is..something wrong?" he asked before yawning. Sarah mewed and twiddled her fingers, looking away nervously.

"I..um I know this might sound weird but...can I share your bed with you tonight?" She asked in a small voice as Ed's face flared up a bright red as he blinked in shock, wide awake now.

"W...why is that?" Edward asked, trying to surpress his blushing as Sarah shook her hands quickly while meeping.

"It's nothing like what you think! I..I just dont like thunderstorms...and the power went out and it's really thundering outside and stuff. I'm...im scared ok? I'd ask Itachi but he keeps his room way too damn cold. And Deidara snores like a sonofadog and Sasori's a cover whore. Tobi...well he has to be knocked out to sleep and who knows what he'd do to me when im asleep and in a room alone with him." Sarah prattled on, looking away now as Ed just laughed some before smiling as he covered her mouth.

"Take it easy Sarah...you can share a bed with me; just dont hog the covers though ok?" Edward replied as Sarah smiled cheerfully while he allowed her into his room.

"Well I dont think you'd need much with that tiny frame." Sarah responded, eeping when a pillow smacked her in the face as Ed smirked darkly while twitching.

"One more short crack and I'll make you go sleep with Tobi." He warned as Sarah flailed her hands infront of her again.

"Kidding kidding." she said in a tiny voice as Ed nodded. Once they were nice and comfy, Ed quirked a brow when he noticed the ravenette was shivering some even though she was under the blankets.

"You aren't THAT scared of the storm are you?" Ed asked, nodding to her shivering as Sarah shook her head, sitting up to show she was only in a tiny tank top now, having removed her shirt under the covers.

"No...my shirt tag was itching so I took my shirt off." Sarah stated as Ed urped, covering his nose as he looked away.

"P..put it back on!" he meeped out as Sarah puffed her cheeks.

"No it's itchy!" she mewed out as Edward then snorted, slipping his black muscle shirt off as he then tossed it out her quickly.

"Fine wear mine then. But gimme it back in the morning!" Edward barked back, trying to suppress his nosebleed as Sarah looked at the shirt in surprise. Giving a light smile at his kind gesture, she then slipped the shirt on and wriggled back under the covers.

"Thanks Eddie." Sarah responded as Ed waved a dismissive hand, laying down once more as he had his back to her. Though sleep hardly came as both seemed to stare at certain spots in the room. Finding the silence to be torture, Sarah decided to speak up again. "You fought him...didn't you?" Sarah then asked, sensing that the older Elric was still awake too as he tensed a bit.

"Y..yeah. If you'd call it a fight that is. It was pretty one sided. But I did get a few good hits in on the bastard." Edward muttered, looking down a bit as Sarah sighed.

"That's good. I wouldn't have wanted him to completely pummel you. It was good you showed him you don't roll over for anyone. And trust me...he hates stubborn defiant types." Sarah replied back as Ed grinned a bit.

"Good, and your damn right I don't roll over for anyone. By the time my training is done I'll be shoving his face into the dirt, forcing him to apologize to you." Edward exclaimed with a snicker as Sarah gave a sad smile.

"Don't get overconfident Eddie...Itachi and the others aren't even a match for him even when combining their forces, and they have eons of training experience over you. I know you'd want to avenge me but please...it would make me happier if you kept your distance from him. I'm nothing worth losing your life over." Sarah whispered as Ed frowned, feeling a twinge of sadness as he kept quiet.

"I'm so sorry I got you involved in my mess...but let's not be gloomy, let's just rest up." Sarah then stated, adding the last part with a fake happiness to her voice as she nuzzled under the covers further.

"Um..yeah. Rest well Sarah." Edward then muttered, he wanted to argue with her about how her cause to hate Sephiroth was worth fighting for, was worth avenging her father over...but he felt if he did argue he'd just upset her more...so he opted for letting it be for that night as he curled up in the bed too, closing his eyes as he let sleep take hold of him.

"But im soo happy...you lived." Sarah then added in a softer voice, stealing a glance over her shoulder at Edward, tears streaming down her face.

Meanwhile, off near the slums of central, a dark chuckle ran through the rain choked air. "Sooo...this is Central eh? Pretty bland if you ask me..I expected something far more ritzy..ah but you know me im such a picky perfectionist." A man exclaimed boredly, long black hair being soaked in the rain, lightning flashing across the skies, illuminating his ghostly pale high cheek boned face. His gold snake like eyes resting on the man next to him in a raggity blood soaked navy blue trench coat. The messy green haired male gave a soft laugh, shrugging lightly as he kicked at the dead body of the solider infront of him as he reloaded his shot gun.

"No arguement there my reptilian comrad. Let's do hope we find that Fullmetal runt and your little posse that soo rudely kicked you from the team. I'd love to raise some hell." The man stated, lightning flashing again as this time, the other man's face was on display, wearing messy clown like makeup over his scarred features. The taller ravenette just gave a playful yet ominous chuckle.

"Oh now let's not kill them now....for who would we torment then? Besides...I like to take my time." The ravenette replied in a hurt tone as the green haired male scoffed.

"Aw..why soo serious snakey? We wont kill em...just put em in the intensive care unit is all. I just want to see how many times I can break em; especially my old traitor of a employee Lou Lou." The shorter male responded, a twisted smile crossing his face as he shot the corpse nearby in the head once more before letting out a wicked laugh.