

Lullaby for a Stormy Night

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Submitted: March 28, 2011

Updated: September 29, 2011

A sweet little fable that shows not all creatures that go bump in the night are out to harm you. (A crossover of Legacy of Kain and Fullmetal Alchemist)

Provided by Fanart Central.

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1 - True Destiny of the Soul Reaver

A bright light illuminated my surroundings as I passed through the portal. A swirling energy surrounded my form, transporting me to some unknown destiny. Then there was darkness. I surveyed the area calmly trying to see with my immortal eyes, to try and peirce the shadows to find an exit to this abyss. However to no avail I could not see anything. But my surroundings suddenly lit up, but only in one small area, and standing in that spotlight with an unseen light source was a man of human origin it appeared. But appearances can be decieving as I have learned through all my years of unlife. His hair was straight and lengthy, touching his waist as it was bathed in red streaks of blood but was orginally pitch black ,and glossy like the wings of a raven like my own. He wore a matching long leather coat and boots of the same material. His eyes however...were most haunting. They were a normal design like any humans; having pupils and irises unlike myself. But the color of the irises were a swirling silver...as if a deep haunting sense of forboding and great horror lay just behind those mystic eyes. I knew then this was no ordinary human...perhaps it was he that brought forth the portal into the Elder God's chamber. I would soon find out weather this "man" was my savior or damnation.

"Who are you? And where am I?" Raziel asked, slowly rising to his feet as he quickly summoned up the wraith blade. And the sword now being imbued with the essence of purifying spirit he was pretty much unstoppable in this state...or so he thought.

"Relax my child...I have not brought you from that parasite's pit just to squabble. And even if I did you'd be wishing for a unobtainable demise right about now." The man stated, chuckling as he waved a dismissive hand. However his arrogance further fueled the wraith's rage as he took a daring step forward.

"You think so? Let's test that theory shall we?" Raziel said in a dark voice, raising his blade ready to fight now. The raven haired male did not falter though, only closing one of his eyes as a coy smirk graced his lips.

"I dont think...I *know*; Raziel. Now calm yourself, and let's get rid of that sword for the time being." The man exclaimed, snapping his fingers as the soul reaver instantly vanished from view, disappating and retreating back into the wraith's arm. Said spector looked at his right appendage with surprise before scowling, white eyes glaring at the man before him now.

"Typical, like I havent seen that trick before. Let me guess, you work for Moebius or the Elder God...or perhaps the Hylden lord and wish to use me as a reliable pawn correct? Well if you know my name than you must know of my history and my distaste at being used. So if that's your game than you can just send me back into the portal you summoned." Raziel then snapped, pointing a claw towards the dark clothed ravenette before he turned his back to him in irritation. His anger only growing when the silver eyed male just laughed in amusement while resting his hand on his face.

"Boy you are a wild card arent you? Plus you are rather paranoid. Wouldnt blame you though with how many times you've been screwed over. Artemis was correct in claiming you'd be a hard one to get off the fishing hook without being bitten first. No child I dont work for those laughing stalks of the universe. Nor

do I wish to 'use' you. I brought you here to ask for your assistance infact since you are the only one that can do this." The man then said before folding his arms as he then smiled in amusement, the wraith slowly glancing over his shoulder as a suspicious look crossed over his features.

"What do you mean exactly? I'm confused at your statements. Who are you and again I ask where am I? And what's this 'assistance' you need from me? Bear in mind Moebuis tryed the sympathy act with me too so I wont fall for the same deception twice." Raziel then asked, his voice darkening now as he turned to face the man again. The man just chuckled again, swiping a hand through his dark black and red locks.

"Ah where are my manners? Forgive me; I forgot you are not of my realm in the universe considering the Elder "God" rules your world of Nosgoth. I am known by many many names...man in black, the blind date you cannot stand up, Shikigami king, the black death, Anubis, the Ferry man, the reaper, however; I mostly prefer my name of Thanatos. Well it's my new name. I used to be called Acheron Parthenopaeus but since the old Thanatos got killed off by some Kratos fella I was promoted and I'm now known as the *new* Thanatos." The man explained, gently bowing his head as he crossed his right hand over his chest in a polite manner. Upon hearing this Raziel quirked a brow. So this being was the god of death in this realm it appeared. An elder god of death and rebirth of this realm...only not as parasitic it seemed.

"And to answer your next question...you are in the world known as "Amestris." A place where the art of alchemy has far exceeded that of science and the rule of the christien god has faded into the shadows of time to be nearly forgotten." Thanatos then added before nodding off towards a nearby window that now came into view, the stain glass of multiple colors of blue, yellow, and red barely clinging to the frames. When Raziel adjusted his eyes more he could see they were in a dark abadoned church. Cobwebs covering almost every nook and cranny of the building, and the alter all but destroyed by time. The windows that were not smashed in had faces of people Raziel could not recognize. Probly the long forgotten messiahs of the christien religion Thanatos mentioned.

"Alchemy? I have heard whispers of this art in Nosgoth but it never really caught on compared to sorcery. Moreover; why have you brought me here?" the wraith then asked, eyes resting on the death deity once more as the man chuckled shaking his head as he walked along the chruch now, heading for a dusty old pipe organ that lay ten paces ahead of where they where Raziel was summoned.

"You sure are a chatty little ghoul arent you? However I dont blame you for yearning for questions. And I would find it cruel to keep you from your mission specs." Thanatos replied in a coy tone, smiling as he then trailed his fingers slowly over the keys to the pipe organ. Though due to the cruel hand of father time; the once majestic instrument brought forth no sound when it's ivory keys were pressed. It gave only a gasping wheeze as dust spewed from the pipes that touched the ceiling praticlly, along with a few spiders scampering out of it too in irritation or fear from the man made gales of the organ.

"Your mission, dear Raziel is a simple one. Guard the savior of this world without being detected as much as possible. You can feed on plenty of souls til your heart's content, pass through the material realm and spirit realm like you would in Nosgoth; as in possessing a corpse and re-shaping it to your image. Not to mention feel free to kill the scum of this world if they force you to do so, especially those endangering the savior's life." Thanatos exclaimed calmly, looking towards the angel of death from Nosgoth now, a serious look crossing his face now. Raziel contemplated this, his eyes locking on the god's as he then rose a brow leering.

"What will you give me in return for my duties to you? How can I be sure im not going to work for you like I have for that parasitic fraud of my world? Feeding you while I struggle with my journey you set out for me?" Raziél asked in a curious yet irritated tone. Thanatos just smiled then before closing his eyes. He then vanished. Raziél's unease sky rocketed then when the deity appeared behind him. Turning he then looked up, eyes widening in horror as the same male stood before him....only this time in his *real* form. A skeleton like entity towered at least fifteen feet over the spector, his cloak flowing in an unseen wind, the inner layer of the cloak a blood red and filled with screaming spirits. His ribs moved about like a insect's legs and the lower part of his body was nothing but innerds and oozing blood. His face was a skull with an eerie sneer as a tattered priest's hat made of skulls adorned his head. And lastly his scythe, the trademark of the god of death was that of a screaming fanged skull; a blade of pure black protruding from it's mouth while its spine served as the hilt of the weapon. Raziél backed away in horror at this being and without his soul reaver to help him he knew this wouldnt be much of a fight.

But Thanatos knew better than to let the wraith escape. Laughing he raised his clawed hand, the fleeing spector instantly being risen up before he was yanked towards the god and held there by kinetic shackles. Coming face-to-face with the wraith he then sneered more before his dark bone-chilling voice rang out, rattling the church windows and peircing through Raziél like a knife.

"Dear boy I am a GOD unlike that pathetic creature you served. Lumping my intentions in with his are an insult to my existance! And though you are undying...I'd make you wish for death! Or worse, I'd reincarnate your soul into that of a May fly's, giving you a normal life that lasts only twenty four hours. Or maybe I send you straight to the other realm I rule over...HELL! Oh yes you'd have a grand ol time in the river Styx as demons tear away at your flesh while you continue to reanimate again and again...an eternity of neverending pain and torment. I dont need your help to keep the natural order of things going in this world. You would be a small assistant of sorts, clearing out the riff-raff like the roaming demons and spirits and those causing the world of Amestris grief. However I do need you for the task of guarding the savior of Amestris...for gods cannot interfere in the affairs of the middle earth." The reaper exclaimed, his voice calming now towards the end of his explanation as his silver glowing eyes continued looking at the wraith before him.

"What do you mean you cannot interfere? Why do you need me of all people?" Raziél asked, trying to calm the fear in his voice as he glared daggers at the entity hovering before him. The god just laughed in amusement, as if Raziél asked a stupid question.

"Just that little soul reaper, we cannot interfere. Humans and others who walk the middle earth usually have to deal with their own tasks though they prey to us constantly. Well in another world they do and the humans in Ishvalla prey in this one. However it is dire important that I had to take a loop hole into assisting this one little human by bringing you to be his guardian. If he dies, so does Amestris and we cannot afford that to happen. Now as to why you I sought out for this task..." The deity stated, turning now as he hovered along; the benches his dark cloak touched instantly rotting up and falling to peices, the stone walls turning a dark black and growing further cracks. He kept true to his threat if he could destroy anything his body touched without knowing so. Yes this being indeed could keep to his promise of making Raziél's life a living hell...he was truely a god unlike the fraud in Nosgoth who loved to hear himself talk of his origins.

"Since you are undying, your soul cannot return to the cycle of life, death, and rebirth of even this

universe's natural flow. Plus you do have the free will many have told you about. However...had I not interfered right after you devoured the Time Streamer's Soul...you would have made a dire choice and sacrificed yourself *willingly* to Kain's blade in order to prevent both of you from being buried under the vampire citadel. Do not worry of Kain however; he'll escape by the same means he used to reach the top of the Chronoplast chamber you both fought in long ago." The Reaper then stated, Raziel's anger flaring at the mention of this.

"So...my sacrifice would have been for naught?! Damn that bastard, And to think I felt guilt in killing him to obtain Janos's heart!" Raziel yelled, his old ember of hatred for the scion of Balance flaring up again as the god nodded, turning now to Raziel again.

"Yes, but back to the point at hand. Your amazing immortality that matches that of the legendary phoenix's and your free will are just the items needed to help protect the savior of this world. And though it is said you are to be the scion of Balance's right hand...that is true...however pictures and prophecies can deceive if looked at the wrong way. Take for example the Mona Lisa...some say she is smiling but others think she is frowning. Or the two men and a vase depiction. Like Ariel you too almost read the signs wrong. I brought you here for a reason my little angel of death. For it was foretold by your world and our's. You will see in time though what I mean...but will you wish to see for yourself why you guard this child?" Thanatos then asked, tilting his head as he looked to the wraith. Raziel was defiantly curious now at this god's words. And he proved many good points and showed he was not of deception.

"Very well, I will play out this duty...just stay true to your intentions and not hide anything from me. For if I sense deception I will make it clear I'm not a happy servant." Raziel then muttered, still showing a bit of irritation as the God of Death chuckled, snapping his bony fingers as the wraith was released from the telekinetic shackles, falling to the floor hard.

"Servant is a cruel word. No no you are an angel of death, practically MY right hand at the moment. Or should I say 'guardian angel of death'." the deity then stated in amusement as he grinned. Raziel murred, raising to his feet now as he dusted himself off. Looking up to the ghoulish entity he spoke again.

"So where is this child I am to protect? I wish for my answers to come quickly besides I want to make a good first impression on my first day of work." Raziel said steely as he then folded his arms. The reaper laughed in glee before turning to tear open a portal with his scythe.

"You about as friendly as a cactus neh? No worries you'll learn soon enough I'm not a lying manipulative bastard like those souls Moebius and Kain. I'll reward you when you do a good job unlike that fat squid the elder 'fraud'." Thanatos exclaimed with a chortle, guiding Raziel into the portal as they appeared in another part of the world. They now stood outside on a grassy field. It was snowing as the gales whipped through the wraith's hair and wings. He squinted and wrapped his scarf tighter around his shoulders and tried to muster all he could to keep from getting blown away by the cold winds. Below them sat a yellowish white house of simple design, a balcony on the second floor. The house was dark; all but for one room as a orange glow peeked out into the dark snowstorm.

"Listen...your duties will kick in this very night." Thanatos exclaimed calmly, now reverted back to his human form that he had first approached Raziel in. The specter nodded and honed his sense of hearing, straining against the howling squalls. As he listened...he then heard a soft crying of an infant.

"A baby...? He is being born right now?" Raziel said in surprise as the man nodded calmly, wrapping his coat around his own form too. Showing he wasn't liking the storm much either.

"Yes, it was foreseen centuries beyond this child's birth that he would be destined to save Amestris and perhaps the world called Earth too. However something happens to him that causes his demise, and the worlds fall into oblivion. The younger brother of the former Thanatos told us to not interfere, that we would move on to another world to seek worshippers to sustain us. That bastard pretty much treated these delicate entities of such magnificence like cattle or excrement on one's boot. I seized the chance to take action the moment I was promoted to the new God of Death and Rebirth and the moment Zeus fell at the hands of Kratos. That's when I searched all the worlds for a guardian that possessed great power and free will, passing by all the laws depicted by the gods. Eventually I found you Raziel....I waited and bided my time, then snatched you from your false destiny to bring you here at the very hour of this boy's birth. This is your true destiny Raziel, and you will see why very soon. But remember keep to the shadows. However if you do reveal yourself to him do not fret for I'll have a solution to that." Thanatos then stated in a gentle tone as he turned and looked to the wraith, reopening the portal behind them. Raziel looked to the man calmly as he gave a nod.

"I will accept this destiny and play it out. I don't fully trust you yet...but you are more altruistic than those I used to revere known as the Sarafan. And more merciful from your apparent hatred for the fallen god Zeus who seems like the Elder god with the way you speak of him. Tell me, what's this boy's name?" The wraith then asked, the god of death smirking before he fully left.

"Edward Elric. Protect him with your very unlife Raziel. Be his Guardian angel of Death and his right hand...for your destinies are far more intertwined than you can fathom..." Thanatos exclaimed, vanishing into the portal as only the wraith was left behind now. Looking back towards the little house below him, he could only watch, the little infant's cries still greeting his ears, other voices joining in now. And older man's, no doubt the father, and of course a female voice as well.

"It's a boy! Oh my dear he's so beautiful...thank you for this gift."

"What...what shall we name him dear? Look his eyes are like yours."

".....Edward. But he should have your maiden name my dear."

"Edward Elric...the Prosperous guardian. I like the sound of that."

Raziel could only chuckle, yes even the boy's name suited him perfectly. Crossing his arms he could only wish to smile as he looked to the cloudy sky above.

Though the skies looked foreboding and ominous, raining frozen waters upon the land as the winds screamed in rebellion, I knew there was a starry sky behind them. And this child's birth seemed to slow the storm. Even now the winds felt as if they were dying down, the icy sting of snow no longer whipping at my emaciated form or clawing at my mangled wings. I almost swore I saw the moon peeking through the clouds. Yes there was no doubt in my mind now...this child was destined to protect this new and intriguing world. And just like he; I too would have to learn much of it as the years would pass. Though I am a servant of another once more; for some reason I feel no irritation or deception. No I realize now that what Thanatos; a true god of death and rebirth, said could be true. That THIS is my true destiny, not

to be Kain's soul reaver, the soul trapped within his sword. Though the rest of what he said was still a mystery to me, I had no trouble with waiting as long as the world spun to see when the answers would finally reveal themselves to me....

2 - Little child be not afraid

Ten years have passed since my role as the guardian of Edward Elric; the savior of this world known as Amestris; a world ruled by alchemy and the brutish military who enforce it. While free time was available to me when not watching the young boy; I would travel this world carefully taking to the shadows to not be spotted. I had to admit though it was a step up from Nosgoth with it's advancements in travel and everyday living...it still was ruled over by an iron fist known as the military of Central. Thankfully Edward's little town wasn't corrupted by it's dark influence; he lived in a quiet little place known as Resembool. It was rural and far from the city...but it was also peaceful at the same time; making my job slightly easier. Moving back to the point, the young Elric wasn't apparently the only one to keep in my sights. Guardian of him or not; I felt myself obligated to keep an eye on his younger brother; Alphonse Elric too. They lived a happy normal life like any family would...but the father seemed like another story. There was something...off about him. Not in an evil sense no. More like a sense of fear he held towards them; especially his children. And on one fateful morning I knew why when I eavesdropped on the parents out in the yard. The father having nearly broke his backside when trying to fix the tree swing for his children. It was that he feared his children would obtain the curse of immortality like he himself has. So; another like myself has also been liberated from the wheel of fate. However unlike I, he didn't seem too happy about lasting forever. Then a month or so later on a foggy morning....he left them forever. It was that act alone that set the next tragedy in motion. I only wish now that I should have stopped Hoenheim so that his children would not suffer this heartache; and Edward would not despise his father for 'abandoning' them.

It was a summery day, the boys had been sent by their mother to go get groceries for supper. I was doing my best to keep up with the two; invisible to all eyes thanks to the powers of my Dark Reaver blade. Had it not been for that ability I don't know how many times I would have been caught by the pair. But nonetheless I was rather winded, having to walk the rest of the way as the two scampered on ahead; unaware they had a third behind them eating their dust. But...the laughter and mocking stopped and Edward's cries of panic filled my ears. Adrenaline rushed through my body to help me to make it back there in record time to see the cause of the little boys's panic. Their mother...laying on the floor barely conscious. Months later she passed from their lives; it seemed an epidemic had swept through the town and though she showed no signs she still had been fighting it off the best she could. However no human could fight the cold hand of death in such a state she was. I watched with a heavy heart as the two boys stood in front of her tombstone hours after her funeral. The younger whimpering and shivering while Edward stood there...a determined look in his golden eyes.

"Brother what are we going to do without her? I'm cold and hungry...."

"We're going to bring her back Al...with alchemy."

I sensed an ominous sensation at the boy's words. I had watched them as they grew how they worked with this art to impress their mother; for it reminded her of their father and made her smile. But they even knew that bringing a person back from the dead is forbidden. I wanted to step in to make them change their minds...but I was only to watch them...not to teach. And speaking of teachings...the next few weeks they were seeking out a teacher of alchemy, to further their skills so as to do this blasphemous act.

Eventually they found one; a strong woman with the ability to do alchemy without a circle. She went by the name Izumi Curtis. And despite her fatal illness that plagued her body she was quite a force to be reckoned with. But not even she was not immune to the two little boys cute charm and caved in; deciding to teach them, but with a catch. They were to spend one whole month on Yock Island and learn the meaning of "All is one, one is all." If they failed this task, she would send them back to Resembool. The other catch was no alchemy. Sure it seemed barbaric to leave two little boys alone on an island to fend for themselves...but I saw it as a very good training method. For I and my brothers were also put through this sort of training by Kain; back when I still revered him as my altruistic father. Managing to swim undetected by those in the boat, I surfaced and took to the shadows of the trees. Surprisingly the Elrics had already disappeared from my view. It was amazing how fast they could move. Then again what do you expect out of something so small and filled to the brim with energy?

Raziel looked about keeping as quiet as ever to remain undetected as he scouted the area for signs of the boys. Eventually he found them when Edward's enraged voice rang out.

"DAMNIT WHAT THE HELL DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?! WE WE'RE TRICKED INTO STAYING HERE BY THAT SADISTIC OLD WITCH!" Ed roared out, causing the wraith to trip over a log from being startled. Thankfully the sound of his stomach made the two not hear Raziel's faceplant.

"Well least I know now where they are." The specter muttered to himself, trying to keep from chuckling whilst then taking to the trees, heading in the direction of their voices. He watched from the shadows as the boys went about searching for food. Eventually Edward managed to catch a rabbit...but due to their sensitive hearts they couldn't bring themselves to take its life. And so while they argued; a fox snaggled up the vulnerable beast. The hungry boys gave chase, Raziel having no choice but to follow. He wasn't fast enough however when the fox had reeled on Edward and bit him before retreating again. Surprisingly this only furthered the blonde's rage and ignoring his wound pursued the orange canine. When they finally found it...they noticed it was a mother who had brought the rabbit to her babies. And so they decided to let her go and get fish instead. But it seemed not even the fish were obtainable at that hour of day. Feeling a bit of pity for them, Raziel decided to lend a small hand. While Alphonse tended to Edward's arm; the wraith searched through the shrubbery and found some edible fruit and nuts. He couldn't risk going out into the water for fear of them hearing the splashes. Sure his dark wraith blade gave him the power of invisibility..but that was all. So instead he snapped off some suitable sharp branches. Then sneaking towards their makeshift campsite, he placed the food and fish spears at the very edge of the clearing they sat in before slinking off unnoticed.

"Hmmm? Hey brother look there's some food here!" Alphonse called out, taking sight of the present. Raziel left them when he went to get more gauze for the elder brother.

"Food outta the way!" Edward yelled gleefully, eagerly snatching up the berries and stuffing them into his mouth, Alphonse flailing.

"Hey share some brother, after all I found them!" Al called out while puffing his cheeks. Raziel could only chuckle as he watched the two from a safe distance in the treetops. Glad he had given them a small push towards their survival training.

"Hang in their young ones...for I can't give you charity all the time. This training is for you and you alone. My job is to make sure you don't die." Raziel then stated...more to himself than them of course. Two days

had passed since then, the Elrics starting to hone their fishing skills though were still having some trouble. They also managed to fashion a make-shift shelter from large leaves; using it for when it would rain. And speaking of that; the rainy season was indeed kicking in unfortunately. But that was the *least* of their worries. Unbeknownst to the boys; Raziel had spotted a boat visiting time and time again...a group of scraggly rough-looking men would arrive on the otherside of the island and dump a corpse there every other day. They did not look friendly in the least. They must have been apart of some underground gang; silencing those who talked far too much and burying their bodies on Yock island so the authorities could not find the remains of the missing person. As long as the Elrics and these ruffians did not meet, the wraith had nothing to worry about. But that hope would soon disapeate and come into a harsh reality. For the man in the mask who was really Izumi's one neighbor; sent to watch out for them and fight them so as to keep them on their toes had accidentally chased them *too far* one stormy night. Due to the intensity of the storm; not even Raziel who was keeping fast behind them could see how far they had run. Once the masked man had lost sight of them and left; the boys re-grouped in a clearing.

"Al...Alphonse are you ok?" Ed called out, both gasping as they were hunched over trying to catch their breathe.

"Yes b..brother i'm alright...but where are we?" Al stated, frowning as he squinted through the rain. "I dont remember coming this far out into the island before." he added. Edward nodding as he then recognized that some of the rocks were not rocks..but tombstones long past their prime.

"You're right Al...it looks like we're in an old cemetary, back when people used to live here I think. Let's head back b-" Ed was cut off, jumping as gravely voices entered their ears.

"Hey you! Hurry up with that damn shovel...this body aint getting any lighter ya know!" An older man yelled out, just over the hilltop from where they stood. Alphonse was about to cry out in fear, only for Ed to clamp a hand over his mouth, putting a finger to his own lips. Then carefully they crawled up the large slippery mound of earth. Peeking over it, they noticed five men, all in trenchcoats to keep out the rain and two holding lanterns. Two were digging in the muddy dirt while three were holding a large oval object wrapped in a black tarp.

"B...brother...what are they doing?" Alphonse whispered out, his voice cracking in fear.

"It seems they are burying a body. And they dont look like undertakers either. Look the body is bleeding still." Edward whispered back, an uneasy look on his youthful face.

"You..you mean they murdered that person?" Al squeaked out, Ed nodding to this. However...fate being a cruel mistress caused the next events to be set in motion. The boys still being uneasy to storms, jumped higher than they anticapated when a large bolt of lightening cracked through the air, striking a tree behind them. Edward being the closest to the edge screamed as he tumbled down the hill, landing hard infont of the five men as he rolled into the freshly dug grave. A sickening snap rang through Raziel's ears; the blonde howling in pain as he cradled his wounded left arm.

"Who the hell is this brat?!" One of the men yelled out, most of them backing away in shock before pulling their guns.

"Since when do people live on Yock island, I thought this place was deserted!?" Another said in irritation,

as he then pointed his pistol at the young boy's head.

"Well he's a witness now so prepare another grave!" The tallest; no doubt the leader called out, sneering as his gold tooth glinted in the lantern light. He then oofed, staggering away when a loud clang rang through the air; a shovel having smacked him hard in the back of the head.

"Leave my brother alone!" Alphonse yelled out, glaring towards the five men, the leader whirling around after regaining his composure as he snarled.

"Another damn kid?! Where the hell are they coming from. Well doesnt matter, kill em both!" The man roared out at his minions. They nodded, dropping the body as they gave chase, Al ducking from their grappling forms as he managed to help Edward out of the grave.

"Run brother!" Al called, Ed nodding as he bit his bottom lip to surpress the pain his left arm was giving him. The men were close behind them, going soo far as to shoot at them. However the storm seemed to come in handy as well; making it hard for the men to see, and thus aim properly. But that advantage was not good enough considering Ed got knicked in the ankle, and Alphonse the arm. The younger tumbled and tripped, falling into a nearby roaring river that ran through the island.

"Alphonse!" Ed yelled out, panic filling his heart as he made a mad dash towards Al in hopes of catching him, but the boy was swept far from his reach. "Al...Al no!" Edward cried out, his panic further fueled when rustling greeted his ears as he turned in horror to see all five men.

"Nowhere to run brat. Dont worry, your little brother will join you soon enough." The leader said, sneering as he twirled his pistol, the scar across his face wrinkling up as he grinned. Edward glared back, pulling his knife on them all.

"S..stay back. I mean it! You dont know who your messing with!" Edward muttered, doing his best to surpress his fear. The men howled with laughter, a few holding their sides.

"Ooooo a knife im soo scared!" The one exclaimed, slapping his bald head as he gurgled with laughter.

"We got guns kid, I think we know what we are dealing with. Now be a good boy and play dead!" The scrawny one of the bunch stated, moving forward as he kicked the knife from the young blonde's hand, decking him afterwards as Ed cried out and fell onto his back hard. Pain surged through him further when the bastard stepped on his chest and left arm, pulling the barrel of the gun to his head. The blonde could only quiver...praying deep down for a miracle.

"Actually you DON'T know who you are messing with." A voice called out. All men pausing and looking about for the source of the english voice, the male stepping on Edward yelping as he was knocked back by some unseen force; slamming into the others like a bowling ball to a set of white pins. Edward blinked, looking up stunned. Sitting up quickly, he then saw someone leap down infront of him. Well *something* was more of the correct term. From the looks of it, the being was an emaniated skeleton like humanoid. Tattered wings hanging down from the small of his back, three long sharp claws on each hand that were wrapped up with brown tattered cloth up to the elbows. His hair was a glossy deep black that's bangs hung messily in his face. Cloven hooves with weird bronze boots or shin guards wrapped around his ankles while a large brown cowl or scarf with white tribal looking markings wrapped around

his shoulders up to the lower half of his face. His skin was a tinged purplish blue, signs of immense burning to his skin no doubt. And his eyes lacked pupils or iris; only the white orbs that glowed a light green at the moment as he glared towards the men.

"What the frack is that thing?!" The fat man yelled, pointing towards the wraith. Edward panicked on the inside...but for some reason didn't run since it seemed this thing wasn't here to attack him...but the men.

"Shoot it! Before it comes for us!" The scarred leader barked, the men pulling their pistols instantly on Raziel. The wraith didn't hesitate, moving fully in front of Edward to act as a shield, wincing as their bullets stung his back. Ed gaped, looking up at the strange being as he looked back at the blonde.

"Run...young one. Take shelter in that old cave hurry!" Raziel wheezed out, Ed nodding when he caught sight of said area and quickly taking off in the shelter of the trees towards said destination. Once the shooting subsided, the men gawked when they saw their bullets weren't able to take the wraith down like they had anticipated. "Finished? Well that did hurt...but now it's MY turn. And you won't be walking away from this alive unfortunately." Raziel growled out, summoning the wraith blade as it glowed an eerie white. The men panicked, some backing away, the rest trembling.

"It's...it's some sort of demon or fiend from Hell!" The scrawny man cried out in horror, dropping his now empty gun. Raziel chuckled, stepping forward, a menacing tone to his otherwise gentle voice.

"Oh no I'm not the fiend here. You are..and though you aren't from hell...you'll be going there very shortly. Yes Thanatos will love tutoring your damned souls, do say hello to him for me." Raziel replied. He paused before dashing forward with blinding speed, taking the bald man out instantly as he gutted him with the spirit wraith blade, his fat gut emptying its innards all over as he collapsed in a screaming heap. Then turning he ducked the scrawny man's pathetic attempt at a punch. Reaching forward he dug his claws into the man's throat before slamming his own head into the man's, crushing the skull with his immense brute force. Turning he advanced towards the twin males; last two to work for the scarred man. They attempted the old trick of splitting up on the wraith to make him concentrate on having to chase one at a time. "Come now, no fair hiding from me. Let's play!" Raziel hissed out, yanking the one twin out into the open with telekinesis as he slammed him into his brother. They whimpered trying to crawl away from him. Raziel could have sworn the one wet himself from the smell that met his nose.

"Plea...please show us mercy!" The one howled out, covering his face as the second nodded. Raziel glared, stepping on their feet, snapping them with little remorse as they screamed in agony.

"Like you showed that little boy? Or perhaps his brother when you tried to silence them? Or maybe the mercy you showed all those you buried here in unmarked graves?" Raziel stated, quirked a brow as they whimpered.

"We...we were only following orders!" The one said defensively.

"As am I. And I won't let you petty ignorant cattle destroy the redemption of this world." the wraith shot back, slamming his clawed hand through both of their chests due to one hiding behind the other; it made it easier to finish them off. Ripping their souls literally out of their bodies, he then pulled down his scarf revealing his fanged upper jaw; with no bottom one and a gaping throat that glowed brightly as it sucked the souls in. Edward watched all this unfold from his hiding spot in the cave's opening. Eeping as he

covered his mouth in fear. Sating his hunger, Raziel turned his sights on the leader now. The man was rattled...but was still trying to act tough.

"Well bone bag...dont expect me to run from you." He said gruffly, pulling his own knife into view as Raziel scoffed. Dashing forward he pinned the man to a tree, however proving he wasnt such easy prey, the scarred brute stabbed Raziel in the chest. Then his confidence faded when he saw it didnt have the desired effect, the wraith yanking the knife from his chest as if it were a feather in a pillow.

"I dont want you to run...I want you to scream." Raziel hissed out, and getting the request he desired, jabbed his claws roughly into the man's eyesockets, blinding him as he then pulled his claws in opposite directions while they were still in both eyesockets; ripping the man's head clean in two. Once the body toppled over, he then summoned his fire reaver. "Might as well get rid of this mess." he exclaimed, walking about as he burned each body to smoldering ashes with excellent time, taking only a few minutes tops. Turning then he headed towards the cave entrance, seeing Edward backing up in fear. Raziel felt a pang of guilt...realizing the boy must have seen the massacre he had caused.

"Who...who are you?!" Ed whimpered out, meeping as he fell on his bottom when he tripped over a rock. Raziel continued to walk foward calmly, Ed panicking as he threw a rock at him with his only working hand as it barely had an effect. "St...stay back!" he yelled. Closing his eyes tightly when the wraith kneeled down infront of him, expecting the worst. A few moments passed of silence...Ed peeking through his right hand's fingers before then blinking when he saw Raziel was handing him something...his hunting knife that Izumi had given him.

"A friend." Raziel exclaimed with a soft tone, before patting the blonde on the head considering he still could not smile.

3 - Still here in the morning

I knew what Thanatos had warned me about many years ago...not to reveal myself to this child; the potential savior of Amestris. But due to the previous events; a band of thugs who had desired to bury this boy along with the other unnamed corpses and dark secret deeds they carried out on Yock Island...I didnt have any other choice. I wasnt used to protecting others however; especially ones soo young and innocent. And now I was slightly regretting my violent behaviour on those savage brutes for their attempts to silence the young Edward forever...for the boy had seen it all unfold before his eyes from where he had hidden himself. I could sense he was scared of me; yes most people werent exactly used to my eccentric appearence. Even the vampire Vorador had claimed I looked more demon than vampire in his eyes. Though I could also sense that he trusted me, after all I did save him from the slaughter he nearly endured. It might take abit to keep him from thinking I'd attack him..but that small amount of trust he held was a start. And no matter how small it was; it was still something to work with.

Edward blinked a few times in confusion as he looked at the knife the wraith had just handed him back. His eyes then rested on Raziel as he quirked a brow. "You..you mean you arent going to kill me and eat my brains or anything like that?" he asked curiously, causing Raziel to give a confused look now at the statement.

"Why..would I do that? I seem to recall that I eat souls...not brain matter. Besides, as I just explained; I am a friend, no harm will come to you from my hand little one." Raziel then stated with a chuckle; however it was short lived when a foot came smashing into his face. Yelping he keeled over flailing; the young blonde standing on his face snarling like a savage animal.

"DONT CALL ME SMALL YA ANEREXIC SMURF!!" Ed barked out, snorting as he stomped on the wraith's face one more time before backing off and looking away, irritation oozing from his aura now. Raziel tried to see straight after this, stunned at how fast the young boy had moved despite his injuries. Not to mention he had flattened the immortal in a second...he was just glad Kain hadnt been there to see that; he'd have never let the wraith live it down at being clobbered by a mere child.

"Right...I'll keep that in mind since I like to keep my face footprint free." Raziel muttered weakly, sitting back up as he rubbed his forehead a few times. Getting up quickly then, he moved over to the boy's side as he reached out for his left arm. Edward backed away, giving him a weird look.

"I'm fine back off." he growled out, though was obviously lying as Raziel sent him a stern look.

"No you arent. I can smell the blood from your one ankle and your arm is broken." Raziel said, taking Edward's arm carefully before he examined it. Indeed it needed to be fixed up and fast, it was already starting to swell at the break points.

"Even if I'm not; what are you going to do? You arent exactly a doctor." Ed asked, looking to the wraith with doubt while Raziel shrugged.

"I may not be an expert healer...but I can try to mend your wounds to the best of my abilities. Now stay

still, I have to set your arm just right for this to work...hopefully." Raziel then said as Ed gulped, not liking the confident ending statement the specter said. Being as gentle as he could, Raziel then held the young Elric's arm out in front of him. Then waiting a few moments, he quickly snapped the boy's crooked arm the best he could into being straight once more. Ed of course howled in agony at this as he then bit his bottom lip; fighting back the tears as the wraith quietly apologized. "The hard part is over, I felt the bones scrape against one another so lucky for you it was a clean snap when you fell into that hole and no bone fragments were chipped off. Now that the bones are connected like puzzle pieces...there's the part of glueing them back together." he then said, Ed blinking at this.

"W..what do you mean?" he asked weakly, weeping when Raziel summoned up his white spectral blade as he then began to struggle. The wraith quickly holding him down by the shoulder with his free hand.

"Easy now...this blade can heal too. But you have to stay still so I don't miss. As I said...I'm a better fighter than healer." Raziel then said, looking to Edward with a calmness to his tone. Edward looked up at the strange creature before him, somehow he knew he wouldn't bring harm to him as he then nodded and calmed down. Once he began to cooperate again, the blue fallen vampire then charged the energy of the blade as it glowed brightly; lighting up the dark dank walls of the cavern, basking them in a soft white glow. Then placing his left hand on the broken arm right where the bones had snapped beneath the skin of the young Elric, the energy from the blade slowly traveled up his right arm and through his chest...before finally reaching his left arm as it moved its way down into his hand and onto the boy's arm. A weird tingling sensation shot through Ed's arm before it began to grow warm..then cold..and finally it numbed and faded entirely. The young blonde blinked in surprise as he then carefully flexed his arm a few times.

"H...how did you do that?! Is..is that alchemy?" Ed asked in shock, wincing as he grabbed his arm again as Raziel reached out holding his wrist.

"Nay..it is a magic foreign to you child. And don't flex your arm so much, like cement; it will need time to bond your bones back together fully. I will need to set it with something until the bond is complete. Also we need to get that bullet out of your ankle; it will get infected and make it hard for you to finish your training." Raziel then said sternly, raising up Edward's right ankle to inspect it now as Edward blinked and gave him a suspicious look.

"How long have you been following me mister? You some sort of spy or somethin?" he asked in an irritated tone as Raziel tuned him out, trying to sense where the bullet was exactly in his ankle so he could take it out with ease. When he didn't get his answer, he proceeded to kick the wraith in the face with his other foot. "Hey I'm asking you a question Jack Skellington Smurf!" he then growled out.

Rubbing his nose, Raziel gave a weak sigh before pulling his cowl back up around his face due to the previous kick knocking it down.

"As I said before, I'm a friend plain and simple. And I may have overheard your teacher telling you why you are on this island. Now be still once more unless you want this to hurt more than it has to. I have to be quick and precise so you won't suffer so much." Raziel answered back, a bit of irritation in his voice too. He felt that this boy was much easier to watch without him knowing than with it...he had the temper of a wild bull it felt like. Edward merely gave a snort before obeying again, bracing himself as the wraith flexed the claws of his hand that wasn't holding his ankle up. Then with a quick flick of his digits, the

bloodied bullet yanked itself out of the boy's wound, causing Ed to cry out again and double over as the wraith snatched the bullet from mid air, then tossing it aside. "Now we need to treat those wounds. Cant have animals smelling the blood." the wraith then said, sitting down as he then tore peices of the bandages from his own arms. Gathering enough that would suffice in covering the bleeding wounds, he then bent down and began binding them around Ed's ankle and left arm. All the while Edward kept a stern glare looking outside while sniffing every now and then.

"Do not be soo weepy child...your pain is gone now and only healing is left for them." Raziel then said when he heard the sniffing of the young Elric who then glared at him some.

"Im not crying from my wounds. It's Al I'm worried about. He's out there all alone!" Edward exclaimed fiercly as he then wiped the tears away and looked off to the side. When Raziel finished tending to his wounds, he attempted to run for the exit of the cave, only for the wraith to block him with his arm.

"You are not to go out in that. Or did you forget that bolt of lighting that nearly struck you and your brother? Plus it is flooding in most of the island." Raziel said sternly as Ed glared at him more now.

"I dont care, Al's out there all alone! I need to save him I'm his big brother. Storm or not I'm going!" Ed then hollared, more tears streaming his face as Raziel glared back before shaking his head.

"I wont risk you dying. It's my job to protect you Edward. Now sit out this storm like a good boy and pray to your god that Alphonse is ok. In exchange I'll tell you why I am here, how's that sound?" the wraith then stated hoping this would peek the boy's interest. Edward eyed him abit, curiosity evident in his gold hues. After a few minutes passed between them he then planted himself back on the cave's floor.

"Fine..but this damn storm better pass quickly cause as soon as it does im looking for my little brother." Edward growled out.

"Do not fret young one. For it cant rain all the time." Raziel then stated gently, sensing Edward was relaxing alittle. "And do not worry for your brother..." he then added, of course Ed pondered this, but not for long when the wraith turned and flicked his forehead, knocking the young male out. "Because I'll save him for you." he then added, chuckling as he then headed out into the storm. It took forty minutes of searching before he could track down the younger Elric. Finally he found him clinging helplessly to a tree branch that had managed to jar itself between a rock and a cliffside in a roaring overflowed river, a powerful undertowe threatening to drag the boy down into it's murky depths. Wasting no time, the spector leaped over towards the closest spot near the shore as Al squinted through the roaring waves.

"Wh...who's there?! Please be someone helpfull!" He yelled out weakly, crying out in panic when his grip slipped alittle on the thick tree trunk. Deciding not to waste time answering, Raziel moved his hands out infront of him and focused on Alphonse's body. Carefully then, he lifted the young boy up from out of the violent waters that yearned to claim him with his telekinesis as he squeaked and struggled in the air, very confused by this abilty the wraith was using. Raziel then slowly levitated him over towards himself before disabling his telekinsis, Alphonse dropping safely into his open arms. Once Al got a good look at his savior, he could only pale in fright before passing out.

"Your welcome. Then again I dont blame you...I'd probly be frightened of myself too. Actually I think I was." Raziel then said, recalling back when he met his former human self who had looked at him with

pure terror when they crossed paths in Janos's mountain retreat. Merely letting out a chuckle, the wraith carefully carried Alphonse back to the cave where Edward was as he then placed him beside his older brother. Afterwards he then snapped a few branches off small trees from the outside entrance to the cave, using most of them to start a warm fire, and two firm strong ones to set Edward's arm so it could heal properly. Ed of course sensed someone was messing with his arm and replied with a punch to the face, luckily the wraith had finished up setting his arm even though he got a bloody nose out of the deal. "That's a fine way of saying your thanks." he muttered. Ed glared at him before blinking, looking to his one side he saw why as he then sweatdropped, feeling guilty now.

"S..sorry. BUT WARN SOMEONE NEXT TIME YOU'RE GOING TO KNOCK EM OUT!" Ed then barked out, snorting as Raziel chuckled once more. This child indeed had a fire to him. Rubbing his nose and praying it wasn't broken, he merely shrugged.

"If I had warned you...you'd have avoided getting knocked unconscious young one." Raziel pointed out playfully as Ed twitched.

"S..shaddup smart @\$!" Ed hissed out, the wraith sweatdropping.

"Such a mouth on you." he said, not used to children being so vulgar and violent..yes this child was indeed something, he had noticed this even when watching him from afar.

"Yeah, least I have one!" Edward then shot back, Raziel megasweatdropping at the burn the boy just put on him insult wise. "But anyways, a deal is a deal. Tell me all about you smurf man and why you are stalking me!" Ed then added, folding his arms as he gave Raziel a firm glare. He did have a point, he did stay in the cave while Raziel went to help his brother to safety. Sighing, the wraith then moved over to sit by the fire, facing Edward while he folded his arms.

"Alright then, I guess it's fair to tell you now. For what I am; I'm not a zombie, not a...smurf as you call them...nor am I an alien as you are thinking. I was once what you call a vampire. A vampire of a world known as Nosgoth..hence why my appearance is different from the vampires you see in your movies and shows on that v.t set. However due to being wrongfully killed...I was brought back to life by some unknown forces and made into a soul eating wraith." Raziel started as Ed gave him a bored look.

"It's called a t.v. first off, and second..you ARE what's called an alien if you come from a different world. And third...if you are brought back to life that DOES make you a zombie!" Edward pointed out, Raziel shooting him an annoyed look with his glowing white hues.

"Do I look like I fly around in a UFO, and eat brains to you?" Raziel asked, sounding a little insulted as Ed grinned playfully, walking over to the wraith as he jabbed at his ribcage a few times.

"Well, you did heal me with your hand like that E.T. fella...and you are scrawny and zombie-ish looking to me." Ed retorted, Raziel murring as he twitched at these actions, gently smacking away the boy's jabbing fingers.

"I'm ten times smarter than those braindead walking stench factories that can't hold onto their limbs. And I'll have you know I'm far from the ability of stretching my neck to impossible lengths like that ghoulish looking E.T. thing. Nor do I get sick if I'm far away from my planet...infact I'm happy to be away from it

actually. How you humans thought that thing was cute...I'll never know." the wraith then said, huffing as he looked away, which caused Edward to laugh for the first time since they encountered one another. Of course this caused him to look back at the blonde curiously. "What? What's soo funny?" he then asked, Edward grinning as he rubbed at his eyes, due to how hard he was laughing he was leaking tears.

"You are...it seems you cant take a joke...but that accent and how easily you got insulted is just a riot." Ed replied out, smiling in amusement then as Raziel was further confused.

"Accent...? I dont have an accent...do I?" Raziel then said, blinking in confusion as Edward nodded.

"You damn well do. You sound like some tea sipping hoity toity upperclass rich dude who munches on crumpets. Which is weird cause you look well...nothing like that no offense. And when you got insulted and started spouting off you sounded soo...funny. Mom was right...it IS hard for guys with your accent to sound insulted." Edward then pointed out, still trying to keep from laughing soo much as Raziel sweatdropped, feeling silly now.

He never did realize he had an accent, due to the fact most of the beings from his world had the same english accent to their tones. Kain and Janos defiently having accents besides Raziel himself. Though Janos had more of a spanish one...not an english one like them. Well now he knew why Kain laughed at him back in the past when they were younger and he was still a fledgling vampire and would get insulted and start ranting...he must have sounded amusing to the elder vampire when having a hissy fit. He had to remind himself to kick Kain if their paths were to cross again for never telling him why he laughed at him back then. And he would have to make a mental note not to sound soo...english as this boy put it bluntly with his stereotyping description.

"Well it is good to see you are calmer now. I am glad I was of some amusement to you." Raziel said with a murr, Ed chuckling more at this before he sat back down and grinned.

"Yeah yeah a riot...but tell me more, dont try to slink out on our deal. Cant get without giving after all." Ed then said, Raziel sweatdropping. Damn, the kid was a sharp one for being soo young. Usually children would lose their train of thought at this age soo quickly and either want to go back to sleep or complain about being hungry.

"Point taken. Alright young one I'll tell you more. The reason I am here is due to the fact higher forces summoned me to watch over you. I am not allowed to say who..but they claim it is of dire importance that I be your guardian. I know your name and I've watched over you since the day you were born. I have also watched out for your brother too considering how close you two happen to be." Raziel then continued, Edward giving him a wierd look as the wraith shrugged. "I myself dont really know why, but they said it would be much better than having my soul sucked into the sword of my wicked father of sorts." he then added, Edward thinking for a few minutes as he looked at him. Then giving a light shrug he grinned.

"Fair enough...pretty cool though to have a zombie alien bodyguard though. Just as long as you dont peep on me in the shower im fine with that." he said, Raziel twitching at this.

"I'm a wraith! Or to be more percise..a soul reaver. And please...last time I checked I prefer women and wasent a pedofile." Raziel retorted while snorting, causing Ed to giggle in glee at annoying the blue

spector again as Raziel murred.

This brat gets under my skin just as badly as Kain. Ugh it's no surprise if they end up being related! Raziel thought, feeling a headache coming on..and it wasnt anywhere NEAR sunrise yet.

"So...Mister Soul Reaver; how'd you get that way anyways? I doubt it was by choice...unless you like to streak yet freak people out that is." The young Elric then asked curiously, tilting his head to the side while he poked idly at the small fire with a stick he had found lying nearby, helping to keep it going so it wouldnt diminish too quickly. Raziel chuckled at the boy's choice of words for his condition before shaking his head, staring into the fire that Ed was prodding now as he recalled the painfull events of his damnation as a loyal vampire...and rebirth as a devourer of souls bent on revenge.

"No it wasnt by choice young Elric. Though I wish I could change the events in a heartbeat if I could. That I could have flown far far away from the sanctuary of the clans instead of facing my inevitable demise and rebirthing in this vile carcass im forced to inhabit." Raziel started, Edward sending him a curious gaze as Raziel then started to explain is tale of his death and rebirth.

"You see Edward..the vampires of Nosgoth are very different than those of you read of or watch on t.v.. Rather than evolving slowly over time, vampires of Nosgoth experince periods of accelerated metamorphosis, entering dormant states from which they emerge transformed. When I, first among Kain's Lieutenants, revealed my latest evolution- a pair of batlike wings after entering the state of sleep first before Kain, I should have known then to run. But my blind loyalty kept me from thinking that my vampiric father Kain would ever bestow harm to his firstborn son. How wrong I was...." Raziel then trailed, looking down some as Edward watched his reactions, frowning some.

"W...what happened?" the younger male asked softly as Raziel gave a weak sigh.

"My eternal damnation...Kain responded with an act of seemingly egotistical sadism. Tearing my newly fledged wings from my back, he then ordered me to be cast into the Lake of the Dead, where I would burn forever in the roiling abyss. Now keep in mind...vampires of my world are harmed by water...it burns us like acid does to most things. That isnt the case anymore with me now..since I devoured the soul of my brother Rehab to gain immunity to water. But back before that...well you can see what it did to me. After an eternity of torment, my ruined body came to rest- and as the pain receded, I realized that I had not only survived the descent, but had been delivered to the very seat of the Underworld. I was save from the brink of oblivion by a mysterious benefactor- a preternaturally ancient *god* dwelling in the depths of the Abyss, who transformed me into a devourer of souls, and released me back into the world to take my revenge on Kain and my brothers." Raziel then stated, his fists clenching some as he recalled the incidents.

"Did you ever get it?" Edward then asked, Raziel shaking his head some.

"Yes..and no. The yes being that I hunted down each of my vamperic brothers and took their powers for my own when I ate their souls...the no being Kain still walks Nosgoth unharmed. For you see...due to our meddling in time...it had caused me to kill my past self with Kain's powerful signature weapon..the Soul reaver. But before that it was called the Blood Reaver and devoured the life blood of it's victims. I had ended up sucking my soul into the Blood reaver unknowingly and it thus the weapon turned itself on me. Kain showing abit of mercy saved me from the blade...though it was foretold that I was destined to

trapped within the sword and serve as the soul devouring entity within it. And whenever I cross paths with Kain; there is very high risk the sword tries to devour me even if I merely touch it's hilt or it's blade cuts my flesh. I managed to escape this horrid fate due to the being that seeks your safety. I offered to watch over you at their request...considering it's much better than my fate at Kain's hands." Raziel then finished, Edward nodding some to this in thought before frowning.

"Seems we both have bastards for fathers...and our lives suck." Edward stated sadly, Raziel shaking his head at this as he patted Edward on the shoulder.

"No young one...my life is far worse than your's. You had a loving mother and a little brother who looks up to you. Well I did have ONE brother that cared for me, little Melchiah; but all the others I felt envied me for being the favorite amongst Kain's brood. Still though...I'd say your's was much better." Raziel pointed out, Edward glaring some at this as he stared into the fire.

"Then how come my dad ran out on me and Al...and why did our mom get taken away?! I really don't think that's a better life...least you had a mother and a family long enough to remember until you died, were turned vampire, then died again!" Edward then snapped, Raziel flinching at this.

"I don't remember if I had blood siblings or a mother or father Edward...before Kain resurrected us; he wiped our memories of our human lives. He thought it was better to start with clean slates and get rid of our bothersome human memories no doubt." Raziel then said, Edward blushing some at this as he looked away, feeling guilty at his rash outburst.

"Sorry....I didn't know." Ed mewed out, rubbing his one arm some as he stared at the ground, Raziel patting his head a few times.

"It's alright, you didn't know. And for your earlier statement...life's not fair young one....all those who exist and struggle know this well as they grow and travel on their rocky crooked road of fate. But at least keep this in mind...your's will be a tad easier; with me there to catch you when you stumble or fall. I may not be your mother or father...but think of me as a good substitute." Raziel then said gently, Edward smiling up at him some before his mood lifted a little. Rubbing at an eye, he then stretched a little, showing signs of fatigue.

"You aren't going to baby me are you? Last thing I want is a smurf zombie running after me before school giving me my bag of lunch and telling me not to talk to strangers. Plus you'd probably give Winry and Auntie Pinako a heart attack." Edward then exclaimed, Raziel sweatdropping at the strange image the young boy had painted for him in his mind as he then had a turn at laughing. Strange...he hadn't laughed in so long, yet here this boy was punching his funny bone when he was mostly a dark and brooding being who hardly trusted anyone. Indeed this child was something. Calming his laughter he then cleared his throat.

"No..though I will eliminate anyone that dares to harm you or your brother. But that means no sicing me on people who annoy you or make statements about your height. I'm a Soul Reaper...not an attack dog." Raziel replied, Edward murring at this...his hopes of terrifying the bullies at his school going right out the window. When Raziel caught sight of Edward trying to stifle a yawn, he then chuckled and patted his shoulder. "Alright...enough bed time stories...I think it's due time for you to sleep like your brother." Raziel then instructed firmly as Ed pouted, showing his childlike nature for once as he then jumped and

clung to the wraith's leg when a crack of thunder rumbled through the heavens.

"How am I supposed to sleep with this damn storm going on? I don't sleep like a rock unlike Al!" Edward whined out, shaking as Raziel couldn't help but chuckle, wishing once more he could smile as he pondered.

"Well...what would your mother do to help you sleep during rough times like these?" he then asked, Edward looking up at him as he then looked out at the storm, sadness gracing his gold eyes as he thought back to when his mother would help him and Al sleep during storms.

"She...she would sing us to sleep with a lullaby. Her mom taught it to her when she was little and she passed it down to mom and so on." Edward said sadly, Raziel sweatdropping. The sheer thought of singing a child to sleep felt odd to him. He didn't exactly sing in his spare time...though he did hum when he was bored. However, when he caught sight of that sad look on the young Elric's face, he couldn't help but feel for him.

"Alright, let me read your thoughts so I know the song. That way you don't have to teach it to me." Raziel then said, resting his hand on Edward's head as he listened to his thoughts...reading the memories Edward presented him. Once he got the lyrics memorized he then nodded. "Right...got them. Now go lay down next to your brother...can't exactly get comfy enough to sleep sitting up can you?" Raziel then said, a kind tone to his voice now as Ed nodded, moving over to lay next to his still slumbering brother next to the warm fire, getting situated in the large leaves and grass Raziel had collected earlier along with the firewood. "Now don't laugh...I'm not exactly a singer. So try to be kind if I'm not very good at this." Raziel then said as Ed gave a nod while the wraith sat down beside him and Alphonse, patting him on the head when another loud thunder clap rang through the air, the young boy whimpering as he held onto the wraith's one ankle tightly with his right hand out of reaction.

Well...here goes nothing. Raziel then thought weakly, praying to the highest orders Kain would never find out about this. Closing his eyes, the wraith then began the lullaby that the Elric's mother would sing to them on nights like these.

*"Little child, be not afraid,
Though rain pounds harshly against the glass
Like an unwanted stranger, there is no danger,
I am here tonight.*

*Little child, be not afraid,
Though thunder explodes and lightning flash
Illuminates, your tear-stained face,
I am here tonight*

*And someday you'll know,
That nature is so,
The same rain that draws you near me.*

*Falls on rivers and land,
On forests and sand,*

*Makes the beautiful world that you see
In the morning.*

*Little child, be not afraid,
Though storm clouds masks your beloved moon
And its candlelight beams, still keep pleasant dreams,
I am here tonight.*

*Little child, be not afraid,
Though wind makes creatures of our trees
And their branches to hands, they're not real, understand
And I am here tonight.*

*And someday you'll know
That nature is so,
The same rain that draws you near me.*

*Falls on rivers and land,
On forests and sand,
Makes the beautiful world that you see
In the morning.*

*For you know, once even I
Was a little child,
And I was afraid,
But a gentle someone always came
To dry all my tears, trade my sweet sleep for fears
And to give a kiss goodnight*

*Well now I am grown,
And these years have shown,
That rain's a part of how life goes.*

*But it's dark and it's late,
So I'll hold you and wait
'Til your frightened eyes do close.*

*And I hope that you'll know,
That nature is so,
The same rain that draws you near me.*

*Falls on rivers and land,
On forests and sand,
Makes the beautiful world that you see
In the morning,*

Everything's fine in the morning,

*The rain will be gone in the morning,
But I'll still be here in the morning...."*

When Raziel finished the soothing lullaby, he peeked his eyes open, hoping the Elric hadn't waited to laugh at him, or was still awake to tell him that's not how she sung it or something to that degree. To his surprise the melody had done its work...due to the fact the young Edward was fast asleep, his right hand loosely holding onto Raziel's ankle now as his breathing was steady and relaxed, a slight snoring escaping from him.

Well, he either fell asleep from boredom or from how well I sang it. Either way I got the desired result so I'm not complaining. Raziel then thought, sighing in relief as he then carefully snuck over towards the fire, sitting next to it to get warm while his eyes then watched the young boys resting. He didn't feel tired so he decided it would be best to watch them like he always did. During the middle of the night however, they both started showing signs of being cold, shivering as they huddled up more to get warm. Looking around for what he could use as a cover, the wraith came up with nothing, and the leaves were soaking wet so they wouldn't do any good to them, except maybe get them sick. Then getting an idea, Raziel then removed his cowl; seeing that it was long enough to cover them both, he walked over and gently placed it over their shivering forms. It did the trick as both of the boys instantly calmed their shaking, nuzzling up to the warm burnt cowl that had once served as a cape to the fallen vampire turned Soul Reaver.

"Rest well little ones. I'll still be here in the morning; promise you that I can." Raziel then whispered to them from where he sat, sitting there as he watched for the dawn to peek out from the thunderous clouds.

Hours had passed as the wraith had then set out to grab some fish and other foods nature provided before the boys could wake. As dawn crept over the horizon, Ed and Al were stretching and yawning as Raziel walked into the cave with the fish and berries he had obtained. Having still left his cowl with the two to keep them warm, he had forgotten how much of a shock he was on Al's appearance-wise...so it was rather unfortunate the boy screamed and passed out once more from fright upon seeing the scarless specter.

"Damn you're such a wuss Alphonse. Sorry about him..he kinda doesn't mean it. He isn't used to seeing you." Edward said as he sweatdropped, prodding at his unconscious brother as Raziel chuckled and shrugged, placing the food in front of the two before he took his scarf back and proceeded to wrap it back around his face.

"No worries...I'm rather used to people being startled by my visage. Though it puzzles me as to why you have adjusted so quickly when most children your age would well...pass out like your brother." Raziel exclaimed, Ed shrugging as he grabbed one of the fishes and began to chomp down on it, due to Raziel having already cooked the fish courtesy of his fire reaver.

"You are creepy looking no lying there...but I know... you are also good so I'm not bothered by your...freaky appearance." Edward pointed out, explaining this between bites of his fish, showing his appetite had definitely not diminished at all. Raziel quirked a brow at this. This child was as sharp as a whip. He may have looked young and feeble...but he had an old soul in him no doubt there.

"You defiantly has a voice of reason that belies your age young one. You have great promise to exceed where others cannot." Raziel then said with a light chuckle, Ed smiling some at this.

"Thanks....and uh..how come you can talk but have no jaw? That's been bugging me eversince I saw you last night eat that guy's soul." Edward then asked, Raziel sweatdropping at this before shrugging.

"Very supple throat muscles to put it simply. I mean my hair survived not getting burnt off too during my descent." Raziel explained, Ed nodding at this.

"True...plus you'd look real silly bald. And you'd just blend in with the other zombies." Ed then said, taking another big bite from his fish as Raziel facepalmed.

"Wraith young one....and yes I guess my hair makes me unique. Not like my personality and intellect distinguishes me from other mindless undead or anything." Raziel then muttered, Ed snickering as he sent a grin Raziel's way.

"Learn to take a joke Mr. Reaver."

"Eat your breakfast...and save some for your brother for when he wakes up."

"Yes Papa Smurf."

Later that morning, the wraith had helped re-wrap Edward's wounds since the bandages had bled through alittle and had forced him into cleaning up in the nearby pond since he was filthy from falling into the mud multiple times the night before trying to escape the thugs. Well it wasnt much of a task, since he used telekinsis to knock him into the shallow part of the pond when Edward refused to go in willingly. And of course since Edward, though tempted to use alchemy, couldnt for fear of Izumi finding out; decided to just curse out the wraith after he dried himself off and then knocked him into the water when the wraith had chosen to tune him out while sitting on a rock near the deep end of the pond with his back to the child. Sure the two may have seem annoyed with one another; but it was obivious they were bonding like siblings usually would when bossing each other around or squabbling. After a few more hours passed, (And Alphonse passing out yet again from sheer fright of Raziel), Raziel had helped Edward back towards the original spot him and Alphonse set up camp.

"You know...for a dead guy..you sure are alright with me. I mean you arent eating my brains or anything...plus you are kinda cool. I just didnt think I'd have a undead zombie for a guardian. Weird if you think about it. We just need Al to stop fainting at you." Edward said, leading the way to the campsite as Raziel followed close behind holding Alphonse, nodding at this.

"He'll adjust eventually. And i'm a wraith Edward...very different from zombies. And again I eat souls. I'd eat yours...but's alil too small." Raziel retorted, ducking when Ed threw a stick his way as he chortled.

"Learn to take a joke Edward." The wraith said slyly, Edward snorting in irritation at this before he stormed on ahead.

"I'm NOT small!" he barked out, causing the wraith to laugh in amusement, that being the hundredth time he had laughed that morning into mid afternoon. However, his laughter was cut short when he heard

Edward yelp. Running forward, he pushed the leaves and underbrush aside when he saw the young Elric holding his knife ready, pointing it towards a male with jet black waist length hair streaked purple with his back to them, sitting in front of the firewood Ed and Al had made days before that was now lit and holding fish. "Hey who the hell are you and why you raiding our campsite?!" Ed yelled angrily. Turning, to look over his shoulder, the man tilted his black sunglasses down, swirling silver eyes resting on the tiny blonde male. Raziel's breath caught in his throat, it was the man he met when he first came here...well man is not exactly what he was to be exact.

"Well aren't you a firecracker. What I can't have a snack before meeting with my servant? Besides you ate already kiddo; not like I was stealing your fish or anything." The man said, giving a shrug as he got to his feet and dusted himself off, towering over Ed at the staggering height of 6,8ft tall. Ed had to strain his neck to look up at the man adorned in the black trenchcoat with matching shirt and boots as he then ulped, ducking behind Raziel now. "And my name is Thanatos. But you can call me T. R. for short...well when you remember that is." Thanatos then said, Edward blinking at this confused as he looked to Raziel, noticing the expression he was giving the tall male.

"You know him?" he asked, remembering the male's earlier statement as Raziel gave a nod.

"He's my boss. I think I'm in trouble for revealing my presence to you hence his arrival." Raziel said, actually uneasy for once when facing one who controlled him. That was due to the fact that unlike Moebious or the Elder God...this man could back up his statement of being a God and proving it rather well when others doubted him. Thanatos just gave a chuckle before waving a dismissive hand.

"Relax Razy I ain't going to punish you or anything like that. You did a damn good job keeping yourself hidden for quite a long time from this kid and the rest of the world. Plus I don't blame you for your actions the night before...I probably would have done the same if I were in your shoes. However...I do have to do something about this situation. The kid's still a little too young yet and not the type to keep a secret rather well. It's still not yet time for him to know about you or things that go bump in the night." Thanatos then said, his tone becoming serious now as Ed looked between the two, his confusion growing greater and greater with each word spoken.

"What exactly are you implying?" Raziel asked, unease in his voice as he unknowingly moved his free hand that wasn't holding Alphonse over to Edward's shoulder. Ed of course tensed at this too, moving to hide behind Raziel's frame more now.

"Nothing drastic. As I said; this kid is important to us all. Just that I'll put him down for a nap and do a memory wipe of the encounter between you both." Thanatos then explained, both of their eyes widening as Edward mewed.

"What?! That isn't fair, I just got to know him, and he's my guardian too. I won't tell anyone I promise!" Edward yelled out, anger in his voice as Thanatos sighed while putting his hands up defensively.

"Sorry kiddo but that's the way it is. Rules are rules. I'd love to let you guys bond but I can't or I'd be in trouble myself. Don't worry though...not like you'll forget Raziel completely or anything like that." Thanatos then stated, a light smile to his face as Edward tilted his head, Raziel now speaking up.

"You mean...there might be a chance he'll remember all this?" Raziel then said, Thanatos nodding as he

leaned his tall frame against the base of a nearby tree.

"Yes. Not remembering something doesn't really mean that it's gone." he stated.

"What do you mean? You aren't making sense here Mister." Edward said as Thanatos smiled in amusement at the boy's utterly confused expression as he scratched his head in confusion.

"Let me finish kiddo. Anyways, when you remember one thing, that leads to remembering another, and another, and then another. Our memories are connected. Many pieces are linked together like they're in a chain- that makes up each of us. I don't actually erase memories you see- just take apart the links and rearrange them. You still will have all your memories of this encounter buried deep within you. But you won't be able to remember anything about what happened here these past few days. I'm sorry, it's the only way I'm afraid." Thanatos then stated, a slight frown to his features as he saw the heartbroken look cross Edward's face as he then looked desperately up at Raziel, who also happened to be unhappy with this news.

"But...but when I wake up...I won't remember you anymore. So how am I going to thank you and be friends with you?" Edward asked sadly, Raziel's heart nearly breaking at the boy's utterance of the word "friend" when he referred to him. Then an idea struck his mind at what Thanatos had said earlier before he patted him reassuringly on the head.

"No worries, the time will come when you'll see me again. And I'll make sure you remember me next time of this event." Raziel said gently, looking to Thanatos as the man nodded, knowing what he would plan what to do due to reading his thoughts as he approved of it.

"Oh good, that makes me feel a heck of a lot better. Goodnight then...?" Edward then asked, sweatdropping since he forgot to even ask the wraith his name.

"Raziel's my name. And goodbye Edward." Raziel then said, patting him on the head as Edward puffed his cheeks in annoyance.

"No, not goodbye! When I wake up, I'll find you. And then we'll be friends again! Promise me, Raziel." Edward stated firmly, Raziel chuckling at this before sighing.

"You're going to forget making that promise Edward." Raziel pointed out as Edward shook his head.

"If the chain of memories comes apart, the links will still be there right? so the memory of our promise will always be inside me somewhere. I'm sure of it." Edward stated firmly as he gave him a confident grin. Thanatos quirked a brow, impressed at the kid's sharp mind at such a tender age as he gave a chuckle.

"Kid's got a point Razy." he said, looking to the wraith with his own grin as Raziel folded his arms and shook his head, rather impressed.

"Yeah. You're indeed true about that...alright young one...it's a promise." Raziel then said, before Edward held up his fist, Raziel nodded and crouched down, bumping his own fist with the young Elric's; their way of sealing the promise as he then rose up to his full height again.

"Good. Until later."

Turning then, the young Elric walked over to where Raziel layed down Alphonse on their makeshift bed of leaves as Thanatos then walked over beside the boy, starting to prep the spells as he chanted softly.

"A promise...huh." Raziel said to himself, surprised at how deep an impact this boy had had on him to where he saw him as a younger brother. Then walking over, he noticed Edward was growing a tad nervous and unsure as Raziel nodded to him. "Don't worry, you might forget about me...but with our promise I can come back." Raziel then said reassuringly as he stood beside Edward, leaning down as he purposely messed up the blonde's hair as he murred and fixed it, though showed a grin nonetheless.

"A promise is a promise." Edward stated, Raziel nodding once more.

"Til then, the memories of our meeting will be in your heart." Raziel said afterwards to this as Ed nodded, giving him a thumbs up.

"Right. Forgotten- but not lost." He said.

Ten minutes had passed after this, Edward fast asleep beside Alphonse as Raziel and Thanatos stood at the highest peak of the island's one hill that was not too far off from the shore. "You'd think with those claws you'd carve faster." Thanatos stated in a bored tone, Raziel ignoring the ravenette as he then finished up his note on a nearby tree that was in plain view of the shore and campsite.

"Calm yourself, I just finished. You know it's not easy to write with three claws. Plus I hadn't had a soul in awhile so I'm abit famished." Raziel retorted, dusting his hands off as Thanatos nodded.

"Well that could be why you were shaking earlier...though the leaking from your eyes you'll have to explain to me." Thanatos replied, sneering as Raziel looked away and rubbed at his face a few times murring.

"I got wood particles in my eyes is all! Now let's be off before they wake up or anyone else spots us." Raziel said in a hurried tone, Thanatos snickering..sensing that Raziel's pokerface was about to cave in again as he summoned up his scythe and tore a portal through the air.

"Alright let's be off. You can watch them once their training is over on this island. Shouldn't be too long now. Besides that masked fella is here watching em for Izumi...so they aren't entirely abandoned." Thanatos then said when he sensed Raziel's hesitation. The wraith looked back towards the two slumbering Elrics, giving them a look of worry...as if they were of his own brood before he nodded and began to follow the god of death through the portal.

"Take care Edward...look out for your brother and yourself. But remember..I'm still here for you too like I promised." Raziel then whispered, turning as he headed fully into the portal, unaware of Alphonse waking up and catching a glimpse of the wraith walking into the portal before it vanished.

"E....ED!" Al cried out, clinging to his brother as he mewed in fear, the older Elric yowling before he shoved Al off him.

"W..what the heck is it Al cant you see I was napping?!" Ed barked out, murring as he rubbed at his eyes while Al whimpered.

"I thought I saw something...it looked like a blue skeleton...he vanished into some freaky portal but he was just there I swear it!" Al said, pointing towards the spot where Thanatos and Raziel had previously stood, the blonde making a face.

"Al you just had a bad dream...blue skeletons? No more spotted berries for you tonight oi. There's no such thing." Edward then said with a loud yawn, Alphonse mewing as he looked at the spot again before giving a weak sigh, following after his brother as they went to search for some food for the day.

Meanwhile, now standing on the shore to Dublin, Thanatos and Raziel looked towards the now small island, Raziel staring at it quietly before glancing to his new master.

"Do you think we did the right thing? I mean...the boy could have kept my secret you know." he said in a hopeful tone, Thanatos shaking his head while he smiled.

"Too risky Raz. No worries though...you can watch em after their training is over as I said before. But stay to the shadows this time ok?" Thanatos said sternly, the wraith giving a weak nod as the raven haired god eyed him curiously. "Heh...you act like they are your kids or brothers. Didnt think a fella like you would have such feelings." he said, Raziel chuckling weakly as he shook his head.

"No...they are my friends." Raziel said. Thanatos smiling and nodding to this as he signaled for the wraith to follow. Watching the island for a few more minutes, Raziel gave a faint chuckle as he then turned and followed the god of death.

I never knew I still had such emotions myself....I who had struck fear into the hearts of many on my bloodsoaked quest for revenge against Kain. I who trusted soo few in number due to others using me like a rug to wipe their boots on after a hard day's work. I had only trusted one other; my mentor Janos Audron...he who looked to me as a son..only to be possessed by the Hlyden lord; the fiendish enemy of the vampires due to my own careless actions of self preservation, only for him to attack me and fly off to unknown areas. After that I thought I had lost all faith in the word...trust. But this mere little boy with an inner fire to challenge that of a volcano's in pure might...had taught me that not all are out to hurt you...that not all are out to make you to be a monster. No..this child...in an eternity of manipulations, torment, and strife...had givin me the one thing I longed for more than my freedom from my dark destiny as the soul within the Blood Reaver.....peace.

4 - Fullmetal be thy name...

A whole summer had passed since that fateful night of Edward and I's encounter. It wasn't the fact I could no longer cross paths with Ed that tortured my soul...it was that he no longer knew I existed. But it had to be done, erasing his memories of me that is. Nevertheless I overcame my sorrow and kept a diligent eye on him and his younger brother Alphonse. I had to admit, that woman Izumi Curtis was quite the knuckle scraper. She put these boys through training that would drop even myself from exhaustion. Not to mention the relentless pop quizzes on alchemy itself that she sprung on their poor minds. But they did want to excel at their knowledge and strength; so it couldn't be helped. When their training ceased, they returned back to their home in Risembool. But my mind began to become uneasy when they began to purchase odd items from their allowance once back home. Not to mention they had distanced themselves further and further from Winry when she would ask them what they were up to. I wished time and time again I had stopped them...their screams through that stormy night still haunt my ears.....

Raziel perched quietly upon the branch of an old oak tree, eyes slipping shut from time to time as he cast them on the quiet and timid house. The winds howled wildly through the night skies as the rain soaked the landscape, lightning searing through the clouds every now and then.

"Strange...they should be asleep by now. What are they planning in that basement? Are they reading up a little more before they call it a night?" Raziel asked himself aloud while he scratched at his soaked black hair. He didn't get quite suspicious yet...after all the boys had been up the past few nights later than normal reading up on alchemy in their father's basement study. However, the fear in his chest skyrocketed when a purple glow began to pour from the basement's window. Jumping up, he had to shield his eyes when the light became too bright and started to fill up the whole house. Then Edward and Alphonse's screams greeted his ears. It was then that he knew what had taken place.

"Dear god...NO!" Raziel said aloud in horror, leaping off the tree's branch as he dashed towards the building. They had done it, they had committed the ultimate forbidden art amongst alchemists...human transmutation. Of course; how could he be so blind? The desire to train themselves further in alchemy, the ingredients, the intense reading sessions...they were preparing themselves to bring back their mother! No no no why hadn't he stopped them sooner?! Why didn't he steal the ingredients until they were flat broke? He was so foolish, and now these two were suffering the wrath of the higher powers unseen to human eyes because of breaking such a sacred rule. He growled in anger when he started yanking at the door to the house, it wouldn't budge for some reason. Had they locked it? "Dammit let me in!" he called out, slamming his clawed fist into the door's window as he reached for the inner lock. Then an unseen force slammed into him, knocking him onto his back as he yelled in pain. Coughing, the wraith forced his pain aside, glaring up at the glowing house.

"Let me pass!" He called up angrily, summoning up his wraith blade as he took another mad leap towards a window of the house now, blade at the ready. But once again he was knocked back by that same unseen force, a dark laugh filling the air.

"You aren't going to interfere bone bag. Until I get what I want...you stay there like a good angel of death."

After all, I have to teach these naughty lil boys a lesson of what happens when you try to take a soul back from me. After that...I'll let you have what's left hehehe..." The voice exclaimed in sheer amusement. Raziel growled more, glaring up at the sky as he heard the dark voice.

"You bastard, you get some kind of sick thrill harming two innocent boys for merely wanting their mother back?! Face me and I'll show you what happens when you anger a servant of death himself!" Raziel hollared, clenching his fist as his eyes glowed a bright wispy blue in the darkness of the storm. The voice merely laughed in response to this as the wraith was sent flying hard into the side of the house, enough to leave a dent.

"Dont make me laugh...Acheron is a pushover compared to me. And you are merely an ant that serves him. Infact, Acheron serves ME im that powerful. I govern the gate unlike him, im the one who decides the fate of those who pass through my domain, where they go after they die. Do they go to God, or do go to Acheron's turf? And it is I who decides the fate of those who use human transmutation, shall they live with a crippling loss..or shall they die for their sins? Besides, those boys will learn the hard way..you cant get without giving right? But nonetheless...we will meet someday little wraith..just pray I am in a good mood when we do. Til then tata." The voice called back, laughing as the voice faded as Raziel screamed angrily.

"C...COWAAAAAAAARD!" Raziel hollared, blasting a torrent of ice from his reaver blade towards the heavens as he then dashed back towards the door of the house, slamming his fists time and time again at it as an invisible barrier kept him at bay. "No..no..no. Please dont die dammit! Why...why?!" Raziel yelled with each hit, fear rising in his whole body as his hitting became more and more desperate. He didnt even care for the condition of his hands, which were starting to become cut and bruised, his blue blood soaking through his bandages now. Thirty to forty minutes of this dragged on until he sunk down low to the steps infront of the door, his hand weakly tugging at the door's handle now.

"Edward...for..forgive me..I wasent..there..for you and..Al..Please be alright. Please..survive. For..Winry...Pinako...and me. My dear little friends." Raziel said weakly. And for the first time in all of the centuries he was alive, he could feel tears escaping from his pupil-less eyes and streaming down his burnt blue skin, staining the already soaked ground below him. It shocked him at first, to have wept for these two, but then he would have thought it heartless not to have done such a thing. After all, they had only wanted their mother back..and this unseen heartless fiend had punished them for it. He swore he would find this god or whatever he was, and destroy him.

A few more minutes passed until Raziel heard the door in the basement leading up to the backyard open up. He quickly rose to his feet and snuck around the side to see the condition of the boys...praying they were in one peice. His eyes widened when he saw what came out. It was a suit of armor, stained in blood that came out. He had recognized the armor from earlier snoops around the house when everyone was asleep. It had stood quietly next to the door of Hoenhiem's study. But now here it was, moving about as pinkish white eyes illuminated inside the helmet, acting as eyes. In the armor's arms was Edward, and Raziel's heart sunk when he saw the boy's condition. He was missing a right arm and left leg, and was bleeding profously. So that's what he had lost to the gate..but where was Alphonse? He pondered this for a few moments until horror washed over him..no it couldnt be...could it? His fears were then realized when the armor spoke down at a semi concious Edward.

"B..brother hold on. I'll get you some help! Dont die on me please!" The armor cried out, his voice was

none other than Alphonse's. Raziel fell to his knees, though still out of sight of the armor when he heard his voice. The horror of it all, Al had lost his whole body and Ed his arm and leg, barely hanging on. The armor turned then and dashed down the hill that lead to Pinako and Winry's house, vanishing into the roaring storm as his footsteps rang through the air. Raziel couldn't believe such a tragedy that had unfolded..all because they missed their poor mother who was snatched from them far too soon. The mother...what had become of her during the transmutation? Raziel didn't like the thought, if these two had been reduced to this..what was her condition? Forcing his unease aside, the wraith rose to his feet and slowly stalked towards the open cellar doors. Creeping down cautiously, he coughed and covered his eyes as smoke greeted him. Making his way down into the cellar's main room, he looked about a few times, his heart aching when he saw the countless blood spatters that stained the floor..along with the remnants of Alphonse's cloths that laid in a pile next to the huge transmutation circle drawn in chalk. His eyes rested on the center of the circle, and a horrid sight greeted them. There was a half mutated corpse of...something that was supposed to be human. It's insides were splayed out and it's ribcage was wide open and jutting outwards. It's head was upside down and it's matted black hair was stained in blood. It didn't even look as if it had skin let alone a reasonable body, it's eyes were a semi pink color and it's dark black tinged muscles looked and smelled as if they were burnt. It's one hand was stretched outwards towards Alphonse's clothes and the blood spatters...no doubt it was reaching for Edward and Al during the few first and last moments of it's short life.

"You poor thing...ripped from this world once more so quickly from your sons. I shall pray for you to have a safe journey. Do not fret though..your sons are safe. And please forgive them...they only wished to have you back because they missed you and love you dearly." Raziel exclaimed to what he supposed was no doubt the attempted transmutation of the boy's mother. Turning then, he dashed out of the cellar, to go see how Edward and Alphonse were faring.

Upon reaching the Rockbell house, he scaled a nearby tree and watched as Winry and Pinako attended to Edward's severe wounds as Al sat outside in the hall quietly. He had learned through Edward's guilty cries of "I'm sorry Alphonse please don't hate me." that Ed had no doubt sacrificed his leg or arm in an attempt to keep his brother's soul and bind it to the armor. Such a noble act, and such love he had for his little brother. It touched him deeply that Ed was willing to risk life or limb to save his brother. None of his brother's had done that for him...and it made Raziel a tad jealous. Once he was sure the two Elric's were resting well and ok for the time being, he called out mentally for Acheron to summon him. Then in a flicker of light, he was transported to Katoteros; Acheron's home in Greece in the planet called earth. He stormed angrily through the gold and black halls of the ancient yet brilliant structure, kicking open the doors.

"Acheron, I require an audience with you; NOW!" Raziel yelled, fury evident in his voice as Simi; Acheron's adopted daughter and Cheronte guardian demon servant squawked and glared at the wraith from where she sat watching her tv. She looked much like her adopted father in looks, her black and red hair matching his along with her gothic fashion sense. Though the only exceptions were the facts she was pale with skin tone, her eyes were blue not silver, and she had a tiny set of red horns on her forehead while her tail and wings were a mix of red and blue.

"Simi trying to watch something Razy-chan. Don't be so loud and Akri's home!" She exclaimed, giving him an annoyed look. Raziel didn't fear the look, stalking over as he pointed one of his claws at her.

"It is rather important that I speak to Acheron now Simi. So please get him for me. We have business to

discuss about the savior of Amestris and his current condition." Raziel said, doing his best to be nice to the girl. However she did have a habit of getting on his nerves from time to time, especially when she would threaten to eat him with her dreaded barbaque sauce. Simi frowned before seeing the serious look in Raziel's white hues. Giving a nod she hopped up and skipped towards the throne room. After a few minutes she reappeared through the double doors, allowing Raziel in. There atop his black throne trimmed with gold and a symbol of the son with three lightning bolts in its center sat Acheron. He was in his usual black trench coat with black boots and a shirt, both being adorned with skull symbols. His long raven hair was streaked purple this week while his silver hues hid behind those ever present dark sunglasses. He was currently strumming his electric base guitar to the melody of "Sympathy for the devil."

"So what's got you in a tizzy Raz?" Acheron asked, still strumming along to the dark melody as Raziel glared, his anger boiling over. Edward was missing his limbs while Al lacked a body and all this bastard was doing was sitting there?! The lack of compassion sent him into a blind rage. Using his tk, he yanked the guitar from Acheron's hands and set it flying out the nearby window. Acheron quirked a brow from under his glasses, sitting up fully in his chair now. "Ok..you have my attention." he stated, in a more serious tone now.

"What has me upset, is the fact you are sitting here on your duff, while Edward is in pain from missing an arm and leg, while Alphonse has to suffer from the fact he no longer has a human feeling body! Not to mention you are doing nothing to punish the bastard that did this to them!!" Raziel hollared, pointing an accusing finger at Acheron who merely sighed rubbing his forehead.

"Raz...relax. I know what happened and who did it. But it's out of my hands. Im in just as helpless a situation as you." Acheron exclaimed as Raziel became even more angry, eyes glowing blue now.

"You are the god of death! You govern the souls of the worlds, dont give me that nonsense that you cant do a damn thing!" Raziel hollared, Acheron glaring abit now behind his glasses as he growled.

"I govern the souls of the DEAD Raziel, plus I do not rule the domain that stands within the realm of truth, knowledge,destruction, and creation. This realm is also known as The Gate. Another entity rules over this area, and it lies with him on what happens to those who barter with him when they make a forbidden transmutation of the dead. And due to his cruel nature, he never let's a transmutation be sucessful most of the time. Or if it is brought back..it's never for too long, or you wouldnt recognize that person. He outranks me in power and status, otherwise you would be damn sure I'd help those two out. Infact I kinda bent the rules myself so dont say I didnt sit around doing completely nothing!" Acheron retorted, anger in his voice now as Raziel blinked, looking to the god.

"What do you mean?" the wraith asked, as Acheron looked off to the side.

"I kept Al from reaching my realm and let him be stuck near the gate just long enough for Edward to reobtain his soul. Plus I put a temporary spell on his body to last and not rot away waiting for him outside of the gate. I only put a tiny bit of this spell on him though...so that entity doesnt catch on that I am interfering in his turf. This does mean though that Ed will have to move his @\$\$ and help Al get his body back along with his limbs before it fully vanishes from lack of food. I could only do soo much for it after all." Acheron stated, leaning back in his throne as he rubbed idly at his forehead in frustration, this complexed the wraith further though.

"What do you mean...get his body back and Ed's own limbs? I don't understand." Raziel asked, as the god of death sighed.

"He has two ways to re-obtain Al's body and his limbs...the philosopher's stone, or getting my servitude by obtaining the crimson blood stone." Acheron said as Raziel was very surprised by his latter statement.

"You..your servitude? You mean as in serving under him? But how could such a stone do that?" Raziel asked in surprise as Acheron shrugged.

"Long ago, in an attempt to make a philosopher's stone, an alchemist who thought he could outdo Nicholas Flamel crafted a stone that far exceeded the original stone's power. For in order to create it, the man sacrificed the lives of thousands of dark entities, demons, dragons, and a few powerful warriors here and there. When this stone was finished, it gave the wielder a god-like status and made him practically invincible. The ruler of the gate cursed this stone however, turning the wielder of the stone into a vampire. He was so distraught at the fact he couldn't go to heaven that the man killed himself..but the curse still remained upon the stone. So whoever would dare lay claim to such a dark stone would be turned into a vampire as a price for wielding it. Not only that, but the recent stone that was made by a Vlad Tepes, had obtained the ability to force me to work under him as a servant. The reason behind this is due to the fact he obtained some of my blood and fused it into the stone, and passed the remnants of my blood along to his servants who also made stones of the same fashion, forcing me to work under them as well. Most of these stones were destroyed..though only two remain. One is in Amestris being held by a powerful vampire alchemist, and another still belongs to Vlad Tepes." Acheron explained as Raziel scowled.

"Such a horrible thing, forced to serve another against your will." Raziel muttered, knowing well how Acheron felt when having to be forced to serve under someone you hated as the memories of the Elder god's cruelty reeled in his mind. Acheron nodded to this while he stood up and made his way off the throne, picking up another guitar that layed near the base of the large throne as he began to tune it idly as he chuckled.

"Yeah but at least they don't bother me too much...they kinda are afraid I might turn on em. Well the vampire in Amestris is that is. Vlad however is a real pain in the @\$\$, made me spread the black plague across Europe one time he was that cruel. But anyways, least Edward gained something from this tragic night." The ravenette god stated, not noticing Raziel glare at him as he folded his arms.

"If you mean a half mutated corpse of a mother than that wasn't funny. Those boys loved their mother and to have that greet them after all that work...just unfair if you ask me." Raziel said sharply as Acheron shook his head.

"No I don't mean that. I meant something else, something that can't be seen but felt." Acheron stated as Raziel quirked a unseen brow, tilting his head.

"What is it then that he gained through all this?" Raziel asked as Acheron chuckled.

"I'm not telling you. You'll have to see for yourself with your inner eye. Don't worry you'll find out soon."

Acheron said with a grin as Raziel scowled.

"I hate when you act like an all seeing oracle then tell me to figure out things for myself when I ask about your jibberish's translation. It really tans my skin." Raziel retorted in annoyance while looking off to the side.

"It's 'tan my hyde' you meant Razz." Acheron corrected as Raziel hissed in response.

"Whatever." he replied, whirling around as he headed out the doors to leave.

"Just keep an eye on them ok? No worries they are much stronger than you think. And make sure they dont get into too much trouble." Acheron called after the soul reaper as he flicked a wave towards the god of death, leaving into the nearby portal that Acheron had set up for the wraith seconds after he gave him that final advice. Raziel was still angry about this whole mess...but he just hoped the god of death was right about Edward and Alphonse's strength.

Three years had passed since that tragic night, and Raziel had kept a close eye on them through the years that progressed. Edward had obtained an automail arm and leg, courtesy of Winry and Pinako. Though he would have just sat in that wheel chair for the rest of his life, had it not been for a man of the military by the name of Roy Mustang. He had gone to see them a few days after the dark deed and was surprised to see it was two young boys who had done the transmutation. It was then that he had offered Edward a job at the military, encouraging him to get out of that chair and move forward. Then the next day, Ed had asked Winry and Pinako to give him a set of automail limbs...seems he was much stronger than Raziel thought. After the rehabilitation process and much more training, the young alchemist and Alphonse were ready to head out for central. Even Raziel was surprised that Ed would take up Mustang's offer, considering the harsh things that Pinako had said about the military men; how they were dogs of the military and sent out to attack whenever their master's tugged on their leashes. But Raziel knew Edward wanted to join for another reason...to find a way to help Al reobtain his body. And Al was joining him on his journey for he wanted to help Ed find a way to get his limbs back. Such dedication and powerful a bond these two brother's had, even in the face of certian death they were unafraid. After the long train ride to central, Raziel followed the pair to where they would take the alchemy exams. After a few intense encounters here and there; Edward finally became a certified state alchemist. Being one more step closer to obtaining his goal of returning his and Al's bodies back to normal.

Raziel watched as the blonde male had headed into Central Headquarters to recieve his watch and papers, standing on a nearby balcony out of sight of the guards, arms folded as he chuckled to himself. Due to his powerful hearing..he had heard the title Edward was given; a second name that State Alchemists had went under. Fullmetal. It struck Raziel as odd, for he had heard Acheron say this name when referring to Edward once before during the past three years, though he said he called him that due to his automail. Though he knew now why. Not to mention the other thing that had kept bothering him since three years ago.

"I now understand what you meant that day long ago Acheron. A lesson without pain is meaningless. That's because you to need to sacrifice something in order to? gain something else in return. But, once you have withstood the pain and overcome it, you will gain something stronger then anything else. You will gain a fullmetal heart." Raziel said aloud, he just pondered now that he thought further about it..if that sneaky god of death had anything to do with Edward obtaining this oddly conviniant title. Shaking his

head, he turned and stared up at the sky now, a pleasant mood washing over him.

I now know Acheron pegged you right, having bestowed upon you through Bradley the title of Fullmetal. I don't know how long it would be till we met again. But I know we will. For beyond the path without you is a forgotten promise to keep. We may have walked side by side, but now we go on back to back. And though our paths may not cross, all paths are connected somewhere. When I arrive at where you are to aid you again, we may not appear to be as we were...but we'll make another promise to keep...my friend the Fullmetal Alchemist.

5 - Usual words on the usual street

Seven years had passed since Edward was officially declared a state alchemist and obtaining the name "Fullmetal." He had gone on many adventures with his brother Alphonse, all in hopes of obtaining the sacred stone said to ignore all the rules of alchemy and turn lead into gold. However during those quests, he managed to help many and earn much respect..thus earning a new title; "Hero of the people." I found that darker forces had their eyes on the two Elric brothers too...one force known as the homunculi...and another much greater threat. Though I am unable to pinpoint the other source of trouble, all I know is that they have their eyes on Edward.

But besides that, I have also discovered myself and Ancheron are not the only immortals in Amestris, yes to my surprise there are vampires roaming about this world too! And in great numbers also. But it puzzles me as to how they are here and flourishing..while the vampires of Nosgoth are dwindling to alarming numbers..soon to vanish from the world. Ancheron tells me it is due to an ancient order of elders that made a pact with King Bradley and the other leaders of this world that the immortals are to remain a secret from humanity as long as they promise not to hunt humanity like livestock. Plus the vampires of this world; most of them that is, can blend in perfectly with humanity due to their appearances being more human like in nature; and not like the vampires of Nosgoth at all. I understand this, but what perplexes me more is that Ancheron also had told me at one time that the reason vampires exist here and on Earth is due to an ancient vampire of Nosgoth breeding with an ancient immortal woman eons ago on Earth. From there vampires slowly evolved to be more human like in nature, and more powerful than their Nosgothian ancestors when it comes to being in sunlight and enduring the burning of water....where could that ancient be now? Or more to the point..who was he? And how did he come to Earth and how did the vampires get here to Amestris? Well that is a thought for another time, for now I have to go meet Ancheron..he has a mission for me of dire importance involving Edward....

Raziel carefully scaled across the rooftops, being careful to stay out of sight of the townsfolk. When he noticed that male with jet black hair; this time his dark locks streaked green while wearing those sunglasses that hardly were removed reflected in the morning sun; he climbed down, landing behind him. He was grateful the male had stood in a dank alleyway, considering being spotted by a civilian was always so troublesome for the both of them.

"Ah good, right on time as always Razzy." Ancheron said, smirking as he glanced over his shoulder at the shorter blueish purple tinged wraith.

"You know I don't like to keep others waiting. Then again I should have kept you considering you tortured me with that blasted "Lady Gaga" music for a week at Katoteros when I was recovering from that mission in Shing." Raziel muttered as he sent a glare Ancheron's way, who in turn grinned putting his hands up defensively.

"Relax Raz, I meant no harm in it. Plus Simi loves her music more than me, and I would rather have her blasting that than going crazy with my credit card." he retorted as the soul reaver murred.

"You spoil that demon too much. You cant even say no to her without her getting in a tizzy." Raziel exclaimed folding his arms as Ancheron chuckled looking away as he adjusted his sunglasses.

"She's a present from my mother and was the only one there for me during my 11,000 years on earth. So yes I spoil her, it's my way of saying thanks. For if it wasent for her I'd have probly let mama dearest destroy the cosmos." he explained as the wraith nodded some while sweatdropping.

"Well true...I keep forgetting what a hellish life you lived both as a human and a god. Forgive me for my curtness." Raziel then stated as Ancheron waved a dismissive hand.

"No worries, though your's wasent a picnic either. But ah enough of that, now about your new mission." Ancheron then stated, taking Raziel by the shoulder as they teleported off into another section of the city. Reappearing next to a bookstore as the wraith ducked out of sight. Ancheron looked about a few times before he nudged the smaller blue male. "There's your target." He then said, pointing out a tall pale female with long flowing black hair and ebony blue hues. She was dressed in a pair of low hip hugging cut offs while her upperhalf was adorned in a black zip up tank top. Fingerless long sleeved gloves trimmed red wrapped around her arms while a silver skull brandishing gold wings hung from the choker around her neck. Raziel also noticed she had an odd diamond marking with lightning bolts on both sides of it was tattooed on her stomach just above her belly button.

"I sense no evil in her...so why is she a threat?" Raziel asked quizzicly as he looked to his boss. The taller male grinned that playful grin as the wraith sweatdropped. He knew that look meant mischief; no doubt about that.

"She's not a target to kill. You just have to lure her towards the town square where the big water fountain is near the clock." Ancheron explained as the wraith tilted his head. Now he was really confused.

"How does this involve Edward?" He asked as Ancheron snickered.

"Ed's heading in that direction with Alphonse. They always visit that spot to place a small memento there for Nina; since it was her favorite spot after all." Ancheron replied as Raziel nodded some. Yes little Nina; the daughter of the deranged Shou Tucker. Back during Edward's alchemy exams, he had stayed with this man and him and Alphonse formed a brotherly bond with Shou's daughter and her dog Alexander. However desperate at not wanting to flunk his annual exam to keep his liscense to practice alchemy; Shou Tucker had made a talking chimera...made up of his dog and Nina. Sadly the same chimera didnt last very long, being killed by the serial killer Scar alongside her father. This event had wounded both brothers deeply, and shown just how human they both were.

"I am still confused though...why am I to lure the girl there?" Raziel then asked as Ancheron gave him that playful grin again. How Raziel hated when this man acted soo mischievous when it came to things like this. Or when he would be cryptic and not tell him what he meant. Ugh!

"You never played matchmaker have you Razzy?" Ancheron then asked as Raziel then blinked in surprise before sweatdropping.

"You mean we...are going to hook Edward up with this woman?" He asked as the ravenette god nodded.

"Bingo!"

Raziel was very confused now, cause now that he looked more at the girl..he could not only sense that she was good at heart; but an immortal too. And not just any type of immortal, but something he once was soo long ago; a vampire.

"I dont know...I mean she's 4 centuries years old, I doubt she's interested in someone of Edward's stature and age. I mean he is barely a man now and still as stubborn and hot tempered as ever. Plus he wouldnt be able to be with her for long, since she's immortal and all." Raziel then pointed out as Ancheron just chuckled more.

"You think too simple minded sometimes Raz. She could always turn Edward if she wants too. Dont forget about the dark gift. Plus you never know...I mean hell some chicks are into bald guys. And maybe she's into short and sassy blondes; who knows." Ancheron retorted as Raziel sent him an accusing look.

"You would know. Otherwise you wouldnt be arranging this meeting you trickster." Raziel said, knowing full well that Ancheron had read the girls thoughts at one time or another as the god of the final fate gave him a sheepish grin, he knew that the Reaver of Souls had found him out.

"Also, doesnt Edward have eyes for Winry; his childhood friend?" The wraith then asked as Ancheron frowned and looked away at this, causing Raziel to grow all the more curious.

"Yes he did...but Winry shot him down. He poured his heart out to her and asked her to be with him..but she told him she didnt want to risk such a relationship. That she was scared something would happen to him and it would be too much for her heart to handle. Plus she prefered him as a brother more than a companion. This happened during your mission in Shing..hence why you didnt know." Ancheron then replied in a gentle yet stern voice as Raziel nodded, looking towards the girl now.

"Ah yes...that does explain why Edward refused to go to Risembool to get his automail repaired. That is til Armstrong had to call Winry to Central that is. It must have been very hard on him..." Raziel then said as Ancheron nodded gently.

"Wounds to the heart cut much deeper and sting much greater than wounds to the body. Plus they heal much slower." Ancheron said softly as the wraith twinged some, he knew that Ancheron knew this form personal experiance..since he had multiple wounds to the heart soo great that it was a wonder if they healed at all.

"Well...gloom aside. How do I get her to cross paths with Edward?" Raziel then asked as Ancheron nodded before he pointed to the girl's choker as she read through a manga while leaning against the bookstore's side wall.

"That's your bait. Take that choker from her and she'll follow without a doubt. It's a memento from her father so you'll know she will want it back. And make sure to make yourself scarce once you reach the town square cause knowing Edward he'll already be there with Alphonse. And we cant risk you getting noticed." The taller male stated as Raziel nodded.

"So...he's not ready to meet me yet huh?" Raziel asked as Ancheron shook his head.

"Not yet..but soon so patience Raz. For now just concentrate on helping to make Ed happy with this lil lady. Now get moving before she decides to relocate; she's a speed reader." Acheron then said as the wraith nodded, climbing up towards the rooftops once more while he then leapt towards the bookstore's roof. Then looking about a few times to make sure no one was around, he carefully crawled down the side where the girl was; positioned inches above her head. Once he was sure she was enthralled in the manga completely, he reached down with lightning quick reflexes and snatched the choker off her slender white neck. The girl squeaked in surprise, instantly reaching up to her throat before she whirled around and looked up. Her angry glare turned to that of fright when she saw the wraith before her as he waved the choker about in his two claws.

"Looking for this?" he asked calmly as she then glared again, this one much more intense than the first.

"Give that back!" she hissed out, her temper flaring as Raziel shook his clawed finger at her.

"Tut tut, who are you to mouth off to your elder? No I think I'll keep this. That is if you can catch me that is." Raziel then teased out, turning around as he crawled up the wall with ease before dashing off. Hearing the girl curse loudly, he chuckled to himself. "She's just as fiery as Edward." he said to himself, sweatdropping when she appeared on the roof in a flash and was three paces behind him. "Good lord she's fast! Acheron failed to mention this to me!" he then yelled, picking up speed as he dashed off the roof, gliding towards another one and then another.

"Dammit get your skinny pantless @\$@ back here you friggin smurf!" The ravenette beauty then hollared as Raziel chuckled, glancing over his shoulder as the girl nearly slipped off the roof but was glaring at the wraith all the while.

"Such language...you think im going to come over there after orders like that? You must be daft woman!" Raziel retorted, yelping as he ducked, nearly being speared through the head by an icicle, courtesy of the female vampire. "Well now im defiantly not coming over!" Raziel then shot back as he turned and dashed off once more.

Note to self...yell at Acheron for forgetting to tell me about this vampire's temper and powers. Raziel then thought, swearing he'd get back at that big oaf of a god later for making him have to lure this madwoman along.

"When I get my hands on you..you'll be wishing you were even more dead than you are now!!" The girl then hollared after Raziel, growling as she kept close behind him, easily jumping along the rooftops and narrow ledges. She shown she was just as talented at parkour as the wraith himself. Though her speed was getting the better of the wraith. For a few times she nearly caught him. Thankfully Raziel knew this town inside and out and managed to outwit her and escape. But now that they were nearing the destination, the water fountain's clock already coming into sight; he knew he had to ditch her to prevent him from being seen by the Elric's. He doubt she would just ignore him to look at Ed, sure the blonde was handsome but not drop dead gorgeous as Simi called some men. It was risky, but he would have to rely on his dark reaver for this. Sure it cloaked his presence but only to an extent. And this girl was an not a fledgling, if she put her mind to it; she would be able to sense him out despite his being invisible.

"It's worth a shot." Raziel then said to himself, landing on a rooftop just before the town square fountain as he then looked over his shoulder, the pale ravenette was closing in on him and fast. "Well my dear,

for now I say farewell. We'll meet again. Til next time." Raziel then said, waving his dark blade a few times before he fully vanished from sight. Then to prevent her from tackling him, leapt completely over her form as she meeped and fell off the rooftop, clinging to it as she then cursed loudly. Raziel then watched as she muttered all sorts of things she would do if she were to catch him while she scaled down the side of the building. Then he remembered Ancheron's words...the choker was the bait. Glancing down at the object in hand, he then flung it towards the fountain. Seeing the item glint in the sunlight, the girl squeaked and ran after it...only to stop short when she noticed the two sitting at the fountain, namely the shorter one sitting next to the armor.

Well Ancheron knows these two well. Here they are right on time. Raziel then thought to himself with a chuckle. There they were, talking to one another as Edward placed a small doll near the fountain's clock. He had a melancholy look on his features. No doubt due to the fact it was Nina's birthday. It was amazing what a big heart Edward and Alphonse had; to treat a simple little girl as if she were their little sister. Though his attention went to the ravenette now...how would she react? The Elric's hadn't spotted her, but she defiantly saw them. Her eyes were wide in shock, as if she had seen a car crash of disastrous proportions and couldn't look away. The wraith was very curious now...why did she look so stunned? He hadn't recalled these two ever meeting, nor was it a look of someone who was standing before a celebrity.

"Hi...Hikari? Is that hi..no it couldn't be..that was too long ago. It couldn't be my precious Hikari..but who then? He looks just like him. Why?" The girl said to herself, shaking her head in disbelief as she backed away, frightened like a scared deer. Then in a flash she whirled around and dashed off, leaving her memento on the ground as she ran deep into the city and out of Raziel's sight.

"Well...that was unexpected." Raziel said, rising to his feet to go after the girl, but a hand on his shoulder halted his actions as he turned to see a smiling Ancheron.

"No worries, you did your job well Raz." Ancheron stated, making the wraith sit down again as he quirked a brow.

"Now I'm very confused....you wanted them to meet yes? Well how come she ran off and Edward didn't even lay eyes on her? I don't think playing Eros works like that." Raziel replied scratching the back of his head as the taller god laughed grinning.

"It's 'playing Cupid.' And it went much better than planned. We set the wheels in motion, that's all that matters." Ancheron explained as Raziel sent him a bored look.

"Quit being cryptic for once and tell me what you mean." He said in an annoyed tone as Ancheron put his hands up.

"Easy now, what I meant by my last comment is that I was afraid she was going to attack Edward. But luckily she still holds a flame for "Hikari" so it's a very good sign. And Edward didn't have to see her, she saw him which is a good start." Ancheron then said as Raziel pondered a few moments on this.

"Ah...so scorned lover? And Edward happens to look like her past beloved no doubt yes? But what's going to happen because of this?" Raziel then asked as Ancheron shrugged while looking towards the two Elric's down below.

"Correct on both statements...and I suppose she's going to stalk the hell out of him. Trust me she had a big thing for her "Hikari"." He replied as Raziel flailed turning to face Ancheron now.

"We wanted to give him a girlfriend, not someone who might kill him!" Raziel shot back as Ancheron flicked Raziel's forehead.

"Easyyy Raz, relax. She wont kill him I know this much. She might want to at first due to how badly "Hikari" hurt her in the past. But her goodhearted nature she got from her father will prevent her from doing so. You said so yourself you sensed no evil in her right?" Ancheron then pointed out as the wraith hesitated before nodding as he relaxed, sitting back down again.

"Yes that is true...but what's going to happen once they meet officially?" Raziel then asked, glancing to the taller male who shrugged smiling.

"Romance doesnt bloom too quickly..especially not this one. It will start off slow at first as friends. But certian events will cause their bond to tighten and before long they'll be inseperable. Hell who knows, we might even be planning their wedding next." Ancheron said jokingly as Raziel nodded with a light laugh.

"True..and they do say the latest of bloomers are the most beautiful once they reach their peek of perfection. However...I doubt you are playing matchmaker just because Edward is lonely..there is much more to this isnt there?" Raziel then exclaimed, sending an accusing look to Ancheron as he smirked playfully.

"Well let's just say this: The past and future are about to collide. For legends of old will aid in the journey to know today. One soul shall seek another and pledge their sworn friendship to another. One mystery shall beget the next...and the doors of fate will be opened." Ancheron then stated in a calm tone as Raziel nodded to this, looking to the two boys now too as he folded his arms in thought.

"It appears we are merely at the threshhold then yes?" Raziel then asked as Ancheron gave a light nod.

"Yes but as Janos once said, you are the fulcrum upon which this era depends. Without you, this wouldnt be possible." Ancheron then pointed out as Raziel scoffed.

"You show too much kindness. I doubt this girl would have depended on only myself to have crossed paths with Edward." Raziel stated as Ancheron shook his head.

"No it's true Raz. If she hadnt met him right now, this future would have changed dramaticly, maybe for the worse too. They'd have probly turned out to be enemies, or never have met at all. I mean it is a big city, Central." Ancheron then said as Raziel nodded some to this. "Plus Winry might have gone back to Edward, and he would know soo little about his destiny, and thus the noose around the cosmos would have grown tighter." Ancheron then added as Raziel gave a odd look.

"Soo...it's fated for these two to be together?" He asked as Ancheron shrugged once more as he stood up.

"Maybe...or maybe friends. Depends on the outcome. All we know is that the universe is alittle safer now

that the one knows of the other's existence. But let's hope for the best that they form a strong bond and are able to stand ready when the doors of fate are opened. Til then keep an eye on Elrics for today. But next week your going to have to head out to Schlafrig Hoble to do some scouting with Vincent. Seems are big threat from Shing is moving locations now that he knows there's nothing useful there." Ancheron then said, patting Raziel on the shoulder as the wraith nodded.

"Right, it will be good to see Vincent again. Tell him to try and be more talkative though please?" Raziel then asked as Ancheron chuckled.

"He says he'll talk to you more if you would just wear pants." Ancheron replied, waving as he vanished as the wraith had a turn to laugh now as he shook his head.

"Soo...the doors of fate will be opened huh? I do hope we will be able to face whatever lingers within those doors. But knowing Edward he'll just laugh at that beast before pummeling it into submission. For now though...we can only imagine the outcome as we stand at the threshold of a new aeon....." Raziel then said aloud to himself, eyes resting on the two Elrics who seemed to have brightened up mood wise now as they talked, Edward laughing as he shoved Alphonse some. "I know you can face any dangers Edward. Cause you have your friends as your shield and motivation...and your fullmetal heart as your weapon. And no evil no matter how powerful can penetrate that." Raziel then exclaimed, standing up now as he turned and walked off, vanishing into the shadows of the city.

Close to outskirts of Central, a woman came walking into view, clad in purple armor; a matching tiara with devil shaped horns adorning the sides of it and boots, one short and one long were upon her feet, hiding some of her pale skin. She looked towards the town calmly from her steep hillside view where she stood, the wind whipping through her long black hair as her violet hues scanned the vast city.

"So this is Amestris...the place where the end of days shall begin again." The woman said to herself, folding her arms then.

"Heh..let's see if Dart's descendant is up to the task....." She then said with a light-hearted smirk while swiping a few fingers through her dark hair as a glowing red gem flickered in her pocket.

Off in Dublin, on the quiet little island of Yock; a lone tree stands near the shore leading into the forest; not too far off from the tree that Edward cut notches into indicatiing the days that passed. On this other tree, is a poem carved into the bark, it reads:

*There is always sleep between part and meet
With our usual words on the usual street.
So let us part like we always do...
And in a world without you
I'll think of you.
When you come to, let us meet
With our usual words on the usual street.*

Edward still wonders who wrote this to this day when he had returned there a few years back with Alphonse.

THE END.

Or should I say...

The beginning?

(If you wish to know what
happens next in Edward's Journeys; read
"To Challenge The night")