

Mellifluous Trill

By Velika

Submitted: September 8, 2007

Updated: April 22, 2009

Told from the view of Demyx, number Nine of Organization XIII. A story of friendship ripped apart at the seams. A story of lost love, and a little angst. it's also an experiment. ShounenAi warning! Will be updated daily!

Provided by Fanart Central.

<http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/Velika/48396/Mellifluous-Trill>

Chapter 1 - It Begins	2
Chapter 2 - the Graceful Assassin	13
Chapter 3 - Evil?	20
Chapter 4 - Hung Over	27
Chapter 5 - Past Truths, and Number Twelve	34
Chapter 6 - Renegade Nobody	43
Chapter 7 - Betrayal, Denial, Rejection	51
Chapter 8 - Roxas and Namine	59
Chapter 9 - Xigbar's Tale I	67
Chapter 10 - Xigbar's Tale II	73
Chapter 11 - Roxas Leaves, Axel Follows	84
Chapter 12 - With the Guys	93
Chapter 13 - You Are Never Coming Home	101
Chapter 14 - Awakening	108
Chapter 15 - The Price of Failure and Epilogue	117

1 - It Begins

DISCLAIMER: I do not own anything in this story. Organization XII belongs to Tetsuya Nomura, that lucky bastard.

WARNING: Not so much in this part, but there will be Shounen-Ai and Yaoi scenes. If you are against, DO NOT READ. ALSO! There is cursing. Lot's of it! Don't like it, don't read it! Simple as that. Enjoy!

AUTHOR'S NOTE: This is kind of like a test. I wanted to write a story revolving around Demyx. This is not at all what happened, and my information is most likely incorrect, but I'm enjoying writing this so far. Everyone knows how Axel and Roxas were obviously attached at the hip while Roxas was in the Organization. Well what about before Roxas was created? Yes, I'm starting when Luxord was created. I didn't feel the need to start with Demyx since he's telling the story. So enjoy this part, and let me know what you think. I'll definitely write more, but I need to know whether or not the viewers would want me to post more. Thanks!!

I turned my Xanga into a little journal revolving this story, my thoughts, and other things. You can find it at [But please, any comments you have regarding the story, please post here and not there. Thank you.](#)

Mellifluous Trill

Part 1
'It Begins'

That was it. The last straw. I couldn't take it anymore. That stupid 'Zebra Head' had gone too far. I kept telling him to stop, warning him,

but he wouldn't. It was time I took this situation into my own hands

"Xigbar, I swear to God, if you grab my @\$\$ one more time, I'll shove my sitar up yours."

We were on a mission together. The Superior had ordered us to scope out the worlds for a new castle. I was supposed to go with Axel to find new recruits, but Xigbar insisted that I join him. I protested, but for some reason, the Superior sided with him, and now, here we are.

"Look, kid, I told you I was sorry. It's not like I'm trying to grab your @\$\$. It just kind of happens," Xigbar smiled, with a wink.

"You're so full of shoot," I sighed. "This is the last time I go on a mission with you." The world we had arrived in was dark, and barren. There were no people anywhere. The skies were full of dusty clouds, and the sky was invisible. There was no sun or moon. It was hard to tell the time of day.

"This place is perfect!" Xigbar squealed.

“Are you sure?” I asked. “The Superior might want something a little more... Lively.”

“Demyx, kid, this is Xemnas you’re talking about. He’ll love it here.”

“If you say so...” We quickly left, and hurried back to headquarters.

So, I guess I should explain some things. I’m not really good at the whole ‘story writing’ thing. My name is Demyx. I’m number nine in a secret organization of beings called ‘Nobodies’. Xemnas, or the Superior, is our leader. He created us all, made us Nobodies. Xigbar is number two. I called him a Zebra Head because he has black hair, but there’s a few streaks of grey. So far, there are only nine of us, me being the last one. Xemnas wants more, though. Who knows why? We’re not even supposed to exist.

Every person has different, forms, let’s say. We’re all made up of a body, a soul, and a heart. Everyone’s heard of the Heartless, right? Heartless are exactly what they are. Heartless shadow monsters. They lack a heart of their own, so they steal hearts from others, and devour them. When someone loses their heart, a Heartless is created from their spirit, and it consumes the heart. The body that’s left becomes an empty vessel and eventually fades into the darkness. That doesn’t always happen, though. If the heart was strong enough, the body may become animate, and think for itself, initially becoming stronger without the heart or the spirit to hold it back. That’s what we call a Nobody. And that’s what we are. Spiritless bodies. We lack hearts, and emotion. We also lack our spirits which allow us to grow and age. Without either, we are stationary in time.

The first six of us were the original scientists to discover Nobodies and Heartless. They soon realized that they couldn’t really live after they became what they are now. Even though they keep recruiting new people, they’re still looking for a way to go back. We all are. We want our lives back. Xemnas says that we might even be able to keep our new strength and power when returning to normal. That would be great! Currently, I control water by playing my sitar. I can move water, and create clones of myself. It’s pretty nifty. Imagine if I could do that as a real being!

Xemnas also says that in order to gain our hearts back, we have to know our True Names. Only he knows what our True Names are, though. When we are born as Nobodies, our entire memory of our life so far is erased, and then we awaken with a new name, and identity. Only Xemnas knows who we all were.

Well, I guess that’s enough rambling for now. I’ll get back to my story.

When we got back to the Headquarters, only a few people were there, Vexen (number four), Zexion (number six), and Saix (number seven). Axel (number eight) and Xaldin (number three) were out scouting for new members. I could never do that. When I say scouting for new members, I don’t mean that they open a shop with a banner saying “JOIN THE NOBODIES IN THEIR FIGHT FOR THEIR HEARTS” and greet people. No, it’s much worse. They go world to world, eliminating them all, casting a dark shadow over each place and when everyone’s dead, or a Heartless, they go to find who has become a Nobody, and bring them to Xemnas. That’s how I got here. Atleast, that’s what Axel tells me.

“So how did the search go?” Zexion asked me.

“Pretty well. We found a cool place. Xiggy thinks Xemnas’ll love it.”

“Don’t call me ‘Xiggy’, kid.” Xigbar snapped.

“Well the trip was fine, and it would have been better if Xigbar had stopped touching me!”

“I’m a touchy-feely guy, dude. I can’t help it.”

“Xigbar if I had a nickel for every time you felt me up, I’d have a shoot-load of nickels!”

“Guys, stop arguing. You know how Xemnas gets when we fight.” Zexion cut in. Just when Xigbar opened his mouth to protest, Axel came flying in the door, an unconscious man over his shoulder.

“We got one!!” He yelled at the top of his lungs. He dropped the man onto the couch. Xaldin came in shortly after him.

“Demyx, inform master Xemnas of our arrival, would you?” He asked. I immediately said yes, and ran up the stairs. I was kind of intimidated by Xaldin. He was a big guy, and he had narrow, icy blue eyes. Plus, he had these massive sideburns that made me nervous.

The place we were currently living was old, and musty. It was an out-dated, two story house with many bedrooms. It was like an old haunted house. It was old, everything creaked, and everything was dusty.

I knocked on Xemnas’ door.

“Master Xemnas,” I said quietly. “Xaldin and Axel have returned with a new recruit.” The door slowly opened. I backed away, as Xemnas came out of the darkened room. He was a tall, elegant man with long silvery hair. His eyes were a beautiful amber, and his skin was lightly tanned. He had a small smile across his lips.

“Very good,” He grinned in a velvety voice. “And I suppose you found us a new home, Demyx?”

“Y-yes sir!” I squawked. “Xigbar and I returned not too long ago. We’re all waiting for you downstairs.” He nodded and I started my descent. Xemnas followed. When we got downstairs, I noticed the man on the couch began to stir. First thing Xemnas noticed when he arrived was that someone was missing.

“Where is number five?” He asked. The room grew silent.

“W-we don’t know, sir,” Zexion spoke up. He was small, and probably the youngest out of all of us. His voice was tiny, and it reminded me of a cat. “I haven’t seen him all day. I don’t think anyone has.”

Xemnas sighed. “Saïx, be a dear, and go fetch number five.” Saïx scared me, too. He was tall, and thin. His hair was kind of scruffy, and he had an ‘X’ shaped scar over his nose, and between his eyes. His ears were pointed, and so were his teeth. I thought maybe he’d been the nobody of a werewolf.

Without saying a word, Saïx grunted, and headed up the stairs. Shortly after, Lexaeus (number five) arrived.

"I'm very sorry, sir," Lexaeus pleaded. "I was in my room and got lost in thought." That was total bullshit, but I didn't feel like calling him on it.

"Now that everyone is here, let us greet our newest member." He had neatly cut blonde hair, and a trimmed beard. His skin was fair. Suddenly, look of terror struck his blue eyes. In a split second, he had jumped from the couch and was cowering against the stairs, unable to move.

"WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE?! WHERE AM I?! WHAT IS THIS PLACE?! WHAT'S GOING ON!?" He shouted.

"Augh, if you don't silence yourself, I will rip you to shreds!" Saix growled. His eyes gave a menacing glare, as he bore his teeth. The man soon shut his trap, still shivering.

"Young man, welcome to our home," Xemnas said, smiling. "You have survived a brutal test. Congratulations." He began to clap. "Be proud. We are willing to let you join us."

"W-what if I don't want to join you?" The man stammered.

"We'll have to kill ya." Axel giggled.

"K-k-kill?!"

"Silence, Axel." Xaldin spoke. "What be your name, sir?"

"W-why should I t-tell you?!" He yelled. "You kidnapped me, and now you want to be all buddy-buddy with me?"

"We never said that we were friends," Xigbar said, with a chuckle. "If you choose to join us, we need to know your name. If you want us to violently tear you apart, that's okay too. We won't need to know your name for that."

"Everyone, please stop," I said quietly. "Leave the poor guy alone. So he has a strong heart, good for him. And now he's a Nobody. Whoop-di-doo. We shouldn't force people to join the organization against their will."

"Demyx," Axel sighed. "Shut up. We forced you to join, didn't we?"

"Not like I remember," I pouted.

"M-my name is R-rudol." The man shivered. "I don't remember anything else. All I know is I want to go home." If he had a heart, you would probably hear it echoing in the silence. His tone of voice suggested his fear.

"You want to go home?" Axel almost laughed. "Home to where?"

"M-my home world." Rudol answered.

“Sorry, but if we even tried to bring you back, well, let’s just say you won’t have much of a world to go back too.” Then he let out his fiendish giggle.

“What do you mean?! What happened to my home?”

“Axel,” I whispered under my breath. “you’re a bastard.”

“That’s enough Axel.” Xemnas scolded. “You are dismissed.”

“But sir!”

“Now!” Axel hung his head and began his ascent up the stairs.

“Please, what happened to my world?”

“There was a terrible fire,” Xaldin said quietly. “Axel and I arrived too late. We tried to put the fires out, but there was no point. We thought everyone was dead. Heartless where everywhere.”

“Heartless?!” Rudol yelled. “What were the heartless doing in my home?!”

“We’re unsure,” Xaldin continued. “We searched the area for survivors. All we found was you. You, and a hoard of Heartless.” I couldn’t get mad at him. Although Xaldin was clearly lying through his teeth, he was trying his best to keep Rudol from freaking out. We all knew it was a lie. We knew that Axel started that fire and Xaldin wasn’t too innocent himself. He has a tendency to stab things, and he does it with all six of his lances.

“We understand that you’ve lost everything but yourself,” Xemnas began. “Your friends, your family. So now I give you this choice. Join us, the Organization, and gain more strength and power than you could hope to dream of. You are no longer human, my good sir. You are what we are. Nobodies. You lack a heart, and all emotion attached. Think about it. You are not really afraid of us, nor are you missing any home that might have burnt to the ground. You’re True Name is Rudol, but you are no longer this man Rudol you speak of. Join us, and you will become someone new, and start over.”

Xemnas wasn’t much better than Xaldin. He was also better known for his long-winded speeches. This wasn’t so bad. He’s done a lot worse. Sure, I could protest. This wasn’t right. Spewing lies just to get the poor guy to say yes. I know I wouldn’t win, though, because somewhere along the line, my other agreed to these false promises, too, and so did everyone else’s.

Rudol seemed amazed, and was clearly entranced by Xemnas’ seductive eyes, and heavenly tone. In other words, it was a “come with me you’ll be safe” kind of tone. And Rudol went for it.

“Okay. Count me in.” Famous last words. Then noticing that he was naked, added, “Oh, and can I get some clothes?”

“Very good!” Xemnas almost squealed. Xemnas then, still smiling, snapped his fingers, and down Rudol went.

Xemnas walked over to the naked body on the floor.

“Gentlemen, I present to you our tenth member. His name shall be decided when we prepare his thoughts. Xaldin, take him to the infirmary for some rest, then get him a coat.”

Sorry, I’m kind of new at this story thing. I have more explaining to do, I guess. I suppose you could call us a cult. We all wear these black trench coats. When we visit other worlds, we keep our hoods up so you can’t see who we are. We also wear black pants, boots and gloves. Oh, and I should explain about the names.

If you’ve been paying any attention at all, you’ve probably noticed all of our names have ‘x’s in them. No, it’s not a coincidence. The first six members decided that they couldn’t go by their original names, so they took the letters of their names and rearranged them with an ‘x’ in there to show that they’ve fallen.

Now this is just a rumor I heard, but apparently after they chose their names, being a head scientist, Xemnas realized that knowing their true names, they can regain their hearts and return back to the light. Fearing his friends leaving him, he somehow erased their memories leaving them with just their new names and knowledge of their new found abilities. It’s just a rumor though. And I heard it from Axel, so who knows if it’s true or not.

Believe it or not, Axel and I are great friends. It may not seem so right now, but we are. He’s the closest to my age, and we have lots in common. I’ve been a Nobody for about a year now. A few months after I joined, Axel and I were talking and well... Let’s just say our imaginations went a little wild. We ended up streaking down the halls of the house. We gave Xigbar a nosebleed when we knocked on his door. It was hilarious. We were laughing for hours. But that’s a tad off topic, and possibly a story for another time.

Rudol, or whatever his new name is, was clearly exhausted from the struggle. When he wakes up, he won’t remember anything. There will be a void of darkness, then waking up. Xemnas says he’ll give him a title and announce his name after we’ve seen what he can do.

See? There I go again. Talking about things I haven’t explained. Well, get us to it. It happens a lot. Titles. We all have a title that Xemnas gave us personally. The title, he says, describes us, like how our numbers rank us. My title is ‘Melodious Nocturne’. Pretty sweet, right? So yes, we all have titles.

“How long do you think he’ll be out?” Zexion asked Xigbar.

“Who knows?” Xigbar replied with a shrug. “In the mean time, we should do something fun.”

“Like what?” I asked. Usually when Xigbar says ‘fun’ he means either extremely dangerous, or mischievous. Either way, I know we’ll get in trouble for it. And that hasn’t stopped me yet.

“I feel like messin’ with someone.” He chuckled. “Who’s a good target?”

“How about Axel?” Lexaeus suggested. We all looked at him. Not only was this the first time he joined in any conversation, but he proposed a great idea.

“Yes! Great idea! You get a gold star for the day!” Xigbar snickered. Lexaeus gave a small smile.

“I think I’ll pass, though. Pranks aren’t my thing”

“Guess it’s up to you, me and Zex,” I smiled at Xigbar.

“But what are we going to do?” Zexion questioned. We didn’t know. We just knew it had to be hilarious.

“I have an idea. The results won’t show until tomorrow morning, but it should help pass the time.” Xaldin joined in. “I’ll give you the idea, but remember, you didn’t hear it from me.”

“We get it, just tell us!” Xigbar insisted.

Xaldin reached into the folds of his coat and pulled out a small, crystal vial. Inside was a bubbling, green liquid.

“What is it?” I asked. Hopefully it wasn’t any kind of dye. I have a bad experience with hair dye. When I first joined, Axel had actually put hair dye in my gel. When I went to gel my hair, it turned bright green. It took months to wash it out.

“Demyx, you were not here when this stuff was used on me.” Xaldin smiled. Xigbar smiled too. “Xigbar, if you recall, you placed this nasty green liquid into my aftershave. I’ll have you know I took years to grow my facial hair and in one instant, it was all gone.” Hearing this come from big, scary Xaldin made me just about die laughing. I was on the ground for a good ten minutes before I recovered my breath.

“Ahem, anyway,” Xaldin began again, slightly annoyed. “I entrust this to you, Demyx. Use it wisely.” He handed me the vial and walked away. I looked at it and grinned a silly grin. I looked to Xigbar who smiled, too. Then to Zexion who simply said:

“Shampoo.”

“I don’t think so,” Xemnas boomed, standing at the top of the stairs. “Destroy the formula or I will destroy you. We don’t have time for prank wars.” Sighing heavily, I looked to Xigbar. He nodded, and I threw the vial into the air. Xigbar pulled out a large gun, and shot it. It shattered into billions of tiny crystal shards, the liquid splashing onto the rotted wood floor.

Some time went by and Rudol finally woke up from his minor coma. Xemnas led him into the foyer where the rest of us were waiting. Axel had come back downstairs.

“Everyone, the name we have chosen for our new member is Luxord..” Xemnas smiled, gesturing at the blonde. “Everyone please introduce yourselves, and keep in order.” Xigbar was first.

“Nice to meet ya, dude. Name’s Xigbar, the Freeshooter. I’m number two.” He gave a little wave, then sat back down onto the couch.

“I am Xaldin, the Whirlwind Lancer. Number Three. Just stay out of my way.”

"They call me Vexen. I am number four, the Chilly Academic. I'm a strict scientist, so keep away from my lab."

"I'm Lexaeus, the Silent Hero. Number Five"

"The Cloaked Schemer. Number Six"

"Tell him your name" Xemnas cut in.

"... Zexion."

"My name is Saix. I am the Luna Diviner. I am number seven. Don't get on my bad side."

"You guys are boring!" Axel yelled. "Well, Luxord, was it? The name's Axel. Got it memorized? I'm number seven. I'm also known as the Flurry of Dancing Flames. Burn baby!" Extending his palm, he shot what looked like a fireball whizzing through the air, right past Luxord. His eyes grew wide, dodging the flame. I looked over to Xemnas who just had his hand to his temples, shaking his head. Then it got quiet. I forgot that it was my turn to speak.

"Well, um," I hated speaking in front of them all. "I'm Demyx, the Melodious Nocturne. Number nine." I smiled. He didn't.

"Well everyone," Xemnas spoke. "I'm pleased to announce that Number ten here controls the element of luck through cards and dice. Luxord." They stood face to face. "I hereby name you the Gambler of Fate!"

"Thank you, Master Xemnas." Luxord replied. This was the first time I heard him speak since the freak-out. He seemed calmer, and a lot more well mannered.

"I'm truly grateful for you allowing me to join you." Luxord said kindly, with a bow. "I can feel this strength coursing through my muscles, my bones, my entire being."

Another member of our ghastly Organization. I guess I can't complain. I love these guys.

Yup, you guessed it. Explanation time. As you should already know by now, Nobodies cannot feel any emotion what so ever. However, we still remember what it was like to feel these emotions. Although we cannot feel, or give love, lets say, we still act like we do, and can because we do in fact lack a heart. It's like that empty void in your chest that emo kids talk about. It's really there for us. We have a need to be loved, or even cared for. We don't even know why. So, we agreed to care for each other.

Now I know what you're thinking. In this world we live in today, there's only one word that comes to mind when discussing this topic. 'Gay'. For the record, you could say we do not have a preference when it comes to sex. Because we're Nobodies, we don't really think of ourselves as men anymore, although, technically, that's what we are. We're creatures that live between the light and the dark who aren't meant to be.

It's not like we go out and get married to another Nobody. No, this is all there is. Just the ten of us. We can't have any sort of relationship with a normal person, so we form temporary relationships with each other. And in case you were wondering, that's why Xigbar was grabbing my @\$\$ a while back. It's like his way of saying 'I'm marking you to be mine next.' I've kind of been with Axel for a while, big surprise there, so Xigbar's been trying his best to intervene. Later on, it's going to sound like the Organization is just one big Soap Opera. All the shoot that happens between all of us is just ridiculous. Before even starting this story, you should know that the most members we'll ever have is thirteen. If you don't then why the hell are you reading this?

It was time to move. Xemnas visited the barren wasteland that Xigbar and I declared as our new home. We all packed up what little belongings we had and left for our new home. I'm not really sure what happened, because I was the last to arrive, but there was a HUGE castle there that wasn't when I first visited the area. Xemnas must have done it. We all chose our respective rooms. My room was a standard size. It had a bed, a computer, a closet and a bathroom. It also had a large window. Now, when I say large, I mean MASSIVE! This window, or maybe I should just call it a gap in the wall, was about half the wall wide, and was the entire height of my room, except for a little sill that was about 3 feet from the ground. No kind of safety either. I could fall out and die, and no one would ever know.

All the rooms were really far from one another. Xemnas split us into two groups. Five and Five. Each of the five had a half of the castle. Obviously, I was in the second half. Xemnas liked to keep everything in order. But we had our own hallway, our own wing that had two common rooms, and a kitchen. There was the same in the other wing. And this was just the upper levels of this massive castle. Downstairs there was all kinds of crazy crap. I usually stayed in my room. I loved to sit in my window, playing my sitar. The strange thing about this world was it was never night or day. It was just dark. Like an endless night kind of. There was a city below the castle that looks like it was abandoned years ago. The view from my window was beautiful. It was dark, but it was a nice, calm dark. After some time I decided I was tired.

My bed was looking mighty comfortable. I unzipped my coat, slid off my boots, and climbed into bed. I often slept in my pants. They were tight, but they were roomy at the same time. I didn't even bother to wash all the gel out of my hair. That'll probably be a mess in the morning. Contemplating cleaning my hair or not, I drifted into a very sound sleep...

There was a knock at my door, but I didn't hear it. Soon the pounding woke me from my dreams.

"Who the hell is it?" I grumbled. I don't like to be woken up for no reason.

"It's me, open up." It was Axel. I opened the door a crack so I could peek my eye out at him.

"Yes?"

"Let me in, I want to talk to you." Reluctantly, I opened the door.

"Have a seat," I mumbled as Axel made himself comfortable on my bed. I sat at my window.

"Are you mad at me?" He asked sweetly.

“Now, why would you think that?” I almost laughed.

“Could be that enormous attitude you just dog slapped me with.” Axel had a great sense of humor. He always said the right things that just made you want to laugh forever. It was hard not to crack a smile at that.

“Look, Axel, I’m really tired, and it’s late. Can we discuss this tomorrow?”

“Nope!” He stood up and walked over to me, sitting down on the opposite side of the window sill. He crossed his legs.

“What’s the matter? You can talk to me, you know.”

“It’s nothing.” He started scooting closer to me.

“If you’re mad about what I was saying earlier, I’m sorry. I’m a mean guy. I can’t help it. It’s who I am, and I’m sorry I got you upset.”

“You shouldn’t apologize to me. Apologize to Rudolf!”

“Goddamn it, Demyx, you can’t be so sensitive. Stop playing around. I know you don’t really care about what I said. Drop the act. You’re not fooling anyone.” Did I mention how smart he was? Yes, I was pretending to be mad and upset when I technically couldn’t. I didn’t feel anything. None of us did.

“You know me too well,” I cracked a smile, then slid over to him. We sat together on the window sill, facing outwards, watching the stars and the eternally dark sky. Before I knew it, his arm was around my waist, and I was leaning on his shoulder.

“Xemnas wants me to look for members again tomorrow. Would you like to join me? It’s actually quite fun.”

“I’ll have to go just to put out all the fires you’ll start.”

“You’ll just end up drowning them all.”

“What’s wrong with that?” I chuckled. Axel started to laugh.

“I love you, loser” He whispered. He gave me a tight hug, then got up. “I’ll meet you first thing in the morning, got it?” I nodded, and with that, he was gone. I got up and lay back on my bed, hoping to whatever Gods watched over us that nothing would ever come between us.

Then there was a second knock at the door.

“Who is it this time?” I called.

“Yo, kid, open up. Let’s go party, or something.”

“Augh, come on, Xigbar, I’m tired!”

“Get your skinny @\$@ out here or I’ll have Xaldin break down the door.” I rolled over and put my head under my pillow.

“Go away!! Come back tomorrow!” The knocking had ceased, and before I knew it, I was drifting away into my dreams.

It was the first night in a brand new bed, in a brand new home. Everything was clean, and tidy. I woke up quite refreshed, yet a tad worried. I had just woken up from a strange dream involving Axel, and a giant key. Someone was holding it, then whisked Axel away and I never saw him again. I hate when I have dreams like this. They’re kind of annoying. And I’ve been having a lot of dreams involving a giant key lately. I’m getting mad. Not even a few nights ago I had a dream where I had the crap beaten out of me with this key. I woke up, and I was so mad. I told Axel and Xigbar about the dreams. They just laughed in my face and told me not to worry about it. I guess we’ll see what happens.

After I got out of bed, I entered my bathroom and took a long hot shower. I hadn’t showered for days, as gross as that sounds. I spent about an hour on my hair. I like my hair, so shut up. I spent about a half hour blow drying it, then another half hour styling it. Hair gel is my best friend.

When I finally finished, I slipped on my coat, and found Axel waiting outside my door.

“Ready?”

I nodded. He took my hand, and we left.

2 - the Graceful Assassin

DISCLAIMER: I do not own Kingdom Hearts. Tetsuya Nomura does.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Just letting you all know, I know what the next chapters will contain, but I still don't know where I'm going with this story. Hopefully some kind of plot will develop along the way XD. Guess who Umarali is the True Name of :D I still have one more Nobody after him, and then we shall get to the good stuff, I promise!

I turned my Xanga into a little journal revolving this story, my thoughts, and other things. You can find it at But please, any comments you have regarding the story, please post here and not there. Thank you.

Enjoy!

PART 2

'The Graceful Assassin'

I wanted to take a vessel, but Axel insisted on transporting through what I like to call 'Shadow Doors'. I never really understood what they were, or how they worked, but entering them brought us to a dimension where we could chose where we wanted to end up. We entered this strange realm, and Axel pulled a small piece of paper from his pocket.

"Xemnas gave us coordinates of where he wants us to strike next." He stated. He put out his hand. "So, according to this, we should end up in some city somewhere." I nodded, and we walked through to a new shadow door, and entered. There was a bright light that caused me to squint. It was blinding! I had to cover my eyes. Thankfully, Axel grabbed my other hand, otherwise I would have gotten lost. When the light faded, we were in a thick, green jungle. The trees were massive, and extended to the skies. There was lush grass and beautiful pink, orange, and blue flowers all over. It was extremely hot, and wearing heavy, black leather coats didn't help much.

"Well this is just great!" Axel yelled. "We're in the middle of a freaking jungle!"

"Calm down. Let me see that sheet." But before he heard me, he balled the paper up in his hand, and set it ablaze.

"Axel!" I yelled. "What's the matter with you?! Now, how are we supposed to find this place?!" The heat was already starting to take it's toll. "Forget it. Let's look around. Maybe this place is closer than we think."

We walked for what seemed like days, although it was only a few hours. By this point, we had both taken off our coats. They were too much of a bother to carry, so we left them behind. We could always get new ones. We heard lots of rustling, but it wasn't coming from us, and there were no animals to be seen.

"Just a little further..." Axel mumbled. His voice was becoming faint. I started to realize he was in trouble.

Before I could say anything, he collapsed.

“Axel! Axel!” I cried. I rushed over to him and lifted him up. “Come on, wake up!” He didn’t move. I started to panic. He was burning! What was I supposed to do? I needed to save him, but how? Wait! My sitar! I stood up and concentrated hard. Light blue bubbles began to flow all around me and flowed together in long shape. Then, the bubbles splashed, and popped, revealing my beautiful blue and gold sitar that I love so very much. Grasping it in my hands, I began to play. The humidity began to condense and it started to lightly rain. I knew it! There was so much water in the air, that I was able to make rain! Setting the sitar down, I held out my hands, cupped, and caught a good amount of water. I leaned Axel’s head forward, and began to feed him the water. By this time, it was pouring rain. He was still hot, and I got kind of worried, but then he started to twitch, and stir. He opened his eyes to see me sitting over him.

“What’s going on?” He asked in a weakened voice. “Why is it raining?”

“Are you alright? You scared me half to death!” I shouted. “Next time you think you’re dehydrated, tell me! I can create water, you know!” Axel gave a silly smile.

“I thought I could take the heat,” he laughed. He opened his mouth to say more, but then the rustling came again. This time we both looked to the bushes. Looking harder, I saw two piercing blue eyes behind the massive leaves.

“There!” I shouted. The eyes widened, then disappeared. The rustling turned to shuffling as our visitor was fleeing. “After it!” We both stood and began to chase our unknown visitor. Through the thick grass, and the large trees. It was just a blur of green until we arrived at a small village. In the center of the jungle, no less!

“What is this place?” Axel asked. “Is this the place we were supposed to go?”

“Well, even if it’s not, let’s torch the place anyway.” Axel grinned.

“Bad idea,” I reminded him. “There are trees and plants everywhere. If this place burns, so does everything else. Let’s just ‘look’ first, not ‘kill’ first this time.” Realizing he was defeated, Axel started walking through the bushes. I thought it would be best to befriend these people. We were hot, tired, and needed a good rest. Hopefully whoever lived in this place would let us stay for at least one night. At the sight of us, the villagers quickly entered their huts, and hid away. I didn’t think we were that intimidating, but we were outsiders. The largest hut, I guessed, was where their leader was. Maybe reasoning with him would get us a room for the night.

Two large muscled guards stood at the entrance of the larger hut. Only one of them spoke to us.

“Who are you?”

“We are but simple travelers who have lost our way.” Axel pleaded, innocently. “Please, would you grant us some food, and a place to stay just for one night?” The guard thought on this, then opened the flap to the hut, telling us to enter. It was dark. The only light came from three little candles on the floor. A large, round, bald man sat at the large throne in the center of the little hut. Next to him was a tall young

man with silky, black hair, and piercing blue eyes...

"Axel," I whispered. "That's the one who was watching us!"

"Speak, travelers!" The fat man roared. "What is your business here in our humble village."

"Please," I asked sweetly. "We've been traveling for quite some time. We have run out of food, and water. We would like to ask hospitality of you, just for one night. We'll do anything." The fat man thought on this for quite some time, every so often leaning to the tall man and whispering something. Axel was beginning to get impatient. He began to tap his foot, and cross his arms. I kept having to elbow him to get him to stop.

Finally, the fat man spoke up.

"Guests, I welcome you to our village. We are a peaceful people. You may stay with us for as long as you need. We just kindly ask that you pull your own weight, as we all do." We bowed, and thanked him, then he continued. "My name is Drulo. I am master of this village. This is my son," He pointed to the tall man. "Umarali. He will show you around. Unfortunately, we have no extra huts, so you will stay with Umarali." Umarali stepped forward. He had a kind face, and a serene smile. He led us out of the hut, into the heart of the village.

We were introduced to many people whose names I've long forgotten. They didn't matter. I needed to get Axel alone so we could talk, but if we were to stay in Umarali's hut, then we probably wouldn't have any alone time. I wanted to make sure Axel wasn't about to blow this place to hell.

"...And that's the end of our little tour," Umarali grinned. "I hope you both enjoy your stay." We smiled, and thanked him. He pointed next to the large hut to one just a tad smaller. "That is my home. That is where you will be staying. Please join my father and I for dinner tonight." We smiled, and he turned to leave. I looked at Axel.

"It's really nice here! We should tell Xemnas to move here instead," I chuckled.

"It's nice, but it's got to go." Axel said, monotonous.

"...Excuse me?"

"This whole time I've been getting strong vibes from our buddy Umarali. I think he's the one we're supposed to bring back. And you know what that means."

"Axel, no, these people have done nothing to deserve any kind of brutal death." I protested. "Besides, we can't burn it, remember? The whole jungle will catch."

"You think I care about some lousy jungle?"

"Axel!"

"You can't stop me, Demyx." He began to walk toward Drulo's hut.

“Axel, stop!” I chased after him. “You cannot do this! I won’t let you do this!” I jumped in his way. “At least not until we’ve ate, and rested.” He began to calm down. “I know we’ve only spent one day in that new castle, but when’s the next time we’re going to get a chance to spend a night in a beautiful jungle village together?”

“Damn it, Demyx.” He sighed in defeat. “Fine. We’ll stay tonight. But tomorrow...” I smiled.

“Fine, tomorrow. And we’ll bring Umarali back if his heart is as strong as you think it is.” I agreed. The sun was starting to set, so we entered Drulo’s hut for dinner.

It was a feast! Goose, boar, and all kinds of vegetables I’ve never heard of, and colors I’ve never seen.

“This meal we have presented here,” Drulo began. “This glorious food, we must thank our glorious Gods.” He sat in the head chair. “Enjoy!”

That was probably the most I’ve ever eaten... Ever. And it was the best meal I’ve ever had ever. I somewhat began to feel guilty. Here these people were, giving us an awesome meal, and a place to sleep, and we were going to kill them.

Later that night, Axel and I were in Umarali’s hut. I was tired, but too ashamed to sleep. I didn’t really want to hurt anyone, especially after all the hospitality they gave. Axel and I talked about it for a long time, and then Umarali entered.

“I’ve prepared beds for you,” He smiled. They weren’t really beds, but cots of straw, and animal hides. I didn’t care though. I was tired.

“Thank you, Umarali” I beamed. “We really appreciate all that you and your father are doing for us.” Umarali closed the flap to the hut, then swiftly spun around to face us. His normal smile, and kind eyes, turned to a look of hatred and disgust.

“As you’ve probably realized by now,” he began. “It was I who spied on you earlier today.” This didn’t sound good, although I wasn’t sure why. We hadn’t done anything wrong. “You are creatures of the dark! I saw that black magic you used to make it rain!” I looked to Axel who was just as clueless. Then his look softened. “You must teach me this magic of yours. Although this jungle is humid, water is hard to come by more and more these days. Please, Demyx,” He got on his knees. “I promise not to reveal your evil ways. Please teach me.” Well, this was new! Now, we were evil black mages? This was too funny. I could see Axel was doing his best not to burst out laughing.

“Uhh, Umarali,” I said, trying so very hard not to even smile. “We’re not black mages. And that wasn’t black magic.” I would have continued, but he wouldn’t have understood. He stood up.

“If it wasn’t dark magic, then what was it?” He asked.

“It’s... Hard to explain,” Axel finally chimed in. “It’s best we go to sleep now. We can better explain it tomorrow, after we sleep.” More bullshoot from Axel. He was right, though. We needed the sleep. Umarali finally backed off, and we all passed out.

I just couldn't sleep. I tried to, but I woke up in frenzy. Although I don't feel, sometimes I believe I still have a human conscience. Xigbar says it's because I haven't given up all my humanity, or something like that. He always says that I haven't been a Nobody for very long. He's always telling me that over time, I'll stop feeling things like guilt.

And I was guilty. A whole generation of people lived here, and today is their day of reckoning. Was it the guilt that kept me awake that night? Maybe. I don't really know for sure. It could also be the dreams. They were vibrant that night. So real, and I swore I was dead. It was an awful feeling. It was like seeing into the future. Was that how I was destined to die? At the hands of a merciless, key-wielding killer? And why would he take Axel? Was he going to kill the others? I had decided right then I was to tell Xemnas, privately, about these dreams. He'd be the least likely to poke fun, and criticize me. He'd also try to give advice, or his opinion on the meanings. Yes, Xemnas would know.

I left the hut and walked past the village boundaries. It was almost sunrise. It had been too long since I saw the sun rise. I remember it being a beautiful, and awesome sight. Unfortunately I knew that after this peaceful sunrise would come the blazing fires that burnt this poor place to the ground. Didn't let it bother me, though. I was too entranced by the sun lighting up the morning sky.

That's when I heard it. The first of the screams. Axel was awake. I feared for these people, yet did nothing to help. I just calmly walked back to the hut. Drulo's was the first to be set ablaze. The fat man was no where to be seen, so I figured he was dead already. People screaming, burning to death, babies crying. Chaos. And I saw Axel. Axel with his bright red chakram in each hand.

"Come on, Dem, join the fun!" He shouted in a crazed voice. Then he proceeded to slash, and burn. I couldn't move. I wasn't afraid, but I was. I wanted to help these people, but I couldn't, and I wanted to join Axel, but I couldn't. I was useless.

Suddenly, I felt tugging on my legs, and before I knew it, I was on the ground. Pinning me down was none other than Umarali. And he was pissed.

"How could you!" He yelled in my face. "That man, that MONSTER! Why don't you stop him? We trusted you! And now.." He let me up. "Now it's all gone." And he was right. Nothing but flames now stood where the village once was. Lifeless bodies where everywhere, scorched, and smoldering. From the smoke, Axel's silhouette was seen, marching toward us.

"You men are demons!" Umarali screamed. "You are not men!"

"No," Axel grinned, smoke clearing. "We are Nobodies. We are the shadows of men we once were. Empty shells." A hoard of Heartless materialized at his feet. "And so are you." Before he could protest, the Heartless were attacking, and had him down. I couldn't watch. They were consuming his heart. I just could do nothing but look away. When the Heartless dispersed, I saw that Axel was right in his instincts. Umarali indeed had a strong heart, and now, he was a Nobody.

The man out cold was no longer the black-haired beauty, but a light skinned man with mauve locks. It was a most drastic change. I couldn't believe what I saw. And Axel, of course, said it was normal.

“Let’s get out of here,” I pleaded. I didn’t want to be in the steamy jungle any longer. The pain seemed to great, even though there was no pain at all. Axel grabbed the body, and we left the ruins of the village.

We’re not bad people, although by all that’s happened so far, you probably think otherwise. We’ve been rejected by the light, and the darkness. We walk between, you could say. We are not good nor evil. We just are. We do what we think is right whether it really is good or bad. The events of that day made me realize that I was definitely a good person when I was whole. My conscience was screaming my name the whole time, or so I thought. I still felt the pain of guilt. And it hurt.

“Are we evil?” I asked after a few minutes.

“Evil? Who knows. We just do what Xemnas tells us to.”

“But what if he’s evil?”

“He’s not evil. He’s a great guy, and a wonderful leader.”

“But what if this is wrong? I feel like this is wrong!”

“Xigbar is right, you need to let go of your conscience.”

“But I can’t! I tried to think differently, but I can’t. It hurts too much. Why can’t I rid myself of this guilt?” We had stopped walking. Axel had placed Umarali’s lifeless body on the ground of the Realm.

“Demyx, you’ve been acting so weird lately. Is everything okay?” No, I wanted to say, I’m not okay. I haven’t been lately. Let’s just leave the Organization. This isn’t right. I can feel it in that empty gap in my chest. I had said nothing. There was a terrible silence between us, and I couldn’t bear it.

“It’s nothing,” I said finally, in a hushed tone. “Let’s just get back to the castle.” Axel sighed, nodded, and we were on our way once more. We entered the Shadow Door that led to our new home.

Why was I feeling so emotional? God, I do this every time! Of course I’m not like that now, but I was a whiny dog. Everyone always told me that, and I never believed them, but I sure do now.

My humanity. I felt like I’d never lose it. I felt like I’d never get over these simple feelings that my body pretended to feel. I hated it. I wanted to be indifferent, and apathetic. I didn’t want to feel anymore.

Oh, and by the way, incase you were wondering, dear reader, we did get lost that day. We weren’t supposed to attack a village. We were really supposed to find a city. I think Axel got the coordinates wrong, not like I’d be able to check since he destroyed them. And this proves to be a big issue, but I’ll discuss this much later.

When we arrived at the castle, we were greeted by Vexen, Xaldin, and Xigbar. They saw that we had accomplished our mission, and hurried to inform Xemnas. I had a bad feeling about all of this, but I didn’t let it get to me. I was starting to learn to shrug it off. Of course, the one time I shrug of a bad feeling, it comes back to bite me in the @\$\$.

Xemnas had appeared and we presented Umarali's body to him. He said nothing. I could sense the confusion in his expression. Something was wrong, and I had a feeling it was our fault.

"This is not the heart I sensed when I sent you two out." Xemnas said, lowly. "Where did you find this man?"

"Well, sir," Axel spoke timidly. "We got a little lost, and we stumbled across a small village. This was the only man to survive." Xemnas was still not pleased.

"Well, I suppose if his heart was strong enough, then he shall join us, too. Did you happen to catch his name?"

"His name was Umarali. He was the prince of the village."

"There is something amiss here, but we shall not let it ruin our plans. I shall present him when he awakens." He took the body, and carried him away.

"Axel..." I had that bad feeling again. I tried to shrug it off, but this time it only got worse. "What do you think he meant, 'amiss'? Does it really matter that much if we get someone different than who we wanted?"

"Xemnas is a perfectionist." Axel almost laughed. "He chose us because he felt that we were perfect beings. Many people have strong hearts, but are not truly 'perfect' or balanced. Umarali's heart could have been out of balance. You saw that look he gave us when he thought we used magic. He was afraid, yet he wanted it so bad." I nodded.

"I was told that when a darkened heart is released, the nobody becomes a vile creature" Xigbar cut in. "A monster almost. They don't keep their original, human shape. Xemnas doesn't want to create monsters, at least, not yet. Since that guy you brought in still was human, I guess it's not all that bad."

"But what if he's human now, but becomes a monster later!" I cried. Now, I knew why Xemnas was cautious.

"It doesn't work that way, kid. Yeah, we can be tainted by darkness, but it's not likely. The light banished us, and the darkness has no heart to enter. It'll turn out okay. Xemnas is just paranoid."

Oh crap, I forgot to mention something. Xemnas senses the strong hearts. He doesn't know exactly where it comes from, but he tries his best to give us a close estimate. In the year I've known him, he seemed very careful, and planned everything out. Everything had to be perfect, and he wanted us all to be safe. We weren't even sure if we could die, but he didn't want to take any chances.

Nowadays, it's as if he's the complete opposite of what he was. He's willing to sacrifice us all just to get what he wants. And he has. And those monsters Xigbar talked about? Yeah well there's thousands of them now. And they're just as dangerous as the Heartless. It proved to me that as time goes on for us, we lose our human selves more and more. Xemnas is a perfect example. But before I go into details about the present, I must finish telling you of the past.

3 - Evil?

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Thesaurus(dot)Com is my best friend :D

DISCLAIMER: I do not own Organization XIII

I turned my Xanga into a little journal revolving this story, my thoughts, and other things. You can find it at But please, any comments you have regarding the story, please post here and not there. Thank you.

PART 3
'Evil?'

Vexen turned away from us. He started mumbling something that was inaudible to me, but I did see Axel roll his eyes.

"Come now, old man" he grinned. "What's the worst that can happen?"

"I'm not mad about that," Vexen said, almost turning around. "We grow. The madness that started with six is now at eleven."

"Madness? What are you talking about."

"Us, you fool! This group of organized Nobodies that we are here. Eleven members. How many more atrocities is that madman going to generate!?" He stomped his right foot, then turned to face Axel. "I love Xemnas, I really do, but I think we are taking this too far. He has told no one what his true plans are. Why does he need more of us? What is he thinking? We should have stopped after six, no. We should have stopped before this ever happened. We should have never gone against Master Ansem's wishes!"

Vexen was known for his mini tantrums. If going by our true ages, he was the eldest of us all. He was one of the original scientists who created Nobodies. He seemed to me to be the only one who resented the change. This is all what I heard from Xigbar, so some of this may be stretched a bit from the truth.

The original six scientists were led by a man named Xehanort, the man who Xemnas is a Nobody of. They were all assistant scientists under this apparent scientific genius named Ansem the Wise. Xehanort wanted to experiment on people's hearts, and the darkness, but Ansem the Wise forbid it. Xehanort, and the other assistants began the experiments without the wise Ansem's knowledge. If Ansem would have known, he would have ended it all, probably arrested Xehanort for conducting illegal experiments, and then none of us would have ever been. We would still have our hearts, and would have lived normal lives.

Zexion told me that one scientist spoke out against Xehanort. He pleaded with him to make him stop, but he wouldn't listen. He tried to talk to Ansem about it, but he was too late. Xehanort knew he'd go to their superior, and took them both as his hostages. The scientist who spoke out was the first to fall victim

to the Heartless that Xehanort generated from the darkness. Zexion didn't ever tell me who the scientist who spoke out was, but I assumed it was Vexen. We don't know what happened to Ansem the Wise. Xemnas does not believe he became a Heartless, and he definitely does not have a Nobody. I wish I knew more about these stories people tell me than just the bare facts, but the only way to do that is to talk to Xemnas about it and I have a feeling that he probably wouldn't welcome my curiosity.

We said nothing. Vexen was furious, but we all assumed he'd get over it. He always did.

"You amateurs." He barked. "You had no idea what you were getting into, but we did! We had the choice. And we condemned ourselves to Hell. Xemnas didn't give you a choice. He just took you from your lives and made you monsters against your will."

"Vexen... We like what we've become," I tried to argue. "We are stronger, and faster, and have more power than we could ever dream of. And we owe that thanks to Xemnas. Without him, we would never be."

"That's what I'm saying!" He fired back. "Without him, none of us would be. And the worlds would be a better place without us! We are monstrous creatures of nothingness. We shouldn't exist. Every Nobody that our ludicrous lord creates must break some kind of law somewhere!" He was starting to lose himself. Any moment now, I was half expecting Xemnas to appear and slap some sense into him. I have to say right now that I agree with everything Vexen said, I just didn't dare say it myself. It's treason, you could say.

"He should give them a choice..." He spoke softly. "Their true selves would not want this for their bodies. This is madness..." He trailed off, and walked away.

"He gets crazier and crazier by the day," Xigbar noted. "It's gonna be a damn shame when he gets locked up for eternity." He walked to my side. "What's up kid?"

"I really don't like what Vexen said," I deemed. "It bothers me. I mean, after all you've told me about everything..." I looked to Axel who just sighed and looked away. "Xigbar, are we evil?" I was expecting exactly this:

"Hah!" Xigbar shouted. "Evil, of course not! Why would you ever think that?"

"Because we kill people for no reason!" I yelled back. "It's wrong isn't it?"

"Nope! Perfectly normal." We had a good laugh, then got over the topic.'

But no, that's not how it went. For once, Xigbar really stopped and thought about my question. If there's one thing for him to be serious about, I'm glad it's this.

"Evil? Hmm... I actually never really thought about it. We do seem to kill a lot of people... But that's because Xemnas orders us to."

"From what I've gathered from your stories, Xehanort seemed pretty nuts. Do you think Xemnas is the same?"

“Who can be sure? I don’t know if we’re evil or not, but one thing’s for sure.”

“What’s that?”

“We’re freaking amazing at what we do!” Good ol’ Xigbar. Before we could continue, Axel grabbed my arm.

“C’mon, Demyx, let’s go spar... or something.” Being pulled away, I waved to Xigbar, whose smile faded at the sight of Axel. Pulling me down the hall way, Axel seemed mad about something.

“Axel, let go,” I whined. “What’s the matter?”

“Xigbar’s the matter.” He grunted.

“What do you have against Xigbar?”

“What do you have for Xigbar?”

“What?”

“Exactly.”

“Axel.” I pulled back, forcing us to stop. Now I was getting mad.

“I don’t like the way he talks to you.”

“Do I sense a hint of jealousy?” I cocked an eyebrow.

“It’s not a laughing matter, Demyx. I’m quite serious.”

“You’re unbelievable!” I threw my hands up. “This is like a bad Lifetime movie!” Frustrated with it all, I started to walk back. “Xigbar’s my friend. It’s not like I’m going to go run off with him and completely forget about you. I don’t plan to succumb to his wants. Yeah we know, he wants me, but he’s not going to get me, so get over yourself, and chill the frack out.” When Axel didn’t say anything, I knew it was my cue to leave. And I did. And It felt AMAZING. It was my first time really standing up for myself, and I think I did a good job. Axel was way to worried about me ‘leaving him’. Why wasn’t I worried about him ‘leaving me’? Maybe I didn’t think he would. Maybe I thought I could live without him. I never really thought about it, actually, so who really knows?

I came back to see Xigbar yelling up a storm to Xaldin, who I could tell didn’t give a shoot. He looked over to me.

“Well, what the hell was that about?!” Xigbar howled. I shrugged my shoulders. I didn’t want to talk about it.

“Just leave it alone...”

“No, I’m pissed off!!” He stomped over to me. “Who the hell does he think he is? Does he think he controls you?! That’s fracked up!”

“Xigbar please calm-”

“That jerk! Ugh!! I’m gonna go find him and we’re gonna have a little chat.” At this point, it was nearly useless to talk him out of it.

“Xigbar-”

“That bastard .Who does he think he is.”

“Xigbar, I-”

“He doesn’t own you! You make your own desicions!”

“Xigbar-”

“Man, if I wouldn’t get in trouble I’d-”

“XIGBAR!!”

“WHA-AT!?”

“SHUT UP!” Startled, he finally shut his mouth. Now it was my turn. “You’re right. He doesn’t own me, and he knows it. He’s just afraid. He’ll get over it. I already set things straight. Now let’s put all this behind us, and go meet our new member.”

Wait a sec. Pause, rewind. “I already set things straight. Now let’s put all this behind us, and go meet our new member.” Oh noes! Could that be me taking charge? You damn right it is. Too bad that didn’t really happen. I can only stand up for myself once a month, sorry guys. Here’s how that really went.

“XIGBAR!!”

“WHA-AT!?”

“SHUT UP!” He stared blankly at me. “It’s not worth getting upset over...”

“To hell with that! I’m about to shove one of Xaldin’s lances up his tight @\$\$!”

“HEY! Leave me out of this!” Xaldin called from the corner.

“Gentlemen, please join us on the roof.” Saix called. Startled the crap out of me. It was finally time to meet the newest abomination-I-mean-member. We were the last ones to arrive. I always hated going on the roof. For starters, it was because we were in this unnecessarily large castle. It towered over the abandoned city below. Also, it was kind of creepy because there was no sky, just swirling shadows, and

dark purple clouds. No sun, no moon. Just nothingness. Kinda creepy. Xemnas stood by the balcony with what appeared to be Umarali's Nobody. He was tall and elegant, like Xemnas, and his hair was aloof and fluffy. In some light it looked pink, but it was really a reddish-brown. Luxord was even present. He was still sort of training, and honing his battle skills. Our new friend here would probably join him soon.

"Now that everyone has arrived," Xemnas smirked. "I introduce you all to Number Eleven, Marluxia." How...Feminine. Matched his hair, I suppose. "Marluxia here controls the element of Flowers."

Pause. Rewind. "Marluxia here controls the element of Flowers." Flowers. Don't tell me you're not laughing. Come on, flowers! Marluxia controls flowers! Him and his pink hair! That just about did it for me. I had to turn around so they didn't see me laughing. I couldn't even look at Axel or Xigbar, although I really wanted to, to see their reactions. When I had finally regained my composure, I realized neither one of them was laughing. Were they still pissed off from before?

We did our introductions, like we did for Luxord. Xemnas didn't have a room for either of them prepared, apparently. I had no idea of this, but Luxord was currently sharing a room with Xaldin. Poor guy. And now they needed Marluxia to room with someone for at least a week. Boy, did I feel bad for the sucker that ended up with a roommate.

"Demyx," Xemnas called. shoot. "Demyx, would you be so kind as to have Marluxia stay with you for a few days?"

"Uhh, Sure, why not?"

"Splendid!"

Well this was great. I had a jealous 'boyfriend', a horny best friend, and now a flaming roommate. This day was getting better and better by the minute! Actually, I guess that's how I felt at the time, but living with Marluxia for a week wasn't so bad. He didn't talk much, and kind of kept to himself. I figured he was shy. I tried to talk to him, but he would just kind of smile and nod, not really listening. He took a great interest in Zexion, though. Zexion, of course, wanted nothing to do with him. The only reason he would stop by was to see me. Me and him were kind of close. We were just buddies. It was a different kind of relationship than with Axel or Xigbar. We were just friends. It came to the point where Zexion didn't feel comfortable visiting me in my room. So, I had a chat with Marluxia.

"Hey, buddy, can I talk to you for a sec?"

"Sure!" He beamed. He was starting to get over his shyness. Personally, I wished he was still shy.

"Well, I've noticed you've taken a liking to Zexion."

"Oh you have? I think he's just a great guy. You guys are so close! I wish I had a close friend."

"You'll make close friends. And the friends you make here, are here forever. We all stick together. Do you think you could do me a favor?"

“Sure, Demie, anything!” Oh, the nicknames. Pretty self explanatory.

“Ehrm... Do you think you could back off of Zex for a while? He’s kind of uncomfortable around you.”

“Do you think he’s afraid of me?”

“I don’t know, I haven’t asked him. Just tone it down a little, ‘kay?” He solemnly nodded. I could sense his sadness.

“Oh, Demie. I forgot to tell you. Xemnas said he feels good leadership skills in me. He wants me to stay with him for a while, so I’ll be moving out tomorrow afternoon.”

“Leadership skills?”

“I don’t know,” he shrugged. Then he winked. “But you’ll be welcome in my room any time.” I half smiled, half groaned.

Then there was a knock at the door. I was thanking the space around me for an interruption. It was Axel.

“Oh, thank you Axel!” I sighed, falling into his arms. “Glad you’re here.”

“Well damn, I see that.” He laughed. He waved to Marluxia.

“Hiya, Axel!” Marluxia beamed. I motioned to the corridor, and we began to walk.

“He’s kind of scary.” Axel remarked. I could only chuckle.

“He means well.”

“Demyx, I had a talk with Xigbar.” The smile fell right off my face and my step halted.

“What?”

“No, don’t worry. We worked everything out. It’s okay. He promised he would leave you alone.”

“Axel, he’s my friend!”

“No, you misunderstand. I mean he’ll stop trying to take you from me. I told him how I felt about you, and he accepts it.” He gave a ‘thumbs-up’. “We’re cool now.”

“Oh good.” I was relieved. “I always kind of hoped the three of us could just hang out and not have any kind of conflict.”

“Actually, we were gonna go out tonight. The three of us. That is, if you want to join. We were gonna go find a bar, and drink the night away.”

“Oh, I’m so game!” He lifted my hand to his mouth, and softly kissed my glove. I blushed, then he took

my arm, and led me to Xigbar's room. He knocked, and said, "You ready?" The door opened in a fury.

"Ready when you are!"

4 - Hung Over

DISCLAIMER: I don't own the characters, blah blah blah, Tetsuya Nomura does, blah blah blah. You get the idea.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Well, this chapter got off to a silly start, but it gets pretty important toward the end. Originally, I just wanted to have a kind of 'filler' chapter where I could do stupid stuff and have it be funny. Then I figured "hey good opportunity for plot development-sort-of!" So here you go.

I turned my Xanga into a little journal revolving this story, my thoughts, and other things. You can find it at [But please, any comments you have regarding the story, please post here and not there. Thank you.](#)

PART 4

'Hung Over'

The next morning, I felt like my head had been severed by a dulled knife, and put on a stick for all to poke and prod. I had no memory of the events that took place the night before, nor did I really know where I was until I sat up. Sitting up was a bad idea, and my head throbbed more with each movement. I tried to look around the dark room. It wasn't my room; that I knew for sure. I tried to stand, but it made me nauseous, so I lay back down on the bed.

"Ughh," I groaned. "What happened last night?" I was alone in the room, so no one answered. At least, I thought I was alone. Soon I heard groaning coming from under me.

"Ahhrrgh."

"Who's there?" I whined. I couldn't talk too loudly. My own voice made me sick.

"What the fu-uck..." the voice groaned. I couldn't recognize it. I looked to see where it was coming from, but I saw no one in the shadows. Then I realized it was under me. As much as I dreaded it, I leaned over and poked my head upside down, under the bed. I saw red hair, a black coat, and a very sick Axel.

"Glad I'm not the only one hung over," I sighed, somewhat relieved.

"Yeah, Demyx, frack you." He said back. I sat back up on the bed. Well that solved one problem. But where was Xigbar?

As if on cue, the bathroom door opened wide. Thick, white steam came pouring out of the gap in the wall. A silhouette of a man came walking through the fog. When the steam cleared, there stood Xigbar. Naked. Well, he had a towel, but that was it. His lengthy, black and grey hair was down, and sopping. I saw all the scars and scratches all over his toned body. And I finally saw his right eye. I think I forgot to mention that Xigbar wore a black eye patch over his right eye. Like I said, not good at story-telling. I always leave out important details. Anyway, his right eye was sealed shut with a small scar running over it. I was tempted to ask, but I figured it was best to leave that for another time.

“Can I help you?” He asked me, sarcastically. I realized I was staring.

“Nngh” I groaned some more. “Why are we in your room?” As I saw him begin to smile, I began to notice a small, sharp pain in my backside. My eyes widened and my jaw dropped. I started to panic.

“Oh god,” I cried. “Please tell me we didn’t!” Then he laughed. I panicked more “Oh god! We did, didn’t we?!” Horrified with myself, I crawled under the blanket.

“Demyx, kid, chill.” Xigbar smirked. He couldn’t control his laughter. “It’s not what you think!”

“Is that why you wanted me drunk last night?!”

“Dem, listen to me! You fell last night. At the bar. You and Axel tumbled down the stairs. I had to carry you BOTH back here. Both your doors were locked so I brought you all the way over here. Let me tell you though, your reaction right now; priceless. Times I wish I had a camera, dude.” I felt my aching head get hot. I was blushing bad.

“One more question,” I asked, laying back down. “Why is Axel under the bed?”

“..Wait he’s still here? He was definitely on the bed before.” We heard a groan, then we both started laughing. Xigbar laughed so hard his towel started to loosen.

“Whoops” He said, mildly embarrassed. “Gotta go get dressed. Make yourselves at home.” He hopped back into the bathroom and shut the door. I lay back down on the bed. My head was killing me, but I couldn’t help but smile. I closed my eyes and tried to drift back into sleep...

A hand grabbed my ankle. I jumped so high I almost hit the ceiling. I also happened to screech like a little girl. Of course, it was Axel. He was crawling out from under the bed.

“DON’T DO THAT!” I shouted.

“Please don’t yell,” Axel complained. He crawled onto the bed, and lay next to me.

“What happened last night?” I asked. Maybe he’d remember more than me.

“I remember loud music,” he said. “and lights. And you and Xigbar. We were dancing I think. Then all I remember is falling. We were leaving, and Xigbar went ahead to make sure no one saw us. I think we both tried to go down the stairs together and we tripped over each other. Then the next thing I knew, I was on my face, and you were on top of me.”

“Jeez, I don’t remember any of that. Did I drink more than you?”

“Christ, Demyx you were wasted! I’m surprised you remember anything at all, and you’re not huddled over the toilet! You were gone way before I was.” I wasn’t glad to hear that, although it sure explained a lot.

Xigbar finally came out of the bathroom. He hadn't changed much except that he was wearing black pants, his eye patch, and his hair was dry. He grabbed a hair tie from his computer desk, and tied it back.

"Good morning, Axel," he smiled. I don't think he was hung over at all.

"Mugh," Axel whined. "How come you're so cheerful?"

"Because between the two of you, more alcohol was consumed than I've ever drank in my entire life time, and I'm a drunken idiot!" More laughter.

"Grr do you have to laugh so loud?" I complained.

"Yes, I do" he grinned big. "Today's gonna be so much fun!"

"Go away," Axel moaned, burying his head in the pillow.

"I would except you two are currently occupying my bed." Axel whipped his head back, flames in his eyes.

"I am NOT moving until I FEEL BETTER!" He shouted. Xigbar sighed.

"Come on, Demyx, let's go cure this nasty hangover." I stood up, the world was spinning. I almost lost my balance, but Xigbar grabbed me. He walked me to the kitchen. Saix was there, drinking coffee. He was wearing a light blue robe that matched his hair, which was messier than usual.

"Good morning, Saix!" Xigbar beamed. "And how are you this fine morning?"

"Not as good as you, I see," he mumbled. That was probably the most I've ever heard Saix speak in my presence. He soon finished his cup and grabbed the pot, and walked out. I guessed he was bringing it to Xemnas. Saix was like his personal servant. Although Saix always grunted, or sighed, he always did what Xemnas told him. I sense blackmail. Or maybe Saix WAS the Nobody of a werewolf. I really obedient werewolf.

Xigbar began to file through the cabinets tossing almost everything out of them. He grabbed a few bottles, then a giant glass and filled it with ice and water. He gave me the bottles. They read 'multi-vitamins', 'dura-lax', and 'Xigbar's Special Hangover Medicine'. I could understand the vitamins, and maybe his hangover stuff, but...

"What's the Dura-Lax for?" I asked. There was no way I was about to take a laxative.

"Chill, little dude, it's not for you." He answered in a hushed voice. Probably going to pull another prank. I also noticed he grabbed a huge bucket and filled that with ice water too.

"Dare I ask what the bucket is for?"

"You'll see," He simply said. I knew that tone, though. He asked me to take the vitamins and drink the

water.

“What’s in the other bottle?”

“My super secret hangover remedy! I already took it this morning, and look at me now!” I looked inside the bottle. The pills inside were humongous! And they didn’t really look safe.

“Are you sure?” I asked. Maybe there was another way.

“They work wonders. I only give them to people I like.” He winked.

“Didn’t you tell Axel you’d stop that?”

“Speaking of Axel,” he said, changing the subject. “If you want to see a good show, take the pills, then join me in my bedroom.” And he left. I was left with vitamins, laxatives, and these weird pills that I KNOW had to be illegal somewhere. Might as well give it a try.

I took two of the multi vitamins, swallowed them, then took one of Xigbar’s. Before I put it in my mouth I examined it carefully. I was scared. Even though he used to be a scientist, I still don’t trust the pill. But I took it anyway. Down it went, and I washed it down with ice water. The cold water made my head throb. As soon as the pill was down, my world began to spin. Everything in the kitchen became distorted, and I lost my balance. I’m pretty sure I fell onto the table, knocking it over. Everything began to hurt. My head, my chest, my arms, legs, everything. Things were still spinning, and then I blacked out. I don’t know how long I was out, but when I woke up, I was still on the kitchen floor. The table was knocked over, and the pill bottles had spilled. The glass of water was shattered all over the floor. What had happened was not a dream. I stood up, and surprisingly I was fine. No bruises, no cuts, no throbbing headache. Whatever he gave me did the trick. I walked toward the door, then I remembered I knocked everything over. I turned around to begin to clean up when I saw that everything was in order. No broken glass, no spilled pills, no flipped table. And my hangover was gone.

I stumbled into Xigbar’s bedroom to see him suffocating Axel under the ice water in the bucket.

“WHAT THE frack ARE YOU DOING?!” I screamed, charging at him. He lifted Axel’s head out of the water, and braced himself for my attack. I landed on top of him.

“First you try to kill me, now Axel?! You’re a sick man!”

“Demyx, calm down! I was giving Axel a hangover treatment.” I looked over to Axel who was gasping for air.

“Damn, that really works!” He shouted. I was confused. I got off of Xigbar and waited for an explanation.

“The ice water treatment.” He stated in a teacher-like voice. “A very common way to rid yourself of a hangover. You keep the alcoholic under the water until they have sense enough to jerk their head up. Plus, the cold water will tone down the headache. It hurts, but it works!”

“Well... Okay, but what the hell was that stuff you gave me?! I thought I was going to die!”

“Isn’t it great? I invented it! It’s a special hallucinogen drug that takes your mind off the pain. It only really works in the first few minutes. After that, not only is the hangover gone, but you’re not really trippin’ out either. I’m a genius.”

“You gave me drugs?! I could get addicted!”

“It’s not an addictive drug. I told you, I invented it.” I was very confused, and flustered. Although I ached no more, thanks to Xigbar’s drug, I still wanted to just go to my room and sleep.

“Well, I guess, thanks, Xiggy,” Axel smiled.

“No problem,” Xigbar said back.

“We’ll see you later,” I told him. And then Axel and I left. We had to get back to our side of the castle, and we weren’t entirely sure how to do that.

“Let’s go on an adventure!” Axel grinned. I smiled back, and we walked down the hall. We soon heard noises coming from Xemnas’ room. Noises I don’t even wish to describe. Sounds I thought I’d never have to hear. Axel heard it too. We soon crept up to the door and placed our ears against it. There was definitely two people in there. We heard voices, and what sounded like shuffling.

“Marluxia, do it now! Let me have it!”

“No! I’m not ready yet!”

“Then I’ll make you ready!”

“No, please-”

“Yes!”

“Ohh! Ahh!”

“I don’t think you can handle this!”

“No, I’m ready!” Then we heard Marluxia scream.

“Oh goddamn it, Marluxia. You got that shoot everywhere! It’s all over me!” I nodded at Axel, and he slowly opened the door. We weren’t too sure what we were going to find. And then as the door creaked open, there they were, stark naked, on Xemnas’ bed. Looking away in disgust, I regret ever opening that door.

Just kidding. That’s just what was going through my head at the time. What I was expecting to see. Good thing my imagination is wilder than real life. Really good thing. Turns out that when we opened the doors, both Axel and I had a sneezing fit, and I’ll tell you why.

As soon as the door opened, pink and orange pollen flew through the doors. The stuff was everywhere! We could barely see the two figures standing in the haze. Marluxia was the first one I could see clearly. He was wielding a large pink and green scythe. He was breathing pretty heavily. He looked over at us and waved, like he always did.

“Hey, Demie!!”

The next figure I saw was Xemnas. He was hunched over on one knee, also breathing heavily. The pollen finally settled, and there were little, pink flower petals everywhere, mostly surrounding Marluxia.

“Very good,” Xemnas stated. “You’re learning fast. If you keep advancing at this pace, I shall definitely have a place for you in our next project.” Marluxia bowed.

“Thank you, Master Xemnas” He said, and started to walk toward us. “Whatcha guys doin’?”

“We were trying to find a way back to the other side of the castle.” I said. “We’ve lived here only a few days. We don’t really know our way around.”

“Well, you don’t expect me to know, do you?” Marluxia snickered.

“It’s not like we were asking you,” Axel cut in.

“Aw, Axel, don’t be like that.”

“I’m out of here.” Axel left the room. Xemnas walked over to us.

“I trust you two are doing well,” He smiled at me. Xemnas always had a calming aura about him. When he was near, you just knew everything wrong would be set right, and when he spoke, it was like a confirmation.

“Yes, sir.” I smiled back. “We’re just a little lost.”

“Well, you should hopefully learn your way before your next assignment. You’ll have plenty of time. Vexen, Zexion, and I are conducting a series of experiments on Heartless. It should take some time.”

“More experiments?”

“We want to see if we can somehow alter ourselves with the help of the Heartless.”

“Alter?”

“It is hard to explain, young Demyx.”

“Oh, well, I’m sure whatever you guys do will help us. We need to get going. Have a great rest of the day!” I smiled, and waved, and left. I found Axel outside the room. We closed the door, keeping it open just a crack. We began to walk away, when Xemnas started talking again, this time to Marluxia. We couldn’t pass up this opportunity to eavesdrop again.

“You didn’t mention the Key Bearer.” Marluxia noted.

“I felt no need. Besides, he’s not hurting us, he’s greatly helping us. For every Heartless he slays, the more hearts we gain. I will explain my plans to the rest of them when the time is right. ” They had stopped talking, and were probably going to leave. We quickly raced to the end of the hall so we wouldn’t be seen.

“What do you think he meant by ‘for every Heartless he slays, the more hearts we gain.’?” Axel whispered to me.

“I don’t know. Who’s this ‘Key Bearer’ person they were talking about?” I asked back.

“No clue. Let’s get out of here.”

He took my hand and we scurried off into the depths of the corridor.

5 - Past Truths, and Number Twelve

DISCLAIMER: Must I? Ugh, fine. I do not own Xemnas (Princess Mansex), Xigbar (Xiggy the Pirate), Xaldin (Sideburns of DOOM), Vexen (Hojo's defect brother), Lexaeus (Steroid Man), Zexion (Emo Kid), Saix (Fluffy McRAWR), Axel (Mr. BURN EVERYTHING), Demyx (Mullet of Sexiness), Luxord (Strip Poker Champion of the Universe), Marluxia (Flower Power!), or Larxene (PMS 24/7!). I do, however own the names Rudol, Umarali, and Relena.

I turned my Xanga into a little journal revolving this story, my thoughts, and other things. You can find it at [But please, any comments you have regarding the story, please post here and not there. Thank you.](#)

PART 5

'Past Truths, and Number Twelve'

A few months passed before anything really exciting happened. About 5 months, to be exact. Xemnas, Xigbar, Xaldin, Vexen, Lexaeus, and Zexion locked themselves in their laboratory every day to do more weird experiments on the Heartless. We rarely saw them emerge from the murky lab. I only saw Xigbar about once every few weeks. So really, Axel and I had the castle to ourselves. Saix, Luxord, and Marluxia pretty much just kept to themselves in their respective rooms. Once in a while, Luxord would call a group game of Strip Poker, but that wasn't too often. It was usually me or Marluxia who'd end up naked in the end. Luxord cheated somehow, and Axel was just lucky.

It also gave Axel and I more time to get close. We weren't really able to be together with all the missions, and activities Xemnas had us do, and Xigbar was always trying to get between us. We started sleeping in the same room, usually mine. We'd sit at my window every night, and gaze into the cloudless, starless, nothingness that was our sky. It was so soothing to just watch the shadows swirl around in the air. Although I didn't have a heart, I felt like being with him gave me the heart I needed. It's hard to explain. I felt completed around him. He made me feel like I still had a heart and I loved every second of it.

During this time, Axel and I would go on mini adventures to other worlds. We had nothing better to do, so we thought, 'why not?' We'd leave, and be gone for days at a time. No, we didn't kill anyone this time. We just sort of visited, saw how the people were living their lives, and move on. We couldn't live, so it was fun to see other people live. Our lives were anything but normal, so we often forgot what it was like to be normal. Axel and I agreed that if and when we got our hearts back, we would definitely live together. I told him we should get a big house, and have Xigbar and Zexion live with us, too. He said he'd think about it. He said as long as we got away from Saix, we'd be golden.

So, let's speed up to 5 months later. We were lounging on the couch, Axel and I, just taking a little nap. I was on top of him, and he had his arms wrapped around my waist. We heard a loud 'BANG!', then a 'FOOM!', 'CRASH!' something glass broke, and finally, 'XIGBAR, WHAT THE HELL!?' The vents were pouring smoke into every inch of the castle. The labs were in the basement, so it all rose to where we were pretty fast. We jerked awake, and tumbled off the couch at the loud noises.

“What the hell just happened?” Axel groaned, rubbing his eyes.

“I’m not sure, but it involves explosions, and Xigbar.” I replied. He rolled his eyes, and we both stood up. We raced down the corridors, down the stairs, down, down, down, to the main floor of the castle. We quickly stopped to catch our breaths when we saw Saïx, and Marluxia running towards us. We looked at each other then we all looked at the door leading to the stairs that led to the lab.

“Well, it’s not going to open itself,” Marluxia noted, going for the knob. Before he could turn it, the door opened. It was Xaldin, white lab coat covered in dust, and debris, hunched over, coughing. Smoke rose from the door, flowing toward us. Xaldin looked up in shock, seeing us all there.

“Leave!” he shouted. “Get out of here now! We have a slight problem down below.”

“Then we should help,” Marluxia cried. “We don’t want anyone getting hurt.”

“If you want to help, go ahead.” He gestured to the stairs. I looked at Marluxia, who nodded. I wanted to help, too. We both ran to the door. He went down first. I looked to Axel, who nodded, and we descended down the stairs as quickly as possible, trying hard not to breathe in the smoke. Whatever happened, we’ll have to ask about later.

When we got to the labs, I saw how really huge it was. I had never really been down there. It was the entire basement of the castle. And the castle was unnaturally large. Nothing was on fire, so we couldn’t see where the smoke was coming from. Then we started hearing arguing. We ran over to where we heard the voices. It was Xemnas and Xigbar. Xemnas was obviously scolding him for something. And Xigbar was using his, ‘It’s not my fault, don’t blame me!’ tone.

“Why’d you have to do that!?”

“I didn’t do anything!!”

“You ruined the whole experiment!”

“It was an accident!!”

“YOU SHOT THE TEST TUBES!”

“I WAS BORED!”

“GUYS!” I screamed. “What the hell happened?” It was then I felt slithering across my leather boots. I felt lots of movement at my feet, and it was giving me chills. I looked down to see little black and white creatures. They didn’t look solid, and they moved around like liquid. They had glowing yellow eyes, but they weren’t Heartless. I don’t know what they were. I screeched so loud, I’m surprised the glass hadn’t shattered.

“You let the experiment loose, and now, we put the others in jeopardy.” It was then, I noticed, that the others were gone. Xaldin was upstairs, but aside from Axel, Marluxia and I, the only people down here were Xemnas and Xigbar.

"Where are the others?" I asked. It was like they didn't hear me. They just kept on arguing.

"That's it! You're banned from the labs until further notice!" Xemnas shouted. I don't think I've ever seen him so angry. His eyes might as well been flames. He was clenching his teeth, his hands were balled into fists, and he was shaking. Furious!

"But Xemnas I-"

"No excuses!" I thought I felt the ground shake. "Five months, we worked on this. And now we have to start over."

"Most of that time was trying and failing stuff anyway!" Xigbar argued back. "At least now you know what you're doing!"

"No excuses!! It will still take time to make another one!" I felt very out of place. I don't think neither Axel nor I were supposed to be hearing this. The slithery thing at my feet had disappeared. Who knew where it was now, whatever it was.

"Xemnas!" Axel screeched.

"What, Axel?!" Xemnas spat back, finally paying attention to us.

"What happened?" Xemnas took a few deep breaths to calm himself down. He flipped his silver locks out of his eyes.

"We were trying to use the power of the Heartless for more useful purposes." Xemnas said, his tone much smoother, and calmer than the last. "As Nobodies, we have special abilities that are unique. What if we were able to harness the power, and strength of the Heartless, and have the unique abilities of a Nobody. Maybe we're just fooling ourselves." He let out a deep sigh. "Well, we're probably going to take a break for a few weeks. Besides, there's someone I've been meaning to draft into our little club." He showed a little smirk. I knew that meant trouble, and I wanted nothing to do with it this time.

"Axel, I assume you'll want to retrieve our 12th member?"

"Of course, Master Xemnas." Then Axel looked at me. "And Demyx will join me."

"Oh no I won't," I said, shaking my head. "You're gonna have to find a replacement."

"I could always force you, you know?"

"Just try it," I said, waving my hands, walking up the stairs. I was expecting an attack, but it never came. I made it to my room in one piece. Where had Axel gone? Did he go by himself? I sat at my window when suddenly, there was a knock.

"Come in," I shouted. The door opened to show my young colleague, Zexion. His indigo-violet hair was especially messy. "Is everything okay?"

“I-I just wanted someone to talk to.” he whispered. “I was here an hour ago, but you weren’t. I thought I’d come back just to check.”

“Well, come on in, buddy.” I smiled. “Have a seat,” I patted my bed, sitting down myself. He showed a small grin, then walked to my bed. He softly sat beside me, staring off into space. “So what’s the matter?”

“Well, I’ll be honest. I’ve felt kind of stressed lately, and the person I normally talk to has been kind of... Distant lately.” Zexion sighed. I could hear the attempted sadness in his voice.

“You mean Lexaeus?” I questioned.

“Yeah... Ever since we started the experiments, everyone’s been kind of... Weird.”

“I haven’t really seen anyone since you started. ”

“Xemnas has this thing about keeping everything on the ‘low-down’, especially these experiments.”

“What exactly are you guys doing anyway? Xemnas said something about combining Heartless and Nobody power.”

“Well, I really shouldn’t say anything, but it’s actually what I came here to talk about.” I smiled.

“Well, I’m here to listen.”

“Thank you, Demyx.” And then he began...

“It’s not really these experiments that are getting to me, but the history we have with experiments. As you know, before I became a Nobody, I was one of the six scientists to create Nobodies. Those projects we had back then, I knew, were a bad idea. And I had a bad feeling about these as well.

“All those years ago... I was the one who objected. I was the one who went against Xemnas. I was the one who warned Ansem the Wise, but I was still too late. I’ve wanted so badly to tell someone, but I wasn’t sure who I could trust. I trust you, Demyx. You’re probably the only friend I have left. Please listen to me, and tell no one what I’m about to say.

“Xemnas, or Xehanort, as he was called before, was the newest assistant scientist to our master, Ansem the Wise. We had found him outside our headquarters, Radiant Garden. He had no memory of where he came from, or who he was. All he knew was the name ‘Xehanort.’. Incidentally, unscrambled, it says ‘No Heart’ with an ‘X’. He had a heart, like the rest of us, but that was just something Dilan and I figured out. Dilan is Xaldin’s True name.

“After only being with us a few months, he wanted to already start his own projects. He wanted to tamper with the heart, and see where darkness came from. We knew roughly that the darkness in one’s heart created Heartless. They, of course, weren’t named Heartless at the time. Xehanort named them. He begged Ansem to do these experiments, but Ansem knew better. He knew there would be a

disastrous outcome.

“Xehanort didn’t listen, of course. Without Ansem’s knowledge, we all sort of turned against him, aiding Xehanort in his quest to harness the power of darkness. In doing so, we created the very first Heartless. And then they began to multiply. The darkness was growing inside each of us, and without us knowing, the Heartless were slowly chewing away at our souls. Finally, one day, Xehanort decided for us to cross over into the ‘world of darkness’. That’s when I knew we had to stop. We were going too far. I quickly tried to tell Ansem what was going on. I managed to tell him everything, but before we could do anything about it, Xehanort captured us, locking us away. Before I knew it, Xehanort was forcing me to go first. None of the others would help. They were all consumed by their greed for power.

“There was no way I could escape my fate. Xehanort already had a hoard of his new found monsters waiting for me. I didn’t bother fighting it. I just let oblivion come. Before I knew it, I awakened in a strange place. It wasn’t dark, nor was it light. It was just there. I thought maybe I was dead. Purgatory maybe? Who knows how long I was there. It felt like hours, days, forever, really. Then, out of nowhere, more people started arriving. And before I knew it, there we all were. There was something different about each of us, but here we were. The only person missing was Ansem the Wise. Who knows what happened to him.

“Before we realized what happened to us, we all turned to Xehanort, who I guess is now our present day Xemnas. He looked upset, and somewhat panicky. I don’t think he meant for whatever happened to us to happen. Frankly, I don’t think he knew just what would happen. Jerk.

“Somehow, that murky nothingness cleared, and we were back in the lab. Almost everything was destroyed, Ansem was no where to be found, and Heartless where everywhere. There was one man we saw, but I’m not even sure if he was a man. He looked like a middle product of Xemnas and Xehanort. His eyes glowed amber, and he had long white hair. He was unconscious when we arrived, so we just left him.

“After we ran some tests, we figured out that we were just bodies. We realized that our hearts had been devoured by Heartless that were born from our bodiless souls. Xemnas told us that from that point on, he would dedicate all his time to finding a way for us to go back the way we came, but lately, all he’s been doing is creating more of us. And these new experiments. He’s making more, horrible creatures, although he is on to something. He says that those with strong hearts aren’t the only ones who leave Nobodies behind. He says that only the strong ones are the ones that keep their human shape. He’s fixed on finding out what happens to the others. I just don’t think this is right. We have no purpose, and we shouldn’t exist. What’s the point in all this?”

I was truly fascinated by what he had to say. None of this I knew, and I don’t think I was supposed to hear it either. He was confiding it all in me, and I had to do my best to keep my mouth shut. I was simply stunned by what went on. I had no idea that this was how we were created. Out of hate, and greed. Then, he had more to say.

“I’m sorry, Demyx, but I’m not finished yet. There’s just a little more. Of course, we didn’t accept what we were. Especially not Xigbar. He took it the worst. He would yell about how he was a monster, and then he’d turn around and say things like ‘I am too normal! What do you mean I can’t live anymore?’. I felt so bad, but I blamed Xemnas for everything. Eventually, Xigbar got fed up and left. He traveled for

years to other worlds. He came back, bruised, scratched, and bleeding with Saïx, and also with-

A knock at my door.

“Go away,” I yelled. “I’m busy!”

“Axel’s back with a girl! You have to see this!” My jaw dropped. Zexion had already stopped talking, and refused to say anymore.

“I’m sorry, Demyx, but I’ve said too much anyway. If you wish to know more, ask Xigbar.” He then stood up. “We should see what all the commotion is about.” I nodded, and followed him out the door.

We got to the foyer, and everyone else was already there. And Axel was indeed holding a woman. She had short, blonde hair, and was wrapped in what looked like a bed sheet. Axel handed her to Xemnas.

“Her name was Relena.” He said. Xemnas nodded.

“Our first female member. This is quite surprising” Xaldin noted.

“Imagine. A woman with a heart strong enough to-”

“Anything is possible,” Vexen said, cutting Axel off. “Actually, I’d wager that more women than men have strong hearts. Men are too easily persuaded to do evil things. Women are pure and simple creatures.”

“You speak like they’re another species!” Xigbar joked.

“I must note this!”

“Everything’s an experiment to you!” Xigbar laughed harder.

“Enough!” Xemnas called. There was something different about him, but I couldn’t really place what it was. “Everyone shall remain here until the girl awakens.” He nodded at Saïx, then to Vexen, and the three of them left. Xemnas didn’t seem as kind and giving as he was five months ago. No, something was definitely amiss; I just wasn’t sure what it was. I was kind of still wondering about what Zexion told me, but I was too timid to speak up about it. I promised I would keep the secret, so I did.

Marluxia sat on the couch and crossed his legs. His eyes were blank, and he looked lost in thought. Axel joined him on the cushioned seat. I just kind of stood there, waiting like everyone else. Then, Marluxia looked up.

“Gentlemen,” He spoke loud enough for us to hear, but quiet enough so no one else would. “Please come here, there is much I wish to say.” We crowded around the old couch. “Have any of you heard of Xemnas’ plans? He told me, I’m not sure why, but he refuses to tell anyone else. He tells me he trusts me, even though I’ve been here for the least time. I’m not supposed to say anything, but you all have a right to know.

“Xemnas is planning on giving us back our hearts. He has said he’s finally found a way for this to occur. As joyous as I was, there was a darker side to his plan. Not only does he want to give us our hearts, but he wants us to assimilate with hundreds of thousands of other hearts. He wants to collect the hearts released by Heartless and then take their power. Not only would he gain his original heart back, and become human once more, but he’ll also gain the powers and strength of the millions of other hearts he absorbs. I don’t like this at all.

“Of course, this means killing more Heartless, which isn’t necessarily a bad thing. The bad thing is that he wants to create more Heartless just so he can kill them. The more Heartless, the more hearts. But that means killing more innocent people, and I simply do not agree with that.” He crossed his arms. “I’d like to hear what you all have to say about this.”

“He wants to destroy the Heartless and release their captive hearts...” Axel pondered. “It sounds simple enough, but it doesn’t add up. No one’s been able to destroy Heartless. They disappear. Once they’ve devoured a heart, it’s gone forever.”

“Wrong again,” Xigbar smiled, waving a finger at Axel. “During those five months in the lab, we didn’t always stay in the lab. Xemnas set us out to scout other worlds to see if we could find what he calls ‘the Key Bearer’. I dunno who this guy is, but apparently he has the power to kill Heartless, and release the captive heart. Xemnas wants to use this guy for his plans.”

“Well, this ‘Key Bearer’ person,” I cut in. “He probably wouldn’t work for us unless we made him a Nobody.”

“Right, so what are we waiting for?” Axel grinned.

“Don’t even try it,” Xaldin snapped. “The Key Bearer is who he is because of his extremely strong heart, and strong ties to the light. If he ever fell into darkness, or became a Nobody, he would obviously lose his heart, and therefore be unable to release captive ones.” We all took this into consideration.

“Have you met this Key Bearer?” I asked.

“Xemnas has. He found him at Radiant Garden, or what’s left of it, that castle where Ansem the Wise lived.” Zexion said softly. “He said that he met him, and tested his strength. He is indeed the Key Bearer, for he wields the Keyblade, a marvelous weapon, if I do say so myself.”

“The.. Keyblade?” I was slightly confused.

“Yeah,” Xigbar answered. “It’s a giant key that this kid uses as a sword. It has lots of cool powers that we don’t really know a lot about. And he’s apparently the destined one to master the Keyblade. We have to get him on our side somehow.”

“Um hello?” Marluxia cried, waving his arms. “I’m glad you listened to the first half of my speech, but did you hear the part about more killing?! We don’t want this to happen, do we?!”

“Marluxia,” I said to him. “You and me both want to stop the killing, but think of it this way. If we get our hearts, and are able to live again, we won’t have to kill anymore!”

“But Xemnas-”

“When he gets his heart back, he’ll not want to absorb all the others anymore. He’ll finally be satisfied. We all will be. And then we can let the hearts go back to their original bodies.”

“I hope you’re right...” Marluxia sighed. “He’s been getting kind of power-hungry lately.”

“Well, in any case, we need that Key Bearer.”

“Wait, Xemnas doesn’t know I’ve told you all. Please keep this secret until he’s ready to tell you.” We all agreed.

Before we knew it, Xemnas was back with the blonde girl. He had gotten her a fitting, black leather coat. She was a little shorter than me, and had blue eyes. She was kind of pretty, but there was something odd about her.

“Everyone, this is number 12. Larxene, the ‘Savage Nymph’. She controls the element of thunder.” She smiled and showed us her weapon, or weapons I should say. In each hand, she held three yellow and blue knives. She winked at Xaldin, who surprisingly, quickly looked away, blushing furiously. I didn’t know we could blush.

“Something the matter, number three?” Xemnas said, monotonous, eyebrow cocked. Xaldin quickly regained his composure, and crossed his arms.

“No, Master Xemnas.” He grumbled.

“Good. Make Larxene feel at home. I’ll be cleaning what’s left of our precious laboratory.” And with that, he stormed off.

“Wasn’t my fault..” Xigbar mumbled under his breath.

“Well, Larxene,” I smiled, extending my hand. “Welcome to the Organization! You’re room is down the hall from mine. Care to let me show you around?” I winked. This was the first time I was encountering a woman as a Nobody. Something told me that my True self was a lady-killer. And I could feel the icy glares from Axel and Xigbar from across the room. I didn’t care, though. To my surprise, Larxene refused my offer. Her glare was the coldest of all.

“Sorry, boy, but I’d like a real man to show me around,” She waltzed to Xaldin, who tried his best to ignore her. He kept making faces at Xigbar, who kept mouthing words. Finally, Xaldin looked at her. She was standing right in front of him, arms behind her back, her big beautiful eyes staring him down.

“A big, strong man, that is,” She giggled. Xaldin made a face of disgust, and began to walk.

“If you must, then come along, quickly,” he growled. I had such an urge to follow them, but I did not. It had been a long day, and a long five months. Now that we knew Xemnas’ true plans, Things were about to get a lot more exciting for all of us. This ‘Key Bearer’ was the key to it all. Now all we needed

was him on our side. Then nothing will stop us from regaining our lost hearts!

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Sorry to all of you who have to endure my absolute LOVE for XaldinxLarxene fluff. I can't help it, really I can't. It's an unhealthy obsession, much like the rest of this story. Sorry this chapter was so long. Now that I've introduced the 'Key Bearer' (hmm I wonder who that could be!) The story should move a little faster. It's actually going to have to. Demyx is about to get a very unpleasant surprise, and his name begins with an 'R' :D See you in the next chapter!

6 - Renegade Nobody

DISCLAIMER: I don't own any Kingdom Hearts characters.

I turned my Xanga into a little journal revolving around this story, my thoughts, and other things. You can find me at Xanga(dot)com(slash)Velika, But please, any comments you have regarding the story, please post here and not there. Thank you.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Finally!! Sorry this took so long. I didn't work on it at all during my winter break (which was probably the worst winter break in this history of winter breaks.) But yeah. Now the story's starting to pick up. Look for chapter 7 coming soon. This is the first of the spoiler chapters. If you haven't started the second game, or haven't beaten the first game, this chapter might ruin some things for you. Please, if you're worried about spoilers, but want to keep reading, then PLAY THE GAMES! IT'S TOTALLY WORTH IT!

NO, I'M NOT AN ADDICT! XD

READ ON!

PART 6

'Renegade Nobody'

I wanted to know who this Key Bearer was. The suspense was killing me! Just a few hours ago Xemnas met the guy. He even fought him! He was our only hope. I was trying to imagine the Keyblade we were told about; a long key-shaped sword. Amazing. I'd kill to see one. Everyone was talking about it; the monsters, the Key Bearer, and Xemnas' encounter with him. Gossiping was fun, I guess. We rarely cared about the outside world, but the truth was, we never really knew much about it. Zexion and I were chatting about it when Saïx came running from Xemnas' bedroom.

"Everyone, listen up!" Saïx exclaimed. "Master Xemnas just received a vision of a renegade Nobody acting on his own. We certainly didn't create him. He's in the abandoned city below. Your assignment; bring him to the castle. Go, now!" He then sped back into the room.

The rest of us huddled together and tried to come up with a plan. The plan was that we would split up in teams of three and four and search all areas of the city. The teams were Team Blaze, which consisted of Axel, Zexion and myself, Team Gale, Xaldin, Larxene and Xigbar, and Team Floret, Marluxia, Lexaeus, Luxord, and Vexen. We hurried down the stairs and corridors out the main entrance. The entrance led us to a cliff just beyond the abandoned city. We hurried down the mountain trail into the city. Large rocks and stone turned to high buildings, and flashing lights. There was a huge tower in the center of the square, and there were other large buildings surrounding it. The tall tower had a screen at the top, placed in the side of the building, and it was flashing white noise.

To our surprise, as we walked through the square, about to split up, huge hoards of large Heartless rose from the ground, and circled us in.

"Marly and I will handle them," Luxord called. "The rest of you start searching!" We started to run as we left Marluxia and Luxord to face the giant shadows. We then split into our groups and went our separate ways. We ran down a dark alley way. It seemed to go on forever! We just ran, and ran, and ran...

A scream. It came from the other side of our alley, where we entered. We had come too far to go back.

"I'll go," Zexion volunteered, and before I could protest, he ran back.

"Damn it, we have to stick together," Axel cursed.

"Don't worry about him," I said back. "Let's just continue. We need to find this guy!" We started to run again.

"It's so weird" Axel mentioned. "If we didn't search him out, how did he become a Nobody?"

"I guess we'll find out when we-"

"Stop!" Axel stopped short, pushing me into a corner, and hid himself.

"Why are we hiding?" I whispered.

"Shh! Look!" I looked up. We had come to a larger opening between buildings. There was someone there, but it was hard to see him. He looked like just a little kid. He was wearing a trash bag as an outfit. He had blonde hair that looked even more uncontrollable than Axel's.

"Someone actually lives here?" I asked. Before Axel could answer, the boy shot around, glaring at us. He had heard me, and now he saw us. His eyes were bright blue, and he had a boyish, round face. Axel stood up, out of the shadows.

"Kid, what are you doing here?" he asked. He began to walk toward him. "you shouldn't be out here all alone. Where's your family?"

"Who are you?" The boy asked. "Answer me!"

"It's best you keep your voice down," Axel scowled. "The others might hear you and they're not as kind as we are."

"My name.. Is.. I can't remember my name," the boy cried. He clenched his fists. His hands began to glow, and then out of nowhere, two large swords appeared in each hand. He slashed them down, and pointed one at Axel.

"Stay away from me!" He shouted. It was then I got a better look at the swords. They were each different, yet the same. One was white, one was black. The only similarities they had were the shape. The swords extended to about the same length, and at the end, a design shot up from the blade much like the teeth of a key...

“Keyblades!” I shouted. Axel looked at me in horror.

“The Key Bearer?!” Axel cried, looking back at the boy.

“No, there’s something different about him. I can’t feel his heart.”

“The Nobody! Demyx, come here and help me!” I started to stand, and then the last thing I remember was a Keyblade to the face. I think it was thrown, but I really don’t remember.

I woke up who knows how much later to the sounds of clanging metal. I opened my eyes to a dark sky, and a pounding headache. I sat up to see Axel and the boy fighting. I guess I wasn’t out too long. And then I saw everyone else. Everyone had heard the noises, and was now watching them fight. Xaldin, being as impatient as he was, stepped behind the key-wielding child and hit him in the back of his head with a spear, knocking him out cold.

“I coulda had ‘im” Axel said softly, panting.

“Of course, Axel. Let’s bring him back to the castle.” Larxene laughed. I tried to get up too, but I couldn’t move. I was in so much pain. I just lied there. Axel had picked up the kid and already left. Xigbar found me in the corner.

“What’re you doin’, kid?” He chuckled.

“I think I’m just going to stay here for a while. I hurt. Bad.” I managed a smile. He shook his head, then bent down.

“I’m gonna regret this...” He sighed. He grabbed me by my shoulders, and placed a hand under my knees. Next thing I knew, he was carrying me. He carried me all the way through the city, up to the castle, and to my bedroom. He placed me on my bed.

“You’ll be fine in the morning. I’ll keep ya posted on the Keyblade kid.” I thanked him, and he left. Now, that I was alone, and resting, my mind began to wander. Who was that kid? Was he really the Key Bearer? But he was a Nobody. Does that mean he can’t help us get our hearts back? This kid seemed like a jerk though. He couldn’t have been the same kid Xemnas fought. My thoughts were interrupted by voices outside my door.

“Team Floret hasn’t returned yet.” The first voice said.

“Do you think they know we found the Nobody?” The second voice said.

“Who knows? Maybe they found something else.”

“I guess we’ll find out.” And they were gone. Then I heard shouting. I guess the team returned. More voices.

“...Another Nobody? Xemnas said there was only one!”

“This one’s a girl too!”

“Just what we need. I think Larxene’s enough estrogen for one castle.”

“She’s just a little girl though. Xemnas is with the two kids now.”

“Where did they come from?”

“I don’t know. And the one kid has two Keyblades.”

“But he’s not the kid Xemnas tested. I’m so confused...”

“Me too, buddy.” I wanted so badly to see what was going on, but I was tired, and in pain. I passed out instead.

I awakened to the sound of my own screaming. It had been a while since I had either nightmare, and this time, they were connected. One nightmare. First, some kid with a Keyblade comes and takes Axel away, then another kid with a Keyblade comes and kills me. I knew it was two different kids because one was a blonde, and one was a brunet. Then it hit me. The blonde Keyblade kid. The kid we found. They’re the same! Why would I dream for months about a person who I had never even met until yesterday?

I sat up on my bed. I looked to my small table to find a glass of water, and a letter. I took the envelope, and ripped it open. It read:

Dear Demyx,

I do hope you are feeling better.(Who could this be?) You don’t know what kind of hell I went through after bringing you up here. (Oh, Xigbar.) Axel sure let me have it. But the weird thing is, ever since we brought that new kid here, Axel refuses to leave his side until he wakes up. It’s... Odd. He says he doesn’t know why. What a nice guy, eh? Hope you wake up soon!

Love,

Xigbar

Now, what the hell? He wrote me a letter? It’s dated for...Tomorrow? Wait, how long have I been out? Frustrated as all hell, I got up, and walked to my window. My head was still pounding, but maybe the fresh air would do me some good. I summoned my sitar, and began to pluck at the thin strings. I wasn’t even paying attention to what I was playing. Soon, a haunting, yet soothing melody came from the instrument. It flowed so beautifully. The water in the cup began to swirl and soon, was flying around my room. It took the form of a man, dancing. It was small, but it made me smile. I knew I had to write this down. This melodious tune had to be saved. But what would I call it? I’ll figure that out later. I put the sitar down, then decided to leave my room.

I was still in my coat, pants and boots, and my hair was a mess, but I didn’t care at this point. I was out for days, and I needed to catch up on what was going on. I left my room and quickly walked to the

infirmary. I looked through the glass to see Axel and Xemnas. I then opened the large steel door. The blonde children were lying on a small medical bed. The boy, they had given him a black coat, but the girl wore a white dress. It was strange, but I could feel strong emotion coming from them both, although they were unconscious, and were, in fact, Nobodies. I didn't like the fact that my nightmare involved the blonde boy. I hated it. Xemnas always told me to never believe in my dreams. He told me they were just images, and thoughts all jumbled up inside my head. I believed him until I started having nightmares. How could I dream about this kid without meeting him first?

I walked to the bed to get a closer look. Axel and Xemnas turned to me after hearing the door shut.

"Good morning," Axel smiled.

"Glad to see you have awakened." Xemnas greeted me.

"What's going on?" I asked.

"We've been running tests on the children," Xemnas stated, flipping through his notes. "They are the youngest Nobodies I have seen. And the young girl is showing intense mental activity."

"What does that mean?"

"It means," Axel cut in. "We could potentially use these kids to help us achieve our goal. Look at this." He snatched the notebook from Xemnas and opened up to a page about the boy. "Although we all remember what it was like to have a heart, this boy shows signs of still having his!"

"Wouldn't that mean he's not a Nobody?"

"That's just it. We've run a bunch of tests. He has no heart, but his heart is still alive somewhere."

"...You've lost me."

"I shall explain it then." Xemnas said, pushing Axel aside. "Nobodies are created when the heart leaves the body and becomes a Heartless, correct?" I nodded my head. "Although this boy's heart has been lost, it did not become a heartless, at least, not for very long. Somehow, the heart is still inside a body somewhere. It's hard to explain, but I plan on finding out what happened."

"I don't get it..."

"I shall explain more when I know more, Demyx. I believe this boy to be somehow connected with the current events of the Key Bearer at Radiant Garden." He extended his hand to Axel, who gave him back the notebook. "I will not be gone for very long. Keep the children here until I return." Extending his palm, he opened a dark door, entered it, and was gone. Now it was just me, and Axel. This was the first time we were really alone since before Xigbar blew up the labs. I inched toward him and hugged him tight, wrapping my arms around his shoulders. I could feel him curve into my grasp, and it seemed we melted into each other.

"I was kind of worried about you," Axel whispered into my ear. "I didn't realize how badly you were hurt

until I saw Xigbar carrying you. Are you sure you're all right?"

"I think so," I grinned, pulling away. "Then again, this could all be a dream, and I have a concussion." I saw him flourish into laughter. I chuckled some too until I felt his grip tighten and pull me close once more. Puzzled, I gazed into his emerald eyes.

"Axel...?"

"Shh." He whispered. "You'll wake the children." He leaned in close. A frozen shock came over me as I was unable to move. Before I knew it, my eyes were closed, and I felt the soft touch of his lips against mine. I became constricted by this feeling of excitement, surprise, and that pulling at my chest where my heart should be. My mind shouted "don't stop!" as we held tighter, pulled closer, and embraced a much deeper kiss.

"I told you to watch the children, not 'make-out' for them," Xemnas said, returning. We quickly split, startled, and flushed. I was too shaken to say anything.

"Xemnas-er sir!" Axel stammered.

"Spare me the details." Xemnas smirked. "We have more pressing matters at hand."

At Radiant Garden

Xemnas plowed through the dark door to the run-down castle at Radiant Garden. He quickly pulled his hood up to mask his identity. He began to venture into the castle when he heard shouts and yells. He quickly hid himself. Whizzing past him came two children, a dog, and a duck. They sped quickly out of the castle, and into their small ship. Xemnas recognized the boy.

"The Key Bearer!" He looked back at the castle. When the ship had taken off, Xemnas quickly ran to the castle, dodging the hoards of Heartless. He entered the castle, climbed the stairs, all the way up to the center room. There were large containment chambers lined against the wall, a huge Heartless emblem on the floor. He quickly climbed the stairs to see a tall man with long, white hair, and tanned skin. The man quickly looked at Xemnas.

"And who might you be?" He laughed.

"You may not know me, but I know you." Xemnas smiled, pulling down his hood.

"You... You look familiar."

"Don't worry yourself about it. Tell me. What happened to the Key Bearer?" The white haired man smiled.

"I don't have anything to hide," he grinned, his golden eyes glaring. "I had created a marvelous weapon," he began. "I called it a Dark Keyblade. It had the power to release the heart from within a person. I had been searching for seven princesses. That was the only way, I thought, to bring me to Kingdom Hearts, and the door to Darkness. One princess had hid her heart within the Key Bearer. Then,

things took a strange twist. The boy, Sora, used my Dark Keyblade to release both his and her hearts. And the boy was gone. The rest escaped.” Xemnas thought about this. If the Key Bearer had disappeared, why was he running with the rest of them? Was he brought back? Then it hit him. The blonde boy was the Key Bearer’s Nobody. And somehow, he wasn’t sure, was brought back.

“Thank you, my good Heartless,” Xemnas smiled.

“Excuse me?”

“You are the Heartless of a man named Xehanort, are you not?”

“I am no Heartless!” The white haired man raged.

“Oh, so do you go by a new name now?”

“You say you know me, yet you do not. I am Ansem, the seeker of Darkness.” Xemnas laughed to himself.

“Poor, mislead Heartless. The man named Ansem died years ago. No matter. You shall meet your end soon enough.” With a smile, and a wave, Xemnas opened a dark door, and left for home.

“...And that’s my theory.” Xemnas stated, telling us what he had witnessed.

“Must have been weird meeting the Heartless version of yourself,” Axel laughed. “Sometimes I wish I could meet my Heartless, and maybe even my True self.”

“Don’t we all,” I agreed.

“I also have a theory about the girl. Xehanort’s Heartless said that she hid her heart within him. When he released his heart, he must’ve released hers as well. She must be the Nobody of the girl.”

“It kind of makes sense since they both appeared at the same time.” I noted.

“But I wonder why they appeared here, instead of where the incident happened.”

“Who really knows...?” We stood there for a long time just thinking, watching the sleeping children.

Suddenly, the scanners began to alarm, the screens began to jump to life, and the boy with the blonde hair awakened. His eyes were bright, and almost seemed to glow. We had all ran to the bed, but were now backing away. The boy sat up. I got a better look at him. His blonde hair was shaggy and curled up, and his eyes were a deep blue. He was pale, and was just as confused as the rest of us. He looked around, and stared each of us down. The look in his eye cried that he was not a happy camper.

“Boy,” Xemnas said slowly. “We will not harm you. Tell us. What is your name?”

“Wha-what’s going on?” The boy croaked, placing his head in his hands. “How.. How did I get here? Who are you?”

“Please. We can help you more if you help us. What is your name?”

“...I don't..”

“Please try to think.”

“...My name?” We listened intently. He was silent for a long time. He looked at the girl next to him. He took one last look around the room, and focused his attention back on Xemnas.

“Sora.”

7 - Betrayal, Denial, Rejection

DISCLAIMER: I do not own Kingdom Hearts.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: I have a really strong feeling that not a lot of people are going to like this chapter. I'm not sure why. It's just a gut feeling I guess. And for those of you who haven't realized it yet, I'm trying really hard to keep the storyline inside the original KH2 storyline. So yeah... I hope you like this chapter. It moves a little quickly. If you don't like it, I'm sorry to disappoint. Don't flame me, please, because if you don't like it, I honestly don't want to hear you dog about it. Thanks!

WARNING: Shounen-Ai warning! If you're not into boy/boy love, then why the hell are you reading this story:D

PART 7

'Betrayal, Denial, Rejection'

A few days went by. Xemnas initiated the new kid. His new name was Roxas, number Thirteen, and he was named the 'Key of Destiny'. Xemnas knew something about Roxas that he wouldn't share with the rest of us. I felt it every time he was near. I could just feel that there was something wrong.

Roxas felt very out of place. Although he was immediately accepted (Vexen told him as a joke that knocking me out was his initiation test), He just didn't flow with the rest of us. I figured it was because of his whole heart situation. Xemnas told Axel and I, but told us to keep quiet about it. I figured he told Saïx, as well. Honestly, I didn't know what the big deal was. It made him special, and crucial to our plans. We wanted our hearts back, and we needed the Key Bearer. How lucky for us that the Key Bearer has a Nobody!

Roxas usually hung out with Axel and I. He didn't talk much at first, but after a while, he began to come out of his shell. And the three of us started to become great friends. He was really a nice kid, and he knew how to have a good time, even for a teenager.

Oh, I should probably mention the girl in white. She woke up not too long after Roxas did. She told us her name was Namine, and refused to alter it in any way. It was almost like she knew what was going on, and refused to accept it. She wouldn't take a black coat, or a title. She was about 9 years old. Xemnas told her that he wanted to test her skills, and she refused that also. She said that she knew her skills, and he had no right to dig into her personal business like that. Defeated, Xemnas just sent her to Larxene's room. I remember Xaldin commenting, "It's bad enough we have one moody woman on our hands."

"Namine is quite different from Larxene. From any of us. She already knows everything I've tried to explain." Xemnas sighed, perplexed. "She's hiding something, and if she doesn't present herself soon, I may have to force it out of her."

Good for her, rebelling against the system. Xemnas wasn't too pleased, though. I wonder how he plans

to force it out of her. The only person she would talk to after that was Roxas. Who knows why? I didn't think much of it, though.

Ever since, Xemnas, Saix, and Marluxia sat in the lab, and discussed plans, or something like that. I don't really know. They never told me anything. I just hung out with Axel and Roxas, and that's all that mattered to me. Being with friends. Being with Axel. Then, of course, entered Xigbar.

"Heyo, boys!" He said, marching up to us. We had been playing an amusing game of Egyptian Ratscrew with Luxord, and I was winning.

"Hey Xiggy," Axel waved.

"Yo, Zebra," I grinned, picking up a pile of cards I had won. Roxas said nothing.

"Care to be dealt in?" Luxord offered.

"Nah, cards ain't my thing." Xigbar said. He suddenly turned to Roxas. "What, no greeting for your superior?"

"..." Roxas just stared at the cards on the table. "Dem, it's your turn."

"Whatever, little dude." Xigbar rolled his eyes (er, eye, I guess, since he only has one.) "Have you guys heard the news yet?"

"News about what?" Luxord asked.

"Xemnas is forming all sorts of weird plans," He grinned big. "He says he knows how to capture the Key Bearer! But that's all he's told me"

"..Because you have a big mouth." Roxas muttered.

"What was that, short-stack?"

"..."

"Listen, small-fry, we respect our elders around here."

"As far as I'm concerned, you're a delusional child." I couldn't help but laugh a little. Roxas was defiantly winning this verbal war. It was when Xigbar reached for his guns, Axel and I jumped in. Luxord just wanted to see a fight.

"Put 'em away, Xig," Axel warned, rising from his chair. "You don't wanna shoot the new kid, now do ya?"

"Oh, believe me, Axel, I'd LOVE to, but I can't for Xemnas' sake." Xigbar scowled, mumbling as he walked away.

"I don't think he likes you," I noted.

"I don't care." Roxas scoffed, turning his head.

"Man, you're adorable!" Axel jeered, locking Roxas in a hug. I chuckled, yet slightly confused. "Hey, me and Roxas going to go kill some Heartless. Wanna join?"

"Eh, not really. You two have fun" I smiled, standing up. Axel shrugged, and I left the room.

The next two weeks were strange. I saw less and less of Axel as the days went on. Soon, I didn't see him at all. I spent my days alone. And it hurt. Every time I tried to seek out Axel for any reason, he was either 'busy' or 'didn't have time'. I started to get annoyed. We were inseparable for so long. Even if he was 'busy', he'd usually want some company. He always told me how lonely he gets. And when I saw him around the castle, he was usually with Roxas. I didn't have a problem with the kid, not at all, but I wanted to know what was going on. I didn't mind if they were close friends. I'm not the jealous type. I just wanted to have some time with Axel, too.

One night later, I sat alone in my room, continuing that melody I started. I sat at my window, feeling the breeze on my face, in my hair. So very relaxing, soothing, calming. Then a fist abruptly knocked on my door.

"Who is it?" I called, slightly irritated.

"Who do you think?" It was Xigbar. And he didn't sound too happy. My sitar dissolved into steam as I stood up. I opened the door to see Xaldin there with him. Both of them had their hair down, Xaldin in a navy blue robe, Xigbar in his boxers.

"Can we come in?" Xigbar asked. I looked at my clock. 2AM.

"What could you two possibly want this late?" I opened the door, and they came in, Xaldin closing the door behind him.

"We need to talk." Xigbar said sternly, placing his hands on my shoulders.

"...What about?"

"Axel and Roxas."

"Xigbar, I really-"

"No, you don't get it. Let me explain-"

"Xigbar, I'd really appreciate-"

"Demyx stop and listen to me."

"They're just friends, guys. Axel doesn't get new friends often. He's just excit-"

“Demyx!” Xaldin boomed. His voice much deeper than either mine, or Xigbar’s. We both jerked our heads and stared at him. “Either you’re delusional, in denial, or just plain stupid. Can you not see what is going on here?” I shook my head.

“We’re worried because we know how much you love Axel,” Xigbar sighed, in a softer voice. “We’re afraid that if you weren’t told, you’d never find out.”

“Guys, I think you’re just paranoid. Axel is-”

“Axel is in his room right now with Roxas, the door; locked.” Xaldin growled, crossing his arms.

“...Well it is 2 in the morning, guys! Obviously they’re.. They’re sleeping. ” I fought back. “Roxas doesn’t have a room yet. And Axel is just a good friend.”

“You’re starting to doubt your own thoughts, aren’t you?” Xigbar nearly cracked a smile. “The other day, after I handed you your assignments, I saw Axel and Roxas together walking down the hall. Axel took his hand. I saw Roxas protest, but Axel wouldn’t listen. Then, just a few minutes ago. The reason why I thought you should know. We were playing poker in Luxord’s room. The door was cracked, and we heard shouts, and yells. I peeked my head out to see a very angry Roxas being carried by what looked like a very smug Axel. Axel refused to put him down, and they entered Axel’s room, locking the door. I knew that look in his eyes... Demyx?” I left the room. I was more angry than anything. Why would Xigbar say something like that? I knew he was after me, but this was ridiculous. What a jerk thing to do. I planned on marching down to Axel’s room and having him do something about Xigbar. I was tired of dealing with his bullshit.

And there was his room. The door was made of steel, and had a symbol of a large ‘A’ surrounded in flames. I knocked on his door. No answer. He was probably sleeping. This was awful. I tried to open his door, but it was indeed locked. I started to get suspicious, but I wouldn’t let that get the best of me. Xigbar was lying. It was time to prove it.

Just as I was summoning my sitar, Zexion appeared at the staircase entrance to our hallway. Beside him was Xigbar and Xaldin. I began to play a sweet melody, and water formed around me. Using my notes, I commanded it to enter the room through the cracks, and unlock the door.

“Demyx, stop!” Zexion called, running up to me, Xigbar and Xaldin right behind him.

“Zex? It’s like 2 in the morning.”

“I know. Listen. These guys speak the truth. I was with them”

“Oh for frack’s sake, not you too.” I was really getting mad now. Zexion was probably my best friend aside from Axel. He wouldn’t lie to me, would he?

“Demyx, you won’t be pleased with what you’d see in that room.”

“Yeah, not only is Axel committing some kind of juvenile rape, but he’s breaking whatever bond you two

had when you were 'together'. You hear me?" I stopped the water from opening the door. Somehow I knew they were right. I was afraid to admit it, but I knew it. I tried to deny the thoughts, but I couldn't any longer. I said nothing.

"...Dem? Are you all right?" Zexion asked. I didn't speak, nor did I move. Just stood there, gathering thoughts, and assessing what was around me. Nodding my head, I opened a dark shadowy portal beneath my feet.

"Demyx, wait!" I don't know who called out to me, but I had slipped down, and closed the door behind me. I flew through the darkness, not caring where I'd end up. I just wanted it to stop, to end. Not my life, of course, oh no. I just wanted to stop the shouting, the drama, the pain. Even if I knew they were right, I didn't want to hear it any longer. I didn't care where I ended up. I flowed through the darkness until I felt like landing. And then I did. Soon, I felt wet, and was drenched. I opened my eyes to see I was floating in a dimly lit ocean that led to nowhere. Strange dark rock formations rose from the sea, and the sand was black. I swam to shore to find that it was closed off, and secluded. I was alone on this dark beach. There was a soft wind. For a place built from darkness, it had a calm, serene glow. I felt at peace here. The sound of the waves, the flow of the wind. I sat on a rock, and thought for a long time. All I could think about was Axel. Axel. His spiked red hair, his shimmering green eyes, his smooth, pale skin. I shook my head. After all that, why can't I stop thinking about him? It seems he has chosen Roxas, a child he's known for 2 weeks, over me, a friend and love for more than a year. Why do I feel this pain if I cannot feel? The throbbing pain of disappointment, and rejection was swelling in my chest, where my heart should be. Betrayal. I must speak with Roxas. I need to set things straight.

I must have passed out at some point, because I woke up, covered in dark sand, and several feet from the rock I had been sitting on. I decided that was enough pouting. I couldn't become an emotional wreck over this. For once, I had to stand up for myself. And I had to do it now. I left the dark beach through a dark door that led to my bedroom. I quickly left, and ran to Axel's door. It was late in the morning, he had to be awake by now. I pounded on the door. No answer, and the door was still locked. I began to pound harder, yelling "Axel, wake up. I need to talk to you. Axel, open your door!" Then I heard footsteps, noisy shuffling, and a lock turn. There was some whispering, though I couldn't make out what was being said. The door opened and there was Axel. He had dark rings under his eyes, his undershirt was ruffled, and wrongly buttoned, and his boxers were falling off his @\$\$.

"Oh, good morning, Demyx." He smiled, trying to fix his hair, which was a ball of red mess.

"Have a rough night?" I scowled, crossing my arms. He had nowhere to hide, and I wasn't letting him leave until all my questions had been answered.

"I didn't get much sleep last night. What's up?"

"I just wanted to see how you were. I was looking for you yesterday."

"Yeah, sorry. I was busy."

"Doing what?"

"Doing..? Well..."

“Roxas?”

“What?” He suddenly straightened up, shocked at the mention of Roxas’ name. “Of course not!”

“Oh really?” I said, stepping toward the door. It was only open a crack. I tried pushing it open a tad more, against Axel’s wish. He immediately stepped out.

“What do you want, Demyx?” his voice filled with frustration.

“Axel, I miss you.” I gripped him tight. “I haven’t seen you lately. I miss being with you.”

“I’m sorry, but I’ve had a lot to do,” he said, immediately breaking my grasp, and stepping back into his room.

“What is there to do? Our only jobs are to do what Xemnas tells us, and he hasn’t handed any assignments out lately. So what exactly have you been busy with?” I tried opening the door again. I caught the sight of a small, black boot next to Axel’s bed. Before I could look twice, a small hand grabbed the boot, and shuffled away.

“Are you done?” Axel asked, glaring. Before he could say another word, my fist had collided with his nose. And he went down like a tree. I swung the door open wide to see Roxas, nearly naked, collecting his clothes. He froze in fear when he saw me at the door. He looked at Axel, then at me. He was cornered. Axel began to squirm, and sat up.

“What the hell, Demyx?” he yelled. “What the frack are you doing?!” I took hold of his shoulders as he stood, and kned him hard in the gut. He went down for a second time. I lunged at Roxas, taking him down.

“Now, you’re going to be a good boy, and answer all of my questions, or I’ll snap your neck.”

What a fantasy I was lost in. I wish that happened. Then maybe, I wouldn’t be in the situation I am in now. But here’s what really happened.

“What is there to do? Our only jobs are to do what Xemnas tells us, and he hasn’t handed any assignments out lately. So what exactly have you been busy with?” Axel pushed me away from the door frame.

“What does it matter to you? Go away.” Then slammed the door in my face. Something was dreadfully wrong. Now, I’m not stupid, or a drama queen, as many of you might think at this point. Axel was different. He had never been like this as long as I’ve known him. Axel was fine until he showed up. Roxas. This was all his fault. I didn’t even want to talk to him anymore. I probably should have, but I was too angry to care at this point. I stormed away from his room, down the hall, and down the stairs. Anger turned to hatred, to sadness, and I began to cry. It wasn’t a loud, childish cry, but more of a secluded, rage-filled cry. And the tears wouldn’t stop. I walked to the other side of the castle, of the Wing stairs, and through the halls on the other side. I stopped in front of Xigbar’s door. Another steel door with a carving of a Gun with a ‘II’ behind it. I couldn’t speak at this point, I was so overwhelmed

with these emotions. I didn't understand it. We don't have emotions!

I knocked hard on his door. It opened in a fury. He was wearing pants, and his boots, his hair tied in a loose pony tail. I couldn't say anything, choking on my tears. He quickly rushed me into his room, closing the door behind him.

"Demyx! We were looking everywhere for you!" He took my hands, and I felt the concern in his voice. "Are you all right?"

"Am I all right?" I found the strength to speak. "You see me now, how I'm so consumed by false emotions and you ask if I'm all right? Yes! Everything is frackin' amazing right now, how are you?" I threw my hands up, emphasizing my sarcasm.

"I'm only trying to help." Xigbar sighed. "Have a seat, and let's talk."

"I'm sick of talking. All I've been doing is talking, and it's getting me nowhere. I'm finished talking. It's time to act upon the talk."

"Dem, what are you talking about?" I could no longer speak. I started to cry hard once more. I felt like I was going to collapse, and backed into a wall. Xigbar quickly ran to my aid, but I pushed him away. I was a wreck.

"Xigbar..." I sighed, between sobs.

"What is it, Demyx?"

"I'm sorry."

"Sorry for what?"

"I didn't believe you. I called you a liar, and thought you were just jealous. I should've believed you. You're one of my closest friends, and I don't know what I would do without you." Then came more tears. Xigbar, unsure of what to do, took me in his arms, and held me tightly. I grabbed him tightly, quietly sobbing into his chest.

"This rush of emotion you're having... I don't understand it either" He told me. "Shh.. Calm down. I'm here." He rubbed my back in a soothing motion. I was tired of standing there, against the wall. We began to sink to the floor. He softly pushed me away from him, and stared into my bloodshot eyes. He pulled my wet face close to his.

"He may not love you anymore, but I sure do." He put his mouth to mine. I was alarmed, but I didn't stop him. This was a whole new level of unwanted, unreal emotion. And it forced me into a horrible round of indecision, caught between right and wrong, go and stop, yes and no. My mind started racing, shouting, 'No, stop!', and then 'Don't stop!', but it was no use. I wouldn't break away. I was too broken by this point to pull from him.

He pulled me closer, breaking what little space between us there was. I knew I had to stop this before it

got too far. Placing my hands on his bare chest, I started to push. He was holding me tightly, but realized my wishes, and let go. Our lips separated slowly. While I was able to speak, I did.

“Please... Stop.” I gasped. As cheesy as it sounds, he left me literally breathless. “Xigbar... I can’t...” He sighed and nodded his head, smiling down at me.

“If you keep crying, you’ll exhaust yourself.” He helped me to my feet, then hugged me tightly. “No matter what happens, I’ll still be here for you.” I tried to thank him, but I couldn’t speak. He was so kind to me, so caring, and I felt balanced with him. At that moment, Axel had stopped flooding my mind. My thoughts were blank.

Xigbar took my hand, and led me to the door. It was still the middle of the day.

“I’m not gonna leave you alone until I know you’re okay.” He said, opening the door. I was breathing normally again, and my sobs had ceased. My eyes were still red, but were dry. “I don’t know what happened, so I hope you will tell me later.” We began to walk down the hall. During our walk, I told him about how I confronted Axel, and I blamed Roxas. My reasoning included the fact that Axel had completely changed in the time that Roxas arrived. He listened carefully, and intently to everything I had said.

“I feel like I should talk to Xemnas about it,” I sighed. “He seems like he knows more about Roxas than he’s letting us believe.”

“That might be true,” He replied. “Xemnas knows a lot more than we do. It’s best not to jump to any conclusions. And we can’t be entirely sure that Roxas has anything to do with it.” I nodded. He put his arm around me. “Let’s go talk to Xemnas.”

8 - Roxas and Namine

AUTHOR'S NOTE: All of you who have reached 'The World that Never Was' in Kingdom Hearts 2 will notice I changed the layout of the castle. In the game, there's really nowhere that they actually live in the castle. You just fight them there. I make it so they live there, obviously.

My Xanga is a journal regarding my FF account. You can find it at [xanga\(dot\)com\(slash\)velika](http://xanga.com/velika)

I placed a poll on my Xanga, but I'll post it here.

SHOULD I GIVE MY CHAPTERS TITLES?

YES OR NO?

Onward!

PART 8

'Roxas and Naminé'

We immediately headed for Xemnas' room. We weren't sure where he was, but his bedroom was always a good place to start. I'm not sure if I mentioned this before, but Xemnas had a whole level to himself. A whole floor! He made us share hallways and wings with the other guys, but he had a floor to himself. There was a balcony that towered over our common room, and the only way to get to the roof was ascending a staircase that was somewhere on his floor.

So, I've probably confused you about the layout of our castle. If you go beyond the abandoned city, you'll find a passage through the rock that will lead you to the front entrance. There's no real door, just a large arc that leads you into the foyer, the central point of the castle. On the left wall, there is a large door which leads below to our labs. The laboratories stretch to the entire perimeter of the castle, and go well below ground. To the right are large double doors that led just above to our common room. Straight ahead was a large opening that led deeper into the castle. The infirmary was there, but right after the entrance. The rest of the castle was past that. I had only been there once, and I don't remember it so well.

In the common room, there were chairs, tables, couches, and a large television that no one used. On the center wall, there was a large staircase leading up, and splitting. Going up and left or right would lead to our North and South wings, where our bedrooms are, and continuing upward would leave you to Xemnas' floor. There was so much more to this castle, but I hadn't had time to explore it.

We raced up the stairs, me following Xigbar. We reached Xemnas' floor. It was like a mini-apartment. He had his own kitchen, his own common room, his own bedroom. It was actually pretty nice. I guess that's what you get when you're the leader of a bunch of nothings. We searched everywhere, but there was no sign of him. He wasn't here.

"If he's not here, he could be anywhere," I whined.

"He might be in the labs." Xigbar noted.

"All the way down there?!"

"I'll race ya!" And with that, he sped down the stairs. I wasn't in the mood to race, but I did anyway. I swiftly followed him down every stair. I began to pass him, but then he miraculously sped up, and left me in the dust.

We reached the lab door, panting hard, doubled over, trying to catch our breaths. Xigbar slapped me on the back.

"Didn't know... I could run... so fast... Did ya?" He chuckled between breaths.

"You...cheated..." I staggered.

"You're just... jealous..."

"Hey guys, what are you doing?" It was Marluxia. He jogged lightly down the steps, and toward us.

"Why are you out of breath?"

"We were racing," Xigbar beamed, straightening up. "What's up?"

"Nothing really. I was just bored. Everyone else seems busy. I thought I'd go down to the labs and bug Vexen."

"You know Vexen hates you, right?" I reminded him. Vexen wasn't too fond of us neophytes, especially Marluxia. I'm not really sure why.

"He doesn't hate me! He just has a hard time expressing his true feelings!" Marluxia giggled.

"No, dude, he hates you." Xigbar laughed. "Xemnas gives you more respect, apparently. Vexen hates you because your rank is lower." Marluxia shrugged.

"I still love to bother him. It gives me a rush when we fight. I can't get enough. I love that old man."

"Well, when you end up as a popsicle, don't say we didn't warn you." I notified him. "The Chilly Academic doesn't take kindly to people he hates. And he hates a lot of people." Marluxia just shrugged it off.

"Care to join me?" He elbowed Xigbar in the chest.

"Actually, we're looking for Xemmy. Have you seen him?"

"I think he's in the infirmary with Naminé."

“Ah, okay. Thanks.” Xigbar smiled, waving. We started to walk away as Marluxia ventered into the Lab.

“Oh, Marly.” I shouted, catching his attention. “Have fun.” He gave a ‘thumbs up’ and descended. We hurried to the infirmary to indeed see Xemnas and Naminé battling it out, verbally, of course. And I think Naminé was winning. We slowly opened the door.

“Your power is great! Why will you not accept what you are, and assist us!” Xemnas roared.

“I’m not a normal Nobody!” Naminé fought back. “I was created differently.”

“Yes, I realize that. But your powers are much different that the powers we have. You must help us!”

“I refuse! What you’re doing is wrong! I won’t help you!” She stomped her foot.

“I’ll make you!” he growled, pointing a finger.

“You wouldn’t dare!” she snapped back, crossing her arms.

“I am lord of this castle, and King of the Nobodies. You shall obey me. You must, or so help me...” He clenched his fist, raising it in a threatening pose. I almost jumped out into the way.

“You wouldn’t hit me! I’m just a child! And you’re too much of a gentleman!” I could have sworn that he was about to explode in a rage and attack her, but he didn’t. It was kind of funny to see Xemnas losing an argument with a nine-year-old.

“Naminé...” His tone changed dramatically. “Please. You could be very useful to us. Just...Think about it.” He then looked up to see us standing there. Shocked, and mildly embarrassed, he asked Naminé to leave. She did so without a sound.

“So... How long have you been standing there, boys?” Xemnas asked, feeling humiliated.

“Don’t worry about it, boss” Xigbar grinned. “We’ll keep quiet on one condition.”

“Oh, lord...” Xemnas groaned. “What do you want?”

“Tell us what you know about Roxas.” I chimed in. “Not just what you told us before. I know there’s more that you won’t let out.” Xemnas stared at me for a long time. I could tell he was trying to gather thoughts, wondering what to say.

“Demyx... I’m sorry, I can’t-”

“Please sir!” I stepped close to him. “This is important.” Sighing deeply, he agreed. He gestured for us to sit down. We sat on the bed, and he pulled up a chair.

“As you both already know, both Roxas and Naminé are special Nobodies,” Xemnas began. “They both suffer the fact that their True Selves’ hearts have not been devoured by Heartless, and faded into darkness. This causes a strange reaction within them, and others around them. It’s hard to explain, but I

will try my best.

“Let me use Naminé as an example. She has no heart, but her heart exists in this dimension. Although we all pretend to have hearts, and fake our feelings, with her, she really has those emotions. And it affects the Nobodies around her. They’re drawn to the strong pull of her heart. It affects some more than others, but when it affects you, it consumes you. I feel it happening to myself. I feel drawn to her, but I know better than to chase the feeling. I know the feeling is false, like the others.

“Now, about Axel. You claim there is something between Axel and Roxas? It’s pretty much the same. I’m not sure why it’s affecting Axel specifically, but he’s drawn to Roxas because of his heart. It might be too late to pull him away for he may be consumed by his want for his own heart that he feels that Roxas is his heart.”

“So, you’re saying that Roxas is causing Axel to focus all of his attention on him because of his heart?”

“Correct.”

“And that Axel feels his heart, and believes Roxas to be his heart?” Xigbar added.

“Also, correct.”

“That doesn’t make sense.”

“I told you it was confusing.”

“So it’s all Roxas’ fault.” I sighed. “Roxas is controlling Axel! He’s forcing him to be like this!”

“No, no, Demyx, you misunderstand! Let me try to explain it a different way. Roxas is the Nobody of the Key Bearer. In order to wield the Keyblade, one must have an immensely strong heart, full of light, far from darkness. Because the Key Bearer’s heart is so powerful, it’s affecting Roxas. Like I said, it’s almost as if Roxas still has his heart, although he most defiantly does not. Now, because the heart still exists, the Nobody feels complete, unlike the rest of us. We yearn to be complete, so, if we let ourselves, we can be drawn to Roxas, letting go of every other care, feeling complete with him. Do you understand?”

“I do...” I sighed. So it wasn’t either of their faults. But who could I blame? Axel for letting himself be taken over? Roxas for having such a strong heart? Myself for allowing Axel to befriend Roxas? No. There was nothing I could do, and Axel would probably be totally sucked in to Roxas. Maybe it was for the best. Maybe I needed some time to myself anyway. A break, I suppose. I thanked Xemnas for his information, and his help. He then explained that Namine’s pull wasn’t so hard because her heart was lost in darkness for a long time. We chatted for a few moments after that, just talking. Xigbar left us to run some errands, tasks he wouldn’t say what they were. Xemnas and I talked much about the darkness, and hearts and he started to tell me how he planned to give us our hearts back.

It was nice just to sit and talk with our superior. He was very intelligent, and extremely well-brought-up. I was starting to see a change in him, though. Since the day I met him, to today, he has steadily been changing. I can’t really point out what it is that has changed, but I can just tell that something is amiss

with him.

As we talked, things happened in the castle that we were unaware of. I didn't find out until much later what occurred.

Xigbar left the infirmary as soon as he could. He sped to the stairs, up through the corridor, and through the North Wing. He pounded on Xaldin's door.

"Dude, come on! We gotta do it now while Dem and Xemmy are occupied!" He called. Xaldin came rushing out of his room, and they raced to the South Wing where they proceeded to kick down Axel's door.

"Hey, this is private property!" Axel steamed, jumping off of his bed. Roxas was at the window.

"Shove it, princess." Xigbar scowled. "Not here for you." He pointed to Roxas. "Roxas, buddy!" They walked toward him. He whispered to Xaldin, "Remember the plan!" Roxas was not very thrilled to see them.

"What do you guys want?" The boy snarled.

"Let's go for a walk, shall we?" Xaldin grinned, grabbing Roxas' arm. Xigbar took the other arm, and they rushed out of the room. Axel was stunned, and daren't follow them.

"Where are you taking me?" Roxas yelled, but neither answered his cry. They rushed down the stairs, and out the door. It was pouring rain in the abandoned city. As soon as the men entered the square, they were drenched, hardly caring. They threw Roxas down into a muddy puddle.

"What's going on!"

"Okay, Roxas let's chat." Xigbar smiled sadistically. He leaned forward. "Do you know what you are?"

"Y-yes of course I do!"

"Yes, you're a Nobody, but do you know who's Nobody?"

"...It doesn't matter."

"Oh, it most definitely does." Xaldin said quietly. "You have been chosen by fate. You are indeed the 'Key of Destiny', boy. Of course, you may pose to be a problem to Xemnas and his masterful plans. Do you know his plans, child?" Roxas shook his head. "You played a large role in his plan. Roxas, Xemnas was going to use you. He was going to force you to destroy all Heartless, but because you only wield Keyblades by default, you wouldn't actually unlock their hearts. We need your True Self, the Key Bearer."

"But if I was born from my True self, then doesn't that mean-"

"Your creation was rather unorthodox." Xaldin noted, standing straight-backed. The rain was pounding

hard on the trio. "Because of that, the Key Bearer, your True Self, still lives." Roxas was silent, jaw dropped.

"So, what's going to happen to me?"

"Currently, Xemnas has no use for you. A shame, though, what he has in store for your True Self."

"..What?"

"Xemnas doesn't need you, Roxas." Xigbar finally spilled. "You're just another pawn in his game. He's going to manipulate the Key Bearer somehow and make him destroy the Heartless, releasing all the captive hearts. And when he's finished, he's going to have him killed."

"But why?"

"Xemnas is slowly going crazy. Power is flooding his mind, and he probably won't be satisfied with just gaining his heart. He might seek a greater power, and if he does, he can't let the Key Bearer get in his way." Roxas was silent once more.

"So what's going to happen to me? You never did answer me..."

"We're unsure." Xaldin admitted. "We do know one thing. Maybe you could prove yourself useful. Not to us, but to yourself."

"What?"

"Leave the Organization. Go find the Key Bearer. Warn him of these plans, and don't let him be captured!" Xigbar cried. "You must stop the madness. Yeah, we want our hearts back, but we don't want Xemnas to become some insane, evil overlord or something." Roxas stood up. He felt heavier with the wet leather and dirty boots.

"but where can I go?"

"Use a portal, and leave. Go to another world. Seek information. Someone must know where he is!" Roxas' eyes narrowed in determination.

"Why are you doing this?" and for once, Xigbar was at a loss for words.

"... Just trying to help!" Roxas nodded.

"Thank you, guys." He turned to leave. "You know, I always thought you hated me. I thought that Axel was the only one who liked me. And honestly, he likes me a little too much. I won't leave right away, but you're right. I have to do this." Xigbar smiled at Xaldin, marveling at their accomplishment. The three then left the city, heading back to the castle.

Axel stormed into the infirmary, startling both me and Xemnas. Axel was the last person I wanted to see right now. Seeing his face flooded back memories of the night before. I quickly turned away, unable to

gaze upon his uncaring green eyes.

“Where’s Xigbar and Xaldin!” he roared.

“Xigbar left a while ago. What’s the matter?” Xemnas questioned.

“They took Roxas somewhere, and I can’t find them!”

“Did you check their rooms?”

“Yes”

“The lab?”

“Yes.”

“The commons?”

“I checked everywhere, and no one seems to know where they went!” He then stormed out of the room. Not even a hello, or anything. Just wondering where Roxas was. Of course! How could I be so delusional as to think that Axel might spare a minute on me.

Now that we were shaken up, our conversation ceased, and I left. A good question was, ‘where’s Xigbar and Xaldin?’ because now I, too, was wondering. I climbed the stairs, and collapsed on the couch in the common room. These emotions were killing me. I closed my eyes, and found comfort in a light nap. I woke up to a hug, and a peck on the cheek from Xigbar.

“Nng, what are you doing?” I stirred, stretching my arms outward. “And why are you wet?”

“Good morning, sunshine,” Xigbar laughed, sitting up. “How are you feeling?”

“Okay, I guess. Where’d you run off to before? Axel decided to pay a visit, screaming about you and Xaldin kidnaping Roxas.” Xigbar smiled big, and laughed so hard, I thought he was going to die of asphyxiation. After his fit subsided, and he had calmed down, he told me what happened. I wasn’t sure whether to be happy or not over this. Roxas was leaving, and maybe things would go back to the way they were. I was happy at first, but wouldn’t Axel be upset? I also wondered why Xigbar had done this in the first place. I sat close to him so I could get a straight answer.

“Xigbar, you know as well as I do that until these events occurred, you were trying to take me away from Axel.” I pointed out. He nodded. “And now, you finally have me, and you’re willing to give me away?”

“Demyx, I’m not doing it for me, I’m doing it for you. I care a lot about you and I want to see you happy.” He leaned over and placed a kiss on my forehead. “And if you’re happy, I’ll be happy.”

“Xigbar...”

“Nope! I’ve already decided!” He smiled. “And don’t try to change my mind.” But he was lying. I could

see the sadness in his eyes behind his false smile.

“Xigbar, I’m not completely convinced.” I figured it was best to be straight with him then to let it slide. “I know you. And I know that you don’t mean that.” His smile faded, and he turned away from me, gazing at the tiled floor. “So why don’t you tell me what’s really going on in your head, hmm? Why are you so obsessed with me? From the first day I can remember as a Nobody, it’s been Axel by my side. Yes, you and I are great friends, but...”

“I get it. Well, I suppose it’s best to start from the beginning.” Xigbar nodded, sighing to himself. “You know that I love you with every fiber of my being. And I think you should know that I’ve been in love with you for about three years now.”

“Three years? But I’ve only been a Nobody for one. Are you just exaggerating?”

“No, I’m not. Just listen, Demyx please. I have to start from the beginning. The beginning of our Organization.”

And Xigbar proceeded to tell me his story.

9 - Xigbar's Tale I

DISCLAIMER: I do not own Kingdom hearts.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Wow chapter 9 already? I even amaze myself sometimes. I'm going to prophesize and say that I predict this story to be about 15 chapters long, give or take.

Woot!

Onward!

PART 9

'Xigbar's Tale I'

"I guess it's best to start from the beginning." Xigbar faintly smiled, still gazing at the ground. He paused for a long time, probably collecting his thoughts. I was eager to know. I've only known him roughly one year and here he said he's known me for more. How did he know who I was before I was a Nobody?

"All right. The beginning. " He took a deep breath, and told his tale.

"Years ago, who even remembers how long, the first six of us were young, avid, aspiring scientists under the rule of probably the smartest man of his time, Ansem the Wise. Our recent studies had influenced us to study the heart, and how it tied us together. We wanted to know what made a heart turn to darkness or light. Doing so proved to be a problem. Xehanort, the man Xemnas is a Nobody of, wanted to experiment on darkness, and it's origin. Ansem thankfully refused. Realizing what problems we could create, Ansem ordered us to cease all experiments on the heart. We were very discouraged, but we obeyed. Xehanort had other plans.

"Unfortunately, he convinced us to keep working on the heart, even if it was against our master's wishes. He said that as long as he had no knowledge of it, he wouldn't care. For months we worked behind Ansem's back, extracting darkness from hearts, extracting hearts from unsuspecting villagers. It was terrible, and I still regret it.

"Then the real problems began. We took the dormant darkness and gave it life, and gave it form. The mass of shadows twitched in it's cage until it took a most definite shape. It had glowing yellow eyes, and twitching antennae. We had created a Heartless. It was a great success, or so we thought. We were brilliant, and we knew it. After a few days, the castle at Radiant Garden grew darker and darker. The Heartless were multiplying, and growing in strength. We all turned to Xehanort for help for it was his great idea in the first place, but he didn't know what to do. We tried our best to keep the Heartless in the labs because if Ansem saw them, we would be toast.

"A few days later, Xehanort came up with another genius plan. He wanted to plunge into darkness, and seize the power of the Heartless. He wanted us to embrace the Heartless and become their leaders,

rather than their creators. 'What's the worst that can happen?' We laughed. How so naive we were. How very inexperienced. Why did we let our greed for power over take us?

"One scientist rebelled. He knew this was a bad idea. He was probably the only voice of reason, and we never listened to him. Poor, young lenzo. You know him now as Zexion."

"Zexion?" I interrupted. I was utterly astonished. I could have sworn it was Vexen who might have rebelled.

"Yes, Zexion. The rest of us were too power hungry. Especially Even, err Vexen. He was probably just as bad as Xehanort." He continued. "Anyway, lenzo learned of our plans, then rushed to inform Ansem. I only wish our friend made it in time. He spilled it all to Ansem just before Xehanort entered the room, and had Dilan and I escort them to the lab."

"Dilan?"

"Xaldin."

"Oh."

"Sorry, I keep forgetting that you don't know their real names."

"What was yours?"

"Braig."

"That leaves Lexaeus."

"Eleaus."

"Ah, I see." I paused. "What was mine?"

"... Just let me continue." I nodded and he began once more. "So we were in the lab, surrounded by Heartless, lenzo and Ansem in a cage. By this point, I believe Xehanort had gone completely mad. I saw the burning craze in his eye.

'Who wants to go first?!' he sounded excited, greatly anticipating the result. He then pointed to lenzo.

'You shall be first, traitor.' He scowled. Elaeus and Dilan grabbed each of his arms and pulled him from the cage. They threw him to the ground, and we all moved back.

'You're insane, Xehanort!' He screamed his last before the Heartless attacked. It was the most horrific and gruesome thing I had seen in ages. My dear friend, and colleague being torn apart by demonic shadows. They clawed at his coat, ripped his skin, he screamed and yelled yet none of us ran to his aid. We simply watched as our friend was tormented. His eyes grew wide, and from his chest burst a shining light.

'It's happening!' Xehanort hissed. We watched closer as lenzo fell backward, into the shadows, and all that was left was his heart, floating freely among the darkness. Immediately, the Heartless jumped at it, grabbing at it, trying to consume, and destroy it, but they were unsuccessful as the heart floated away into oblivion. lenzo was gone.

"We stood for a long while, watching the evil creatures multiply even more. They were growing restless, and eager for hearts. And before we knew it, they rebelled against us. We were their next victims. Trying to run, they barricaded the door, forcing us to be cornered. Ansem was still in his cage, screaming for us to let him out so he could destroy them. We were too afraid to move. Then the assault came, and the darkness came over us. The last thing I remember from that was seeing Xehanort in a frenzy, laughing like a mad man. Then was darkness. Overbearing, thick, painful darkness.

"I awakened to see rubble all around me. I quickly sat up and realized I was in the castle still. Had I survived? I looked around to see the bodies of my colleagues. At least, I thought it was them. Taking a closer look, there was something different about them. They had changed, physically, and they no longer looked the same. Dilan used to have dark red hair that met at his shoulders. Now, his hair was extremely long, and a dark shade of black. Even went from a brunet to a blonde, and looked older to me. lenzo was smaller, and his hair was an odd periwinkle shade. Elaeus had fiery orange hair that stood up on end. I wondered how I looked.

"Looking around, I saw that the lab was completely destroyed. The cage Ansem was in was crushed, but Ansem's body was nowhere to be found. I had hoped he got out safely. My comrades began to awaken and we all looked at each other like we met for the first time. None of us recognized the other, and the only similarities we kept were found in our faces. Our eyes. Our eyes were the same colors, only brighter, and seemed only glowing. We stood to embrace, and thank the heavens for our safety, when we noticed Xehanort was missing.

"We found him, still unconscious on the opposing side of what used to be the lab. And he wasn't alone. There were two men there, one with long, white hair, much like Xehanort, and another with locks of silver. The silver-haired one was the first to wake up.

'We have lived,' he said, starting to smile. He stood, and shouted louder, 'We have lived!'

'Xehanort?' I asked.

'Yes, it is me. Why do you look so odd?'

'We've all changed, sir. We feel different, like we're missing something. What happened to us?'

'I am not sure. Look at this place, it's a wreck!' He walked around, examining all the broken furniture, the broken glass, the destroyed walls. It was then we all realized we had let the Heartless escape. It was a horrible feeling, knowing we let those monstrosities into the worlds.

"A few days passed, the majority of us forcing Xehanort to research us, find out what happened, why we changed, and stuff like that. We were all feeling a rush of emotions and then they would be gone. It was a strange sensation, and we couldn't figure out why. We felt dazed, empty, and incomplete.

'Gentlemen,' He said, coming to some kind of conclusion. 'I have been doing soft experiments on Even, thanks for volunteering.' Even nodded. 'I took DNA, and skin samples to try to pinpoint what went wrong, but when I connected the samples to the computer, I was getting errors and such. Usually the computer can tell dead tissue from live tissue, and tear apart the DNA. But... The errors made me think. If our computer cannot identify us, then maybe we're not real.' How absurd, I thought.

'Not real? How can we be not real? We survived the attack of the Heartless without becoming Heartless ourselves. We live! And we're here to prove it!' Xehanort shook his head. He pointed to lenzo.

'We all saw it.' He said, straight faced. 'lenzo lost his heart, and faded to darkness. The Heartless could not devour his heart. And here he stands. His heart floated to who knows where, but here he stands. Maybe he's not real. Maybe he doesn't exist.' Dumbfounded, we all stared at lenzo who was indeed standing there, and was alive and well.

'I must run more tests...' Xehanort mumbled. 'Please be patient.' He called lenzo to him, and they began more experiments. I couldn't help but feel that Xehanort was right. That we weren't real. We were nothings. But I wouldn't believe it. Even if he proved it, I wouldn't. I still had my whole life to live, and I wasn't going to let some freak accident destroy that for me.

"Surprisingly, it had been weeks later, but every day felt the same. Nothingness, and emptiness. That's all I felt anymore. Every day, the same thing. And I felt like I didn't care. I had no emotion to express. I was utterly confused, but still, didn't care. Finally, Xehanort emerged with lenzo, finally bringing us a conclusion. We gathered around him as he began to finally explain the madness.

'I've come to a very disappointing conclusion.' A Pause. 'We do not exist. We are nothing. We are not supposed to be.'

'Well that's bloody depressing,' Dilan almost laughed.

'We are the bodies of our former selves left by the darkness. We belong to neither darkness or light, and that makes us nothings. When a heart leaves one's body, the body behind either dissolves into darkness, or I guess becomes what we are. Gentlemen, we have no hearts, but as far as I know, we've gained strength. We have new power coursing through us.'

'So that's why we feel incomplete,' I concluded. 'We have no hearts... That's why the emotions have been so out of whack.'

'Indeed,' Xehanort nodded. But I wasn't ready to accept that, and I exploded in new found, stronger than ever, rage.

'This is ABSURD!' I stomped the ground. The rubble shook around me. 'How can you say we do not exist when clearly we are right here! Clearly we are, my friend. Maybe you don't but this is all your fault anyway!' I pointed an accusing finger at Xehanort who was at a loss for words. This anger was filling me, and I was pretty much losing my cool at this point. The rocks around me shook, and I felt like I was floating. 'You can just take your science, your experiments, and your Heartless and leave me out of it! I still have my life to live and-' I felt my hands get heavy. I looked down to see large, spiked guns in each

hand. 'Where the frack did these come from!?' I was completely lost in the madness by this point. I then realized I WAS floating and so were the boulders that surrounded me. 'This is madness,' I hissed. Concentrating my thoughts hard, my desire to escape came true when a portal of swirling shadows opened beside me. Not thinking twice, I entered, and left.

"For a long time, I was traveling there. I was still in a shredded lab coat, and the guns glued to my hands. Where had these marvelous weapons come from? It didn't make sense to me, but then again, after all that had happened, very little made sense anymore. Finally I opened another portal and left that awkward, dark world. I looked around to see I was in another world. Far from the empty depths of what used to be Radiant Garden. It was no longer the beautiful castle it once was. Because of us, it was reduced to a hollow fortress, a bastion, and a shell of what it once was. A hollow bastion. Empty shell. Is that what we now were?

"The world I was in was a small town. It was night, and the flashing lights blinded my sensitive eyes. The town was quiet, and there was nearly no one around. Feeling out of place, I quickly ran to the nearest shop. I bought new clothes, and had a chance to look in a mirror. I finally saw the damage that had been done.

"I'll tell you, kid, I used to think I was a devilishly handsome young man. I had long, wavy light brown hair, and my eyes were a soft golden. But now... Seeing my reflection shocked me to no end. My hair was straight, black, and was beginning to streak grey. My eyes were glowing bright yellow, much like the Heartless. I feared the image before me, and sometimes I'm still bothered by it when I wake up in the morning.

"It was right then and there I decided I would never go back to the castle. I decided to wander the worlds, and live a real life, away from science, away from darkness, far from Xehanort's reach.

"Three months I was like that, wandering world to world, roaming the empty skies, trying to fill the void in my chest. I never spoke to anyone, and I would only stay in said world for a few days before moving on. I wanted to find a place where I was happy. But no matter where I was, I felt empty, and like I was fading away. I soon wondered if people could see me. I seemed to pass through unnoticed. I felt like a horrible depression hung over my head, yet I never actually felt it. The lack of heart prevented me from truly feeling anything, however, I could still pretend. I remembered what it was like to have those feelings, remembered what it was like to have a heart. Why was this happening to me? I was sure by now, Xehanort and the others had come to terms with their new selves, and were possibly living with it. Why couldn't I?

"The last world I visited was a sea-side town. It was rather large, and the beach was magnificent. I arrived late in the night, so no one was around. I walked along the beach for about an hour. The waves were calming, and the air cleared my thoughts. It was very serene and peaceful. Suddenly, I began to hear a most beautiful melody. I stopped walking, closed my eyes, and listened. I had no idea where it was coming from, but it was so relaxing, so beautiful. It flowed amazingly. When it had come to an end, I was sad. I frantically looked around. Where had it come from?

"Then, it started again. I glanced to where I thought it was coming from. There was a high cliff reaching over the sea. I was sure that's where it was coming from. I started to walk toward the cliff. Soon, the image of a man came clear to me. He seemed to be playing some instrument, creating the music. As I

came closer to the cliff, I saw that it was a young man. His eyes were closed, and he swayed to the music. I just stood and watched him. It brought me the peace I had been searching for. But I was distracted when I saw movement behind him.

“I couldn’t make out what it was, but it was dark, small, and more and more began to form. They were racing up the cliff toward the man. Trying to get a closer look, I then realized what they were. The Heartless! How had they gotten out here already? I was far from my home, but here they were. There was no way I was going to let these monsters destroy my happiness again. I started to run toward the cliff. Before I knew it, the creatures jumped at the man, startling him, and pushing him over the edge. My mind screamed as the man tumbled down the rock and splashed into the salty sea. Forgetting the Heartless, I ran into the waves, crashing against the tide. I wasn’t going to have those monsters ruin another’s life. They’ve taken everything from me, but they won’t take this moment. Curse those miserable beasts!

“Fighting the tides, I raced after the fallen man. I was up to my ears with salt water, but the man was nowhere to be found. I frantically scanned the dark water. Nothing. Had he gone under? Cursing the Heartless, I dove deep into the water. I couldn’t see; it was too dark. I swished my arms around until I hit what I thought was a rock. I pulled at it, noticing it was far too light. Feeling more, I felt the frame of shoulders and a head. I had found the man! I swiftly pulled him above the waves, swimming back to shore.

10 - Xigbar's Tale II

DISCLAIMER: I don't own Kingdom Hearts, but Myde is sort of mine.

WARNING: This chapter contains some Shounen-Ai (boyXboy love!) If you're against any sort of relationship like this, then please, stop reading the story RIGHT NOW!

You can view my journal about this story at my Xanga. [xanga\(dot\)com\(/slash\)velika](http://xanga(dot)com(/slash)velika)

Now, the rest of you... READ! Remember, this is continuing Xigbar's story from Chapter 9!

PART 10

'Xigbar's Tale II'

"I pulled him onto the cold sand. I wish I had some kind of light. From what I could see, he was just a young brunet, thin, and mildly toned. I leaned over and placed my ear to his chest. Thankfully, I heard the gentle throb of his pulse. However, no air passed from his lips. I would have probably performed CPR if I knew how. I didn't want to take a chance, and crush his lungs. Beginning to panic, I did the first thing that came to my mind.

'LIVE, DAMN YOU, LIVE!' I cried, shaking his shoulders. I might've slapped him a few times, I don't really remember. Suddenly, the most miraculous thing happened. His eyelids began to twitch, fluttering about. I highly doubt anything I had just done had helped, but hey, I was excited to no end.

'You're alive!' I shouted with joy. 'This is amazing!' He coughed and sputtered water.

'W-where am I?' He stuttered. 'What's going on?' I didn't say anything. I couldn't. 'Who are you?'

'I-I'm.. I'm nobody.' I finally said, standing up, backing away.

'No, wait,' he said, concerned. 'You saved my life! Please, come back!' It was too late. I ran. I couldn't face him. I saved his life, but why? He wanted to know who I was, and I wanted to know who he was, but... No. It was better if he never knew I was there. If no one knew I was there. I was nothing, and I deserved to be forgotten. I stopped to catch my breath. I figured there was no reason to leave now. I was exhausted, mentally and physically. I decided to sneak behind an Inn, and collapse by an outdoor furnace.

"The next day, I didn't really want to leave. Something inside told me to stay a little longer. I humored this feeling by walking around town. It was a quiet place, and there wasn't much activity. I passed by a small restaurant, smelling grease, and various cakes. Why not, I thought. I went in.

"The smells were stronger inside, but I didn't mind it. It was like a normal diner, loud clanging plates from the kitchen, thousands of conversations around the Booth seats, and half the bar stools filled. I took a seat by the counter. It was then and there I had realized I had no money, and I hadn't actually eaten

since the accident. I had no hunger. There was no purpose to me being where I was. However, the atmosphere made me stay. I enjoyed it very much.

“What made me stay there, I really don’t know. Maybe actually being around people. Real people. Hearing the gossip, the complaints, all normal things I had left behind. It was then I felt a tap on my shoulder.

‘Hey cutie,’ it was a waitress. ‘You gonna jus’ sit there an’ be pretty, or are you gonna buy somethin’?’ Her speech was terrible. Mine can be pretty bad when I don’t watch myself, but this was far worse. I smiled.

‘Actually, I don’t have any money.’ I simply shrugged. Her smile instantly left her face.

‘No money? Well what the hell are ya doin’ here?’ She yelled right into my face. ‘You expectin’ to get a free meal? We don’t work that way ‘round here! Either buy somethin’ or move along.’

‘I can’t buy anything. I’m broke.’ I yelled back. Then I stood up so I could shout down at her. ‘And I’m not planning on getting a free meal from you. I’m not looking for pity! Is it a crime to just sit and relax!’ I wasn’t really angry, but it had been a while since I started a fight with anyone.

‘I oughta throw you outta here myself!’ She cried, stomping her feet.

‘Go ahead and try, miss.’ And I sat back down.

‘Oooh Just you wait! I’m tellin’ the cook ‘bout you! He’ll have you outta here before you even get a chance to ‘ppologize!’ She stormed into the kitchen. I just had to laugh to myself. Here I was trying to keep a low key, and now I’ve just about blown it. I could have left, but I would have been running away. And I never run away from a challenge.

“The rude waitress opened the door to the kitchen, fixing her eyes right on me, and pointed an angry finger. The cook was right after her. He was tall, thin, and a lot younger than I thought he was going to be. I just smiled and waved.

‘Good morning.’ I grinned, as if nothing was wrong. They walked over to me.

‘He doesn’t seem to be causing any trouble,’ The cook smiled at the waitress. She wasn’t convinced.

‘He refuses to pay, Myde!’ She stomped again.

‘He hasn’t ordered anything,’

‘That’s ‘cause he’s a penniless bum!’

‘So let me get this straight.’ He took off his hat. ‘He won’t pay you because he has nothing to pay for?’ The waitress was finally silent. I got a better look at the cook. He had scruffy, curly brown hair. He was pale, and had sea-green eyes. He then turned to me. His eyes grew wide as he looked me up and down. He walked out from behind the counter and looked at me some more.

'Uh, is there a problem, sir?' I asked.

'You!' He cried, his face exploded in joy.

'...Me?'

'You're the man from last night!'

'What?'

'Last night! At the beach! You saved my life! Now I knew why he looked familiar. He was the guy I saved. The guy the Heartless attacked. The man who played the beautiful music. And here he was, thanking me. I wanted to thank him, but this wasn't the time or place to do it.

'Please, don't make a scene' I smiled. 'Let's talk in private' But he wasn't listening to me.

'This man saved my life! Give him anything he orders, on the house!' Cheers came from all around. I began to regret staying in the restaurant. The dull roar of conversation turned to cheers, and crowds, and I became very uncomfortable.

'Please!' I shouted. The people grew quiet. 'Can we please talk... somewhere else?' The man nodded, and began to untie his apron.

'I'm taking off early. Tell the head cook.' He handed his work clothes to the waitress, and I followed him out the door. Not wasting any time, I began my prosecution.

'What were you doing at the beach last night?' I asked him.

'I could ask you the same question, but that would be quite rude of me,' he smiled. 'Who are you?'

'My name is Braig.' I grinned, extending my hand. 'I'm new in town. I actually won't stay here long. I'm a traveler.'

'Oh no, you mustn't leave!' He begged me. 'My name is Myde, and I'm forever in your debt. You pulled me from the sea after I had lost my balance. It was only fate that we were to meet last night. Fate that you happened to be at the beach the same time I was.'

'I really have nowhere to stay.' I quickly changed the subject. 'And I have no money for an Inn.'

'You can stay with me. I have my own apartment.'

'We've only just met. I don't think we should move in together just yet.' I joked. He smiled.

'I really must thank you, though.' He said in a softer voice. 'I didn't mean to make a scene back there.'

I just got over excited. All morning I had been telling everyone how I was saved by an angel. Haha, so I guess you're my angel.' His laugh was unsure and uneasy.

"We had walked for nearly two hours before having a rest. The town was a lot bigger than I thought. We talked about all sorts of things. He told me about his family, and his college days, and I told him about my life before the accident. Of course, I refused to tell anyone about what had happened. Hopefully if I didn't stay in one place for too long, they wouldn't notice that I haven't changed in four months.

'If you really want to leave, I won't stop you.' Myde finally said. 'I just thought it would be nice to have a friend.' I thought about all he had said to me, and not once had he mentioned any people aside from his family.

'You don't... Have any friends?' I questioned. I didn't want to hurt his feelings, but that was when I realized. I had abandoned my friends. I was alone also. I guess it wouldn't hurt to stay a little longer.

"He showed me to his apartment. Top floor of a four-storey building. It was very spacious, so having more than just one person living there wouldn't be a burden. He folded his couch out to make a bed and told me if it was too uncomfortable, he would sleep on the couch, and I'd sleep on the bed. I told him he was being way too generous.

'Don't worry about food or anything,' I smiled. 'I don't really eat much.'

'You know, you should really eat.' He told me. 'And being a chef, I can totally make you amazing meals.'

'No, no that's all right. Don't waste your time. I told you, I don't eat.' I didn't tell him I hadn't eaten in a few months. Probably too awkward.

"It was still the middle of the day. We folded the couch back up and watched TV for a little while. It had been a while since I'd done anything electronic. We didn't even pay attention to what was flashing on the screen. We were too busy talking about everything we could think of. By this point, I thought that if I told him what had happened to me, he wouldn't believe me. And that was fine with me. The less he believed, the better.

"I started out the same way I started telling you. And as far as I knew, he didn't believe me. But that was okay. At least I threw it out there.

'So tell me... Why was it you were out on a cliff at the beach playing music?' I finally asked him. I wanted an answer. I wanted to know why the Heartless were after him.

'I do that every night,' He smiled. 'It just helps me escape the realities of life. You heard me?'

'I did. I heard it across town. I was drawn to the melody. It pretty much attracted me to the beach. Then I saw you fall.'

'That's pretty amazing that you saved me. I think I'd be too much of a coward to save anyone.'

'I didn't even think about it. The music stopped and you were drowning.'

'But why did you run away?' That was a question I was not hoping to be asked. 'You said you were nobody. But you're definitely a somebody to me!'

'Like I told you. I don't exist.'

'Just a figment of my imagination, eh?' We both shared a laugh. Just like with the music he played, I felt whole. I felt at peace. This guy made me feel all sorts of feelings I wasn't supposed to feel. I didn't like it at first, but I learned to deal with it.

'Over the next few months, we became close friends. Closer than I think I had ever been with any of my colleagues. We built up each other's trust, and then we were like inseparable brothers. Wherever he went, I was close behind, and vice versa. I soon got a job at the restaurant, in the kitchen, to earn a little spending money for myself. Every day, I felt like I was closer to him. I hadn't a care in the world when I was around him, and when we were apart, I felt sad.

'The winter came, and wasn't it just our luck that the heat in his apartment had broke. We were having a small party with some friends from work when it decided to blow. After about an hour without heat, it became very frigid, and our guests had left. We then decided to take a walk down to the small electric company to see what they could do. We bundled up, and headed out. Wouldn't you know it was the first snow of the season that night. We decided the heat could wait, and walked to a small park instead. We found a bench, and sat together, shivering. We watched the snow come down softly onto the frozen dirt. It was one of many moments I really enjoyed with Myde.

'Wow, it's really chilly out here,' Myde noted, tapping my shoulder.

'Well, it is snowing.' I smiled.

'It's so beautiful out here.'

'Yeah...'

'I'm glad I can share this moment with you, Braig.' I turned my head to look at him. Even in the brisk cold, he was blushing.

'Yeah... M-me, too.' I tried to smile, but the cold was starting to get to me. I quickly rubbed my arms, trying to wait it out. I didn't want it to end. I then noticed Myde unzipping his jacket.

'W-what are you d-doing? It's f-freezing out h-h-here.' I scolded him. 'P-put your jacket b-back on.' But he had already taken it completely off.

'You're more cold than I am,' He said sweetly. 'Here.' He draped his jacket around my shoulders, and zipped it up.

'But-'

'I don't want you to get sick.' He just smiled, 'Stay here. I'll go to the heating place, and I'll come back for you.' I opened my mouth to protest, but no words came out. As soon as I was about to speak, he leaned over and kissed me on the cheek. 'Try to warm up while I'm gone,' He then whispered in my ear. I said nothing as he walked off into the white fog.

"I sat there, silent, still, for a long time. I watched the snow fall, and all I could think about was Myde. I thought I was going mad. He was like a brother to me. He took me in when no one else cared, and I had saved him from the sea. We owed each other a lot.

"Some time passed, who knows how long. I was getting covered in white. My face then grew warm as I watched his frame break through the fog. I felt my eyes light up, and I stood. I was covered in snow, and my legs were locked in.

'Any luck?' I asked, immediately trying to rid my mind of thoughts of him.

'They said they won't be able to get to our building until tomorrow afternoon. Look's like we're sleeping in the cold.' I nodded, then stepped toward him. I slid off his jacket from my shoulders, and placed it around him, closing it tight. I then pulled him close, grasping him in a snowy embrace. He was shivering.

'Wha-'

'You're frozen!' I gasped. 'We must get back to the apartment.'

'It's probably colder in there!' he argued. I let him go, and pointed in the direction back to town. He took my hand, and we walked back into the storm. By the time we reached our destination, we were both shivering, clinging to each other, looking for warmth in the other's arms.

"When we reached the door, it was, no doubt, frozen shut. Myde fiddled with his keys, half shaking, half searching. When he finally found the right one, it slipped from his hands, falling deep within the frosty ice. I had gloves on, so I dug through the snow for the keys. We finally opened the door, and ran up the stairs to our apartment.

"The door creaked open, breaking what ice had been stuck to it. It was indeed colder inside, than out, but hopefully, the heat would come back well before the next day. At least, we hoped so.

'All this cold is making me mighty tired,' Myde sighed, slipping off his jacket.

'I hear ya,' I replied, taking a seat on the couch-bed. As soon as I sat, I shot back up. The metal bars holding the bed, and the springs weren't much warmer than the rest of us.

'That's... A lot colder than I th-thought it would be!' I grabbed my backside.

'You can sleep in my b-bed if you want.' Myde said, teeth chattering.

'Where are you gonna sleep?'

'It's a big bed. We can share it.'

--three hours later---

"So there we were, just the two of us, freezing our asses off, sleeping in the same bed. I was too timid to say anything that wouldn't come out as awkward. I couldn't sleep. I just had thoughts and images racing through my mind, things I did NOT want to think about. But I did, and it made me feel uncomfortable. Finally, I sat up, and looked over to Myde who was indeed fast asleep. A few minutes went by, and I found myself just gazing at my sleeping brother. He looked so peaceful, so beautiful. These thoughts instantly brought more unwanted images.

'I'm not sleeping,' I heard a groggy voice mumble. I froze. 'Yes, I'm talking to you, Braig.' Myde said, turning over to face me. 'What's on your mind?' I said, 'nothing', then lay back down.

'Obviously there's something bothering you...'

'No, I'm fine. I just.. Can't sleep.'

'Me neither, actually. I have a lot on my mind.'

'Oh? Like what?'

'Actually, I'm glad you asked.' He sat up, and faced me. His eyes made me sad. He seemed upset.

'What's the matter, Myde?'

'I just... Can I ask you something?'

'Sure. You can ask me anything.'

'I just- I just don't want you to think of my differently.'

'Myde! How can you even say that? No matter what you say, I'll never feel any different toward you. Even if you told me that you're an insane serial killer who kills guys with long black hair, and I was your next victim, I still would look at you and see my brother.' He didn't seem convinced. 'Of course, I hope you realize, I would have to move out. No offense.' And then he cracked a smile.

'Well... Okay. I need your advice.'

'I don't know what kind of insight I can give, but I'll try.'

'Well... Have you ever been in love?'

'More times than I can count, man.'

'No, no. I mean in love. Passionate love that you can't deny any longer. The mere sight of this person makes your heart skip a beat. You long to be with them for the rest of your miserable life. True love.'

Sadly, I shook my head.

‘...No.’

‘Then I don’t see how you can help me... I feel like I’m falling apart. I feel such a strong want, a need for ... this person. I can’t stand it any longer. I love them, but they don’t love me back...’

‘How do you know? Have you told them?’

‘No, never! I... I’ve tried flirting. Simple stuff, you know. Hugs, play fights, I even kissed them, but I received no reaction.’

‘Maybe they’re unsure of how to react. Maybe they don’t know how they feel about you. Or maybe they love you back, but don’t know how to express themselves.’

‘But... I-’

‘If you want someone to know how you feel you either tell them or show them. Stand up, and take charge! You’re an amazing guy, and there’s no way you’ll get turned away! Take affirmative action, and really show them how far you love goes!’ He stared at me long and hard. I was definitely getting through to him. I found myself yelling in his face, but he didn’t respond. Just stared wide-eyed back at me. ‘Be spontaneous! Do something that will shock them so bad that they’ll have no choice but to return this love you have! Don’t be extreme but do what you think is right! Go for-!’ A quick hand on my shoulder, a quicker one hooking onto my neck. Next thing I knew, Myde’s soft, hot lips against my own. Seconds later, catching on to what was happening, I returned the kiss, and held on to him just as tight. A long passionate kiss. We finally broke away, much to my disappointment.

‘I’m sorry...’ Myde whispered, catching his breath.

‘Don’t... Apologize.’ I said back, pulling him back into my arms. ‘I’ve been having weird feelings lately. Feelings for you. And honestly, I don’t think I could have broken the ice any other way, no pun intended.’ We both laughed softly, and shivered some more. We both lay back in the bed, and holding him close, I stole another kiss. I combed his curled hair with my fingers, as his arms wrapped around my shoulders.

‘Eh, I’m probably boring you with all this sex talk. I’ll stop there, and continue on.’

‘Another year went by. We had discovered our love, and chose to embrace it. We continued to live together, and not once did we spend a night apart. I had never known a love like this before. But then again, I wasn’t entirely sure I was being true to myself. Could I really feel love? One day, it hit me. I had forgotten everything. Everything that happened to me before I met Myde. My life before. The accident. My heart. It all rushed at me so fast, and so hard. I became incredibly depressed. The days went slower, and even Myde’s company didn’t satisfy my sadness. But then I realized. I wasn’t really sad, and I wasn’t really in love. Being a man without a heart, I’m not able to feel.’

‘I had told Myde this, but of course, he thought it was a joke. That is, until the last day that I saw him.’

Silence. Xigbar had stopped. I was so eager to know more, to know what had happened, but he was silent. I could see his eyes growing moist.

“You don’t have to continue,” I said, rubbing his back. Of course, that was a bold-face lie. I needed to hear how this ended.

“No, it’s all right. Besides,” he said, finally looking me in the eyes. “I think you need to hear this.” He took one last deep breath, and finished his tale.

“It started out like every other day. Isn’t that the way these stories always go? Things were normal. I woke up to a beautiful summer day. The sun was brightly shining through the bedside window. I rolled over to grant Myde a good morning kiss, but he wasn’t there. I sat up, and searched the room. I then jumped out of bed, and left the room, searching for him. He wasn’t here. No note, no nothing. Where the hell had he gone? I threw pants on, pulled my hair back into a pony tail, then went outside. Boy was I surprised.

“Heavy smoke clogged the skies. Houses burned in orange flames. People everywhere, screaming, running, on fire, and dying. I was astonished by these sights, and I instantly thought of Myde. Where was he during all of this!?”

“Then I saw them. Through the smoke, and the fire. Two figures in our trademark hooded trench coats. Of course, at the time, I had no idea about the coats, or who they were. I had no knowledge of Xemnas, and the others. They were the last thing on my mind. They walked toward me, probably noticing I was the only one undamaged.

‘YOU!’ I roared, pointing at them. I knew they had done this. ‘You are responsible for this! How dare you destroy our home! Who are you?!’

‘We are nothings,’ the first one said.

‘Nobodies.’ The second one responded. They pulled down their hoods. I didn’t know it at the time, but it was Saïx, and Axel who had invaded.

‘We’re looking for a being with a pure heart, full of light, and strength.’ said Saïx.

‘You’ve come to the wrong place, my friends. Most have cold, dark hearts here. And me? I don’t have a heart, so just move along, or I’ll be forced to kill you.’ I hadn’t fought in years, but hey, what’s a good threat now and then?

“It’s a shame, it didn’t phase them. They whispered to each other, then Axel left, leaving me to face the dangerous one. I grabbed the first thing I could, a long pole, and made the first attack. Saïx was quick to dodge, summoning his large, blue claymore. He was definitely getting the better of me, and it didn’t help that I was unprotected. I then heard a familiar voice shouting my name in terror.

‘BRAIG!’ It was Myde! I looked over to see he was cornered by Axel. The anger grew within me, and for the first time in nearly three years, I summoned my guns. As the guns formed in my hands, Saïx’s eyes widened., and he called to Axel.

'Axel!' he hissed. 'It's the Freeshoter!' Axel turned to him, his eyes screaming surprise.

'The freeshooter?! He's here?! NO WAY!'

'The Superior will be quite pleased with our discovery.'

'Everyone just SHUT UP!' I yelled. 'You invade our home, kill our friends, burn our homes down, and I won't let you live long enough to regret it!' I rushed forward at him, remembering my strength and the power I had discovered. With amazing speed, he still dodged me, and the real fight began. Like I said, I hadn't fought in years, and I wasn't very good. He bested me many times..." Xigbar began to unzip his coat. I was utterly shocked to see all the scratches and scars across his body.

"Those are..."

"From that fight." He answered me. "Saix is a brutal fighter, and when he fights, he aims to kill. My madness blinded me, and I was unable to figure that out for myself. Then, when he realized that damaging my body wasn't stopping me, he went for my face. He dropped his claymore, and his nails, ripping through his black gloves, clawed at me. I tripped over my feet, and fell hard to the ground, in a puddle of my own blood. Saix jumped on top of me, clawing at my neck, my chest, and my face. I only have a few scars on my face, one obviously being this obnoxiously long cut along my left cheek. The others are small, because it wasn't so much a scratch, than a stab. Focusing all his strength into his hand, it stiffened, and his hand became like a knife, headed straight for my head. Unfortunately, I was unable to dodge. I managed to shift my head to one side, but his claws dug deep into my right eye. I instantly lost sight in it, obviously. I was down, and tired, and accepting my defeat. I looked over through the blood to see Axel grinning big, and Myde shaking with fear. I wanted to cry out to him, I wanted to tell him that I loved him, but I couldn't speak. I had a very angry monster crushing my lungs, and blood clogging my throat. Then the last thing I saw was Myde, glowing, and I witnessed the same heart-releasing ceremony once more.

"The next thing I remember is waking up to see Xemnas standing over me. I was bandaged up, and my head killed. We sat and talked, catching up on what I had missed those long years. Xemnas informed me of his research, his experiments, and the seventh and eighth members. But then, he mentioned a ninth. I looked to the bed next to me and there you were, Demyx. I immediately recognized you, but you didn't know me. I don't know if you remember that." I shook my head. "I vowed to myself that I would make you remember me, and remember who you were, but, I don't think even telling you all this is going to make you remember your True self. That's all I have to say."

I was truly astonished. It brought me to tears. What could I say? Nothing. No words could describe what I felt. I looked at him for a long time. His head collapsed into his hands, and he sobbed silently at his memories. I inched close to him, pulling him into a supporting embrace. I comforted him the best I could. I now knew it all. I knew why he was coming between Axel and I. I knew why he'd done what he had done, and I wanted to thank him, but I still couldn't speak. We sat there, alone, clinging to each other. It was then, I heard footsteps walking past the common room. I looked up to see Roxas bobbing along, down the stairs, and then I heard a door slam. Xigbar instantly sat up, and dried his eyes on his sleeve.

"Wanna go spy on him?" he quickly suggested. Some things never change.

“Oh, hell yes. You bet!” I grinned. We stood up, and silently chased after the blonde teen.

11 - Roxas Leaves, Axel Follows

DISCLAIMER: I do not own Kingdom Hearts

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Yes, now we're starting to see more of the story tying in with the game. I took this scene with Axel and Roxas DIRECTLY FROM THE BEGINNING OF KH2! So if you recognize it, that's why. Xemnas is cooking up some wonderful plans for the Key Bearer :)

PART 11

'Roxas Leaves, Axel Follows'

We had gotten up to leave, when Axel, quickly and quietly, chased after Roxas. We then quickly and quietly followed Axel. I don't think Roxas knew he had three people following him.

The clouds were bubbling in the dark, murky sky. This abandoned city that doesn't exist, this world that never was, it was always dark and storming. Roxas calmly walked through the streets of his origin, goal set in his mind. Axel had gotten far ahead of us, and even ahead of Roxas to ambush him. Axel stood, cross-armed against the side of a large black building.

"Where will you go?" He mumbled just loud enough for Roxas to hear as he passed. Roxas said nothing. Axel gave a deep, depressing sigh. "Your mind's made up, then?" Roxas stopped walking.

"Why did the keyblade choose me? I have to know." He simply replied. Xigbar and I were watching from a rooftop not too far away.

"You can't turn your back on the Organization!" Axel yelled. Roxas was silent once more. "You get on their bad side, and they'll destroy you!"

"No one would miss me," Roxas finally replied, beginning to walk to the edges of the city.

"That's not true!" Axel said softly. "I would..." But it was too late. Roxas was gone, and Axel was alone. He hung his head, then collapsed to the ground.

"It's not fair..." He whispered. "I love you, Roxas." That was all I could take. I was hoping that after a few hours, maybe a day at the most, Axel would return to normal. Roxas was gone, and things were back to the way they were. Xigbar and I hurried back to the castle to find Xemnas giving a speech. He was informing the group about Naminé. Xigbar and I were just in time.

"So you see, our darling Naminé here has the power to change one's memory." Xemnas announced, Naminé firm in his grasp. "She has the power to enter one's heart and unlink the chains of memory deep within us. She also has the power to create new memories, and connect them to the old ones. Knowing this power of hers, I have begun to plan a project to find our friend the Key Bearer. Speaking of which, where is Roxas?" Xigbar and I looked at each other, then we looked at Xaldin. "Well, no matter. This doesn't concern him, anyway." He continued. "I plan to break us up into two groups. One group

will be the base team, and shall stay here. The others shall make a base at a new place and lure the Key Bearer there. When the new castle is up and running, you will move in immediately. I have already broken you up, and decided who shall carry out this mission.” He stepped toward us. “Vexen. Lately, your work has been failing me. Prove to me your worth, and help the others carry out this mission.” Vexen grumbled, then let out a quiet,

“Yessir.”

“Lexaeus. You’ve proven your strength many a time. You shall join them achieve their goals.” Lexaeus gave a silent nod. “Zexion. You’re cunning, and your skill to sense strong beings will be very helpful. Larxene. You can reach amazing speeds with your knives. I was going to have Roxas join you but...”

“I’ll volunteer.” Axel said monotonous.

“Ah, thank you, number eight.” Xemnas grinned. “That’s very kind of you to take the child’s place.” He finally turned to the pink-haired drama queen.

“Marluxia,” Xemnas smiled. “You’ve have proven your worth to me in many, many ways. You’re strength is growing still, and you show real leadership potential. I shall place you in charge.” Marluxia’s blue eyes began to widen, and sparkle.

“Lord Xemnas!” He squealed with joy. “This is quite an honor!” I didn’t hear what else he said, because a very ticked off Vexen pushed me away, jumping ahead of the group.

“Master Xemnas!” Vexen shrieked. “How dare you appoint this... Imbecile control over a large amount of us!” He turned to Marluxia, and shouted in his face, still addressing Xemnas. “He’s one of the lowest ranking members you’ve placed on this mission. How can you give him the title of ‘Leader’? How absurd!”

“Number four, you shall hold your tongue!” Xemnas hissed, eyes narrowed. Vexen jumped at the tone, and turned to face him. “You dare question my judgement?”

“No, not at all sir!” Vexen pleaded. “I... I just think someone of higher rank should control the situation! Marluxia is hardly experience-worthy!”

“And I suppose you are, Vexen?”

“...I’m not electing myself, but... ”

“Vexen, as many times as I ask you to prove your worth to me, and our group, you fail. Your experiments are failures, which seem to me to be a perfect representation of you. You have no room to decide who should lead. His rank may be lower, but I have more faith him to bring me success than you. Understood?” This was a hard blow to Vexen’s ego, I could tell. You could see the hatred he had for Marluxia. And Marluxia smiled a most fiendish smile. He was enjoying this! He loved seeing Vexen squirm. It made me sick to watch. And what was with Xemnas? When did he become so... So angry?

Vexen, realizing his place, stepped down. His eyes burned with fury, but his face was calm. I could see

him and Marluxia exchanging glances.

“Continuing on,” Xemnas said, beginning to pace. “The castle where this team will be based is still being built. It is a world between worlds, like where we are now, only visible to those who seek it. Meaning, if you desire to find this place, it will appear before you. The mission of those going to the castle shall be to lure the Key Bearer to the castle, and have our dear Naminé erase his memories, and make her own to make him her puppet. Then, we can use him to destroy the heartless, and reach our ultimate goal.”

“Sir, you have yet to fully explain this ‘ultimate goal’, even to me.” Marluxia said, stepping in. “I think it’s about time you revealed these plans.” Sorry, Marly, but we already tried that tactic.

“Very well, number eleven.” Xemnas nodded. Oh sure, listen to the flower-boy. “Our ultimate goal is none other than Kingdom Hearts.”

“..Sir?”

“Kingdom Hearts. That is where our destinies lay. Tell me, gentlemen, where do hearts go when they are released? They don’t just float around, I’ll have you know. If Heartless don’t devour them, they float to a plane of existence I’m not sure anyone’s seen. It is a place between darkness and light where all hearts drift to. It is known as Kingdom Hearts. Every heart that has ever been lost resides there now. And that includes ours. My plans, my friends, are simply to find, and infiltrate Kingdom Hearts and find our hearts, letting us be whole once more.”

There were so many things wrong with this plan, but being the timid mouse I was, I remained quiet. How were we sure Xemnas even knew what he was talking about? So we’re looking for this so-called ‘Kingdom Hearts’. I’m not sure I like this plan at all. But that was the least of my worries for now. Xemnas was planning to ship them off tomorrow afternoon. He said he wasn’t sure how long they’d have to be gone. This worried me to no end. One of my best friends had been chosen to go to this castle. Zexion. And was I the only one who saw the dangers of these plans? They were going to go head to head with the Key Bearer! If he’s as amazing as I’ve been hearing, then what happens if things go wrong? What if he harms any of them? What if he kills them?

The meeting was over, and I was lost in my thoughts. I shook them off when everyone started to leave. I caught up to Zexion.

“Hey, Zex, wait up!” I called. He stopped and turned to me. He smiled big, and we continued to walk together.

“So this is quite an honor...” He said softly. “Xemnas has never given me such a huge responsibility before...”

“I think this is really a bad idea...” I admitted.

“Why do you say that?”

“Well, it’s just.. This could be really dangerous... and I don’t want any of you getting hurt. This

keyblade guy sounds dangerous. He's apparently gone to many worlds, fighting the Heartless, growing stronger by the minute! Who's to say he won't be stronger than us?"

"You're way too paranoid, Dem. So he killed some Heartless. We're stronger, and smarter than any Heartless he could have faced. Besides, if things go as planned, there won't be much fighting. Naminé will take care of that, I hope."

"You.. Hope?"

"Well, she doesn't seem like she wants to help us."

"That's apparent."

"I just wish she could see it from a different perspective. She thinks us to be bad, evil people, when in reality, we just want our hearts back. She may have gotten a bad impression from Xemnas... And I'm sure being controlled by Marluxia won't change her mind either. He'll probably force her somehow."

"I agree with you there. This all seems so strange. And I wonder why Axel was so eager to volunteer."

"I think now that Roxas is gone, you should sit him down, and talk to him."

"Yeah, you're probably.. Wait. How do you know about that?" Surprised, I stopped walking. He turned around, and flashed a quick, shy smile.

"I'm smarter than I look. I know what happened, so don't worry about covering it up."

"..."

"Anyway, I don't know why he would want to join us. You should talk to him. Maybe talk him out of it. You're right. It could be dangerous. And what if we don't come back?"

"Don't say that!" I cried. "I don't want to think about that... You're going to come back. In fact, I just got a great idea. Wait here." I ran to my room as fast as I could. Under my bed, I kept a small journal that was unused. I was planning to use it, I just never really had the inspiration. I rushed back to Zexion.

"Here. Take this." I handed him the notebook. "I want you to document the events at the castle, just for me. Then you can give it to me when you return." Zexion stared at the book for a long time. After a while, he looked up to me.

"I'm going to miss you, pal." He smiled, brushing the silvery-lavender hair from his eyes.

"I'll miss you, too. Don't be gone too long." We shared a warm hug, then he ventured off to his room to gather some things. It was getting late. I still had some time to talk to Axel. I hurried to his room. Luckily, he was there. I reluctantly knocked on his door.

"...Axel?" No response. "Axel, please open the door. It's Demyx. I want to talk." The knob turned to my surprise, and Axel was there.

“Come on in.” He said, surprising me again. And I did just that. Maybe it was finally over. Maybe he was back to the way he was. Maybe things were finally going to resume where they left off.

“So what was it that you wanted?” he asked me after a long period of silence.

“I just.. Wanted... I wanted to know if you knew where Roxas went... I’m not looking for him, but everyone else seems to be.”

“He left.”

“He... left?”

“Yeah. Earlier today. Before the meeting. He said something about finding out why he has a Keyblade. What a fool. We coulda told him that.”

“So... why exactly did you volunteer for Xemnas’ new project?” Then he grew silent.

“I need to get out into the worlds... yeah...”

“That’s not the real reason. Axel, tell me the truth.” I could see he was uneasy about it, yet I had no idea why.

“I can’t tell you. It’s a personal thing.”

“Axel... Remember the days when you told me everything? We shared everything with each other... everything. Remember?”

“Can’t say that I do.” Oh, no. “Listen, is there anything else you wanted? I need to get some stuff together.” Realizing that nothing had changed, I slowly shook my head, stood up, and left. I couldn’t believe it. Now he didn’t even remember the time we had together. I had a hunch that him volunteering had something to do with Roxas. Maybe having Zexion write in my journal would help me figure it out. I had a very lonely few weeks ahead of me. Thank god Xigbar was chosen to stay behind. At least, I knew I had someone willing to comfort me if things got bad.

3am. Can’t sleep. I couldn’t stop thinking about them. Axel, Zexion, and Xigbar. Axel, why won’t you remember? Why did I ever let Roxas come between us? What are you trying to achieve? Zexion, what if your plans fail? What if the Key Bearer attacks you? What if you get killed? Xigbar, I’m sorry for all the history we have, and I’m sorry I don’t remember it. I know you’re in love with me but...

Why can’t I fall asleep? This is ridiculous. Suddenly, I heard yelling from the room next door. Axel’s room. I snuck out of bed, and crept from my room. I put my ear to Axel’s door to hear two voices arguing inside.

“You just don’t get it, do you?” said the first voice.

“Oh, I understand perfectly.” the second voice shouted. “You just can’t face facts!”

“What are you talking about?!”

“Can’t you see, he cares so much for you! And you just throw him aside like he’s no one.”

“He is no one to me.”

“You weren’t saying that a few months ago!”

“What?”

“Don’t you remember anything before that kid took over your mind?”

“Leave Roxas out of this!”

“It kills me to watch him suffer! I swear to God, if you hurt him any more, I’ll have to kill you myself.” I heard footsteps heading toward the door, I quickly hid in my room, peeking out the door. Xigbar emerged from Axel’s door, slamming it shut. There was no point in me hiding. I opened my door and Xigbar looked right at me.

“Demyx...”

“...Xigbar.. Can I.. Stay with you tonight? I’m having trouble.. Falling asleep.”

“Of course. You can stay with me any time.” He took my hand, and we walked through the corridors, to the opposing wing.

When we reached his room, everyone had finally settled to bed. It was very quiet, and we were the only ones awake.

“I’m sorry we woke you...” Xigbar whispered. “I wasn’t sure how loud we were being.”

“You didn’t wake me,” I corrected him. “I was already awake. I can’t shake this feeling that something terrible is going to happen.”

“Everything’s gonna be fine, Dem. You’ll see. Soon, we’ll have the Key Bearer firmly in our grasp, and next thing ya know, we’ll have our hearts back!”

“I sure hope you’re right...” We had settled on his bed, sitting side by side, in silence. Finally, I spoke up.

“You... miss Myde, don’t you?” Xigbar’s head shot up so fast, I thought maybe he got whip-lash from it.

“W-what did you say?”

“When this is all over, when we finally get our hearts back, we won’t be the nothings we are now. We’ll

be our True Selves. I have a strong... Well... I don't know if Axel will ever remember when we were together...and I feel like even if we got our hearts back, he wouldn't... I just... Do you think... I-I don't know what I'm trying to say here..."

"Demyx, I need to be honest with you. I thought helping you to get Axel back would be one of the most rewarding things I've ever done in my life. I knew it would mean losing you, but knowing you were happy would be enough for me. At least, that's what I thought. I think... I think I've been fooling myself. When this is all over, I don't know if Axel's ever gonna recover. And I feel like this is a lost cause. I don't wanna sound selfish, but I finally have you, kinda. Something about Roxas' heart, the pure heart of the Key Bearer, is forcing Axel to have all that's around him clouded. Roxas is the only person in his view, and I'm afraid we can't change that." I was listening to him, but I just couldn't look him in the eye. That is, until he grabbed my by the shoulders, and forced me to.

"Xigbar..."

"Demyx, I love you."

"No, you love Myde." I managed to say.

"You're better than Myde. You're a part of him, and it's the part that I know I fell in love with. Demyx, let's stop this foolish hunt. Axel is a lost cause. Let's just leave him to chase Roxas to the ends of the universe. We can stay here, and be happy. Together. Forever. And when we regain our hearts, we can really start our lives!"

"Xigbar... I-"

"Don't tell me you can't... Please..." There was nothing I could say. I would have just been fooling myself in agreeing. Realizing I wasn't going to answer him, he backed away, letting me go and gave a deep, depressing sigh.

"What if it was only temporary?"

"...what?"

"Like, for a few weeks maybe. While Axel's away. While they're at the new base castle. It's not like you'd still see Axel every day to remind you of him right? Outta sight, outta mind."

"I.. I need to think. I need time to think." I finally said, unsure of how else to answer.

"..Okay. Think about it. Let me know when you've decided." He leaned over and placed a soft kiss on my cheek. I actually felt better. I was glad we talked, and things that had to be said were said. I thanked him for the hospitality, but I needed to sleep alone that night. He understood, and walked me back to my room. We said our 'goodnight's and I shut the door. By now it was about 4ish in the morning. I got what little sleep I could, and made sure I was up in time to say goodbye to Zexion and maybe Axel.

Morning came too quickly. I knew I had to get up. In fact, I was running late. They were to leave any minute, and I was still in bed. I jumped up, wet my hair, and threw on my coat. I raced downstairs to the

foyer where everyone else was. Everyone was talking, wishing each other good luck, and such. Then I spotted Zexion. He, and Vexen were talking to Xaldin. I hurried over. Xigbar wasn't anywhere in sight, and neither was Axel. I was sort of thankful for that, though. I wanted to forget about them for now, and focus on my dear Zexion.

"Good morning, sleepy head," Zexion greeted me. I smiled.

"Didn't even have time to do your hair?" Xaldin almost laughed.

"I overslept," I stretched, yawning. "I wanted to say goodbye."

"Yeah, who knows if you'll ever see us again." Vexen grumbled.

"Don't talk like that," I scolded my elder. "You guys'll be fine. Have fun, and be careful."

"We'll try... Don't worry, I'll keep your notebook updated, and I'll personally hand it back to you when this is all over." Zexion was all smiles now, extending his hand for a final handshake. Knocking it aside, I pulled him into a hug.

"Come home soon."

"Already there." I shook Vexen's hand, wishing him the best of luck.

"Watch out for Marly," I warned him. "I don't think he's right in the head."

"I agree" scowled Vexen. "The bastard is going to be the end of me..." With that, they left, heading toward an opened shadow door leading them to the new castle. Who knew Vexen's last statement would be so significant? I guess you'll see why later.

Vexen, Lexaeus, Zexion, Axel, Marluxia and Larxene, all gone. Naminé, too. The castle felt naked without everyone there. It felt empty, lonely. And now I was alone with Xigbar standing over me, waiting for my response. I dreaded the decision. Xigbar meant a lot to me, but I could never let go of Axel. I don't even know why. I just couldn't. It hurt too much. And it wasn't even supposed to!

Later that night, I was in my room, continuing that beautiful melody I had started months before. The notes came so easily. I put every false emotion I could feel into it, and wrote it down, note by note. A haunting melody. A, hrm, melodious nocturne, you could say. Every note seemed to blend into the next, and as I played, I felt the harmony flow through my fingers, to the strings, and bellow from the sitar to the corners of my bedroom, and out through my window, into the night sky. Suddenly, I heard a voice. I didn't know where it was coming from, but it was humming along to my music. I started the song over, playing every note with energy, and then I heard words from to the melody.

"We met that night when the sea ran high," the voice sang.

"And I craved for more of a near love experience.

"Those who the music hath then joined together,

“Are now but asunder...” I stopped. Who was singing? I looked down out my window. No one. I looked up. No one. Where were these magnificent words coming from? Just as I was hanging out my window, my door burst open to show the figure of Xigbar, looking stunned, and amazed. He rushed to me.

“Tell me that was you playing that haunting trill!”

“Wh-what?”

“That music! That was you, wasn’t it?”

“Wait! Was that you.. Singing?”

“Where did you learn that song?”

“I j-just made it up. I’ve been composing it for a long time.”

“Are you sure?!”

“Xigbar, what’s the matter?”

“That’s the song Myde played on his guitar that night at the beach!”

12 - With the Guys

DISCLAIMER: I don't own Kingdom Hearts.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Anyone play KH:Chain of memories? That's where I'm headed next :D There's a lot of fluff in this chapter. Sorry, I was in a sappy mood. OH and BTW, yes, I put a bar in Traverse Town. That place needs some excitement XD

PART 12

'With the Guys'

Previously, in Mellifluous Trill...

"We met that night when the sea ran high," the voice sang.

"And I craved for more of a near love experience.

"Those who the music hath then joined together,

"Are now but asunder..." I stopped. Who was singing? I looked down out my window. No one. I looked up. No one. Where were these magnificent words coming from? Just as I was hanging out my window, my door burst open to show the figure of Xigbar, looking stunned, and amazed. He rushed to me.

"Tell me that was you playing that haunting trill!"

"Wh-what?"

"That music! That was you, wasn't it?"

"Wait! Was that you.. Singing?"

"Where did you learn that song?"

"I j-just made it up. I've been composing it for a long time."

"Are you sure?!"

"Xigbar, what's the matter?"

"That's the song Myde played on his guitar that night at the beach!"

I stared a long time before finding the words to speak.

“What... What are you talking about? I’ve been writing this song for... Months now. ”

“I’m as confused as you are, Dem...” Xigbar sighed, sadness in his voice, sorrow showing on his face. “C-could you just... Play the song some more?”

“I don’t want to upset you...” He walked into my room, and sat comfortably in my leather computer chair.

“It’s just been so long since I heard suitable music, especially that.” This troubled me some. I was afraid to speak to him. I didn’t want the subject of “us” to come up in any sort of conversation. I sat on my window sill, and plucked the strings. I became consumed by the melody, and it seemed, Xigbar did too. He started to sway, and hum to the sound. I came to a stop, a break in the music. That’s all I had written. I looked to Xigbar. His hands, gripping the arm rests tight. His face was in complete anguish, tears streaming from his eyes. He gritted his teeth, trying to stop the flow, but he couldn’t stop.

I immediately dropped my instrument, running to his side as it dissolved into flowing bubbles. Then it hit me. What the hell was wrong with me? I mean, yeah, I cared a lot about him but, I was just beginning to realize how... how submissive I was acting. I was like a lost puppy, coming to every beck and call of my master. Xigbar wasn’t... Controlling me somehow, was he? No. That’s absurd. That’s what happens when I think too hard. I think the reality of it was that maybe I was actually falling for Xigbar. Maybe falling a little too hard. And I was in denial. I’m often in denial, aren’t I?

I pulled him close, and he shivered in my arms. He was like a child for those few moments. And I felt like my entire being called him close. Was this how Axel felt about Roxas?

“I-I’m sorry” he sniffled, trying his hardest to stop..

“No, don’t apologize.” I commanded. “Stop apologizing...” My grasp tightened. I felt his arms, his hands grab my back. My arms were around his head, and he sobbed silently into my chest.

“I’m not trying to be a b-bother” he whispered to me.

“I’m in quite a pickle,” I chuckled. I couldn’t help but laugh. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen you cry. Now, to die in peace, it’s Xaldin’s turn to shed a tear.” Even Xigbar laughed at that. He pulled back, smiling, wiping his eye on the sleeve of his coat.

“Man, if word got out a bout this, I’ll be a ruined man,” his mouth curved in a sharp grin.

“Well. I know the first thing Zexion’s gonna hear about when he gets back!” I shouted, standing up, mimicking his devilishly evil look.

“Oh, you wouldn’t dare!” He roared, standing up. I winked.

“Just try and stop me!” I made a break for the door, stopping to look behind. Xigbar was close behind, and I could feel his chest on my back.

“Hands off the doorknob.” He whispered. I let go, raising my hands as if I was busted by police. I then slid from between him and the door, and ran to the window, threatening to jump. And then he was gone. He blinked from my room like he was never there. I stood in my window, staring at my room, trying to find him, and then I felt a tap on my shoulder. I turned around, facing the outside and seeing Xigbar, upside down, floating on nothing. Extremely startled, I screamed, heading back into my room. He then appeared beside me, tackling me to the bed. We wrestled, and when it was clear that I was pinned, he held me there, sitting on top of me.

“Where the hell did you learn to do that?!” I cried. I had never seen him teleport before.

“I’ve been workin’ on it lately. Impressed?”

“Eh... A little” I lied. I was really impressed. I thought that was amazing, and I was hoping he’d show me how he did it. But then my mind drifted to other matters.

“Mind letting me up?” I asked.

“Oh, right. Sorry.” He hopped off the bed, off of me, and I stood up. I’m not sure why I did it at first, but I was glad I did after. I quickly kicked Xigbar’s feet from under him, him falling onto the bed, and me finally pinning him down for a change.

“Demyx, wha-”

“Listen. I’ve been thinking, and tonight just proved something to me. I’ve thought about your offer...” It was then that I achieved his attention. “Let’s give it a shot, I mean... What’s the worst that can happen in a few weeks anyway?” Saying that as fast as I could didn’t lessen the blood flooding my face. I could feel the flush, and knew it was apparent. And for once, Xigbar was speechless.

“Dem, maybe you want more time to think about it...” He suggested. “I mean, I don’t want you to feel like I’m forcin’-”

“No, I understand, and I’ve made up my mind.” I leaned in close, my lips almost touching his. “I think..I’m falling for you.” It was getting hot. The blushing was getting worse, and it was too late to go back now. The fact that I was laying on top of him didn’t help either. “Wherever my heart may be, it’s telling me to try something new. ”

“Something... new?”

“My earliest memory as a Nobody is Axel. And it’s not that I want to forget, but I want to move on. God, I must sound like a hopeless sap.” I started to lean back, and sit up, but Xigbar wouldn’t let me. He swiftly held on to my shoulders, and pulled me back down. He pulled me into a soft kiss.

“If that’s what you want...” He said, breaking the kiss.

“You don’t seem as enthusiastic as I thought you’d be...”

“I just don’t know if you-”

“Let me worry about me. This is my choice, and who knows? Maybe something good’ll happen.” What I wanted to say was ‘maybe you can help me get my mind off Axel’, but I would basically be contradicting myself. At that moment, I was hoping to have a fresh start, and no one would get in my way. The others really kept to themselves, except when Luxord felt the need to have group card games. Xemnas and Saix spent the majority of their time in Xemnas’ bedroom, and I think that’s as much detail as I need to go in there. I was never exactly sure what was going on up there, but I’m sure you people are smart and can cook up something in your imagination.

Since it got quite boring, and quiet in the castle, the four of us, Xaldin, Luxord, Xigbar and I, would often hang out. We were, after all, the only ones left. Saix received daily reports from our friends at the new castle, Castle Oblivion. One from each of them. Then, he would keep us up to date with the events. It had only been a few days since they left, but it felt like a lot longer.

“They’ve settled pretty nicely in Castle Oblivion.” Saix began. “Marluxia has assigned them each a task, and role in the castle. If it is not carried out, he promises to inform us after applying consequences and necessary action. He expects the castle to be ready in a week’s time. He is already formulating plans on luring Roxas’ True self to the castle.

Vexen’s report states that his experiments are going fairly well. He is still not happy about being controlled by Marluxia, but he has great plans for our key wielding friend.

“Zexion’s and Lexaeus’ reports didn’t say much. And Larxene didn’t seem to write one... Axel has also neglected to send his. That is all.”

“What kind of experiments is Vexen trying to conduct?” I asked.

“He did not specify.” Saix turned and left. So things were finally getting off the ground there. Good. I couldn’t wait until Zexion returned with my notebook filled with his experiences, his adventures. And I wanted all the details about the Key-boy. Which oddly reminded me. I hadn’t had my nightmare in a long time. In fact, I hadn’t had it since the day Roxas left. I thought it was weird, but I was glad.

That night, me and the guys, (I suppose that’s what I’ll call them now instead of listing them by name), left our castle via dark door and went world-hopping. Truth was, Luxord wanted to go drinking. And we didn’t object.

So, we stopped at a quiet place. I don’t remember the name. Transverse Town? Tavern Town? Didn’t matter. It had a bar.

Not caring of our appearance, we left our hoods down. We entered, and walked to the back. There weren’t many people there. The four of us sat down, and began the night with a shot of vodka.

After that, the night was pretty much a blur. At least, it was for me. I remember Xigbar sitting down next to a young blonde man dressed in black. He covered himself in a red cape.

“So what’re you in for?” Xigbar grinned, the alcohol taking effect. The man held tightly to his beer.

“A friend o’ mine killed my girlfriend, and now he’s tryin’ to blow up the planet.” He said, taking another gulp from his bottle. Xigbar then leaned over to me. I could smell the brew in his breath.

“Poor guy must’ve gotten dumped by his lady friend,” he whispered. The night seemed to drag on as we all got more and more intoxicated. I think Luxord blacked out for a few minutes, but I don’t remember. Next thing I knew, the four of us were stumbling into my bedroom. Why? I think it was to escape the wrath of Xemnas and Saix. Their rooms, of course, were on the other side of the castle. I also remember I couldn’t stop giggling, and then I fell face first onto my floor. Xigbar had settled on my bed, and I pulled myself onto my computer chair. Luxord and Xaldin had awkwardly started flirting by my window, and it made me laugh to watch Luxord play with his hair. Looking back, though, it was really disturbing.

And of course, the morning after. I had passed out, leaning on my computer desk. A few swift cracks of the back, and I was feeling fine. Thankfully, the hangover wasn’t NEARLY what it was last time I drank. However, I couldn’t say the same for my comrades. Xaldin and Luxord were slumped together in the corner. It was kind of cute, and I almost wished I had a camera. It would have been awesome blackmail. I feared what would happen when they awoke. Xigbar was still in my bed. His hair was a mess, and so were my sheets. I quietly pecked him on the cheek, then left my room. I wondered if he had any of his ‘special pills’ handy. Wouldn’t it be funny if he couldn’t find them? The evil thought flooded my mind as I raced down the hall. I came to the wing. I crept into his bedroom, closing the door behind me. I turned on the light. Everything was nicely and neatly arranged. There had been some targets on his walls with millions of bullet holes through them. I strode into his bathroom, checking all the bottles. I’m sure he kept it in some secret place; I just had to find it.

By the time I gave up searching the bathroom, I noticed a tile out of line. I bent down and moved it aside. Below the tiles lay a small wooden box. I picked up the box, and opened it slowly. Inside the box were envelopes of all sorts, old photographs, and finally, the bottle. I smiled, and had myself a little victory dance.

Then I became quite nosy. I started looking through the envelopes. Endless documents containing science-related things I had no knowledge of. I even saw a few diplomas, and degree in sciences and such. Then I looked through the photographs.

They must have been from the days before the Heartless. He looked... Different, but I could still tell it was him. Pictures of him in the lab with others. Was that Xemnas? Next picture. Two people with test tubes in hand. One was definitely Xigbar; he had long black hair, and I knew that smile anywhere. The other also had long black hair, but I couldn’t tell who it was. When I flipped the picture over, in bold print it said, ‘BRAIG & DILAN’. Xaldin’s True self. They must have been great friends.

I searched the pictures more; there were so many. Finally I came to the last picture, and the ghost of my emotions saddened me greatly. The picture was of Xigbar, and a man with lengthy, curly brown hair. By the angle, they were both holding the camera, and it was above their heads. The brunet was kissing Xigbar on the cheek. I flipped it over to read the names, although I was pretty sure I knew. ‘BRAIG & MYDE’. They looked absolutely in love. They were so happy together.

A door slam. My head shot up, and I scrambled to put everything back in its place. I don’t think I’ve ever moved that fast in my life. Shoving the wooden box down into the hole, I covered it with the tile then

stood. Footsteps. And they were coming closer. I began to panic, and jumped into the shower, pulling the curtain across. I drew up my knees, and sat, almost afraid. The door opened, and a figure came in and looked around. I heard the sound of the tile scraping across the others. It had to be Xigbar, although I wasn't sure because I wasn't about to peek my head out. It was then I realized I was still holding the bottle of pills, and the last picture.

"shoot, where'd I put them?" He said, obviously looking for his beloved pills. He then set the tile back in place, and left. When I felt it was safe to emerge, I did. I quietly stepped out of the bathtub, and soundlessly put the bottle back in the box under the tile. But something told me to keep the picture, so I did. I was careful to place it in my pocket, not trying to ruin it. I then crept out of his bathroom, and out of his room. I then walked back to mine.

I came in to all sorts of yelling, mostly Xaldin and Luxord yelling at each other, and Xigbar yelling at them to keep quiet.

"What's all the commotion?" I said innocently, entering the room.

"Luxord thought it would be funny to pass out on my shoulder!" Xaldin shouted, crossed arms.

"Oh bloody hell, Xaldin," Luxord said back. "It's not my problem that you were content with your arms around me!"

"Ugh, Guys come on. My head is POUNDING!" Xigbar roared, teeth bared.

"What's the matter, Xiggy?" I decided it was time to play around. "What happened to your precious 'special drug', hmm?"

"It's gone missing..." He mumbled, obviously suffering from his sickness. "I s'pose I could make more, but that would take a while." I couldn't help but laugh. I tried my hardest to hold it in, but I couldn't any longer.

"Maybe you should look again!" I shouted between laughs.

"I checked everywhere!"

"I just said, look again!" He gave me an extremely suspicious look, but then left to check. While he was gone, I made quick work to Xaldin. I pulled out the photograph from my coat, and shoved it in his face.

"...Demyx how did you get this?"

"It doesn't matter. You're close to Xigbar. Tell me. What does he tell you about me?"

"..."

"Xaldin, please! Before he gets back!" He quickly collected his thoughts.

"When Xigbar had returned from his absence, you were with him. After you both had awakened, Axel

took full care of you, educating you of what you were, and how you came to be. Of course, being who he is, he lied to you, and gave you a sense of protection from him. Axel, sadly is as much an enigma as Master Xemnas himself.

“When Xigbar had realized what had happened, he went into a mild depression, and denied it had ever happened. He didn’t believe you were his beloved Myde, and steered clear of you. He kept this picture tucked away where he could look at it at any time. He told me all about his journey, and all about you, er, Myde. His reason for agreeing to Xemnas’ insane plans is so that when we get our hearts back, he’ll finally have his love back.”

“So it’s not enough to have me,” I whispered. “He just wants me to become what I was.”

“No, no, Demyx, you misunderstand. I suppose... You could compare it to You and Axel?”

“...Excuse me?”

“You’ve agreed to spend your days with Xigbar, yes? But you really wish to have Axel back, and no matter how hard you fight that, you can’t hide your true feelings.”

“...but-”

“So, similarly, Xigbar has you, and loves you but he truly wishes for Myde.” I nodded my head and what amazing timing we had. Xigbar had just then returned to the room.

“I can’t believe I missed them before” he said, holding the jar of drugs. I quickly stashed the photo in my pocket. “Here, everyone have one.” Of course I refused, remembering the effects of last time. Plus, I wasn’t sick enough to take it twice.

After their side effects subsided, we decided to go for a walk; the four of us. Of course, we didn’t make it far before hearing an explosion. Strange thing was, it had come from the Lab, and as far as we knew, no one was down there. By the time we got to the door, Xemnas had burst out, white lab coat in shreds, and a maddened, crazed gaze in his orange eyes.

“I have done it!” He said, voice on the verge of madness.

“Done what?” Xigbar asked. “What’s goin’ on?”

“A creature. Stronger, smarter, more agile than any Heartless. My friends, I have created the first of our army!”

“Whoa, whoa, hold it,” Luxord cut in. “Army? Army of what?”

“We are not the only Nobodies, my friends! We are the strongest of Nobodies. We are able to keep our human form. Most, however are unlucky. For every Heartless created, a Nobody is made in it’s place. It may not become strong beings, able to think for themselves like we are, but they are there, and I’ve found a way to bring them to our dimension. I am now plunging our castle into a world that never existed; a place where Nobodies roam, and we shall control them! This castle, this world, it all will be

over run by this army of Nobodies.”

“Sir...?”

“Soon, this castle won’t exist. We will live in a world that never was, and we will control our fellow Nobodies in an attack against the other worlds!”

“..What do we need to attack the other worlds for?” I asked. I was utterly confused.

“Not so much attack, but find our key-wielding friend Roxas. Some Nobodies like myself can determine where other of our kind are. I shall send them on a search for Roxas while Castle Oblivion takes care of his other, Sora.”

“Sora... ”

“Indeed. With Vexen away, I must do these tasks myself. Please, go about your business, and I’ll try my hardest to have Saix keep you all updated.” With that, he went back into the lab, shutting the door behind him.

Xemnas became weirder and weirder throughout the time I’ve known him. It seems as though he’s lost his mind. Attacking other worlds for no reason?

About three weeks went by. Up until last week, the reports from Castle Oblivion were normal, saying how they had successfully lured Sora to them, and already had Naminé arranging his memories to fit their dark deed. He spoke of great successes, and how their plan was almost complete, and Sora was almost a mindless puppet at Naminé’s beck and call. Things were sounding amazing. It was until that third week, that it all crashed down.

We had heard nothing since the last report, not even from Marluxia. Xaldin began to worry, but we didn’t think much of it until the day Axel came back. Alone. With my notebook, dripping in blood, in his gloved hands.

13 - You Are Never Coming Home

Disclaimer: I do not own Kingdom Hearts.

Author's Note: Just a few things.. The reason it took me so long to get this out is because I realized that listening to happy/upbeat music doesn't help to write sad/depressing stories. I've been in such a good mood this week that I almost didn't want to work on this at all.

These last few chapters might be a little confusing to those who don't know the games all that well. Whenever the Organization meets up with Sora (Roxas' true self), They call him Roxas. So in these chapters, I'm not talking about Roxas, I'm talking about Sora who they call Roxas. Yeah, kind of confusing, I know. But think of it this way. Roxas has never set foot in Castle Oblivion.

I'm such a sucker for 411 that I just HAD to put some in here. I could never write amazing 411 ficlets like some of my favorite author's on y-gallery, but I did what I could. (411 is the common term for VexenXMarluxia. (Get it? Vexen 4, Marly 11 ahahah...) Yeah..)

The title is a lyric from the My Chemical Romance song The Ghost Of You. I pretty much had that song on repeat while writing from about page 3 on.

PART 13

"The last thing I see, you are never coming home"

I stared at the notebook for a long time. I stared at the ridges of the dried blood, eyed the glove-print stain on one side, and the splatter on the other. It greatly disturbed me to see this. Something dreadful had happened at Castle Oblivion, and for whatever reason, Axel was the only one who had returned. He tossed the book at my face, then left. So many questions, I had. So many that I wouldn't dare ask Axel. I paged through the book, seeing every page filled with inked words. Should I read it? How I longed to know what went on. What happened to you, Zexion?

I took the book, and went to my bedroom, locking the door. I wasn't going to let even Xigbar break me away. I needed to know what happened. I sat at my desk, and opened to the first page.

Entry 1

Day 1

Well, Demyx. I promised you I'd write this all out for you, so here it goes. Might as well start today. We've just arrived at Castle Oblivion; the place where 'to find is to lose, and to lose is to find,' as Marluxia likes to say. He's having a grand old time.

Lexaeus, Vexen and I began setting up our laboratory in the first floor of the basement of the castle. There are in fact thirteen floors, and thirteen basement floors. What a coincidence, right? Marluxia, Axel, and Larxene have taken to the top-most floor. That's where they're keeping Naminé. Marluxia's calling

a meeting, so I'll write more later.

Hmm. What an eventful meeting. Marluxia plans to have the castle set up in about a week's time. He says we all must meet every goal he sets for us so that when we lure Roxas here, everything is in order. The key bearer is really just what seems to be a clone of Roxas. Or maybe it's the other way around?

So, there's not much else to write about, my friend. I'll try to update every few days.

Entry 2

Day 3

Things are not really shaping up around here. Vexen refuses to do anything Marluxia tells him. Axel doesn't seem to want to either, but he does. Lexaeus and I finished setting up while Vexen and Marluxia argued in his office. They've been up there for some time, now. I wonder what's taking so long.

Speak of the devil! He just walked in and-

Sorry. Vexen walked in all sorts of bruised. When I saw him, I immediately ran to his aid. He won't tell us what happened, but I had a strong feeling it had something to do with our fearless leader.

"It was nothing," Vexen had said. "Just a small argument. You know how we fight." But they had never actually physically fought. Lex and I patched him up. I'll have to write more later. Lex is calling me.

Vexen just relayed some very interesting information to Lex and I. Apparently, Marluxia and Larxene are planning something. Vexen had heard something about them turning Roxas into a mindless puppet and send him to our home after Naminé rewrites his memory. When he asked why, Marluxia had gotten rather sore about it, and attacked him. He said the bruises were actually from his plants. Marluxia had never touched him. He just sent vines and flowers after him. If Marluxia's flowers can bruise, I hate to see what Marluxia can do...

Entry 3

Day 6

It's the day before Roxas is supposed to arrive. Or I should say, Roxas' Other. It's just easier to call him Roxas though. Things have been falling apart. Marluxia and Vexen fight every chance they get, Axel is gone most of the time, and Larxene is just a total dog to us all. Lex and I just sit in Basement 1 and drink tea. (Not even joking.) Well, since I have time now, I might as well explain how we're going to work things here. Our ultimate goal is to have Naminé replace Roxas' memories with ones she's made herself so that eventually, he will become just a mind puppet. Then, we can force him to help us gain our hearts back.

Luxord stopped by yesterday to help us install a certain memory-card-system. I'm not quite sure how it works, but apparently, Luxord made these special cards for us to use. He said that we can turn these cards into a place from a memory. So what we're going to do is pry deep into Roxas' memory and

recreate the worlds he's visited. Because he'll most likely be working up through the floors of the castle, Marluxia wants him to use these cards to gain entry to each floor. Each floor will be a different place from his mind.

I thought that was pretty cool. I'm not sure what purpose it holds, but it shall be fun to toy with our keyblade-wielding friend. Vexen has been gone a long while. I'm going to go look for him.

I have returned my friend to relay some unfortunate news. I'm really not sure how to tell you this without any sort of alarm... I only wish I could tell you in person, but unfortunately, I am not able to.

I had left the notebook, and walked up the stairs from Basement 1. I walked through each floor, up every stair. I finally made it to Floor 13, to Marluxia's chamber. As I walked toward it, I noticed the door was cracked open. I could hear yelling, and arguments of sorts. Most likely Vexen fighting up a storm. I inched toward the door, not wanting to be detected when I noticed the yells had turned to screams, and shouts.

"You shall be silent!" Marluxia called. I didn't see what happened next.

"Augh! You're disgusting!" Vexen shouted. "Get away from me!" Glass shattering.

"This is my castle; I am your master here, number Four, and you shall obey me!"

"I will do no such thing! You may control this castle, but you cannot control one of higher rank such as myself, and the others." I had finally reached the door when I saw a vine crawling out. Several, in fact. I quickly jumped to the side as the vines grew quickly around, and out the door. I had lost my chance to look in. But I was not discouraged. I pressed my ear to the door to listen further.

"Stop this madness, Marluxia!"

"Oh, Vexen. You're so desirable when you're furious!"

"Nng, stop!" Vexen's cries quickly shot from angry growls to helpless pleads. I could hear the mocked terror in his voice as he shouted for help, yelling at Marluxia to stop. I placed my hand to my mouth, trying hard not to make a sound. I only wished I could see, help, anything! I felt helpless, myself.

The sound of more glass shattering caught me off guard, and I jumped back against the door, causing it to shut on the vines. The greenery snapped, and the door slammed. This caused no disruption, of course. Then I realized the vines were gone, and creaked the door slightly open.

I heard the sounds of tears, and rips, and I saw the result. Vexen, stark naked, constricted by a hellish, fly-trap type monster of a flower. I could see the thorns from the branches digging deeply into his skin, causing him to bruise, and bleed. I wanted so badly to save him, but I couldn't risk Marluxia capturing me as well. All I could do was wait, and watch.

Marluxia began to unzip his own coat, beckoning the beast to bring poor number Four down. Vexen had stopped struggling, realizing the damage, and accepting where this was headed. Marluxia placed a firm hand on his head, grasping his hair.

"You're so cold," he smiled, shaking his head. He brought Vexen's face to his. "We are like opposites. The deadly winter versus the blooming spring. "

"I refuse to beg, Marluxia." Vexen said evenly, staring him right in the eyes. "Let me go. Someone is bound to find us. You will be reported to the Superior, and he will destroy you himself!"

"Oh, I highly doubt that. As you recall, he no longer has trust in you, dear Academic. You are a failure, just like your work. That is why he placed you under me!" Vexen gasped as Marluxia pulled harder on his hair. "Watching you suffer has been the highlight of this endless week of preparations." He pulled Vexen's face close, practically biting him into a violent kiss. I watched as Vexen's hands struggled around the vines, turning them to ice. They started to break, and shatter, and then, his arms were free. He immediately wrapped them around Marluxia's throat, pushing him away. As Marluxia lost his concentration, the vines released Vexen, causing them to fall onto the floor. The daggers in Vexen's eyes began to shine as ice formed around Marluxia's neck, causing breathing to be a problem.

"Ohoho!" Marluxia laughed, gasping for air. "Touche!" It was my time to enter. At least, I thought it was. As I started to open the door more, Marluxia clawed at Vexen's hands, prying them away. How was he so strong? They tumbled over, Marluxia now sitting over Vexen. He pushed his wrists to the ground beside his head, vines and roots holding them in place.

"How I will enjoy this!" Marluxia beamed, voice like poison. I couldn't watch any more. I was horrified, and truly afraid. I feared for my friend, but I couldn't take him on myself. I backed away, and turned to leave when Larxene appeared by the stairs.

"Well, well. Being snoopy, aren't we, Zexion?" She grinned, malice in her eyes.

"That's none of your business, number Twelve." I said back, walking past her.

"At this rate, we might not have a scientist on our hands for very much longer." And then she was gone. I raced to the basement, and found Lexaeus. I told him what I saw, and we rushed back. Surely we could take on Marluxia together. By the time we had arrived, he was gone. Larxene must've informed him. We entered the room and instantly spotted Vexen. He was crumpled in the corner, wrapped in his coat. We hurried to him.

"Vexen, Vexen! Are you all right?"

"...Y-yes," he whispered. "I'm fine."

"Let us bring you to your room."

"What's the point? It's over. It was over before it even began."

"Vexen?"

"Marluxia is absolutely insane." He shivered. "His views differ greatly from the rest of us. He's... He's going to try to kill the Superior. And he's going to use Roxas to do it."

"That doesn't make sense!" I cried. "Why would he want to do that?"

"He wants to take over the Organization. Him and Larxene. And he'll stop at nothing to attain his goal."

"We must tell someone about this."

"No!" He shouted, grabbing my sleeve. "You mustn't say a word! If he even finds out that I've told you, he'll... get back at me. You mustn't tell a soul. Neither of you! We'll deal with it ourselves. "

"But how?"

"We'll figure something out. Now please, help me up?" I helped him to stand, but he was having trouble walking. Lexaeus picked him up, and we brought him back to the basement.

Later that day, we had one final meeting. Marluxia basically informed us that he was going out tonight to draw Roxas to the castle. We were to prepare in every way we could. The cards were ready, and somehow, Marluxia forced Naminé to do his bidding. (I can only imagine how.) So he's out right now. We can't trust Larxene OR Axel. I don't know if Axel's in on their scheme, but I can only hope there's some sense left in him.

Entry 4

Day 8

So, our friend with the Keyblade has finally embarked on his journey through the castle. Things are going pretty smoothly, aside from avoiding as much as the others as we can. We mostly stay here, in Basement 1.

A really interesting twist of events occurred. It seems our friend has brought others with him. A boy named Riku. A boy with real potential. He would make an amazing asset to the Organization. He lived in darkness for a long time, and he is ever so powerful while using it. Vexen has started a new project. He's been studying the boy, learning about his abilities, and such. He has a wondrous idea to gain this boy's power on our side. If Marluxia is going to fight with Roxas, then we're going to fight with Riku. It is now war between Floor 13, and Basement 1.

Entry 5

I've lost track of the days. It's been a miserable two weeks I don't understand Marluxia's actions, nor Axel's. Who's the real traitor?

Vexen took affirmative action after his Riku project failed. Yes, it failed. And I'm sorry to say that it was the last experiment for our dear friend. He took Roxas to a place where he wasn't supposed to and almost revealed everything to him. We were hoping to persuade him to leave the castle, get out of Marluxia's reach. But Marluxia acted fast and... Let's just say our Graceful Assassin assassinated Vexen. In fact, he made Axel do it. Demyx, Axel killed Vexen! I was starting to feel like I was going crazy myself.

After that, things went wrong left and right. I sent Lexaeus to try to get Riku on our side, and once again, he refused, and my dear Lexaeus payed dearly for it. Larxene seems to have been annihilated as well. Now, it's just me against Marluxia and Axel. I have to think of something, but I don't know what to do. Roxas is basically at the mercy of Marluxia, and if things continue at the rate they are, I'll be done for next. I need Riku. I need a plan, anything! I only wish I was never chosen to go on this dreaded assignment.

Demyx, I can only hope I'll escape this place alive. If I don't I hope you find this book. I want to tell you that I always considered you as my closest, and only friend aside from Lexaeus. And now that he's gone, you're all I have left. I'll return to you. I'll come back with Marluxia's head on his scythe. I promise you this. Maybe after I'm dead, they'll find this book, and give it to you. I'll keep it with me when I face Riku, and who knows. Maybe you can give me some luck.

I stopped reading. Tears were swelling in my eyes, and I felt as if I couldn't continue, afraid to find out what happened at that awful place. Unable to completely break away, I turned the page. The handwriting was different, and as I read, I soon realized who wrote this, and accepted what it said.

Wow, Demyx. This kid really wasted a lot of time writing to you. But hey, I don't blame the guy. It was his last wish for me to finish this for him, since he can't.

Marluxia was crazy from the start. Remember the time we went to get him, and how Xemmy said he was the wrong guy? Well... I guess now we know why he thought that. He was absolutely insane.

I'm not a traitor. I killed Vexen, yeah, but I only did it to get close to Marly. I wanted to expose his plan against the Organization. That Keyblade boy. I'll never call him Roxas. He's not Roxas, just a cheap imitation. His name is Sora, and I need him alive if I'm ever going to see Roxas again. When Marly and Larxene were distracted, I let Naminé go. When flower boy found out, he tried to kill me. Larxene caught her, but then Sora made quick with the attacks, and sent that dog to Hell, where she belongs. After that, Sora went to fight Marluxia, and killed him. That's when I went searching through the basement floors. I knew Zexion was still around. I was gonna take him home with me, but...

He was trying to get help from Sora's buddy Riku. Riku denied, and they fought. Sorry to tell ya, but Riku killed Zex. That's why I'm here instead of him. After Riku left, I tried to help him, but it was hopeless. Zexion pulled this book from his coat, and handed it to me, telling me to 'finish it'. Then he faded. Sorry, man, but that's just the way things go.

So now, Naminé is fixing Sora's memory. Putting it back the way it was. It's gonna take some time for him to recover, so he's going into a hibernation-type-thing. Riku, on the other hand left the castle with some guy in red. I don't know where the hell he came from, but it wouldn't be a bad idea to keep tabs on him.

So basically, that's it. Everyone's dead. Except me. And now, while Sora sleeps, I have time to find Roxas. As long as Sora's around, Roxas will be around.

And that was it. The last page. Zexion was dead, and it hurt so bad. I couldn't

hold my tears back. They just flowed from my eyes, and I couldn't stop. I cried hard, slumping onto my bed. Where was this sadness coming from? I couldn't feel! Why was this affecting me so much? I shouldn't feel. I don't have a heart. But then why, why do I still hurt?

Knocking on my door. Perfect timing. It was, of course, Xigbar.

"Dude, you in there?" He called. "What's goin' on? You okay?"

"I'm fine!" I choked, obviously lying.

"You are not. I can hear it in your voice. Open up." I didn't want to, but I did. I opened the door, and Xigbar instantly took me in his arms. I sobbed hard into his chest.

"They're all dead," I said. "All of them! Nothing was ever all right! Marluxia lied, and wrote fake reports to us! Axel killed Vexen! He killed him like he wasn't one of us! Just an excuse to get close to Marluxia!" I broke away, and gave the notebook to him.

"You're notebook..."

"Naminé is fixing what she broke, and it's going to take a long time to put back 15 years of memories back into his head."

"Yes, and she's gone missing. We don't know where she went off to."

"I don't care at this point. Axel..."

"What about Axel?" I knew he was irritated at the mention of his name.

"I just... He's been blind! He wrote that as long as Sora's alive, Roxas will be too..."

"Demyx... Didn't we agree that you were going to forget about Axel?" I sighed, unable to look at his face.

"...I'm sorry Xigbar. I need to do this. If I can kill Sora, then in theory, I'll be killing Roxas. If we can't find Roxas, then we'll just have to find Sora."

"Demyx..." He sighed,.

"I'm... I'm sorry this didn't work out. I love you with every false feeling I can muster up, but... I can't let go, and I'm sorry."

"...It's all right, Demyx." He closed his eye. "I understand." He turned to leave. "You better prepare yourself. This kid isn't one to be taken down easily." And then he left. I was alone once more. Now, I had truly lost everything. Axel, Zexion, and now, Xigbar.

And I blamed it all on Roxas.

14 - Awakening

DISCLAIMER: I do not own Kingdom Hearts.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Wooo. One more chapter after this (and then an epilogue). I hope you guys like it. PLEASE REVIEW! REVIEWS MOTIVATE ME! lol

PART 14 Awakening

One year was all I had. I didn't know it was going to take that long at the time, but it was about one year. Every day I would wake up and hope that was the day, yet I dreaded that day at the same time. I was working hard, trying to improve my techniques, and battle skill, but I feared, in the end, I wouldn't be able to defeat him. There was this doubt in the back of my mind telling me I was never going to win. I hated it.

And throughout that entire year, all 365 days, I didn't see Xigbar at all. Not once. Was he avoiding me? Was he really that petty? I didn't even bother searching for him, though. If he didn't want to see me, then I would just stay out of his way.

The message of the Castle Oblivion disaster reached Xemnas before I was finished reading. Axel had apparently reported to him after shoving the book in my face. But the strange thing was, he didn't hold any sort of meeting, he didn't announce the deaths. It seemed like he didn't care. Which, I know he truly didn't, but he used to feign his feelings. We all did. We'd laugh at things that were supposed to be funny, get mad at things that we thought would make us so. But I really think I was the only one to cry for the deaths of about half of our members. Five of us dead. Was Xemnas just going to let us die, too? If I was killed, would anyone mourn my death?

And was he going to punish Axel? True, he's the only one who survived, but he killed poor Vexen. Sure, he was ordered by Marluxia, but he didn't have to think twice before slicing him to pieces with his chakrams.

The majority of the time, I was in my room, working hard, improving my water manipulation skills. I rarely left the wing, and I only really left my room to grab some food. I didn't care what the others were up to. Nothing really mattered to me anymore. Looking back, I wish that I would have gotten some help, and maybe a partner to help me. It's hard to do things like this alone.

One fateful night, I was training late, determined to make a clone of myself using water. There was a mighty thunder storm outside, enveloping the city. I saw large flashes of light, loud claps of thunder. I thought of Larxene and her untimely end. I missed even her, and I didn't even know her that well.

I then heard the sound of clanging metal, sharp, swift hits that could only be from a sword. I dropped my sitar, and ran to my window. The rain was coming down hard, smacking the back of my head as I looked down. Two figures. They were fighting in the rain. And they both had Keyblades.

My eyes widened as I watched them battle. I had to get closer. I jumped from my window, using the water in the air to flow to the top of a building. The fighting had ceased. Only one remained. He was wearing a black hooded trench, and held two keyblades. He slowly walked toward the large central tower. He looked up, and shouted,

“Where’s Sora?” I knew that voice. It had to be Roxas! Hoards of Heartless began to form around him. As he fought them off, more and more appeared. He began to jump around, faster, stronger. And then the clouds parted, showing the bright moon. I looked up to see another figure in a black coat standing atop the large central tower. His hood was down, and his silver locks waved in the strong winds. He was blindfolded.

Who the hell was he? He wasn’t one of us, was he? The scene became intense as Roxas jumped to the tower, making his way up it. He was sprinting up the side of the tower! The silver-haired one smirked and jumped off the top. Were they both insane?

Roxas tossed upward his black keyblade and the other caught it, falling straight down. Roxas then jumped sideward, and down they landed on the pavement. Then, they began to fight once more. I wanted to stop them. I wanted to be the one to destroy Roxas. But I let them fight on. My attention strayed for one moment, my eye catching something red. I looked across the way, in a small alley. Axel. He was watching. Why didn’t he run to Roxas’ aid?

The fighting stopped again when Roxas knocked the other down. He snatched back his Keyblade, and pointed it right in his face.

“Why,” The blindfolded man cried. “Why do you have the keyblade?!”

“Shut up!” Roxas replied, cracking him across the face with his weapon. Roxas then stepped over him, leaning down, and grabbing him by his coat.

“Tell me, Where’s Sora?”

“Why should I tell you!”

“Because I’ll kill you if you don’t!”

“You can’t kill me. I have the power of the Darkness on my side!” The silver haired boy began glow and eerie shade of violet. Dark swirls and vines began to wrap around the boy, and he started to change. When the darkness cleared, he was someone completely different. And with one swift motion, Roxas was down, and out. The boy was now a taller man, tanned skin, an white hair. The blindfold was gone, and his eyes were amber.

“Sorry, but I need you alive.” He said, picking up Roxas’ unconscious body, and walking off into the nothingness. And surprisingly, Axel didn’t follow. I half-expected him to chase after and fight the man, but he just receded into the shadow of the alley way.

But I wasn’t going to just wait for something to happen. I quickly jumped down, and followed Axel into

the alley. I knew he would hear me coming, and he stopped walking. I came up to him and looked him in his cold, emerald eyes.

“You saw that, didn’t you?” I said. He nodded, never looking away. “Aren’t you gonna follow them? Isn’t Roxas your beloved? The only thing on your mind?”

“I’ve seen that kid,” He finally said after a long few minutes. “He’s the one... Who killed your friend. I am no match for him. And he changed into an even stronger state. There’s no way I could take him on. Besides... Roxas is a traitor, remember? Xemnas would probably have him destroyed.”

“So that’s it? You’re just going to let him kidnap Roxas.” Why was I so mad? I hated Roxas for everything that happened. Why was I angry about this? Maybe it’s because Axel abandoned me, and I didn’t want him to do the same to Roxas. I’m not really sure.

“He’s going to bring him to that weird guy in red that was hiding in the depths of the castle. I know he is. They left together. I know they’re working together. I just wish I knew who that guy was...”

Months passed. Axel left the castle against Xemnas’ wishes, and traveled worlds, looking for Roxas. Everyone seemed so boring, so fixed on nothing. We were truly starting to act like who we were; Nobodies. And the fact that Xemnas was making armies of lesser Nobodies didn’t help. Those creatures were strange, white monsters. They moved like liquid, but killed like beasts. I didn’t like the way things were going. That is, until one day that Xemnas knocked on my door.

“Come in,” I called, not knowing who it was. He entered with a tall, pink and white Nobody. I stared for a while before asking what it was.

“I made it for you.” He smiled. “A dancer Nobody. You are to control these kind.”

“I get my own kind of Nobody to control?”

“Yes. I’m trying to make several different kinds for us all to control.” Then he abruptly changed the subject. “You want to fight Sora, don’t you?” Not knowing what to say, I simply nodded. “He’s a big threat to us now. He will grow strong when he awakens. Naminé, wherever the hell she is, needs Roxas to complete the process she started. After all, Roxas is part of Sora. I’ve sent some Nobodies to search the worlds for him. If he awakens, we’ll have no way to control him. We need to find Roxas and bring him back before Axel finds him, and before Sora awakens.”

“Before Axel finds him?”

“Axel is working on his own, now. He’s searching for Roxas for his own needs. We must be wary of him.”

“I see...” I started to worry a little. What if Xemnas had Axel killed? I guess I still loved the bastard enough to want to save him from whatever fate our superior had in mind. “Why is Sora going to be such a threat?”

“He’s refused to join us, and therefore, refused to help us. We need hearts. I have found the location of

Kingdom Hearts, Demyx. We cannot allow anyone to stop us. We have come too far to give it up now.”

“But if we found Kingdom Hearts, then why do we need more hearts?”

“We’ve been shunned by all of mankind. One’s heart holds amazing power, my friend. Kingdom Hearts has appeared, but it is not complete.” Complete? “We must gain more, I must give it more. Kingdom Hearts will be completed, and then the power of all hearts will be upon us. We will know more strength and power than we could ever hope to have. And we will be whole again. And we will seek revenge!”

“Revenge for what?”

“Demyx, you are too simple minded to understand. I’m sorry, but I must go. Now that Vexen is gone, Saïx and I must make haste to finish what he started. Excuse me.” He sternly turned, and left. Too simple minded? Excuse me? I might play dumb, but I assure you, I’m not a moron. Xemnas has gone blind with power. He wants more than just his heart. And that’s not right. But I didn’t care. My only focus was Axel. You jerk. Sora. This is all your fault.

Days before Sora’s awakening, I had finally achieved my goal. I no longer had to focus hard, and strain my mind to make clones. It came naturally as I played my sitar. Water could form around me, and I was able to make about 15 clones of myself at once. And as long as I played, they were there. As soon as I stopped, they’d splash back to the floor and disappear. I was quite pleased with myself. It was an amazing accomplishment.

I wanted to take a walk. I had been closed up in my room for months, and it was time to get some fresh air. I closed my door and strode down the hall, and down the stairs. Everything just seemed so quiet. I wasn’t even sure I knew what everyone would be doing. It had been so long since I spoke to anyone, aside from the Superior. I walked to the infirmary. I still hadn’t seen past that point. And I was feeling adventurous. It was time to see the rest of the castle.

The door past the Infirmary brought me to a small room. No windows, no doors. It was lit by strings of lights lined up the sides. The walls were made of glass, and I saw through to the interior of the castle. Was this all that was here? Just one room? That couldn’t be it. I walked to the middle of the room. I stood there, disappointed, and turned to leave. Just then, the floor began to move. It was going upward at an alarming speed. I fell on my @\$\$, scared out of my mind. When it stopped, I was just glad I didn’t have a heart attack. Not like I could..

I quickly left the room, not wanting to go through that again. The door led me to somewhere new. A glass staircase. It twisted around to the left. Large pillars surrounded the area, and I knew that if I fell over the side, I’d fall for a long time, and probably splatter all over the ground. Wasn’t that a nice image? I walked up the stairs, slowly, marveling at the true beauty of the castle. I always thought it was just a magnificent place. At the top of the stairs was another door.

It led me to a great hall. Truly a difficult place to describe. The walls ran high, and were decorated with many silver ornaments, and designs. The ceilings were arched high, and made of glass. You could see the swirling nothingness above it. But as I looked through the glass, I noticed something I never had before. It looked like the moon, only it was shaped differently. I could only see part of it, though. Strange...

Moving on. There was a door embedded in the central wall. And it led outside. The sky sure did look darker than normal. The terrace led up along the side of the castle. It was then that I got a better look at the moon. Not much better, though. I also got a good look at the outside of the castle. Truly beautiful. Up, up, and up. I was starting to get tired, and thinking maybe I should head back. But I didn't. I wanted to see the rest. Another door at the top.

This led me to a smaller room. More like a hallway. I was above the grand hall-type room. There was yet another door across the hall, and of course, I entered it. I had no idea that this amazing high of beauty would all come crashing down hard on me.

The next room had a long hallway leading to it. From what I could see, the next room was small, and it was pretty poorly lit. Reaching the end of the hall, I soon regretted ever taking that walk. Large thin metal frames held glowing blue glass that had our Nobody emblem etched into it. Below each, were flat, red and blue plates. At first, I had no idea. There was one for each of us. Some metal frames were glowing, some weren't. The plates beneath each had a picture carved into it of our weapons. It's hard to explain. I found mine, outline of my sitar, glowing blue. Axel's next to mine, his chakram glowing blue, too. Luxord was in that row too. But so were Marluxia's, Larxene's and Roxas'. Marluxia's and Larxene's plates were glowing red. Roxas' was blue, but the metal frame above was broken. I walked to the next row. Vexen, Lexaeus, Zexion and Saïx. Saïx's was the only one glowing blue. So were Xaldin's and Xigbar's in the next row. Then it hit me. This wasn't any kind of shrine, or whatever. This was a graveyard. A Nobody graveyard. This realization hit me harder than I expected. The one's glowing red were red because they were dead. I had to leave. I ran to the end of the room, and left.

I didn't really care to where I was going now. I was on another balcony type thing. And as soon as I got outside, I saw the moon in all it's splendor. Only, it wasn't round. The moon was heart-shaped. And this confused me. More doors, more hallways, I had finally made it to the top. I ascended my final case of stairs. The moon was large, and bright. There was no where to go, now.

"Why... Why is the moon heart shaped?" I softly asked myself. I heard footsteps behind me and out of nowhere appeared Saïx.

"Kingdom Hearts," He said, his expressionless face barely moving. "That is what that is. It grows ever stronger."

"That's... Kingdom Hearts?"

"Sora is near awakening. We'll need him still. Xemnas has an assignment for you." I groaned. I didn't feel like going out on an assignment. "You are to leave at once and find a man by the name of Auron in the Underworld. Understood? Find him, and gain his Nobody on our side. You have your orders."

"Whoa, wait. You want me to get a new member all by myself?"

"It's possibly his heart isn't strong enough to maintain his human form. But his Nobody will be quite powerful. We have everyone out doing the same. Don't come back until you've gotten it." With that, he dispersed into the shadows. Great. A mission. And I had to do it by myself.

I guess it could be worse. Apparently the others had their new Nobodies to gain too. Xaldin was sent to a far away castle to search for a beast, Luxord was sent to a place named Port Royal, and Xigbar was assigned to a world named the Land of Dragons. They had left immediately, but I did not. Honestly, I didn't care for Xemnas' assignments anymore. I didn't care if they got done or not. I just wanted my chance against Sora.

After thinking about it, I realized I didn't even know what this kid looked like. All I knew was that he was Roxas in a sense.

The day had finally arrived. I was woken up by shouts from below, "Axel has failed! The Nobodies were vanquished! Sora has awakened!" I jumped from my bed, and hurried to the lower levels.

"What's going on?" I shouted. Everyone was gathered around a small table with a thin screen. The screen showed Roxas, and a man wrapped in red clothes.

"We just found the location of Roxas, but it's too late! That man in red is merging him into Sora to hasten his awakening!" Xaldin growled.

"That man! Who is he? It's like he's purposely working against us!" Luxord cursed, crossing his arms.

"I know who it is," Xemnas said, glaring at the screen. We all looked to him. "Yes, why didn't I see it before? 'Tis our old master, Ansem the Wise." Xigbar muttered a, 'No way...'

"Inconceivable..." Xaldin murmured. "He died long ago. When Radiant Garden collapsed!"

"No, it's gotta be him!" Xigbar protested. "I doubt it, but something's tellin' me that he survived all these years. And that's him!"

"It can't be..."

"No matter," Xemnas interrupted. "So Roxas has reformed with Sora. Good. Now he's twice as strong. Gentlemen. We shall meet at Radiant Garden to greet our friend with the Keyblade." No timing could have been more perfect than just then when Axel decided to pop in to say 'hello'.

"I'm sorry, sir, but I couldn't get Roxas back. I tried." He said lowly, walking right up to us.

"Ah, Axel. Nice of you to join us." Xemnas replied. "We are off to meet Sora. Care to join us?"

"Of course," He bowed, hiding a smile.

"Then come, let us go." The screen showed Sora running about the town, fighting Heartless with his companions. A duck and a dog. What kind of friends are those? We left immediately for the place that used to be Radiant Garden.

"Remember, gentlemen. We shouldn't give it all away at once." Xemnas grinned, pulling his hood over his face. We all did the same. I guess hiding our identity was all we cared about in the end. We silently watched over the town. Luxord had the smart idea to listen closely to our buddy with the Keyblade. And

we did. And he was talking about us.

“...The guys we need to worry about are those Nobodies.” Sora said, talking to some guy I didn’t know.

“And those Organization XIII guys in charge, too!” His dog-friend added. It was time to screw around.

“You called?” Xemnas grinned, making his voice heard to Sora, and his companions. They all stopped in their tracks, scanning the area for anyone at all, and finding nothing. He quickly fled from the scene, to an open area. It was time to make our grand appearance.

“You’re doing well,” Xaldin complimented.

“Who’s that?!” Sora shouted, summoning his weapon.

“This calls for a celebration,” Xemnas stated, summoning low-classed Nobodies. Sora quickly disposed of them, triumphant in his victory.

“The Keyblade...” Xemnas noted. “A truly marvelous weapon. If only it were in more... capable hands.” We smiled to each other, laughing up a storm.

“Show yourselves!” Sora demanded, obviously not finding it as funny as we did. And that’s exactly what we did. First was Xemnas. He appeared on a ledge, high above Sora. And we followed.

“Organization XIII!!!” The dog exclaimed. Well, who was he expecting?

“Good!” Sora scowled. “Now we can settle this!”

“What a shame,” Xemnas sighed. “And here, I thought we could be friends.” We started to laugh a little. I had to admit. Even I thought that was fun. We started to leave.

“Stop!” the duck screeched. We left, but Xigbar stayed behind to taunt them a little. I couldn’t help but stand off to the side, and watch.

“What’s the big idea?!” The duck screamed.

“Whoops!” Xigbar shrugged.

“Move! You’re in the way.” Sora yelled, readying his Keyblade.

“Now, do you think that’s polite?” Xigbar taunted. I could tell he was truly enjoying this. “Shutting me down like that?”

“I said, get outta the way!” Sora roared again.

“As if. You can talk all you want, but that won’t change a thing.”

“Then we’re gonna make you move!” Said the duck. It was kind of hard to understand the little guy.

“See, that would work if I was just any old dude.” He pointed at himself. “‘Cept I’m not. I’m with the Organization. Nothin’ ‘any old’ about me.” True. He wasn’t just any old guy. Not to me, not to anyone. I was starting to miss his company.

“Hah!” Sora grinned. “Tough talk for someone who sat on the sidelines while his Nobody flunkies did all the fighting.”

“Oh dear... I think you got the wrong impression.”

“You gonna cry?”

“As if. Why don’t I remind you how tough the crowd you’re dealing with really is!” He wasn’t going to fight, was he? That can’t be good.

“Remind me?” Sora scowled, grunting at the confusion.

“Hahaha, that’s right! He used to give me the same exact look!” That’s right. Roxas never did like Xigbar.

“I guess you think you can psyche me out by saying really random stuff.”

“Gee, I just don’t know.” They stood there for a long time. Finally, Xigbar said his goodbyes. “Be a good boy, now!” And then he was gone. It was probably time I was on my way as well.

So that was it. He didn’t seem so tough. But then again, why was I still afraid to face him? Was I really afraid of some punk kid? No. I wasn’t afraid.

It was then, I figured I should finish up my assignment. I wanted to get it over with before I faced Sora. I was on my way out when Xigbar approached me.

“Hey, kid.”

“Oh.. Hey Xigbar.”

“Xemnas wanted me to tell you that if you see Roxas, and he doesn’t respond, you’re gonna have to fight him and jog his memory.”

“What?”

“He wanted me to give you this.” He handed me a small white card. I read it silently to myself.

“Oh.. Thank you.” I said, not really knowing what else to say. I stashed the card in my pocket. Xigbar then turned to leave.

“Be safe, kid.” And then he was gone. Out of my other pocket, I pulled the photo of which I had stolen. ‘BRAIG &MYDE’. I folded it back up, returned it to my pocket, and left the castle, bound for the

Underworld.

15 - The Price of Failure and Epilogue

DISCLAIMER: I do not own Kingdom Hearts.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: This is it. The last chapter. The story ends here :(Sorry that it's so long. I just want to make a note that I got the layout of the Underworld wrong. I did it from memory, and I didn't have the game handy. (The thing with the red eyes is Cerberus I :heart:Cerberus.) Oh, and I added some more conversation between Demyx and Sora because.. Well... I can lol. I hope you all enjoy.

Once again, the song is GravenImage by Sonata Arctica (it's supposed to be the song Demyx wrote. Yeah...)

PART 15

"The Price of Failure"

"Demyx,

I am setting you on your own for this task. It shouldn't be difficult for

you, for your skills have improved immensely. I have assigned the remaining few of us to certain worlds. You are to infiltrate the Underworld, let loose your Heartless, and Nobodies. If you should come across one with a strong heart, you are to immediately bring them to me. And what luck, Roxas should be around that area as well. If you should find him, you are to call him by name, not identity. If the subject fails to respond, use aggression to liberate his true disposition.

I wish you luck, Number IX. Do not fail me.

-Xemnas"

I arrived not too long after I had left. The door opened up to a wide open place with golden sand, and large pillars. There was an arena stage in the center, and large riser seats all around. On each end were tall golden doors. The place was deserted.

"This can't be right..." I mumbled, crossing my arms. I pulled the small white card from my pocket. "'The Underworld', hmm? This place seems too bright and cheerful to be called something so... well not bright and cheerful..." I walked around the arena. The sun was high in the sky, bouncing off the sand into my eyes. The doors were all locked. "There's nothing here." I grumbled a bit, and decided to leave. Right as I thought this, the golden doors opened, simultaneously, on both ends. I quickly put up my hood, and hid behind the stage. On one side, thousands of people started pouring in, filling the stands. The other door opened to a tall man, muscles largely toned, waving. I took a closer look. Behind him, I could see a small amount of swirling shadows. "There we go!" As the strong man walked to the stage, I silently snuck past the doors.

There was a long, dark staircase leading downward. This had to be where I was supposed to go. I had finally hit the bottom. Now, this place was dark, and it just screamed 'evil'. Large black spikes shot from

the ground. There was a river of dark, murky water surrounding the platform I was on. Two large doors. And in the distance, a large coliseum-looking dome.

“This has got to be the Underworld.” I smiled to myself. “But now what do I do? Well, I guess the easiest way to do this is to start from the source. But who rules the Underworld?” Across the platform were two, short little demon-looking guys. One was blue, taller and thin, one was red, shorter and fat. Time to ask for directions.

“Excuse me,” I said, leaning over them. “Can you tell me who runs this place?”

“What does it matter to you, Hmmm buddy?” The red one said, hands on his plump little hips.

“Y-yeah! None of your business!” The blue one replied.

“I’ll make it my business!” I yelled. “Now, tell me!” The blue one jumped, and ducked his head down.

“Look, man” The red one shouted in my face. “You can’t just barge in here like you own the place and-”

“Look, you little red runt!” I interrupted him. I summoned my Dancer nobodies. “At least point me in the right direction before my friends here get antsy.” The red one, realizing his defeat, pointed to a large black door. I thanked them, and ran to the door, leaving them to face the Dancers. The door closed behind me, but I barely noticed. I had entered a sector that was full of swirling fog. I could barely see the ground in front of me. I suppose that was because there was no ground in front of me. I took a few steps, then fell to my doom beneath the fog. I landed on my back against some black rocks.

“They should really put a sign or something...” I summoned some more of my Dancers, and had them scout the area. I walked slowly through the fog. I wasn’t sure what kind of surprises it held. All was quiet. Strange little balls of light soon were appearing all around me. They seemed harmless enough until I decided to touch one. You can’t tell me you wouldn’t have done the same!

It sent a nice little shock through my body. By the time I had enough sense to back off, my left arm was numb. More of these little spheres began to appear around me. Wasn’t going to make the same mistake twice. I quickly left the area through a stone archway.

Continuing through the fog, I started summoning more Heartless, and Dancers. I was, after all, supposed to ‘let them loose’. I sat on a wide, dusty rock, and had myself a small rest. I started to think about everything. About Axel, about Xigbar, Zexion. But mostly about Axel. I was doing all this for him, but did it even matter? How can I know that without Roxas, Axel will return to normal? I stood up, and started to walk some more.

Axel... What happens when it’s all over? Xigbar... I’m sorry. Why won’t you speak to me? I don’t want to hurt anymore. I don’t want to lose you. My mind drifted to Roxas. This was all his fault. Roxas, Sora, I was going to destroy you! Feeling quite rejuvenated, and worked up, I kicked a small stone into the rock wall. I didn’t think much of it until the wall began to snarl and growl at me. Six, beady, red, glowing eyes peered at me. Not knowing what else to do, I ran for my life. I ran and ran. Through the fog, down, deeper into the Underworld. I was coming to what I thought was a dead end. And then I saw him. Sora.

Standing there before me! But I couldn't stop. I had to get away. I was sure that I was being chased by that... Monster. Until next time, my key-wielding enemy!

I saw him ready his weapon, but luckily, I ran right past him.

"Run! Run away!" I cried, running past right into a freshly opened shadow door. I didn't care where the door led as long as I was away from that beast. It actually led me to a strange room. I was off to the side, behind what I think was a chair. Two men were talking.

I couldn't really see, but the men started arguing. I was a little cramped, but I tried to stay absolutely still. I heard yelling from a third person. I scooted a little to the side so I could peek my head out.

And they started to fight. I was sort of getting bored. I was about to leave when the doors flew open to reveal Sora. I had to get out of there. But where could I go? I opened a dark door, and fled the scene. The door led me back to the outside arena. The muscle man was in the middle, pumping his fists into the air. The crowds were chanting, "Her-cu-les! Her-cu-les!" The large golden doors opened once more. There were Sora and his buddies again. Where was my anger? My strong desire to destroy him where he stood? And the more I saw him, the more I saw Roxas in his shadow.

Sora walked over to Hercules. They started talking, but I wasn't really listening until I heard 'There's a stone that protects one against the forces of the Underworld. The Olympus Stone.' I watched them discuss the stone. Then, Hercules left to find it. And there struck a plan. If I could get the stone, that would leave Sora defenseless while in the Underworld. I wasn't really sure what that meant, but if I had that stone, maybe I could easily kill him. I silently, and unknowingly followed Hercules. I managed to get ahead of him, and snatched the stone before he arrived. It was no bigger than my palm, and it glowed a bright golden hue. Engraved in it was a lightning bolt. I had myself a small victory dance, then hurried back to the depths of the Underworld. As I was leaving, Hercules spotted me. I quickly summoned lesser Nobodies, and ran.

"Stop! Theif!" he chased me, but was stopped by my Dancers. He chased me back to the arena where I instantly disappeared, creating a dark door leading straight into the heart of the Underworld. I closed it before he could reach me. As I caught my breath, I felt somewhat rejuvenated. I felt strength I've never known coursing through my body. Was it the Olympus Stone?

"Hey! You!" I jerked up, and turned around. A small pot-bellied goat-man had followed me. "What do you think you're doin' with that!" I panicked. I summoned a blast of water, and knocked him out cold. I picked him up and dragged him to the stairway leading to the arena. I left him there, then quickly left. Before I knew it, I had been found.

"Who's there?" called Sora's duck-friend.

"Ah! You!" I gasped. I pulled down my hood. I couldn't just shout "I SHALL TAKE MY REVENGE ON YOU" or something. He probably didn't even remember who I was. I remembered Xemnas' note, and almost forgot not to call him 'Sora.'

"Wait a sec... Roxas?"

“Excuse me?” Sora replied, giving a confused look.

“Roxas?” I sighed. This was getting me nowhere. He had no idea what I was talking about. “It’s no use...” I pulled the white card from my pocket.

“Wha? What are you talking about?”

“‘If the subject fails to respond, use aggression to liberate his true disposition.’... Right. Did they ever pick the wrong guy for this one...” My fear slowly came back to me. But I didn’t want to fight him just yet. So, I decided to toy around a little bit more. After all, it’s always fun playing with one’s mind.

“You’re bizzare...” I pulled the Olympus stone from my other hand, and held it clearly in his view.

“He must be the thief!” The duck quacked.

“Now, that’s just plain rude!” I pouted. Me? A thief? Never. I silently laughed to myself, summoning my blue instrument. “Dance, water, dance!” I managed to form 7 clones of myself. They surrounded Sora, and began to circle him. And to my surprise, he defeated them. One by one. And then they were gone. Then again, they were just water, after all.

“Not bad, Roxas.” I grinned. Then I grew quite serious. I doubted I would be able to defeat him right then and there. It was time for more clones.

“Stop calling me ‘Roxas’.” He said, pointing his Keyblade at me. “What are you doing here?”

“Oh, wouldn’t you like to know?”

“You’re with the Organization. You can’t be up to any good!”

“Whoa, man that’s profiling.” I wagged a finger at him. “Aren’t you supposed to be the pure-hearted Keyblade Master? How’d the Keyblade choose such a jerk?” Before he could answer, I strummed like crazy. 10, 11, 15, 27. 50. 50 clones, and I was getting tired.

And, again, he destroyed each one.

“What’s the matter? Can’t fight me yourself?” He called.

“Seems I underestimated you just a tad,” I admitted. He may have won this round, but next time... I nodded, and accepted my defeat. I knew that unless I left right now, he wouldn’t let me leave alive. I disappeared into a portal, and I left the stone behind.

Defeat was the worst pain. I had failed my mission. I didn’t even do anything I was supposed to. I was too ashamed. I didn’t even tell anyone I had returned. I sat in my room, disappointed in myself, and ashamed at my actions. I could have hidden myself and still carried out my orders. Why didn’t I stay?

Stupid. I wasn’t thinking straight. I couldn’t even make sense of what I had done. But it was over with. I had to face Xemnas eventually.

A knock at my door. How'd they even know I was home?

"Xemnas would like to have a word with you."

"...Great." I mumbled.

It was everything I expected, except a beating, or something like that. I was expecting a long, drawn out speech, and maybe a smack or two. But he didn't hit me, and I was glad for that.

"... You see, Demyx, that's why I cannot accept failure. Yet, this is really the first time I have had to speak to you about this." He stood up and walked to me. "Demyx. To make this up to me, I have a special assignment for you." He gestured for me to follow him. We walked to a small room that branched off his bedroom. There was a large map on the back wall.

"This is a map of our old home of Radiant Garden. We are going to invade, you could say. Heartless, and Nobodies. It is sure to lure Sora there. I want you to ambush him, and destroy him. That is, after all, what you want."

"...Sir?"

"I know that you blame him for all that's gone wrong in your time here. So go, and seek your revenge."

"... You want... me to kill him? I think you're sending the wrong guy..."

"These plans won't be executed for a few days, so you have time to rest up, and prepare yourself." I nodded, and he dismissed me. I was at the door when he added, "Do not fail me. And do not come back until the deed is done."

What was I going to do for a few days? Hell if I knew. One thing I told myself, though. I had to set things right with Xigbar. At least, I had to attempt it.

That night, I woke in a frenzy at early hours in the morning. For the first time in months, I had a nightmare. It was so... So real. I was fighting Sora, and he knocked me down, and stabbed me straight through. And then, after I had died, he killed Axel, and then Xigbar. Then, everything went white. Axel was laying on the ground. He looked to the side and said, "I wanted to see Roxas..." And then he burst into flames. And then I woke up.

I was felt angry, yet scared. I never wanted to have these dreams ever again, and the only way was to get rid of Roxas, er, Sora, or whatever his name was. It didn't matter. He was a dead man.

After realizing I couldn't fall back asleep, I rolled out of bed, and sat at my window. What a beautiful night it was. I summoned my sitar, and pulled out the very melodious song I had been working on. I closed my eyes, and decided to finish it.

Note after note, each more mellifluous than the last. And finally, I had finished it. The piece was complete. I looked the papers over and over. I played the song from start to finish at least 4 times. And

when I played, I felt all the emotions I had only wished I truly had. It was everything I had felt the past few years. Everything that had gone on in my time as a Nobody in music-form. I was extremely amazed with myself. This song was me, a melodious nocturne. A mellifluous trill. My life, composed. And I knew just what to do with it.

Later that day, I was walking the halls, and I spotted Luxord and Xaldin. Seems they had returned from their assignments.

“Hey guys,” I said catching up to them.

“Hello, Demyx,” Luxord smiled. “How was the Underworld?”

“Eh... Creepy, for one thing.” I answered. “How was, uh.. Where did you guys go, anyway?”

“Well, Xigbar and I traded. I went to this island that was inhabited by pirates. Actually, it was pretty fun. I’m just taking a break.”

“Yeah, same here.” Xaldin chimed in. “I was actually assigned to a marvelous castle. I’ll be going back in a few hours.”

“..Did you guys hear about Xemnas’ invasion?”

“...No.” They said simultaneously. I shrugged, then changed the subject.

“Have you guys seen Xigbar?”

“Not for a few days.” Xaldin said.

“Actually, I just saw him.” Luxord interrupted. “He’s in his room. I think he failed his mission.” Phew. I didn’t feel so bad, now.

I thanked them, then walked as fast as I could to Xigbar’s room across the castle. I stood in front of it for a long time, not knowing what to say. Talking about his mission would probably not be the best topic. Not knowing what else to do, I opened his door. The sound automatically roused him, and he glared at me from the corner of his room. He was sitting on a chair that was facing backward. He had his arms crossed on the back.

“...Can I help you? You know it’s rude not to knock.” I decided I wasn’t even going to reason with him.

“Look.” I said. I walked in, closing the door behind me. I walked right up to him, and made sure he couldn’t look away. “Don’t talk to me, that’s okay. I don’t care anymore. Just hear me out. I haven’t seen you in a long time. You hate me because I can’t let go of Axel, yet it’s okay for you to hold on old memories of you and Myde.” I pulled out the old photo of the two of them and shoved it in his face.

“...How did you-”

“Listen. I know you loved him, and he probably loved you back, but he’s not coming back no matter

how much you want him to. He's gone, and I'm in his place. And I know you're having trouble dealing with that. It's the same thing for me and Axel. He's changed, and things aren't the way they used to be, and they might never be, but that doesn't mean I can't try to bring him back. I care a lot about you, Xigbar, and it isn't worth losing our friendship over this stupid shoot. Here." I handed him the music. "It's that song you said that Myde played for you. It's the only part of him that, I suppose, has lived on. Take it. I don't care what you do with it." I turned to leave. "I have things to do, so I guess I'll just talk to you another time." And I left.

Nope, I'm not kidding this time. I really said that to him, and it felt amazing. Yet, it still hurt a little bit. The next two days, I practiced, trained, anything I could do to prepare. And on the third day, I went to Radiant Garden.

I thought it would be pretty quiet, but it was anything but that. It was pure chaos. Heartless everywhere, people screaming, fighting. But no Key Bearer in sight. I crept around, trying hard not to be seen when I saw Axel. My body froze, and my mind screamed. What was Axel doing here?

"Axel..?" It was time to confront him, as well. He looked at me, but said nothing. "Axel, why are you here?"

"...I want to see how this all unfolds. There's an army of Heartless marching toward the old castle."

"Axel. Roxas might be here. Is that why you're here?" He looked me straight in the eye for the first time in years. He placed his hands on my shoulders, and got close to my face.

"Ever since Roxas left, I felt... Strange. I'm remembering things that I'm not sure even happened. And here, looking into your eyes, I know they must've occurred."

"What?"

"Slowly, memories of.. Us.. Together.. Are flooding my head. Memories of us. I don't remember these things ever happening. But... Somehow... I know they're true. And I forgot them." His eyes shouted sadness. "Somehow... Roxas changed all that. I'm not sure how, but..." He then closed his eyes, and stepped back from me. "If he comes back, I'll forget again. We were close friends, weren't we? I don't want him dead, but..."

"Axel... I have specific orders to... To kill him."

"...Do what you've gotta do.." He said, leaning against some rocks. "Just... Be careful." He then pointed to a small platform where Sora and his friends were headed. This was the moment. This time, I was not going to fail. I opened a portal, and materialized right in front of him. I wasn't sure what to say, so I just said the first thing that came to mind.

"Uh... Hey, you guys are lookin' lively." Wow. I'm a dork.

"Scram!" The duck yelled.

"Didn't we catch you messin' around in the Underworld?" Sora asked, hands on his hips. "How'd a

wimp like you get into Organization XIII?" I backed up a little bit. You're a jerk, I wanted to say, but I didn't.

"I bet you can't even fight!" He crossed his arms.

"Yeah, but we can!" Said the duck. He was starting to get annoying.

"You shouldn't judge anyone by appearance!" I said, wagging a finger. They readied their weapons, and I had a slight twinge of nervousness. I turned around, and spoke just loud enough for him to hear me. "Oh, I told them they were sending the wrong guy..." Maybe if he thought I was a wimp, I could take him by surprise.

"Who is this kook?"

"Remember, the organization is made up of Nobodies." said the dog.

"Right. No hearts!" Sora said back. That caught my attention. So he knew about us. Maybe he remembered after all.

"Oh, we do too have hearts."

"You can't fool us."

"..." It was time to end this. "Silence, traitor." My sitar materialized in my hands. I began to conjure my clones.

"Oh, not this again..." I heard Sora moan, as he began to fight them. I only produced a small amount. As they were defeated, they splashed against the soil. As the last one was destroyed, he headed for me next. I quickly placed a barrier of water around me. After some time, the water fell, and I used it to propel myself across the platform. It caught him off guard, and the stream knocked him down. I began to play, and bursts of water shot up around the arena. Sora skillfully dodged each blast, and headed straight for me. I tried my hardest to move, but I couldn't Hit after hit, blow after blow. I tried to put up a wall of any kind, but I couldn't move. Quickly, I managed to punch him in the face, and I started to run. I started to summon more clones.

"Oh no, You're not getting away from me that easily!" He said, voice hot with rage. He ran straight at me. I gripped my sitar on the end with both hands, but before I could swing..

So, here I am. I'm standing here staring into the angry blue eyes of Sora. All I feel is pain. My sitar dropped from my grasp. My whole life. Everything. It all just played through my head, flashed before my eyes. What just happened.?

I look down, and all I can see is red as my eyes blur. Is that... The Keyblade? I look back up at Sora who's now smiling. He tears the sword from my chest, and turns to leave. I want to speak, but I cannot. My voice is gone, and I feel weak. I drop to my knees.

"...No way..." I whisper, unable to realize what just happened. I collapse backward. I look to my hands

which are fading before my eyes. Is this what happened to Zexion? I can't see anymore. My eyes are shut, and I can't open them. Is this what it feels like to die? I'm sorry, Xemnas, I've failed you again. I'm sorry Xigbar, I'm not coming home. I'm sorry ...Axel.

I stop struggling. There's no point. This is the end.

And then, Demyx died, fading into the darkness, unable to return to the castle, unable to go on. And although his body disappeared, his heart still remained, and strayed from Kingdom Hearts. And somewhere, on the other side of the universe, a young man with curly, dirty blonde hair awakened to the sound of a familiar voice calling his name;

"Myde?"

–THE END–

EPILOGUE

(told in 3rd person)

A knock on Xigbar's door.

"Hey, Demyx is fighting Roxas! You've gotta see this!" It was Luxord. Xigbar's head perked up.

"He's... what?"

"Come on!" The two raced from the wing to Xemnas' bedroom where they were able to watch the events on a small screen. Xemnas, Saix, and Xaldin were huddled around the screen, watching intently. Xigbar stood off to the side as Luxord joined them.

'Come on, kid.' He thought to himself. 'I know you can do this.' They watched the fight progress.

"He's losing!" Luxord cried. Xigbar rushed over.

"No!" He shouted, pushing the others aside. "Demyx!" But he yelled in vain as he watched the fight come to an abrupt end. "...No.. This can't be happening!"

"It's over..." Xemnas said, monotonous. "All right, everyone out. It's time for a new strategy."

"Master Xemnas!" Xigbar cried. "Demyx was just brutally murdered and you're just going to 'form a new plan'?"

"What would you like me to do, Xigbar?"

"...Something!.. anything.."

"There's nothing I can do. Now, get out."

A few weeks later, Axel had met up with Sora between the dimensions. Axel had finally completely

severed himself from the Organization, and was working alone to save Sora so he could one day be reunited with Roxas. Thousands of Nobodies ambushed them and they were unable to defeat them all.

“It’s hopeless!” Sora cried. “We’ll never kill them all.”

“Don’t give up!” Axel yelled, realizing his fate. He jumped into the center of the attacking Nobodies, and before Sora could protest, Axel exploded in a burst of fire, and light. When the light cleared, the Nobodies were gone, and Axel was collapsed on the ground, starting to disappear.

“You’re... Fading away.” Sora said, rushing to his side.

“Well... That’s what happens when you put your whole being into an attack.” Axel replied, quite pleased with himself.

“Why.. Why would you help me?”

“I wanted to see Roxas... He... was the only one I liked. He made me feel... Like I had a heart.” He chuckled to himself. “It’s kind of funny... You make me feel.. The same..” After some time, Axel was gone, and Sora had left to continue his journey. Shortly after, Xigbar appeared between dimensions.

“Axel... You bastard. Demyx sacrificed himself for you, and you didn’t even care? He died for you, he faded with your name on his lips. And here you kill yourself for Roxas? Unbelievable. I do hope you burn in Hell, Axel. Wherever Nobodies go when they die, I hope he’s there, and he gives you what you’ve got coming to you.”

He closed his eyes, letting a silent tear drop down his cheek. He began to hum the familiar melody of Demyx’s song. And then he quietly sang to himself.

“We met that night, when the sea ran high.
And I craved for more of that near love experience.
Those who the music hath then joined together, are now put asunder...”

Remember me, when I lit the fire.
To keep us warm.
On a cold winter morning. Now I pass through the moment.
Can I still recognize a beautiful melody...

I play a note, but hear no sound. Have I lost my love or the wings I found.
When I was young...
and eager to please anyone who had time...

Needed to sing, the very notes I heard.
Had to stay in the shadows and seek for the loneliness.
Nevertheless, the price was higher than I realized.
I was to live alone, ready to make the sacrifice.
Was I in love with you...

My old heart, little harder again. One the light goes out, everything ends.
It is time...ready to cause a scene, ready to make the sacrifice.
Ready to play the note, ready to end the final show.
The only thing I know.

The pain is here. To stay I fear. In my eyes. I can change one note and make you cry.
In this state of mind. Silence is a crime.

How can life be so feigned and cold. I've answered the call of every melody, lovingly.
Did I find the answers to all my questions.

Or a gravenimage of me...

If I found the hidden fountain. Drank the wisdom from it's deep.
Would I have the time to save me. Would I have them both to keep."