

[Adam C. POV.]

As the sun began its descent behind the tall trees, casting a golden hue across the forest, or what remained of it, I walked along the worn path, the crunch of fallen leaves beneath my boots echoing in the quiet serenity. The air was crisp, carrying with it the sweet scent of pine and the promise of a cool evening. This was my sanctuary, my escape from the chaos of the world.

Finding a secluded spot, I leaned against a majestic oak, its sturdy branches reaching toward the sky. Its presence offered solace and comfort, grounding me in the moment. I let out a sigh, letting the weight of our recent victory sink in. The bastard that had plagued my life for far too long had finally been eliminated, giving window to a new chapter in my life.

Just as I settled into the embrace of the tree, the familiar voices of Erza and Laxus reached my ears, accompanied by the soft rustle of leaves. They emerged from the shadows, their faces beaming with a mix of exhaustion and triumph, one more than the other. Erza's long, flowing crimson hair danced in the gentle breeze as she walked towards me, while Laxus' eyes sparkled with the usual fire of determination.

"There you are," Laxus called out. "We've been looking for you."

I smiled and patted the ground next to me, inviting them to take a seat. "I needed a moment alone, but I'm glad you found me."

They settled down, Erza taking a seat beside me, letting her head rest in my shoulder, and Laxus nestling himself in the grass. If I had to describe my relationship with them, I would say they were my only friends, true friends.

The old man, Cana, Cornelia, Gildarts and Mavis were family.

Erza and Laxus were my friends, despite how little we interacted, or how much we didn't talk, they were always there for me in their own way.

This wasn't to say I didn't consider the rest of the guild my friends, they were, I cared about each of them, after all, like Gramps would say, they were family.

It was simply that I cared more about some of them than others.

"I can't believe it's finally over," Erza said, her voice raw with exhaustion. "It felt like an eternity hanging over our shoulders, one that no longer exists."

Lexus nodded, crossing his arms. "But we did it. We finally put an end to it all," he said, a sense of pride filling his voice.

I still felt empty about killing Zero, but like Erza had said, I felt lighter, it was hard to explain, but her words were the most accurate description if I had to say.

I guess I just expected to be happy about the entire thing, not that I cared enough to think about it.

"So," Lexus' eyes were fixed on the figure crumpled in the corner, slumped against a shimmering translucent Kido barrier that I had summoned. His brows furrowed as he twisted his neck to look at me. "Who's the guy?"

Oh right, Jellal. I had almost forgotten about the guy.

"That would be Jellal," I replied, gazing at the former Wizard Saint.

Erza lifted her head from my shoulder, her expression softening as she gazed at Jellal with a mixture of sadness and compassion. "How... is he?"

I paused, trying to find the right words. "Better."

Erza smiled, understanding what I had tried to convey with that single word. "I'm glad."

Lexus grunted, "So, what are we going to do with him?"

That's a good question. The council would probably incarcerate him again, brainwashed or not, he had done a lot of terrible things.

That being said, he had assisted us in destroying Oracion Seis, so that might cut some time from his sentence. I wasn't entirely sure.

"The council will pick him up, and put him back in his cell," I replied, letting out a sigh. "His actions today saved us a lot of trouble, so they might be lenient with him."

Erza's gaze remained fixed on Jellal, "Hopefully."

As the peaceful silence settled around us, a soft rustling of leaves caught our attention. Wendy, the pint-sized dragon slayer, emerged from the foliage, her eyes scanning the area. She seemed hesitant, as if unsure of her every thought.

"Hey, Wendy," Erza called out, her voice warm and welcoming. "We could really use your magic right now."

I smiled at that. I knew what Erza was doing, trying to boost Wendy's self-esteem, we weren't that injured to require medical attention.

Wendy's face lit up with a shy smile, and she hurried over to us.

"You can start with me, small fry," Laxus barked, without any bite to it, in fact, I could swear he was trying with all his might not to hug the little dragon slayer.

"O-on it" Wendy beamed, her voice soft and caring.

However, as Wendy rushed over to Laxus, her eyes locked onto Jellal's figure inside my barrier. Recognition flashed across her face, but there was something else in her eyes, a mixture of confusion, surprise and longing.

I noticed Wendy's gaze lingering on Jellal, and a pang of concern shot through me. I knew that Jellal was a complicated figure for some, but especially for Wendy. She had a connection to him, or rather a version of him.

Mystogan.

I hesitated for a moment, unsure of what to do. Eventually coming to the conclusion that the best way to deal with this was by being straightforward. "He's not the one you think, he just looks like it."

Wendy's eyes widened at my words, and she shook her head as if to clear her thoughts. "I-I u-understand."

I'll be honest, I didn't expect her to react so well to that, it seems that while shy, and socially awkward she's smart enough to understand and read between the lines.

"What do you mean by that, Adam?" Erza asked, her gaze flickering between Wendy and Jellal.

I turned to her, giving her a look that said. I'll explain later.

Erza nodded, turning her attention back to Wendy. "I'll go after Laxus, if you don't mind."

Wendy nodded, her gaze still lingering on Jellal before turning to Laxus.

I sighed.

This would be a complicated thing to explain.

[Third Person. POV.]

[The Queen of the Moon, Selene.]

[Five hours after the events of Oracion Seis.]

The night was young, with the moon hanging like a crescent jewel in the sky. A gust of wind rustled through the dark forest that lay below the towering cliff, as shadows seemed to dance with the swaying trees.

It was a night of mysteries, waiting to unfold.

At the edge of the cliff, a solitary figure sat cross-legged, her silhouette ethereal in the moonlight. Her long flowing blonde hair cascaded over her shoulders, while her pink eyes were locked on something in the distance. Her skin was as pale as the moon, giving her a ghostly, yet alluring aura.

This was one of the Five Dragon Gods, Selene, the enchanting and enigmatic Dragoness whose reputation was woven with tales of terror and the unknown.

Below her, there was a small village in a flurry of activity. The villagers were preparing for an annual festival, and there was

an air of joy and anticipation, most of it thanks to the visitors that came.

Alas, they were oblivious to the predator above who was watching them with an insidious interest. Well, watching one of them, at least.

Selene's eyes fixated on one of the village visitors, Adam. Her lips curled into a dark, twisted smile as her eyes narrowed.

"It's been a while, hasn't it? He has gotten quite strong," Selene whispered to herself, her voice like a soft hiss. "How endearing... and how foolish."

Selene's delicate fingers traced the air as if drawing invisible patterns that only she could comprehend, pondering whether or not to make her entrance at the village.

Meanwhile, down in the village, the atmosphere was becoming livelier. People were laughing, singing, and sharing tales of yore.

As Selene continued watching him, her pink eyes glinting, an unexpected rustling in the trees nearby caught her attention. She tilted her head and noticed someone else approaching her.

Selene's twisted smile grew wider. "Would you look at that? It seems my sweet Adam is quite the charmer, two ladies waiting

in the night just for him." At this, she rose from her seated position, the air swirling around her as her hair billowed like golden waves.

As the shadowy figure grew closer, Selene's ethereal gaze shifted from the lively village to the newcomer. Emerging from the shadows, with a piercing glare and an aura as dark as night, was Irene Belserion.

Irene's eyes narrowed, her crimson irises briefly scanning Selene's form as if trying to size up this mysterious figure. With a graceful but hauntingly silent step, she stood beside Selene, her gaze now looking down at the village.

"What is your business here?" Irene asked, her voice a melody wrapped in poison.

Selene's twisted smile softened into a sly, knowing grin. Her pink eyes sparkled like twin stars in the moonlight. "Merely watching the night unfold. And you?"

Irene's eyes flickered, barely masking the annoyance in them. "Watching is for the idle. I am here for something that has been long denied me," she replied cryptically.

Selene turned to fully face Irene, her golden locks dancing around her. The air grew heavy as the two formidable presences stood so close, both possessing powers that could sway the fate of the world.

Unfortunately, for one of them, one outclassed the other by an unimaginable margin.

"You seem familiar, yet strange. Who are you?" Irene inquired, her tone tinged with growing curiosity and a hint of caution.

"Ah, I am but a humble admirer of the moon," Selene replied enigmatically, her voice now resembling a whispering breeze. "One who weaves dreams through its silver light."

As the two women exchanged words, the moon seemed to resonate with Selene's aura, casting an even more entrancing glow over the scene.

Irene's crimson eyes widened a fraction. "Selene," she murmured, as the realization struck her.

Selene's enigmatic smile returned, "And you, Irene Belserion, the mother of our slayers, the enchanting and sorrowful sorceress. How entangled the threads of fate are tonight."

Irene's face remained stoic; she knew that making the wrong move now could end poorly. "What are your intentions here, Selene?"

Selene's smile grew wider, revealing a hint of mischief. "Oh, nothing too nefarious, my dear Irene. I simply seek to

understand what I cannot, in order to see how the fate of this world will be shaped by it, nothing more, nothing less."

Irene's eyes narrowed, sensing that there was more to Selene's words than met the eye. "Belserion always said you were one for games, Selene."

Selene's grin turned into a playful pout. "So Belserion used to talk bad about me, how mean of him."