

“... Unlike you, I’ve long given up on trying to keep the lights in people eyes.” A glimpse of humanity shone within the eyes of this monster before he bared his teeth in rage. “Infecta Rot is a group that hunts what we do. Genesis Stones, and the Advents. Specifically, the Advent of Wrath and the elusive Advent of Attachment. Two things the White Wing seeks.”

There was no explanation to why she sought after them. The Arbiter didn’t seem to know either, but it went without saying that Elysia was probably involved in this as well. Faux Angels were born from the Advent of Wrath if she remembered correctly. This led to Beholder E. describing exactly what he saw in the Frozen Springs.

“A beast that was neither a Corrupted nor something living confronted us. It is partially how I lost so many of my limbs. I can only describe it as a wrathful mountain with many wings and eyes... So the Advent of Wrath is what created it...”

“It indeed does. We only know so much of the Advents. Yet they influence the greater part of this world. Far, *far* more than we ever could.” Marionette harped, playing a silent tune on her strings like they were a harp. “Every Advent seems to have a product of some kind.”

She wasn’t wrong.

The Nexus had the Archetypes and the Corrupted as far as she was concerned.

The Eternal Library gave birth to the Beholders.

The Piece of the Fallen Star allowed people to fundamentally change themselves for better or worse. To what extent was yet to be seen.

The Apple created the seeds that induced a failed Corruption, creating Impuritas. Although, Impuritas could already exist without them to begin with.

And now, the Advent of Wrath which created the Faux Angels.

*Caldera Industries has secretly been fighting for the Nexus, huh. I wouldn’t have expected that, but it’s a pleasant surprise.*

*“There is a lot of Nex brewing suddenly. Knalzark appears to be the source of it. He said he gave up trying to achieve what you seek. I find it... sad? I think this is the right emotion. Pity? No. A tragic irony that his power is to harness the pull of a broken star – a black hole. He could no longer be the light for the people he wanted to save.”*

Frost only knew so much of this man. She was sympathetic to know where he came from, but she could only judge him as who he was now and what he strove to do moving forward.

Knalzark spoke for the duration of the next hour. Perhaps more. Time moved so differently here that even if they took a full 24 hours to finish, the time outside would have only elapsed by a fraction of it.

He explained things they already knew, and in exchange, Frost revealed the names and every detail she knew of the Impuritas, including their ability to steal the history of Moons to induce Corruption. Even the names of notable figures were brought up.

Their foes were formidable, and Knalzark did what the others could not. It was again ironic that the one who seemed the least likely to work with the others was the one who drew the line of both sides. The Ateliers versus the Impuritas. The Arbiter smiled in response, pleased that he served as the hammer to nail this deeper into them all.

Furthermore, Galia was surprised. For two reasons, however. The first was Knalzark's obedience, and the second was the mention of the Monkey Brothers.

"Raoul has made powerful enemies. Have you heard of the tale of the Monkey's Paw? It's a legend of a cursed paw with the power to grant three wishes, never in the way the wisher ever intended." She looked over at the triplets, studying Cer's jaw, Ber's hands, and Res' eyes. "I'm not surprised they want to take away Raoul's last lifeline."

*"... like he cares."* Nav echoed Ber's disagreement.

Frost wanted to go over to her and pat her when her ears drooped sadly.

Knalzark ended on his mission to find the Genesis Stones, as they were the source of abnormalities across Elysia. A 'rot' as he called it. But one that allowed them to create their Aspects of Technology.

Additionally, he noted that since destroying the Heart of the City not many Impuritas Hearts had appeared across the Nex Megalopolis. Most notably the ones from the Crimson Hunger.

"I will cooperate. I expect *them* to follow. But be warned – I have no control over my personnel outside of Brandar and Dwarhelven. I will not take accountability of detached personnel."

This was a fair call, but it also added a layer of plausible deniability on his end. Proxy wars could also be a method to bypass this. Ultimately, ending their squabbles was as fruitless as a dead tree. This was something only Time Reverberation could thoroughly investigate if Jury's powers were as potent as they thought.

Frost agreed for now, reminding Anna about the idea of a Code of Conduct, and absolutely a convention or a doctrine on how their infightings should be conducted. So long as innocent people weren't involved, and their homes weren't at stake – then she was happy.

She nearly let loose of a long sigh of relief.

*... I'm going to need comforting after this.*

*"With Jury?"*

*Mhm. I've never felt so exhausted in my entire life... Beholder Descartes 3 is next.*

*"First time you've been in a drawn-out meeting?"*

*No, but this is different. It feels like I'm fighting a Corrupted with only words. Is this how Anna felt when she fought me?*

*"The stakes aren't as high here."*

*I feel like they are.*

*“And speaking of stakes – Jury’s hungry for some steak. Would you like to go somewhere with her after this?”*

Frost’s lips curled into a loving smile.

*Her and I both. Ahaha... Yeah. That’s one way to give me the energy to keep up this act.*

Both their eyes locked onto one another. Frost couldn’t begin to describe the urge to wave at her. It seemed inappropriate to dabble into these thoughts, but Frost was as human as one could be. She just wanted a moment of respite, even if it was just for a single second.