

Chapter 4:

Nemesis

"We still can't get into contact with Leo and Zane?" Jax asked.

"No," replied Erik. "I've called them at least twenty times but they aren't picking up at all."

"I'm not gonna abandon them," Jax said defiantly. "Zane knows how to handle himself, and Leo won't die so easily."

"I'll go."

Jax turned to see who had spoken from the doorway.

"Wha- you're gonna go all the way over there?"

Pranav leaned against the doorframe, his arms crossed, and his golden goggles across his eyes as usual, and dressed in his yellow and blue battle suit.

"Yeah," he said. "I don't have anything else to do, and I'm not gonna let more of them die after Harry."

Jax nodded.

"Alright, I'll leave it to you."

Pranav nodded and strode out of the room, and at the same time Isak burst in, breathless.

"Jax," he panted. "Jax."

"Yeah?"

"An attack fleet has been spotted off the coast of Portugal. It's huge."

Jax leapt up immediately.

"I'll get my stuff, I'm going if it's that close."

"Me too," Erik said. "I got nothing else."

"I'll come with, in that case," Isak added. "The more the merrier, no?"

"AaaaaAaAaaAaaAAaaaaaah!!"

Leo screamed and held on for dear life as the helicopter whirled out of control. Zane slumped against the seat, gripping his shoulder, which had been injured from the shrapnel of the explosion, and struggled to Leo's side, away from the flames and the giant crater the rocket launcher had blasted into the side of the copter. Beside them, the copter in front spiralled away and exploded beneath them, and more bullets and rockets streaked into the sky.

"Hang on!" bellowed the pilot, and wrestled with the controls.

Zane grabbed a soldier by the scruff the neck and yanked him back away from the flames, where was sliding towards, and Leo grabbed the other two - the rest of the crew had already died.

"There's no point, we're going down," he said to the pilot.

"Damn!"

Zane slashed through the pilot's straps and pulled him in the back, before wrestling with the door release handle.

"Hold on! Don't fall out!!"

One of the soldiers stumbled, and Leo wrapped his vines around their waists to anchor them in place.

"Zane, lemme out!"

Leo kicked the door straight off its hinges, and made a leap out of the spiralling copter.

"Come on, Leo!"

Leo hit the ground running, stumbling along the field beneath them, and punched his hands down into the ground. A multitude of thick, rubbery vines exploded out of the ground, swirling up towards the sky like a giant net, with massive leaves spreading out, acting as an enormous crash mat, and just in time as well. The helicopter smashed into the leaves, and Zane, the pilot and the three last soldiers came tumbling out like rag-dolls, before scrambling to their feet and climbing out of the net.

"What do you think?" Leo asked, looking around.

"Well," Zane said, putting his hands on his hips. "We're surrounded. With their backs against Leo's trampoline, the group were surrounded by the mercenaries who had been shooting them down

in a semicircle, their guns and rocket launchers primed and aimed right at them.

"Prepare to die," said one. "In his great name!"

"Who's?" Zane said, suddenly perking up.

"No names shall be uttered," the mercenary replied. "Prepare to die in His Greatness!"

Only one person has that moniker. I would know because I infiltrated their ship before, in the first war. This guy probably thought he was clever.

"Fight?" Leo questioned.

"Fight," Zane agreed.

"Shoot!! Yelled the enemy leader.

The mercenaries fired off their weapons, but Leo slammed down his foot and a wall of thick tree trunks and a wall of earth exploded out of the ground, taking the explosions with them, and the duo rushed out of the smoke, weapons drawn. Leo slashed in a wide arc with his sword, slicing apart the weapons of three enemies, before spearing them on sharp vines. Zane slit the throats of several others with his finger blades, and he saw the soldiers tackle two others and stab them with combat knives. However, when he turned on the leader, who was a young man with an incredibly old, wrinkled, hunched old woman, he slashed the air with his hand and opened a portal on the air.

"Magic?" Leo demanded.

"Farewell, foolish heroes," said the old woman, as her grandson jumped in the portal with a smirk. "Soon you will face the "One You Can Never Defeat".

Zane lunged at her, but she slipped through the portal and it slammed shut on him.

"Damn," he said, picking himself up and dusting himself down. "'The One You Can Never Defeat, huh."

"Zane," said the pilot. "What do we do now?"

"We don't have a way to contact HQ yet," Zane said. "I lost my phone during the fight."

"I didn't bring mine," Leo admitted.

"Then we'll try to reach the south coast," Zane said. "They came down from the North, so it should be fi-"

At that exact second, a huge boom echoes over the sky, and Naerius's flagship and a fight of smaller ships hurled themselves across the sky and disappeared beyond the clouds, heading south. "We GOTTA GO!" Zane yelled. "Or we'll be cut off!"

They began to jog forwards quickly to conserve stamina.

"It's more worth it to find a car or a truck or something," Zane said as they ran. "We should look for one."

"Yeah," Leo agreed, and they quickly split up to look for one.

A few minutes later, the crew were driving at breakneck speed across the country in a big SUV they had found parked along a road, with its driver gone.

"Zane," Leo said. "Do you know what those guy back there were talking about?"

"His Greatness is Witherblood," Zane said from the wheel. "I guess that means he's back."

"But how?" a soldier named Ricky asked. "I thought you guys killed that scumbag."

"Yes, Jax and Erik should have," Leo said. "And then he fell into lava and blew up. How is he back??"

"I don't know," Zane said banging his head on the wheel, making the car swerve a little.

"But then," Leo said. "Theoretically, if Witherblood survived being slashed down by Jax and Erik's combination attack, doused in lava, exploded, then swept along by a pyroclastic flow, and then impaled by shards of ice, if his body was still intact, then wouldn't there be a chance... that Mazog himself could come back."

Zane gripped the steering wheel until his knuckles turned white.

"The One You Can Never Defeat."

"I don't think so," said the pilot, who was called Stuart. "Technically you guys already defeated him."

"Technically," Zane repeated. "What if he was never dead in the first place?"

Leo scoffed.

"If it was the same with Witherblood, then we're dead," he muttered under his breath.

"Whatever, we have to get word to Jax and the others as soon as possible. If you get a hold of anything, a cell phone, a telephone, anything - call them and tell them about our theory."

"Then step on it!" Leo said.

"Isn't this really sudden?" Kyle White asked Jax as they waited for the Osprey to land.

"Yeah, I'm confused about how they can mobilise such massive armies and fleets so quickly," Jax replied, fingering his sword hilts.

"Herobane and Naerius may have some hidden tricks up their sleeves, we have to be careful..."

"Jax," Erik said from the seat opposite him. "I just got word from Fox, who's already there."

"Yeah?" Jax asked.

"He says it's Nemesis's fleet."

"Wait, wait a minute here!" Isak exclaimed. "Nemesis? Isn't he... dead!?"

A small bead of sweat appeared on Jax's face.

"Yeah. Yeah he is."

"I'm calling Fox right now," Erik said, ramming his number into his phone.

"Gimme," Jax demanded.

Erik obliged and handed over his phone as Fox picked up, and the blaring sound of ship engines boomed over the speaker, and Fox's voice whistled under it, completely inaudible.

"O!!!" Jax yelled into the mic.

The noise cleared up slowly, but the noise still warbled over the speaker.

"Sorry," Fox shouted hurriedly. "I can't tell them to shut up like I do to you. Just moved into somewhere that barely blocks the sound!"

"What do you mean Nemesis?" Jax asked.

"WHAT?"

"I SAID, WHAT DO YOU MEAN ABOUT NEMESIS!?" Jax bellowed into the phone. "ISN'T HE DEAD!?"

"YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT AS WELL!!" Fox shouted back.

"BUT THOSE ARE DEFINITELY NEMESIS'S SHIPS. WE KNOW THAT THEY JUST BARELY RESPECT EACH OTHER ENOUGH TO NOT RAISE ANOTHER'S FLAG!!!"

"Let me talk now," Erik said impatiently. "I need to ask him something!"

Jax handed the phone back and rubbed his throat, cursing under his breath about loud noises.

"HEY, ERIK HERE!!" Erik yelled. "WE'RE FIFTEEN MINUTES OUT! BRINGING AN ARMY, AND ISAK, KYLE AND DANI!!"

"OKAY!" Fox shouted back.

"CAN YOU HOLD ON TILL THEN!?"

"YEAH, WILL DO! BUT HURRY UP THOUGH, IF NEMESIS DOES LAND, I MAY HAVE TO ABANDON MY TROOPS TO FIGHT HIM!!"

"ALRIGHT, ONE MORE QUESTION!"

"YEAH?"

"IS THERE ANY OTHER FLEETS WITH HIM!? HIS TWIN USUALLY FIGHTS WITH HIM!"

"YA MEAN NORTUS!? NAH, DON'T SEE HIM!!"

"OKAY, BYE! SEE YOU IN A BIT!! DON'T DIE!"

"I OBVIOUSLY WON'T!! SEE YA!!"

Erik hung up on Fox, and the aircraft was finally back into tranquillity (Dani was in a different craft).

"Fox will be fine," Kyle said confidently. "He's like a big brother to us, no?"

"Yeah, and he's strong," Jax agreed. "He was second only to Ben back then, in terms of a swordsman."

Isak gripped his metal baseball bat. Before he had joined the CSA, Isak had been an incredibly talented sportsman, but he never got to show off his talents in public due to his rivals pressing him down – Isak had a unique gift to become an instant master of any sport he touched, literally – so masterful that he began to think of new strategies, and new ways to use his skills to fight instead.

Fox cut through Intrusink after Intrusink with his sword, leaving a trail of corpses and severed limbs in his wake as he looked back up at Nemesis's flagship, which was looming above the entire battlefield now. His soldiers clashed with Nemesis's Orcs and Intrusinks all along the beach, fighting in the surf with the water lapping hungrily around their legs as people and monsters alike fumbled around for each other in the shallow water, which was quickly being dyed red.

"When is this guy coming down!?" Fox asked himself, as he whirled through three more Orcs. "Maybe he's waiting for something..." At that moment, the heavy sound of engines erupted over the din of swords clashing and screams, and a thousand Ospreys broke through the clouds.

"We're here!" Jax yelled, dropping down next to Fox, slashing down a group of Intrusinks at the same time. All around them, soldiers piled out of aircrafts and charged towards the front line, wielding guns, katanas, combat axes – there were well over three thousand reinforcements, and at the same time the heavy marching of boots resounded alongside them, as ten thousand fresh Frostbourne warriors appeared over the horizon.

"Fox!" Erik shouted, impaling monsters on his Naginata blades as he rushed through the masses of monsters on his steed, clearing the area around them. "Where's Nemesis!?"

"He ain't down here yet," Fox said, shrugging. "I thought that he might have been waiting for something to happen before he comes down."

"Well, whatever," Jax said, shouldering his plasma blade and turning back towards the battle. "We can worry about Nemesis after we clean up his advance party."

"Advance party?" Isak asked, bonking an orc who was on the floor with his bat. "This massive army isn't the main force? There's gotta be at least twenty thousand monsters."

"Yeah, and who attacks with that insignificant number when they have such a massive fleet?" Jax scoffed.

"Fox had about seven thousand men already here, right?" Erik said.

"Then we have three thousand UN soldiers from the Ospreys, and ten thousand of my Frostbourne, so our total force is..."

"Equal to their advance party."

"Yeah..."

"We've lost about two hundred so far in this battle," Kyle said. "So so far we are alright, but do we have a plan?"

"Kill, slaughter, massacre - do what you want," Jax said, beheading a monster that was charging up to them. "Against a powerful but brainless enemy like Nemesis there's no point in designing strategies, just fight. He ain't gonna come at us with some carefully planned out attack, he's just gonna come barrelling up a bull running at a matador. But don't use up too much energy killing the monsters, you'll run out of stamina against the strong guys."

"Alright then."

Eventually, the advance force was being cleared up, and the remaining soldiers on the battlefield all looked towards Nemesis's fleet, ready for whatever came down.

"Yeah, they're coming alright," Isak said.

He was right. Hundreds of small troops carriers had just dislodged themselves from the larger ships of the fleet and hurtling towards the sea, about a hundred metres out, where the gentle slope of the beach only sunk enough for the water to lap up to their waists, and hundreds of thousands of Intrusinks and Orcs spilled out, rushing through the water until it was turned into a giant pit of froth of foam and monsters, all clawing their way towards the shore, where the Frostbourne closed ranks and locked shields, with Erik, Jax, Dani and three officers behind the first line.

"Let 'em come, let 'em come," Dani laughed, smiling an evil smile from ear to ear. "I just can't wait for the killing to begin."

"Nobody else except you wants to actually fight," Erik muttered.

"But I guess war is war, it's impossible to go against that."

"Yeah," Jax said, looking over the rim of light blue and silver helmets of Erik's soldiers. "I'm glad that the Frostbourne-CSA pact remained after the first war."

"Well," Erik said, as he lowered his blades into attack position. "It's only natural. We're like one big family now, aren't we? Except for my sister, Hilda of course, who's biological..."

Then the first wave of monsters slammed into the first shield wall line, and all hell broke loose.

Dani immediately vaulted the defensive line and hurled himself into the mass of monsters, cutting through them with his axeblades, which were strapped to his forearms. He whirled through them like a demon, taunting and laughing at the monsters as he killed his way through them. Jax and Erik held back as the second defensive line surged forward to support the first, and the soldiers held their shields up against the seething mass of monsters pressing against them, occasionally hacking and stabbing from between the gaps. Isak tossed a ball up from his hand, and smacked it with his bat, where it went sailing over the lines of their army and crashed into the Orcs, exploding on impact.

"Some of them are even bombs," he said, grinning.

Kyle sighed, and flicked his hand. In an instant, a hundred boulders lifted out of the ground behind them, and with another flick of his wrist they shot through the air and crashed down amongst the monsters, squashing hundreds.

"Hmph," Isak said, giving him the side-eye. "Show off."

"You started it, I was just responding," Kyle said amiably. "Don't get your bedsheets in a twist about *that*."

Fox hurried through the crowd of soldiers slowly tromping forwards towards the front line until he arrived at the Frostbourne archer regiment closest to the front.

"Fire!"

The archers complied, and lifted their silver bows up to the watery sunlight, with their steel arrows glinting hungrily. And then, all at once, the arrows rose into the air like a crowd of birds lifting off

and arched across the front lines, smashing into the monsters surging forwards, cutting many down before they even reached dry land.

Slowly but surely, the Frostbourne shield wall, backed up by UN snipers, advanced through the big black block of enemies like a set of iron teeth, every spear and sword stained red with blood, trampling over hundreds of corpses as they marched, with Dani in front of them, still shrieking like crazy and knocking Intrusinks' heads together. Now both Jax and Erik had also come out from behind the front line, and Erik was sweeping his blades in front of him like giant scissors, while Jax hacked and slashed and stabbed like crazy, soaking himself in blood as he massacred his way through the enemies in a frenzy. It was clear that victory was near, and many soldiers at the back were already cheering, as the front lines fought back into the surf, throwing up water and blood alike, with masses of soldiers and monsters tumbling over one another as the wrestled into the tide. That was until Jax looked back and saw the second fleet approaching from behind them.

"Well, _____," Kyle cursed under his breath as he stared up at the fleet that was closing in on them at a ferocious pace. "They got us good."

"A cloaking device!" Jax said angrily. "Those goddamn – aggh."

"I was right," Erik said, looking intently at the ships. "Nortus is here." And at the same time, a deafening yell echoed from above them, and the hulking, gigantic figure of Nemesis dropped onto the battlefield.

"Fox, take care of Nortus!" Jax yelled.

"Oh, for real!?" Fox demanded. "Don't you think you're pushing us around too much, eh Jaxin?"

"Shut up and go! Your powers are a perfect match for his."

"Okay, okay!"

Fox streaked through the yelling Frostbourne warriors and howling orcs, weaving in between duels and brawls like a rapid stream. Ahead of him, a humongous pillar of ice erupted out of the ground, throwing Frostbourne into the air.

"Damn, damn!" Fox cursed, as he glared at the figure rushing through the air at blinding speed straight towards him. "Don't think I'll let you get away with this!! NORTUS!"

Nortus was in front of him in an instant, smiling evilly, and sword and fist collided in an instant, sending a shockwave rolling through their surroundings and knocking his soldiers off their feet, throwing up the sand around them in massive rings.

"Impressive," Nortus grinned.

"It's not hidden info that you're not the weakest of the five Generals," Fox grinned. "Bad luck you came to me, your technique is absolutely useless against mine."

Nortus glared at Fox hatefully, before throwing rapid-fire punches at him, but Fox blocked every single one with his sword before slashing him across the chest. Nortus stumbled backwards, and clutched at the bleeding gash in his chest.

"Actually I take it back," Fox mused. "You're pretty weak, I don't think Leo would've struggled too much against you. Or maybe you are powerful, but I'm just too strong."

"Shut up! You said you can counter my technique, but can you really?"

Nortus grinned, and ice began to form on his fists, until they were completely encased in a pair frozen gauntlets.

"One hit from these, and you'll freeze to death immediately," he smirked. "Come on then."

Fox sighed and tutted.

"Well, I did say my power completely counters yours," he replied. Nortus bellowed and charged him and the two collided.

"This-guy-has-infinite-HP!" Jax yelled, as Nemesis swung his around by the foot and hurled him into a rock. Erik leapt up brought down his blades on his arm, but the blade wouldn't cut through at all.

“It’s like steel...”

Nemesis roared and hurled Erik away, where he crashed into a bunch of Orcs, and started killing them as fast as he could.

“AAAAAAA!”

Dani lunged up and punched Nemesis in the face, but it barely had any effect and he too was blown away like a ragdoll.

“That ____!” he cursed furiously, getting back onto his feet. “I’m gonna slaughter him and hang his corpse up to dry.”

“Wait,” Erik said. “Leave Nemesis to us! You have to help the soldiers.”

He was right; Nemesis and Nortus’s pincer attack was putting heavy pressure on their soldiers, outnumbering the twenty to one. The Frostbourne had shield walls on either side protecting the UN troops on the middle, who were shooting out from either side, their tanks and artillery firing into the enemy midst. Isak and Kyle were outside of the formation, surrounded by Nortus’s troops but standing upon a giant pile of corpses, and still killing more. Dani nodded to Erik’s request and charged off into the midst of the enemies, knocking down several in the process.

“Just me and you versus Hulk-man,” Jax muttered.

“We got this,” Erik said. “Just use Armament or something.”

Jax grinned and activated his Color of Armament technique, which formed an invisible suit of armour around himself and whatever weapon he infused it into, making his attacks stronger and his skin harder. Nemesis barrelled towards them, snorting like a bull, his black armour glinting as he did so, but Jax met his charge full on with both of his blades, and the two of them skidded backwards until they came to a halt. Immediately, Jax threw his knee upwards, ramming it straight into Nemesis’s face. The hulking brute of a general stumbled backwards, clutching his bleeding nose, and Erik jumped in, whirling his Naginatas, and swept them across Nemesis’s bulk, drawing a little more blood.

“I remember fighting against this guy last time,” Jax muttered.

“Wasn’t very bright, very strong hits and high durability, not much else I suppose.”

"A bit doo-doo in the duh-brain," Erik muttered under his breath. Nemesis charged them again, and the duo leapt to either side of him, with Jax hurling a volley of bombs into the incoming tank. They did absolutely no damage, but the smoke did confuse Nemesis enough for Jax to charge in, his eyes glowing red with Color of Armament, and slash Nemesis across the face.

"AAAAAAA!"

Then Erik kicked him on the head with the force of a whale dropping on him, and Nemesis scrambled along the ground away from them and took off into the air, soaring across the ocean.

"He ran??" Jax asked. Why that!"

"Leave him!" Erik shouted. "Nortus is the bigger problem!"

"Yeah," Jax agreed. "He's the third strongest of the Generals. Fox might not be able to handle him alone."

"Aggggh!"

Nortus stumbled backwards and crashed into his own massive ice spike. Around them, the bodies of humans and monsters alike were strewn around, some encased in ice while the rest were burning.

Fox and Nortus panted as they glared at each other across the clearing they had made, Fox's blade still blazing with flames, but there were still traces of ice seeping out from his wounds.

"Ugh..." He grunted as he swayed on his feet. "Damn, this is tough."

"AAAAAAH!!"

Nortus yelled as he spread ice over the wound that had gone aflame after Fox's last attack, and he breathed out heavily as he sealed yet another smoking gash, which was singed around the corners. Fox's flames were steadily melting his technique.

"Damn, you're actually kinda tough," Fox muttered, wiping some blood off his mouth.

"... I see you weren't bluffing when you said that you can counter my technique..."

"Yeah," Fox grinned. "Let's finish this."

"Fox!"

Jax jumped over an ice spike, his blades drawn in attack position, and Erik followed.

"Oi, you alright?"

"I'm good," Fox replied. "This guy's tougher than I thought. Mind lending a hand?"

"Sure," Jax smiled. "Time to die, Nortus."

Nortus stared at them.

Did they kill Nemesis? No, I can still feel his power from here, he must've ran, that blithering fool! I can't beat these three alone! All three of them... are really strong.

Nortus bellowed and raised his arms high above his head, encasing his fists in ice as he did so, and drawing in the air like a miniature tornado.

"Let's get him!" Jax yelled.

The trio dashed forwards, but Nortus slammed his fists down onto the sand so hard that the sand erupted like a giant bomb had just detonated under it, and in an instant the sand that had been thrown up was smothered with ice spikes, immobilising the three of them in ice.

"Agh!" Jax grunted. His lower half and his left side had been trapped in the ice, but he slashed apart a giant part of it with his free hand.

"What're you tryna do?" He demanded. Ripping his arm out from the ice.

"Stalling," Nortus grinned, and slashed the air with his fingers, forming a portal in the middle of the air.

"GAAAAH!"

Fox fired a line of fire at him, but he slipped through the portal and disappeared with a smirk on his face that was overshadowed by him wincing in pain at the wounds that Fox had given him. The portal slammed shut before Fox's fire could reach him, and it flew into a horde of orcs, burning them to a crisp.

"Dang, he got away?" Erik grunted, smashing apart the ice. "We should've at least killed one of them...."

"No," Jax replied. "I'm sure that at least Nemesis will die today. Can't you feel that familiar energy?"

"What?" Erik asked. "I don't feel much."

But Jax smiled into the horizon, as the thick layer of clouds finally parted and let the sun shine through for the first time in ages.

Nemesis flew across the sea, skimming the waves and leaving a trail of parting water in his wake.

Were they always that strong? I thought it would be an easy win as soon as my brother got here, but how were that strong?

Suddenly he paused and looked up into the sky, where a dark spot had appeared among the clouds.

A bird...? Can a bird from this puny planet even fly that high?

The so-called bird in the sky circled down slowly, until Nemesis realised that the bird was getting bigger and bigger by the second - it was approaching at a ridiculous speed.

"What the-"

Then it came into view, and he saw the blue flames covering its wings, and the golden trails from its flickering tail, and its familiar, terrifying glare that radiated from its electric blue eyes.

"Why you... NAMAAAAAAN!!!"

Naman shot across the sea like a missile and was upon Nemesis in less than a second, and rammed in full on with one side of where his shoulder would have been in the stomach, sending a shower of blood from his mouth.

"You shoulda stayed dead, big guy."

Naman streaked through the sky as a flaming blue line, and slammed Nemesis down with the force of a nuke onto the ground on an island off the coast of Portugal. The force of the impact shattered the whole island into pieces, and giant fragments of rock rose with the sea that was now coursing in between them, splashing over the fragment that Naman had Nemesis pinned down on. The giant hulking brute of a General lay with his back firmly imprinted in the ground, unable to move, nearly all of his ribs shattered, and blood flowed like a waterfall from his stomach and mouth as he

gasped for air, his eyeballs bugging out of his head. Naman flapped his wings once, and then the blue flames died down and he morphed back into his human form, a lean, tall, young man, with his black hair slicked to one side smoothly, and wearing an aviator's jacket and a plain light blue t-shirt underneath, with simple black and white trainers under sky blue jeans.

"Hey," he said. "Nice to see you again."

Then he raised his fist and smashed Nemesis's head to bits, splattering across the ground like a bursting watermelon.

"I was just coming back to Earth for a vacation," Naman sighed.

"Didn't think I'd be dealing with a new invasion, but I guess... I came at the right time... huh."

"Nemesis died already," Herobane said. "Someone came down to Earth just now, I can feel that presence halfway across the world."

"I know this presence," Witherblood said. "That's Naman the Pheonix. We should try to finish this before Maguire or The Scarlet Warrior can mobilise themselves."

"The Pheonix is strong," Naerius muttered. "He might wipe us all out, y'know."

"You scared?" Herobane sneered. "You can act tough when there's only weaklings over there, but in the end, I guess the second weakest of the Generals is still the second weakest."

"You dare to sully my name!?" Naerius demanded, stomping up to Herobane and looming over him like a boulder. "Just who fought to a standstill with those fools - Greenman and Wallock!?"

"And just who," Witherblood replied from his side of the room.

"Beat the living daylights out of Trewhella, Maurice and that pest at the same time!?"

A pressure felt incredibly heavy and evil suddenly descended upon the room as Witherblood took a step forwards, and even Naerius and Herobane had to force themselves not to cringe before Witherblood's insane power.

"Know your place, you fools."

"Alright," Herobane huffed. "I get the point now."

He took a step forwards and glared at Witherblood head on.

"I'll just destroy you, and the maybe you'd out your head down, huh? Wanna go, bub?"

"I wish you luck then," Witherblood sneered. "Try it, if you dare, you flailing oaf."

However, their stand off was interrupted by a messenger solidier, who came bustling into the room holding a note.

"Hmmm? Ah, I see..." Witherblood grinned. "It's ready, right?"

"Yes, my liege," the messenger replied.

"I've been waiting for this moment," Herobane said, strutting to the control panel. "The moment we see the despair on their faces as we kill them, dead."

"Hmph!" Naerius said, and turned up his nose at them. "Do as you wish, I refuse to go near Europe after the Pheonix has descended. I'll go kill Leo and Zane now."

Witherblood suddenly looked up.

"You said, Leo?" he demanded. "You did not say that Leo was here, in America."

"What of it?" Naerius replied, stopping in his tracks. "He's my prey. You aren't going to steal prey in my turf, are you?"

"You can't handle Leo," Witherblood sneered. "I'll go."

"Hahahahaha!" Naerius boomed. "Are you for real? Only a few days ago I beat the snot out of that kid."

But Witherblood kept walking, right past him. That was it. Naerius almost popped a vein in his forehead, and his face scrunched together in rage like he'd been punched by Zack.

"You."

A massive hand fell on Witherblood's shoulder like a vice.

"You talk too much, you freaking _____."

Then Witherblood's hand gripped Naerius's fingers like a hydraulic press, and he turned and glared at the hulking figure.

"Fine then, tough guy," Witherblood said. "Have fun getting your a___ handed to you, then. But I'm still coming. I want to see you die."

“Hmph,” Naerius growled, removing his hand and checking out his finger. “Do as you want, but if you interfere I’ll kill you first.”

The two clamped away down the corridor and the door hissed shut on Herobane, who stared after them whilst thinking about how idiotic they were, but then he cleared his throat and mashed the intercom button with his fist.

“This is Herobane. Send the assault ship if its ready, but no later than in five hours. The carpet bombing of Europe will begin shortly, so sit back and enjoy the spectacle.”

Jax collapsed upon the sofa and pulled a bandage on his left arm tight between his teeth, before leaning back against the cushions and sighing.

“Hard fight?”

He looked up and Tommy Desmos threw himself down opposite him, breathing out.

“Nah,” Jax replied. “Nemesis’s energy disappeared after he ran away, but Nortus is still at large. Then we cleared up the rest of the army.”

“Jax,” Tommy said, looking at him seriously. “It’s possible you might have to call Pranav back.”

“What? He went to get Leo and Zane, I can’t just force him to come back.”

“Jaxin,” Tommy continued. “It’s serious. If you don’t play your cards right here, you could put the entire CSA in peril.”

“You haven’t even told me what it is yet.”

“Call Naman and Erik here,” Tommy said.

“Naman?”

“Didn’t you hear?”

Naman poked his head around the door at the other end of the room.

“Yo!”

“Wha- Naman!? When did you get here?”

“Is that how you greet an old friend?” Naman tutted, raising an eyebrow. “I guess you guys couldn’t handle anything without me.”

“It’s been a while, bird-brain.”

“That’s better. Now, what’s the problem?”

Continued next week on the 3rd Year Blog!