

023 nerves



chapter twenty three

nerves

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Arden stared at Druig. She tapped on the floor as she deeply processed exactly what was going on and finally accepted that this wasn't a dream.

She was sat on the floor wishing that she probably should have went with Kingo. She couldn't fight against her own family right? That would be terrible. But then again, lives, human lives, were at stake. Her dog would be so sad.

But she could spend the last happy moments before the inevitable doom with someone she loved.

Druig looked at her quickly making her look away.

"All of our powers, even if they're amplified, are not enough to kill a Celestial so," Phastos spoke.

"Well, Sersi did turn a Deviant into a tree," Druig replied.

"Oh yeah!" Arden said. "That was kind of cool."

"I'm sorry what"

"I'm kidding I don't remember it, I think I was hurt."

"I'm sorry what," Phastos repeated. "You didn't wanna tell me that?"

"You've never been able to do it before," Makkari signed.

"I don't know how it happened okay? And I'm pretty sure I couldn't do it again," Sersi spoke.

"Well bows the time to try dont you think?" Phastos laughed in disbelief.

"You could always practice," Arden butt in.

"Phastos that deviant is dead Our plan is to put Tiamut to sleep, not kill it. I can't kill a Celestial," she rushed.

"Sersi, Sersi," Phastos exclaimed.

"We can't!"

It was quiet except for the sounds of Arden's tapping on the floor. They looked to her but said nothing. She looked at nothing but the tattoo on her wrist.

"We can't," Sersi whispered.

"It's okay, Sersi," Druig assured. "I got this."

They watched as Sersi walked out of the room and the tapping continued.

"One, two, three, four," Arden whispered to herself over and over and over again.

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Across the Universe by the Beatles was playing at the highest volume in Arden's ears as she tapped on the floor again and again and again

She was in the same place as before, in the hallway, sat up against the wall with her phone in her hands.

She had no clue what the fuck she was doing.

She stared at her wallpaper filled with the shitty drawings of the eternals, her family, and sighed.

"I don't think I'm going to get that family photo," she whispered to herself.

She wasn't sure if she spoke for she couldn't hear anything besides the calming song and she couldn't feel anything creep past her lips.

"Hey," Druig spoke, though she couldn't hear or see him.

He watched as her hands turned into claws and she continued tapping just like she had done in the lab. The tapping seemed eerie now and it bothered him a great deal when her claws scraped against the floor before she li ed them up to tap once again.

How could she not notice how bad that sounded.

He kicked her outstretched leg so ly and she jumped and threw her phone at him, her earbuds going with.

She brought her hands to her face and winced when her claw pierced her skin.

They both whispered an 'ouch' before Arden quickly began apologizing, her hand going back to normal.

"I'm sorry I didn't hear you and I thought I-"

"Arden," he chuckled, bending down to pick up her phone and headphones. He made it neat before he looked at her again. "It's okay you don't have to apologize."

"Oh," she replied.

He sat down next to her and she watched curiously as he got himself adjusted. He handed her her phone with her earbuds wrapped around it and she took it with gratitude.

"Thank you," she whispered, putting the phone in the pocket of her leather jacket.

He just hummed in acknowledgment and leaned his head back against the wall.

"What brings you here?" she asked.

He looked at her and smiled before closing his eyes and facing back toward the ceiling.

"Just came to check on you," he replied.

"Why?" she asked.

"Because I felt like it," he shrugged. "Plus you keep tapping your fingers on the floor and whispering to yourself. If I didn't know any better I'd think you're trying to summon ants."

"Haha very funny," she replied. "But really it's just a habit."

"You have not started doing it until Kingo le," he pointed out.

"Yeah I do it all the time ask Thena. She's been there longer than you," she spoke.

It was quiet and Arden took a deep breath.

"I'm really sorry, that was meaner than I meant for it to be."

"It's okay," he assured. "You're nervous."

"I am not nervous," she sco ed. "I don't ever get nervous."

"It's okay to be nervous," he explained.

"I'm worried someone else is going to die," she whispered. "And its making me nervous how I wish it'd be me because I don't want anyone else to die."

"You're not going to die," Druig spoke, holding her hands in his. "No one is going to die I am going to make sure of it."

She just nodded and bit her lip, not looking in his eyes.

"Hey look at me," he spoke, adjusting so he wasn't against the wall. She looked at him and he saw the glistening tears threatening to fall.

"No one is going to die, we are going to protect each other yeah?"

She took a deep breath and closed her eyes, engraving the words into her brain. "Yeah," she sighed. "No one is going to die."

They stayed like that for a while, looking at each other and holding each others hands before they leaned back against the wall.

It was quiet as they sat, Arden trying not to tap against anything because Druig would notice. So she bit her lip and thought, and thought, and thought. She hardly noticed Druig reaching for her hands again until Makkari came running in and bringing a big gust of wind with.

"Holy fuck people have got to stop scaring me," she whispered to herself, out of breath as though she had been the one running.

"He did it," Makkari signed as Arden held a hand to her heart a er being scared.

"Did what?" Druig asked, looking at Arden in concern.

"Phastos figured it out," Arden pieced together, standing up and rushing to the lab.

Druig and Makkari followed behind, walking a normal pace and talking as Arden rushed. She made it to the lab and watched Phastos work. Her eyes were wide with awe and her mouth so close to catching a fly in it. When he finished, there was a bracelet in his hand and she gasped.

"Oh my god," Arden whispered, catching the attention of Phastos.

Phastos looked up to see Arden (and Druig and Makkari talking behind her) looking at him in awe.

"Phastos," she said. "I am so proud of you!"

She rushed forward once he put the bracelet aside and gave him a big hug. He laughed loudly and hugged her back, she was sure glad she got a hug. Maybe that's what she needed.

"Thank you Arden," he whispered.

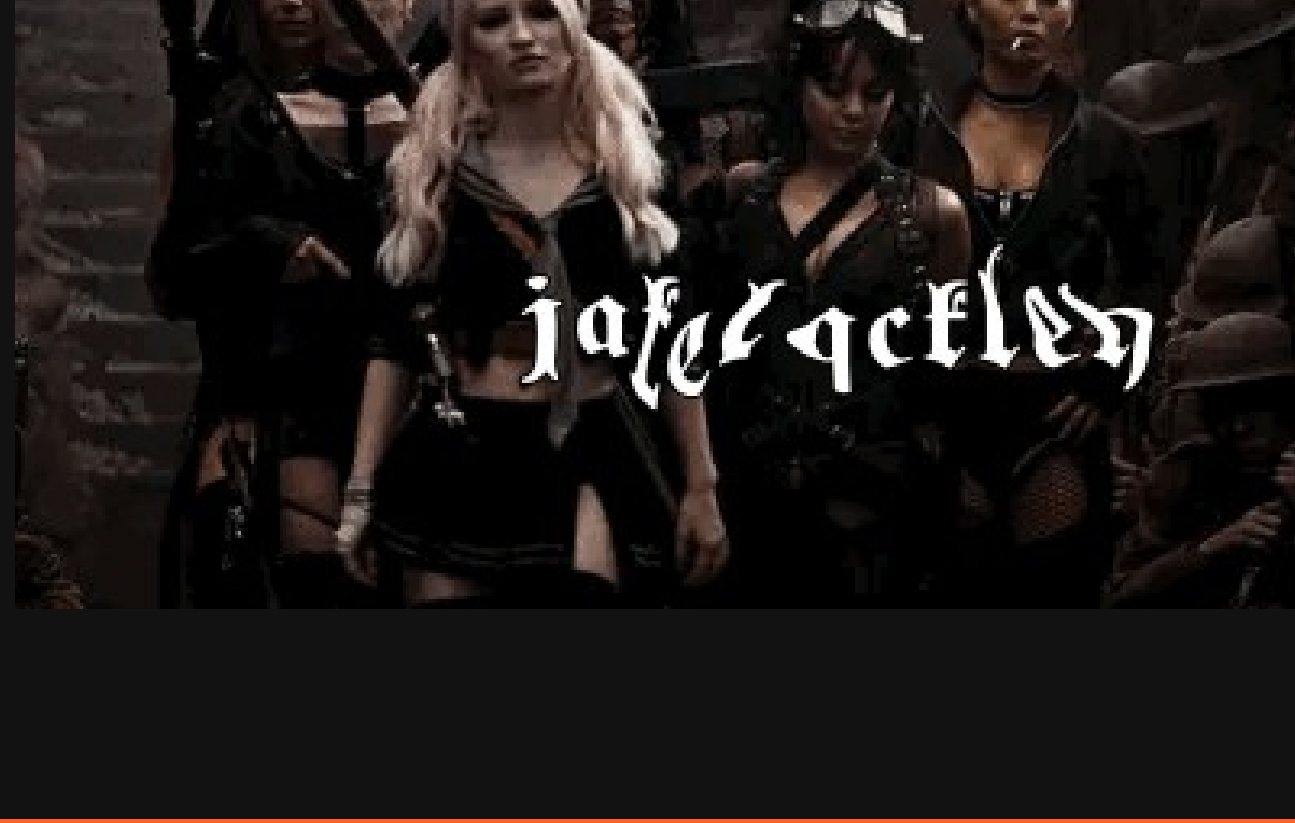
She pulled away and patted his shoulder which vaguely reminded him of how Gil used to do that and he smiled bigger.

"Let's go get suited up."

authors note! _____

hello!!!!!!! hiiiiii HOPEFULLY I CAN FINISH THIS BEFORE FHE END OF THE YEAR GUYS

also i apologize in advance for the upcoming chapters , i'm terrible at writing fight scenes that aren't just hand to hand combat idk it's also kinda long cuz i don't wanna put me or anyone else in the torture of seeing me write that by having multiple chapters JAJDJ



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