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xxxiii - To infinty and beyond
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South Dakota, 2023 IT HAD BEEN TWO WEEKS SINCE THEY'D STOPPED THE **EMERGENCE.** For the first week, Pollo had been scared that another Deviant would appear, or that Ikaris would turn out to still be alive and come to kill them. He'd wake up from nightmares that, for once, weren't linked to his powers. Or the memories taken from him. They were just that. Nightmares. Sometimes, Druig would use his powers to help him fall away, however Pollo was still hesitant when it came to his boyfriend messing with his mind, even if it was to help him. Pollo, with the help of the other Eternals, had gone back to his apartment in Amsterdam and had taken everything he would need with him. The rest he'd sold before changing the human money he'd

a

gotten for something more suited to the place they were going to. And though at first Phastos had suggested that Pollo le Dragon in that apartment, reluctant to let a flerken near his son and husband, he finally accepted. So while Phastos was fixing the Domo, he and his family stayed in Ajak's old house while the other Eternals had taken back their rooms in the Domo. Even then, Pollo would spend most of the time in the little house, exploring. He'd let his fingertips caress a table or he would look out of a window, wondering if Ajak had done the same. He would sit in a chair, thinking it had been her own and he would look at the sunset, thinking she'd seen the same sunset for years. They'd buried her in the courtyard and Pollo had planted daisies on her grave. He'd tried to say something at the small ceremony they held for her, yet he'd

been unable to do so. Druig had just passed an arm around his waist, pulling him closer at they both cried. Each Eternals shared the same grief, still they couldn't understand what the couple were living. The last ones they'd said to Ajak had been bitter, cruel. Everybody else had gotten some kind of goodbye. A kind word. The way she'd just died a er all of this felt strange. Like their story had never ended. But he'd seen the body. He'd buried it. He knew that, for Ajak, this was He remembered screaming. And crying. Losing his mind. A billion

thoughts had been running in his mind, a billion regrets. He saw Druig enter his room. He thought he was going to erase his mind. He tensed up. Instead, he just hugged him as he sobbed. And that was he'd needed all along. A hug. A hug for a soldier who did not know how to love or how to feel. He'd been given a purpose, powers, a reason to be. Had he been given a heart? He had to believe so as, a er all, he could feel it pounding, trying to scale his chest whenever

Druig was just a bit too close. He could hear the whispers now that he knew he had to listen to them. Sometimes, it was helpful. Sometimes, he felt like he was going crazy. The voices were his own, most of the time, his thoughts, yet there were other times when he would hear people he didn't know speaking, or he would even see them, without recognizing their face. He'd realized that it wasn't something he could just shut o . Or, if he could, he had yet to figure it out. He hadn't talked much with the Eternals who had decided to stay on Earth, except for Phastos, of course, as they'd all gone back to where they used to live before and he'd stayed in South Dakota with the

Domo. Still, Kingo had called, telling him that he would send a ticket to the premier of his next movie as soon as he could. Pollo promised that he would come back to Earth to see it, just like he promised he would bring neither his flerken nor boyfriend with him. Sersi had stayed less than two days with them at first, just the time for her to book a flight back to London. Though she was o icially their Prime Eternal, now, she didn't seem to be very keen on the whole leadership thing, letting them make their own decisions. He was glad that she was the one whom Ajak had chosen. The others would have tried to force the Eternals to do as they said. She didn't. A er two weeks, Phastos had finally managed to fix the Domo. Today was the day they were leaving Earth. None of them had anything le that linked the, to this planet. None of them but Druig. At first, he'd

been reluctant towards leaving his village, still he'd came to terms with the fact that they no longer needed him. The same couldn't be said of Pollo, who'd promised to follow him no matter his choice, even if Druig could see him look at the stars melancholically, every night. In the end, they both agreed to leave with Thena and Makkari.

Before they le, they'd decided to take it relax, eating in front of the TV with Phastos and his family. As there wasn't most place on the couch, Pollo had to seat on the armchair, leaning on Druig so as to

A reporter on the screen had started talking about Tiamut's body,

which, a er having been turned to stone, had stayed there. "The sudden appearance of an enormous stone figure in the Indian Ocean has le more questions than answers for authorities. U.S. and Australian naval ships are maintaining defensive positions, but at Ben, Phastos' husband, pointed at the screen, interrupting the reporter. "You guys did that?" Now, Phastos and Pollo were great friends, they'd always been, yet he had to admit, Ben was starting to become one of his favourite people. There was just something about the human that made him dierent from the other. Druig would probably have been jealous had his

boyfriend not been so bad at making friends, which is why instead he

"I love you so much," Phastos spoke, his mouth filled with pizza as he

was happy that Pollo could find as many friends as he could.

did so.

Pollo sighed loudly, bringing attention to him, just as he wished. "Can we go back to the other channel, now? This is boring!" "Pollo, we talked about this," replied Phastos, now mildly annoyed. "The coyote is notgoing to catch the roadrunner. You're not missing anything, it's not going to change in the five minutes you miss." "You don't know that! And anyway, it's not about the coyote catching him, it's about how he fails to do it!" He exclaimed, placing his hand in front of his mouth so as to not show the food in his mouth.

He lost balance for a second, though Druig caught him and helped him replace himself on the couch, not even realizing that he'd

"Come on, Phastos, just change the channel," agreed Druig. "We

The man sco ed, rolling his eyes at that. "Oh, what a surprise, you're

dropped some food onto the ground.

don't need to see this, we were there!"

we're watching so no. Just no."

cut his head o . Just so you know."

laps, who'd shot him a confused look.

"Do not change the channel."

siding with your boyfriend." "We want roadrunner! Signed Makkari, siding with the two others, which made Phastos gasp. "Come on, habibi," Ben joined. "This is their last day on Earth, they can watch cartoons if that's what they want." "Okay, I'm sorry, but I already have to watch cartoons everyday with my child," stated the inventor, "and for once I get to choose what

"Nobody forced you to have a child, Phastos! And when you got one, you should've known what it meant! You've been alive for years, a er all," reminded Pollo, quick to continue talking before his friend could interrupt him. "While we're talking about your child, Thena almost

Phastos snapped his head, almost getting a whiplash, gasping when he saw that Pollo hadn't been lying. He placed his plate on Makkari's

"Um, can you just... Look... One second." He paused, glaring at Pollo.

He stood up, going to see Thena. Immediately, Pollo went to take his seat on the couch, taking the remote and changing the channel. He could faintly hear Phastos and Thena talking in the other room, yet didn't really spend much time giving it attention, until Makkari stood up as well, putting both her plate and Phastos' on his laps. He let out an o ended noise, yet still didn't do anything, as Druig went to take

the plates, going to put them in the kitchen. Pollo turned his head, smiling as he saw his boyfriend entering the kitchen and throwing food at Phastos with a smirk, which made Jack laugh. Phastos, on the

"Ah, yes, there's Druig. Don't go anywhere near him," he suggested to his son. "Unless Pollo is here. And even then... Pollo, are you kidding

other hand, seemed less than amused by that.

me?! I told you not to change the channel!"

"It was the commercial break!"

for the first time.

any of the people of the household.

Pollo had been grounded. He apparently no longer had a vote when it came to choosing what they watched and though he would've argued that this was very dictatorial of Phastos, he stayed silent, knowing that before the end of the day, he would be away from this planet. Actually, they were already starting to leave. He'd packed the things he'd le in Ajak's house, saying his goodbye to her as he sat in front of

her grave, and took a cover that smelt just like her. He also said goodbye to Ben, the only human he'd actually ever been friends with.

Thena was far in front of them, never having been one for teary goodbyes. Pollo had asked her to hold Dragon while he talked with Phastos, knowing the inventor wouldn't want his son to be too close with Dragon, even if the flerken had proven that he didn't want to eat

Phastos placed a hand on his son's shoulder, stopping him from

"Oh! Yeah!" Exclaimed Jack as they walked outside, seeing the Domo

going any further. "Okay, that's far enough, Jack." "Wow, dad, the Domo's so cool," said Jack in awe. Pollo would have argued that it was just a big triangle, yet he was almost certain that Phastos wouldn't appreciate it if he crushed his son's dreams. "Your dad fixed it with his bare hands." He glared at Pollo when the Eternal cleared his throat. "Melting a few things down doesn't count, Pollo." He intertwined his fingers with Druig's, sticking out his tongue at his friend. "I also lighted the dark corners for you, you ungrateful bit—I

The child seemed more amused than convinced by what the Eternal had said. Even Phastos didn't seem that impressed, though there were no doubts that he was glad that Pollo had tried to find an alternative for the swear he was going to use. Tried being the

"Let's wait till you get your learner's permit, okay?" He grabbed his son, pulling him closer, as though he was trying to protect him from

mean, you ungrateful person. Swearing is bad, Jack."

"Can we go to space, too, one day?" Enquired Jack.

keyword, of course.

slightly into Pollo.

and signing.

the spaceship. "Hey, Phastos," called out Druig, freeing his hand from Pollo's grip. "Take care. This world is lucky to have you." "Thank you." He placed a hand in front of him, going for a handshake. "I know you're not a hugger, so..." Druig looked at Pollo with a smile before taking Phastos' hand and shaking it. Then, he pulled him in for a hug, surprising the inventor but earning himself a thumbs up from his boyfriend. "Okay," he chuckled before they parted away. Makkari folded her arms on her chest, walking closer and bumping

"You think when we find the other Eternals out there, that they'll accept the truth the way we did?" Druig asked her, both while talking

They started walking away, however Pollo was stopped by Phastos calling out his name. He turned towards him, smiling yet still

confused. Phastos took a small rectangular box, showing it to Pollo, who nodded at Makkari and Druig, silently telling them they could go

She nodded. " ...because the truth will set them freë.

a

on without him. Druig seemed hesitant, still he le anyway. "Remember how you told me that you couldn't see from a distance and that things were blurry? I think I found the problem," he declared. He gave the box to Pollo, who took a second before daring to open it. While at first he'd feared it would be some kind of weapon that would jump in his face, it turned out to be much less dangerous than that.

Glasses had been placed inside, along with what looked like contacts.

"What you're saying is that I'm just myopic?" He asked, not quite sure yet if he should be relieved. "This has nothing to do with my powers?"

The inventor played with his fingers, shaking his head slightly. "Yes and no. As you know, we're kind of like engines, made by Arishem, and the fact that you weren't myopic when you first came to Earth means that you shouldn't be now. Which le me with one theory. Your body is naturally capable of surviving a very high temperature, which is the one your ropes originally have. But when we were

fighting, you made the temperature go higher than you ever did, your body's temperature raising with it. I think that, somehow, it caused your circuits, or whatever it is that we have, to start melting, which

He played with the glasses, knowing he should probably try them on. They knew so little about what really were the Eternals, it was hard to theorize the reason for his sight not being as good as before. And though what Phastos was saying was simply terrifying, he knew that this was the most likely answer to their problem. He hesitantly put on the glasses, the blurs around him immediately going back to what

He frowned looking up to Phastos.

caused you to develop myopia."

they'd once been.

was saying. "Can I still use my powers?" "Yes. You can," declared Phastos, making the other Eternal sigh in relief. "But what you did at the beach? Changing the temperature of your rope? No. That, you can't do. Your body wasn't meant to endure those kinds of temperatures and next time, I'm not really sure what could happen. You could go blind or other circuits could melt instead. You could lose use of your legs, of your body or just die. And, well, nobody wants that, Po." The statement shouldn't have bothered him so much. He'd only

changed the temperature of his ropes once or twice and never before he'd needed to do it. Those were just situations of pure danger, when he didn't have any other choices if he wanted to beat his adversary. And each of those times his adversaries had been Eternals. He didn't believe he would have to fight one again. He should've been fine, should've been happy that he could still use his powers. Instead, the whispers got louder, making him glimpse at images he didn't quite understand. He tried to ignore it, and tried to shut it out. He gave

In the distance, he could see Druig, waiting for him. He was too far to hear and Pollo wondered how he was supposed to break out the new to him. They'd been dating for less than three weeks, still it was going

relationship by saying that one of them was at risk at melting from inside if he found himself forced to use the maximum capacity of his powers. How would Druig react to that? How would he even say it! He could only understand half of what was happening, he wasn't sure he could explain all of it. Fighting another Eternal would, without a doubt, be his doom. If he raised the temperature of his ropes, he would die, melting from the inside, but if he didn't realize the temperature, he would also died, killed by an Eternal he was unable

so well. He was almost sure that most couples didn't start a

Phastos a tense smile, looking away for a second.

"So what are you saying?" He continued, knowing full well what he

to harm due to their armour made to resist those kind of things. "I'm sorry, Po," Phastos apologized, even though it was far from his fault. "If I hadn't been so blinded by my own anger, if I'd taken more time to analyze how your powers worked..." "Nothing would have changed, Phastos. I would probably have done the exact same as I did before," he said, trying to reassure him. "But thank you for telling me. And for the glasses." "Uh, yeah. I added a few things I thought you might appreciate to the glasses, but I'll let you figure it out," he uttered. "I know you try to hide it, but you're smart, Po. Just because people tell you you're

He smiled. He might have had tears in his eyes as well. All he knew was that this goodbye needed to be perfect. He'd learnt from the last time he'd seen Ajak that any goodbye can be your last one. And something told him that this wasn't over just yet. Something was

"I'm a soldier, Phastos, that's more than enough for me. And it was nice fighting along with you. I hope this is not the last time we see

It seemed like Phastos want to say something as, a er all, he's always liked away the last word. Yet, he stayed silent and, instead, hugged Pollo. The Eternal ru led Jack's hair and with one last smile, he walked back to his boyfriend. As soon as they're close enough, he felt Druig's arm being wrapped around his waist and pulling him closer.

"Is everything okay?" He enquired, just before they entered the

"Yes, Dru, everything is perfect," he lied. The whispers got louder.

Druig: *does literally anything* Pollo::)

Next chapter is the last one!!! I can't wait! I don't have much to say for this, expect for the fact that I've made way too many incorrect quotes, so I'm going to place a bunch of these at the end of this chapters, more than normal! Anyway, I hope you liked this and that you're having a good day!:)

good for nothing but fighting doesn't mean it's true."

coming.

each other."

Domo.

Druig: Watcha doin? Pollo: Stealing my neighbour's cat. **Druig: Scandalous.** Druig: Can I help? Druig: You know what's funny about Pollo? He's my best friend, and anyone who'd hurt him is someone I'd murder, probably. Druig: *sees someone doing something stupid*

> Druig: What an idiot. Druig: *realizes it's Pollo* Druig: Wait, that's MY idiot!

Pollo: So I have made the decision to trust you. Druig: A horrible decision, really.

Druig: I'm not being weird. Am I being weird? Pollo: Yes, and that's coming from me.

Pollo: And what do I get out of this? Druig: I will give you a dollar. Pollo: What do you think I am? A chump? I would never do it for a dollar! Druig: How bout two dollars? Pollo: You got yourself a deal.

Pollo, holding in his laughter: Hey, how do you ask a glass of water what it's doing? Druig: A glass of water is an inanimate object. Therefore, it's incapable of having a thought process or understanding basic human language. Pollo: Pollo: Water you doing?

Pollo, hugging Druig: A ection! **Druig: Disgusting.** Druig: ...Do it again. Druig: I need you to come meet me, and I need you to come alone. Pollo: And I need you to be less vague and weird. Druig: There's something I have to ask about you-know-who. **Pollo: Voldemort?**

Druig: No. Pollo: Is it Voldemort? Druig: It's not Voldemort. Pollo: You haven't mentioned wizards once in this conversation, so I'm gonna have to assume it's Voldemort.

> **Druig: I WOULD DESTROY THE WORLD FOR YOU!** Pollo: Okay, can you do the dishes? **Druig: No!**

Pollo: No more making fun of me when I misuse dated cultural references, alright? Are we cowabunga on this? Druig, sighing: Fine. We're cowabunga.

Druig: Hey, Polly, what do you think it would be like if we had kids? Pollo: What would it be like? Inconvenient, mostly. Druig: No, I mean, what would they be like, the kids? You ever think about it? Pollo: Can't really say I have. Druig: You know, for someone as eccentric as yourself, you can be boring as fuck sometimes. Pollo: Sorry, Druig. For what it's worth, I'm picturing them now. A

Druig: What's this?

a

a

boy and a girl. Two perfect little freaks of nature raised by people who've clearly got no business bringin' up anybody. Pollo: So I got this amazing plan! Druig: We fail almost every time you say that. Pollo: Well this is the same! But with a hamster involved.

Pollo: Hey, can you do me a favor? Druig: Sorry, I have to go do literally anything other than this. Pollo: You don't even have a legitimate reason? Druig: Oh, no, I do. Pollo: Well, what is it? Druig: You see, I simply don't give a fuck.

> Druig: Do you need help getting up? Pollo: Nah, I'm cool down here on the floor.

Druig: Hey, Polly. What kind of flowers do you prefer? Pollo: I like sunflowers. Druig, pulling out a bouquet of Venus Flytraps: Well, shit— Pollo: I want a bf. Druig: Do you mean best friend, boyfriend or bread feast? Because you're being really vague here. a Pollo: You can do it Druig!

Pollo: But if you can't, at least your death will be quick, painless, and really cool to watch.

Pollo: GET BACK HERE YOU DUMB FUCK! Druig: LET ME RUN FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF MY ACTIONS!

> Pollo: Can I ask a dumb question? Druig: Better than anyone I know.

Pollo: Hey random, what are your favorite flowers? Druig: Peonies, why? Pollo: Druig: Were you going to get me flowers? Pollo: Druig: Pollo: t & a possibility

Pollo: Well, Druig and I finally did it! The rest of the Eternals: *gasps, shocked expressions, etc.* Pollo: That's right... We kissed!

Pollo: I truly go into housewife mode when I'm someone's soulmate—like, I'll make you pancakes and bacon every morning. Druig: This is a lie. Druig: I'm literally dating him. This is a lie. Druig: HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO COOK A PANCAKE, WHAT IS THIS.