

[Adam POV.]

Tired, and exhausted, I slept on my bed recovering from my wounds, the ones the medics couldn't heal, like most times they were many.

Today, however, I was greeted by a warm surprise, for the woman that would usually come to my dreams appeared once again, as elegant and beautiful as ever.

Even without touching her, or having touched her at all, I could feel her warmth from afar, a welcoming kind of warmth.

"It pains me to see you like this," The mysterious woman said, looking at my wounds that had somehow manifested within my dream. "So much pain, so much suffering, and I can't do anything to stop it."

I could tell by her tone she was frustrated, feeling impotent, and powerless to aid me in my situation.

"You shouldn't feel bad. Besides, seeing you in my dreams really soothes my mind, you know?" I replied with a smile. "It keeps away the nightmares, and it allows me to actually rest,

so in a way, you're helping more than you could've possibly imagined."

The woman smiled a small tired smile. "You don't get it. If you would only hear my name, if you would only say my name, you would have the power to break free of this torment."

If I could only hear her name? Well, I heard names have power, but that's on a whole new level. "And what is your name, beautiful lady?"

"My name is Zanryu----," The woman began, but something made her stop and sigh. "So close, yet so far away."

I frowned, feeling the hurt in her voice. Even if this wasn't real, I could feel with every fiber of my body that she cared deeply about me, even though I couldn't quite understand why, perhaps I had gone crazy and this was my coping mechanism.

"You really care about me, huh?" I asked, smiling at her.

"You're the only thing I care about," The woman replied without hesitation. "This world, and everyone in it, are meaningless to me. All I wish is to see you happy, and safe. But I can't help you unless you say my name."

"So a Beetlejuice kind of situation, huh?" I asked with a chuckle.

The woman sighed, rolling her head. "Even now you haven't let that bastard ruin your sense of humor. I'm glad, even though your timing for it is terrible."

I chuckled. "I tend to make jokes when I'm not sure what to say."

There was something in this woman that made me feel I could tell her anything.

"I know," The woman smiled, tilting her head to the side in a way that her hair now rested on one of her shoulders. "You use it to hide your pain because you think it better to laugh it up than to cry it out."

I do think that.

"So what was your name again?" I asked, leaning forward. "Zanryu...what?"

The woman smiled at this, with a sad undertone dancing on her face. "I can't tell you my name, I have tried, but you still don't hear it."

I frowned, reaching for the woman to give her a hug. This was the first time I had actually managed to touch her, and yet it felt like my body remembered her, as if I had already done

this. "At least this time I managed to hear some of it. So, we are making progress, don't you think?"

The woman smiled, brushing my hair with one of her hands. "You are, you're growing strong every day, and with each passing moment, I feel closer to you."

"That sounded romantic," I chuckled, which earned me a slap on the back of the head from the woman.

"Is not. Though I will say I do love you, but in time you will learn how different my love is," The woman said, resuming brushing my hair. It felt... nice, and calming.

"I wish I could stay here, forever," I muttered, burrowing my face in her dress.

"You can't. If that was an option, I would've tried, believe me," The woman chuckled for a moment, before her eyes grew sad. "He's coming, to make you suffer again."

I blinked, catching on as to what she was saying. "Time to wake up, huh?"

The woman nodded. "Yes, it is."

I smiled, reaching her face to cup one of her cheeks. "I will be okay. Just visit me again soon?"

The woman smiled, though it didn't quite meet her eyes. "Say my name, hear my voice, and you won't have to suffer at his hands anymore."

I stared at her, and before I could reply I was painfully woken up by a jolt of electricity. "You have one minute to get ready, master Brain awaits for you in the training grounds."

I gritted my teeth, glaring at the man that had electrocuted me before jumping off the bed. I had a long day ahead of me.

[At the Training Grounds in the Tower of Heaven.]

I walked into the training grounds, where Brain was waiting for me, wearing his usual condescending sadistic smile.

"I was starting to think you wouldn't show up," Brain said, turning to meet me as I descended through a set of rudimentary stairs leading to the training grounds.

"I wouldn't miss it for the world," I replied, not even trying to hide how much I hated him in the tone of my voice. It wasn't like he didn't know, because he did, in fact, he enjoyed that I hated him, it made all of this all the more fun for him.

"That's the right attitude to have," Brain clapped his hands in a mock of approval. "Did you know your birthday is coming up?"

I looked at him, wondering where he was going with this.

"Well, your birthday as a slave, that is, two years just two months away," Brain said, a sadistic smile pasted on his face. "Two years of doing what you were born to do, to serve!"

I glared at him, and as I did I could feel my blade growing hotter, showing it shared my anger.

"Now let us celebrate such an accomplishment how it should be celebrated," Brain continued, extending his hands both ways. "I won't be holding back today. That is my gift to you."

I could almost snort at that. He only wanted me to suffer more, and he wasn't sure if he could make me suffer using the same level he had been using before, this was nothing but a feeble excuse to continue with his sadistic game.

Good.

As long as the idiot didn't kill me, it meant I would grow stronger, and stronger until eventually, he would find his power short in order to stop me.

I sighed, finally reaching the last step of the stairs, and entering the playroom of Brain.

My mind wasn't even preoccupied with the pain I would soon feel. All I could think of were the last words of the woman in my dreams, and how insistent she had been that I had to say her name.

Zanry... I could feel what came after that coming to my mouth, but it was like trying to remember a word you had forgotten, you can remember its meaning, but somehow, you can't find the word.

"Are you ready?" Brain asked, his eyes glowing red and his hands glowing green.

"I am," I replied, getting into position.