

[Adam POV]

The first thing I noticed when I woke up was the smell of coal burning somewhere in the back. It took me a few seconds to realize I was lying on a bed.

On high alert, I bolted up in surprise. Noticing as I did that my body was covered in bandages and healing draughts.

I wasn't in the Tower anymore, was I?

There was no way Zero would've treated my injuries after I had cut his arm, so the only logical explanation was that I somehow managed to survive his last attack, and someone had found me.

Apparently, I now found myself in a humble square wooden room, with paper sliding doors that were left wide open, revealing a sunny day as sunlight shone through.

Outside, I could see through the door the trees and their green leaves shaking with the winds. Sounds of birds filled the air, like seagulls and other seabirds.

I could not help but stare in delight at how lovely it all looked, and how calm I felt. I could probably spend hours just marveling at these seemingly common things. It had been so long, so long since I had been allowed to enjoy such things.

I smiled, feeling a tear run down my face. I couldn't help it, after so long, I was finally free.

As I continued to marvel at the simplicity of what had been taken from me, a shadow appeared at the door. It was an old woman of about seventy years or so, her long white hair tied into a ponytail, wearing nothing but a simple yellow robe.

“Finally awake, brat? I was starting to think you would sleep for a year,” The old woman said with a lighthearted chuckle as she sat down beside me on the bed. “You almost died from your multiple injuries, well, you actually did die a few times at my table. Luckily for you, I'm quite the stubborn medic. So tell me brat, what is your name?”

I remained quiet, processing what she had just said.

I had died, but she had resuscitated me, multiple times according to her.

I owed this woman my life it seems.

The old woman said again, this time with an impatient tone. “What is your name?”

I blinked out of my trance. "Adam."

"Well Adam, can you tell me how you sustained so many injuries?" The old woman asked.

"Two years ago, my village was attacked by a cult," I replied, taking a short pause to order my thoughts. "I was captured and turned into a slave. One of the slavers, the leaders, saw magical potential in me and began to train me. And for the record, I use the word training very lightly here, all he did from the moment he took me into his wing was beat me up in an endless cycle."

The old woman remained quiet.

Taking a deep breath I continued. "One day, I awoke my magic and fought him. I beat the slaver, but... apparently, that was only part one of two. The slaver that I had known so far was named Brain, but once I defeated him, a second personality came into play, his name being Zero."

"I see," The old woman's eye widened a bit in recognition, but made no sign she would say anything about it.

"I fought him, and soon found myself being overwhelmed," I sighed, remembering with detail how powerless I had felt after Zero had awakened. "To summarize the rest of the story, with

a bit of luck I managed to cut his arm, and well, that enraged him. Next thing I know, I'm here."

The old woman remained quiet for a moment, looking at me, her eyes a turmoil of emotions. "I can't imagine how hard that must have been for you. Thanks for telling me, I will inform the respective authorities about what you told me."

I wasn't exactly keen about the authorities knowing, because if I recall correctly Zero had a few spies within the Magic Bureau.

"I understand," I replied. Sooner or later Zero would find out I had survived, it was simply out of my hands.

The old woman beckoned towards the door, and a young woman walked in, dressed like a nurse. "This is my apprentice, Dalia. If she tells you to do something, do it, am I understood?"

I nodded.

"Don't listen to Lady Roma, she's just grumpy most of the time. If you feel uncomfortable with something let me know," Dalia smiled, pulling a small vial from her clothes before opening it, revealing a fragrant liquid, "This right here, is a healing brew, it will help you feel better. Drink it."

I looked at the vial and thought. What the hell? I mean, if they had wanted to kill me, they would've done so already, I had no reason to mistrust them.

I nodded and took the vial, downing the liquid in one gulp. It tasted like crap, better than the food in the Tower, but crap nonetheless.

Not even in a world of magic, medicine could taste good.

After a few seconds, I felt a warmth in my body, a warmth that slowly filled me up, making some of the pain I had subside.

“You better rest now,” The old woman said, rising up from the bed. “You should be able to leave in a week, so don't move more than what's extremely necessary.”

I nodded. I wasn't in a rush to do anything physical right now.

I wanted to rest, to recover, to fully recover, something Brain hadn't allowed.

"I'll be here in case you need anything," Dalia said with a warm smile.

I smiled back, suddenly feeling too tired to do anything else.

I guess that vial had something to put me to bed.

My week in medical confinement passed in a blink of an eye.
But it wasn't without its problems.

According to the doctor.

My experiences in the Tower had subjected my body to a harmful amount of stress, leaving me with a bookcase of PTSD. I didn't feel like I had PTSD, but that was pretty much thanks to Zanryuzuki, who would always calm me when needed, or rescue me when it was too much to deal with.

In short, my body was on constant alert, ready to fight any threat, even if there wasn't any.

That was something I would need to deal with before it actually became a problem.

I felt optimistic, after all, I wasn't alone. I had a partner to count on.

Other than that.

I had recovered from most of my wounds.

I still had a few wounds that the Doctor said would heal in time.

Seeing there was no need for me to occupy a bed in the hospital anymore, I was soon discharged.

Not without the old woman giving me a bit of money, telling me that it should be enough to get me to the nearest orphanage, where they would take care of me.

I found the action odd. But it wasn't until I read between the lines that I understood what the old woman had truly meant, she was giving me the option to choose.

She could've called the respective authorities to take me into the orphanage, but she didn't, instead, she had given me money and the freedom to pick.

I appreciated that little gesture.

Not that sending to an orphanage would've lasted, I would've broken out of it the same day.

With a bit of money in my hands and the freedom to do whatever I wanted, I decided to take a walk around the town, in order to clear my head.

The town, which I had now learned was named Cedar, was different from anything I had seen so far. It was full of life and people, and I felt like a fish out of the water.

It wasn't hard to see why first I got reincarnated into a very small town in the countryside of Fiore, then I was taken to the tower, so in contrast Cedar town felt like something completely extraordinary, and new.

-What do you intend to do now?- Zanryuzuki asked, her voice echoing inside my head.

That was a good question.

I wanted to destroy the Tower of Heaven, canon be damned, but other than that, I wasn't sure. I guess I never gave this much thought before, I mean, the only thoughts that occupied my mind were killing Brain, and surviving.

I now had the luxury to imagine beyond those boundaries.

I guess I could join a guild.

Blinking, I chuckled at how I had worded that thought, a guild? really? Like I would pick anything other than Fairy Tail.

They were loud, sure, but they were the strongest, and that alone meant something.

I suppose that settles what I have to do, I have to make my way to Magnolia Town.

Following some signs in the streets, I reached the public transportation station. The building was large and long, and once inside I saw several mothers pushing strollers with little ones, a few cops walking their beat, and a street musician playing a sad tune on a magical mandolin.

I walked past the crowd reaching the ticket station. "Excuse me."

"Oh, hi little bud, what do you need?" The attendant asked, looking at me, her eyes soft and gentle.

"I need to go to Magnolia Town, and quite frankly, I have no idea how to get there," I replied, hoping whatever the old doctor had given me would be enough for the ticket.

The woman smiled at me. "Of course, it will be my pleasure to help you cutie. In fact, you're actually in luck, there are only a few extra spots left, and today we are pretty crowded as you can see."

Crowded?

Frowning, I looked behind me. Sure enough, I could see a large number of people, pushing each other in order to get the best spots inside the train.

Where the fuck did all they pop out of?

A bit taken back by the sudden crowd, I turned back and nodded, as the woman smiled at me. "Once you buy the ticket, be sure to be seated before it leaves, otherwise you'll have to find a place inside the train, and seeing how many people it's going, that might be difficult."

That made sense, I was no stranger to crowded transportation.

"Now, the price for a normal ticket is 5000 Jewels." The woman said, and I could swear I heard a glass break inside my head.

5000 Jewels? How fucking little is Fiore's currency worth? The old woman had only given me 2000 Jewels, and I kind of expected that to be something.

"Hehe," I cleared my throat. "Is there any chance you could give me a discount?"

"Luv, I would love to, but I can't do that," The woman replied with a sad expression.

Ok, the way I saw it, I had two options, one, accept that I can't get a discount, and try to walk my way to Magnolia.

Two make a sad story, not sad enough for her to call child services, but sad enough for her to aid me.

Ok.

You can do this Adam, put on your childish charm, and scam this woman!

"But..." I trailed off, tears slowly rising in my eyes. God motherfucking damn! I deserve a fucking Oscar. "I-I don't have any other money, and... I-I have to meet my dad, he's waiting for me in Magnolia, he's a mage."

The woman's face softened, and before I knew it, she was pulling out her purse and handing me a ticket.

"I'll tell you what," She said, after a few seconds of silence. "I'll give you a discounted ticket, but you make sure your dad pays me back once you get to Magnolia. Okay?"

"Yes!" I beamed at her. Haha, gotcha sucker!

"Alright, alright," She chuckled, writing something on a piece of paper, and giving it to me. "Take this and go to the ticket counter, they will know what to do. And don't forget, your dad has to pay okay?"

"Yes, ma'am," I said, bowing at her.

"On that note, what's your father's name?" The woman asked, just as I was about to turn.

I froze.

Great, now I come to realize I didn't think this through enough.

"My dad?" I repeated buying time.

"Yes," Woman nodded with a smile. "I just want to know what kind of rotten man would leave such an innocent soul here all alone. And I also want to know the name of the person that is going to pay me, seeing he's a mage, is safe to say he belongs to a guild, so that makes my job of getting my money back easier, I also know the names of every mage in the country, at least of those registered to a guild, so don't worry I won't forget it."

Ok, this lady is starting to scare me.

It seems I have dug a hole too big to escape from now.

Choose carefully, Adam. Fix this shit.

I can't pick any name. I said my supposed Dad was a mage, so I have to say the name of a mage. One that actually exists, because Ms. Scary over here apparently knows the name of every mage, because why the fuck not?!

And seeing she knows the names of every mage, it has to be someone this absurdly well-informed attendant would believe. Someone that no one would question if said person was a terrible father.

"Gildarts Clive."

I feel I made a terrible mistake that I will come to regret in the future, but seeing he's a well known womanizer from what I can remember, this is the best choice.

"Oh, I see," The woman's tone darkened. "Honey, give me back that ticket."

I guess she saw through my lie.

Oh well, time to find a map, and hope I can read that shit correctly.

"I'm sorry," I smiled at her awkwardly, giving her back the ticket before turning around.

"Where are you going?" The woman stopped me.

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Is she really gonna prosecute a kid? This woman is a savage!

"I didn't say you weren't going to travel, hon," The woman smiled, an evil, terrifying smile. "I was just upgrading your ticket to the Royal VIP package."

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What just happened?

"It's time that womanizing bastard learns his actions have consequences!" Ohhhh, I see, Gildarts had fucked her, and never called back.

Well, now everything makes sense, she's still crazy as fuck, but it kind of makes sense. "I... I see." I replied, taking the new thing, which had a price of 100,000 Jewels.

"Go on, enjoy the VIP treatment, order as much food as you want," The woman smiled at me, though I could see a hint of darkness meeting her eyes. "And remember, have a nice trip, hun!"

Yep, I will regret this, eventually, but in the meantime, I will enjoy it. This is a problem for future Adam, present Adam, however, is going to enjoy this shit.