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## John as Cyrus:

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The two half-breeds had landed upon the ground, rather painfully, but luckily enough for Cyrus; his prey took most of the blow. Her rage obviously deflected most of the pain, but in a few hours, the dragon demon knew that she would be feeling it... if he didn't kill her before then.

It was at that moment that he realized she had almost *stopped* attacking him. Well, she didn't stop, but her fangs quit attacking towards all lethal spots; namely, his throat. And for some, unexplainable reason... he had quit attacking himself. He knew that he had to kill this evil creature, but his body wouldn't let him. Suddenly, her mouth snapped upwards towards his and there was just an inch between them, followed by a long pause. Their eyes met and Cyrus felt an ounce of pain from her past. He couldn't explain it, but he knew that she had suffered many years ago. She too, had lost a loved one.

Before Cyrus could attack again, to get things back to where the *should* be, there was a beam from behind. It was the light... that incessant, annoying light that had troubled Cyrus in his dreams was back. Only this time, the beam of true purity was real and more painful that it had been in visions. He had foreseen this hundreds of years previous, but never had he expected it to happen at that moment; the moment of his two thousandth kill.

The light, at first didn't affect him. Instead, it felt comforting upon his now bare back. It felt as though there was warm water running down his flesh and the scent of lavenders filled the air. She had smelt of lavender... she...

"No, I will not think of her now!" cried the dragon demon. The instant he retaliated against the light, the pleasure ceased and indescribable pain surged throughout his well sculpted frame. His arms locked up, his head felt like a thousand pounds so it bent down, and his stomach began to twist into knots. He wasn't sure who or what was sending the light, but he wanted it to stop so he attempted to get up. As he pulled upwards, he realized that his opponent was clinging tightly to his torn shirt. She looked in pain; her eyes were squeezed tightly together. It looked as though she were fighting tears... and losing.

Suddenly, his vision shifted and the entire scene moved away, to a land that Cyrus had known years ago. One land that he didn't want to return to. He was back home in Egypt. Taking a sniff of the air, he knew who was beside him...

*"Acrecia!" he whispered panicked. She was dead... yet, as he turned around, he could plainly see her. She was walking beside a younger version of Cyrus. Not too much younger, since his body doesn't really age, but he knew by the clothing.*

*This was the night that had haunted Cyrus for so long and the night that started his hatred for all vampires and things evil. The moon was full and the sky was clear with gleaming star jettisoning across the sky. The street was made of almost golden dirt as it reflected the torch that the young Cyrus was carrying. She had her arm around his very relaxed and the two were just in silence. He remembered that they would do that; walk in silence, to take in the air and each other's presence. That was all they needed.*

*Realizing that they could not see them, since this was obviously a vision from a higher*

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power, Cyrus attempted to lock his heart up. Not only that, but he tried to walk away from the lovers. As he strolled down an alleyway and escaped on the other end, he saw the two again. He was in the same spot that he had left.

"So you want me to see this again, do you? Well I'm not going to! I don't have too dammit! I'm Cyrus, dragon demon, do you not understand that?" - silence—

He didn't want anger to get the best of him, but it was the only emotion he could sense. Trying to release his pain, Cyrus punched into a wall. Instead of his hand breaking through the stone, it just dissolved through it. It was as if he were a ghost. That seemed to have stop his anger, and before he could figure out anything else, he heard a familiar voice that caused his body to cringe.

"Help! My sister fell and needs help!" it was a young boy, about 10. Or at least, Cyrus originally believed that's what he was, but now he knew better. That ... thing, was one of the damned. Cyrus turned and watched himself and Acrecia follow the 'boy' away.

Before Cyrus could react, his body was now in the place of 'the incident'. It was just a little outside his small village, borderline desert. Acrecia looked worried for the little girl, while the man beside her looked calm and ready for anything, except what actually did.

"Where is she?" said Acrecia. Her voice, Cyrus had almost forgotten what she sounded like. He wanted to dearly to run to her and carry her away. He had to save her, but how.

The boy said nothing. His back was facing the lovers. Suddenly, his shoulders began to go up and down vigorously, as if he were crying. Slowly, Acrecia walked towards him and rested her gently hand on his left shoulder. His skin tone then dissipated from a tan to a paler, dead color. He cocked his head around, revealing a distorted look; fangs bore. He had not been crying, but laughing.

"You fool, my sister is all ready dead!" he cried. His small frame turned faster than the normal human and kicked Acrecia in the gut. Her body flew against Cryus', taking him down as well. His torch landed in the dirt, causing it to cease its light. The two stood up quickly; Cyrus in front, since he was the man and Acrecia behind him. She may have looked petite, but she was trained in the royal palace to protect the queen. Both of them were ready for a battle with this inhuman creature.

"You do not understand," he called back to the Cyrus, "my sister is dead and with us now!"

At that moment, the form of a girl a few years older than the boy erupted from the dirt. After that, many other forms burst from the sand. By the time everything was over, there were about 15 new bodies along with the boy. The two had been ambushed.

"Run Acrecia! I'll keep them back," whispered the young Cyrus.

"No, my love, for I shall never abandon you," she announced willfully. She truly was ready to fight and before Cyrus could react, she began running towards the attackers; her lover following quickly behind.

They began fighting, easily taking out each creature. Their fists and feet moved quickly throughout the air, the sound of necks being broken and shattered filled sky. That was the

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*only weakness they seemed to have. Cyrus and Acrecia continued fighting till it seemed that they were the only ones left standing. There was a moment of peace between the two as they shared a smile.*

*Without warning, the smile on Acrecia's face turned into a look of sheer pain. She began to stumble forward, tears rolling in her arms. Cyrus ran to meet her and only caught her before she hit the floor.*

*"Acrecia, what's wrong?" he cried, suddenly feeling a warm liquid below her. His head turned towards where she had been standing and there, was the little boy with a bloody dagger in hand. He was laughing and soon, his one laughter became two, then three, until all of the sixteen dead creatures were standing back up. Hatred boiled inside Cyrus as his love lay, now dead, in his arms. Crying only burnt his eyes. He could feel a fire within him. Something was changing inside and it wasn't until he noticed the crimson scales forming over his skin did he realize he was changing.*

*The vision then faded as the young Cyrus charged the vampires. He knew the outcome. He knew how the story ended and he hated it.*

*Thinking that his pain was over, Cyrus turned around only too see in the distance, the form of a woman laughing. Her hand was raised in the air and there was a strange smoke surrounding it. Looking closely, Cyrus knew what the smoke was; Acrecia's soul. That woman had taken his lover's soul. That was something Cyrus did NOT know.*

Things then went back to normal. The woman was still below him, only this time, Cyrus no longer wanted to kill her. He no longer wanted to kill vampires. He wanted to find out who that woman was and free Acrecia's soul.

That was his new mission and he knew that each of these 'opponents' shared a similar dream. Reaching a hand down, he motioned for the half vampire to take hold of it. He then assisted her upwards where the two met eyes once again. Hers were intense... very unique to look into and Cyrus couldn't help BUT do that. After a moment, he realized that they were still holding hands. Quickly, he pulled away and walked to where his discarded coat was.

"Maybe I should stick around for a bit," he said softly, picking up his trench coat to cover his no visible abdomen.

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**John as Avry**

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The evening sky had finally been cleared away from the cries and whimpers of the three fallen creatures. Each member had risen slowly; Demonica looking even angrier than before, Cyrus had a look of understanding, and as for Nex, well, she never showed facial expressions to begin with and Avry really wasn't in the right mood to invade her privacy. Only the Lord above truly knew how many times he had checked up inside each of their heads those past two nights.

Avry didn't do it just to be a 'peeping tom', so to speak. He was just curious about the world around him. Being an angel for centuries had left him naive and though he had been on the

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earth for well over a hundred years, he still didn't know how the human mind worked. Everyone, with the exception of Závě, had been mortal or had a real understanding of the life, culture, and most importantly, the emotions. Avry had abandoned most of his only emotions after losing his one true love and child to Eternity. It was his own fault for falling for her and giving into temptation, but after witness for so many years the miracle of love in mortals, Avry, or Azreal as he had been known as at the time, was so lonely. He wanted that companionship and then after the great war and discovery of Jendalyn, he couldn't control his heart. She was so innocent and kind, despite the fact that she was a demon. She really did want redemption and Avry thought that if he could show her true love, she would become strong enough and deserving enough to get it.

Seeing Nex and Cyrus looking into each other's eyes reminded Avry and for some reason, he couldn't hold back his own flashback. He continued to walk back to his apartment, but his mind was elsewhere. It was back in Heaven, months after Jendalyn's discovery and recovery. Avry had been hiding her away in his small, serene home 'in the sky'. This was when the incident happened... when Azreal had abandoned all things he was taught and knew; when sins of the flesh took control of him and he became a traitor to his kind.

*The sky was burning amber and golden across the green, hilly horizon. The flowers that sprouted across the plain waved subtly in the breeze, giving the illusion of a colorful ocean. Avry had just finished another day's work of patrolling the Earth and returned to his home.*

*To his astonishment, Jendalyn wasn't hiding inside the house. That was the one place she could truly be protected from His watch. She was standing in the middle of the field, a bouquet in her left arm while another flower in the other. Her face was beaming as streaks of ebony hair blew side to side. She had no more fear in her eyes. She wasn't afraid of being caught anymore and it was at that moment did Avry realize they were in love.*

*Slowly, they stepped towards one another; their eyes never leaving the others. Fire was burning within her irises. There was intent on her face as she innocently bit her bottom lip. Avry had an idea of what she was going to do next and he was afraid. He had never kissed another being. Not only that, but he had never even touched another being. Jendalyn was his first physical contact when, after he first revived her, she grabbed onto his hand and squeezed it in pain.*

Pain. What a funny word. Avry had no idea what it actually meant until he felt the shattering of his heart as Jendalyn's cries filled Heaven and he was cast away by his Father. Jendalyn was due with Avry's child; a child of sin, but of love. The two had created it in pure love, but that purity was laced in evil.

Avry, now that he thinks about it, is glad that his child never got a chance to suffer, because that is what he certainly would have. A child of both Heaven and Hell most likely abandoned by both ends and never allowed to Earth. The kid would have been cast into Eternity eventually, so it was better that it never got a chance to have its heart broken.

But oh how Avry missed his child. He never even found out what his baby was. It could have been a perfect baby girl, despite a tail or a spitfire boy with an angelic face as a mask. No being knows, except for the one that cast it away, and Avry was certain that He would never tell. If it was a girl, though, she would have been named Nicollet after her mother's mortal name.

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Looking around, suddenly, Avry realized that he was back inside his apartment; along with the vampire, the half-bred, the angel, and the demon. All of them were sitting on different corners of the room, as if sitting within arm distance from the other would kill them. There were all separated except for Závě, who was trying to make chit-chat with everyone.

Avry couldn't help but chuckle as she almost *lunged* into Demonica's face as she asked, "So what's your favorite color? I bet I know what it is. Can I guess? Please?"

"Go away," scowled back a very annoyed and slightly confused vampire.

"It's black. Oh such a dark color, but so beautiful. Can you guess what *my* favorite color is?"

"The correct question would be, do I care?"

"No, silly, that wouldn't be right! I love all of God's colors! They're so pretty in one way or another. They each play a small role in the world around us and it seems that mortals, humans especially, take the small things for grant it," smiled the angel.

"Stupendous," said Demonica sarcastically. Suddenly, her entire emotions changed into excitement as she leaned towards Závě's ear, "You see that other woman over there?"

"Uh-huh," nodded Závě.

"She absolutely loves it when you ask her questions or if you joke about how stupid the cello is," the vampire then smiled sinisterly.

"But the cello's not stupid. It's one of the most beautiful instruments ever. Actually..."

"I know, 'all of God's instruments are beautiful', but it's just a joke. She'll think it's hilarious," interrupted Demonica.

"Really?"

Avry knew where this was going, so he quickly stepped in with a request of his angelic friend to make some tea for everyone. She gladly agreed and strolled into the kitchen. Demonica glared at the Fallen briefly, but as he glared back with a message in his eyes that the Pure one was no longer bother her, Demonica turned her back to him with a pleased look upon her face.

The silence was almost unbearable to Avry, so he calmly strolled to the couch... or what was left of it, and sat down. Taking in slow breaths, he turned to each of them saying, "You all received a message from Him. You know what must be done. We have all been chosen to destroy Lyneya."

The sound of her name made Demonica cringe slightly, while Nex lowered her head in rage. Obviously, this new member Cyrus had no idea what the beings name was, but he knew who Avry was talking about and his head turned slightly to face the Fallen better.

"Závě, can you come back in here? I'm going to need your help with this next part. Same with you Demonica," said Avry, putting a hand forward and motioning the vampire to stand before him.

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"What do you need with me?" announced Demonica, defensively. Závě had already entered and knew what Avry was getting towards as she kneeled forward.

"I'm going to astral project an image of Lyneya using a picture of her from your memory. We all have seen her at least once, but no one but you have gotten a clear picture of the demon," said the angel, now serious. Her smile had faded almost as she suddenly remembered back to the images of carnage she had seen that Lyneya had left behind on her destructive path.

"No way. He's been in my mind one too many times and there's no Fu..."

"Language, please Demonica," interrupted Avry. She continued her sentence once more without using one of her original words.

"And there's no way in hell that I'm letting *you* and everyone else in this room inside my mind," she announced angrily.

"Relax, Demonica. It won't hurt at all," said Závě, resting a hand upon the vampires. There was a subtle glow in the angel's had as Demonica's face became calm and she too fell to her knees. "Just look into my eyes and think of Lyneya. I promise I won't show anything but her."

Demonica was almost entranced as she closed her eyes and lowered her head. Závě suddenly said, "I'm going to show her version, but with the one that I had received as well. Combined, it should give us a almost flawless portrayal of this evil."

Suddenly, the angel closed her eyes and began to pray in the ancient language. The lights around them flicked softly and then dimmed out completely. The air around them began to swirl in a cloud of fluorescent smoke. Each whirl around became more and more intense and then... nothing. The fog fizzed away revealing a very tall and muscular woman; her skin with a tint of red and hair as black and dark as her soul. Her eyes, though, were like humans. They were emerald green, except in the right eye, which bore a crimson outline. Instead of feet, she had hooves and upon her back sprouted a pair of tattered wings, similar to that of a bat. Her clothing continued to change from a robe, to a torn skirt and shirt. She also had a jewel in the middle of her forehead, right between her eyes.

"Her mission," announced Závě, though it wasn't her voice. It was a more booming and powerful. "Is to retrieve the lost staff of power. The true name for it is heresy to say aloud, but it is a relic that is possessed can give its owner enough power to rule over worlds. The only way it can work is by devouring the souls of the most powerful beings of every race: demon, angel, fallen, werewolf, mortal, and half breeds. She needs a minimum of five from each race to get the staff rejuvenated, but she's greedy and will take many, many more lives for it. She's already collected enough to start a takeover of Hell, but the only problem is that she has not found the staff. She must not find it, or else we are all doomed and even He, who is ever watching, will not be able to protect us."

The visions suddenly dissipated and there was silence again. No one would speak, not even Závě. Avry looked around, wondering who would be the first to speak up. Lord knows, though, that he didn't want to be the first.

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**Mike:**

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In the broken light of a far off street lamp, Nex sat in what looked to be one of the only remaining puddles of light that the night had allowed to survive. In the wake of that angel's holy, burning, piercing brilliance, the darkness around her seemed richer, blacker. There was nothing like experiencing the pure opposite of something to truly appreciate the newly realized contrast. But the puddle of hazy orange light didn't so much as make the half-breed lift her head to look at the demon before her who had just stood. There was something so unsettling, so hurtful about knowing that her wretched past was going to play a part in the significant destruction of one hellish demon. Yes, it was Lyneya, a name that Nex was indeed hell-bent on erasing from the books of memory, but to think that she had suffered such weakness and pain so that she could be infused with enough hatred to fuel her rage was positively mind-numbing.

Those images were real. That memory, authentic. Nex had indeed cradled the fragile bodies of two more half-breeds, fetuses though they were. Putting her hand on her head, Nex tried to shield her face from the dull light of the distant street lamp and let a grimace consume her face. Tears, they wouldn't come, she wouldn't let them. Not in the presence of the others, never. Despite her impressive age, Nex still recalled her father's teachings.

*"Crying is weakness. It allows everyone to understand that you are human with emotions, fears, and doubts, and that is a death call for a warrior. By weeping, you allow all other weaknesses into your life."*

And though she was indeed old enough to realize that there were occasions that called for the shedding of tears, it was impossible to undo twenty-four years of programming.

Pushing aside all thoughts of her past lover, Nex looked up to see the demon had returned to his human state and was reaching down for her, wanting her to take his hand. Whatever mental epiphany he had just experienced must have changed him; there was no longer any smell of the hunt on him, and that was a scent that Nex could detect for miles. Searching in his eyes intently, Nex hesitated before extending her hand for his. There was something to be said for sharing such a raw experience with someone, but the two had previously been dueling to the death. Though Nex was nearly positive that the demon no longer held such violent wishes towards her, it would be foolhardy to simply assume that all was mended without so much as a trace of cynicism.

However, her search of him brought her back with simply in in-depth comprehension that he too had suffered greatly. He reeked of new resolve and heartache.

Stretching her hand towards his, she gripped it and allowed him to help her from the streets without so much as a thought that she had only ever let Wolfbane do such before. When the demon had righted her, the salutation they shared was not with words, but rather an exchange of deep looks. Absorbing his rich chocolate eyes, Nex was completely overwhelmed with forgotten emotions and confusion, and it was not until the man abruptly released her hand that she rejoined him on the plain of reality. Her hand swung back to her side, open and empty.

However she had managed to make it back into the Fallen's apartment escaped her, but as

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she occupied a corner, sitting on the ground with her back against the grimy wall and one knee bent so that she could drape an elbow over it, Nex knew she belonged there. However long it would take her to accept her companions was immaterial. Even Demonica played an important role, likely much more important than her own. Nex was a simple victim of something bigger than herself, and just the thought that she was supposedly given a chance to exact some form of revenge on the one who had stolen her family from her was enough motivation for Nex to play as nice as she could.

Within reason.

As she sat idly in the corner, thinking and observing, her eyes fell onto the perky angel who currently seemed enthralled with stepping on all of Demonica's nerves. Smirking, she watched the interlude, her ears picking up their conversation easily. When Demonica suggested to the bubbly woman that she should go to Nex and crack a joke about the cello being stupid, Nex actually chuckled to herself. Demonica had apparently met her match; the soot-haired angel was frolicking over every short fuse that Nex's enemy (but who was now an ally...) possessed. However, Nex really couldn't blame the vampire for becoming irritated. Had she been at the mercy of the angel's naïve and revoltingly effervescent personality, she likely would have tried to kill her.

When the Fallen began to speak, Nex lifted her head to watch and listen. However she may have felt towards him, Nex fully comprehended that those in the room with her helped form a sort of battalion. Though Nex did not find herself close to any of her fellow "soldiers," centuries of military service all around the world had taught her enough about operating with people that she didn't consider close, personal friends. Whether she liked it or not, they were fighting for themselves, but with the newfound allies, also fighting for each other. And that meant working together as best they could to achieve the goal. It was a prospect that Nex was hardly overjoyed about, but it was selfish to think that Lyneya had only affected her. Each occupant of the room had a memory to seal and blood to shed. If there's were any like her own (which she was positive they were), then Nex had no problem helping shut a perpetually open chapter in their lives. Pain like what they had experienced never left unless action was taken.

As far as the bloodshed went, Nex could hardly wait.

As the conversation progressed and Avry managed to project the image of Lyneya, Nex simply stared. She assigned every detail to memory. Unfortunately for her, the image was nothing more than a hologram, so there was no understanding of her smell, which would have been a great asset to Nex. Nevertheless, her mismatched eyes roamed the image long after everyone else had looked away. This was her quarry, and all others who got in her way. It was like the dawn of battle when you knew you were marching to your death, but someone had the strength to survive.

Nex refused to die without seeing the end first. Then, she could leave...perhaps God would understand.

However, when Závě began to speak (not in her usual chipper tone either, much to Nex's delight), telling about how God wouldn't be able to stand up against Lyneya, Nex angered. What was this idiot talking about, God was the almighty form of power in the universe. He already owned the cosmos, He had *made* them. He could snap Lyneya like a twig without so much as a blink. How dare she say something so unfaithful, so disrespectful. It was heresy

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just listening to her.

"What the hell do you think you're talking about?" Her words tore through the grave ambiance of the room, her expression once again heated. "For an angel, you're sure full of shit." Nex called to the woman standing beside the Fallen.

Not giving anyone else the opportunity to interrupt her or to try and convince her otherwise, Nex plunged on.

"Look, I don't give a damn *what* you say. God *created* Satan, He owns the cosmos, and all that jazz, alright? So if you all want to run around thinking that we're going to save God, then go ahead, but it's bullshit to think that mere people like us could do what God cannot."

Turning her head to face the Fallen, Nex said, "And don't ask me to watch my language around her." She said, throwing a savage look to Závě, who looked shocked and appalled at Nex's words. "If she's so delicate that she can't handle words, then she should leave."

Settling back from her tense position, Nex waited for the responses that she knew were on the way.

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## **Reyanna**

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Demonica had been smirking to herself at her own cleverness of sending off the annoying pure blooded angel to bug the half breed. Her glory hadn't lasted long, however. When she had been called by Avry, her first instincts had been to tell him to piss off, but then, she had remembered the vision and decided to go onward and do her part, her duty in this developing story. She hated being a part of it. She hated in the company of her newly chosen comrades. But she knew she had to deal so she didn't complain. But she wasn't going to take orders either. Everyone needed to know that.

When Závě had used Demonica's memory, she felt as though her insides were being sucked out of her body. Her breath left her lungs, her legs became jelly, and her eyes felt as though there was a great pressure against them. When Demonica saw that horrible woman, Lyneya, she stifled a yell of frustration for allowing the woman- no...thing do what she had to her. The more of the memory that was drawn out, the weaker Demonica had gotten and her legs decided they wanted to give out on her. She was determined to stay standing though, so she pressed her hand against the wall, to help hold her up until the Princess Angel (Demonica's new nick-name for Závě) was finished with her mind.

Once it was complete, Demonica's eyes shot back open and she sucked in her breath. She pushed off the wall and went to walk, stumbling at first. She caught Avry's eyes and saw him looking concerned. "I'm fine!" she snapped angrily before he could ask and, bound and determined, went back to her seat. Avry didn't say a word, so apparently she had gotten the point across.

Before she could make it all the way to her seat again, Nex had angrily begun to yell at the

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angel Dementia found herself smirking slightly at the balls this half-breed had, telling an angel she was full of shit. Not that Dementia would have held her tongue, she didn't care about the god that had abandoned her, and therefore didn't feel the need to defend 'him' or worry about what not to call his angels. But the general rule was that you didn't inform 'god's' angels that they were full of shit.

When Nex sat back down again, Demonica clapped sarcastically. "Wonderful speech. Now that you've wasted our time, perhaps you would allow us to continue deciding where we should go from here?" She grinned and crossed her right leg over her left knee. "Not that I'm not enjoying myself," she added smugly. She smirked at the heated expression on Nex's face. It would be a miracle if the half-breed didn't go berserk and try to tear off Demonica's limbs. Surely she wouldn't though; they needed to get back to what was important.

Where would they search for Lyneya? When would they start? How would they complete this task without killing one another first? These were only a few of the many questions the group needed to figure out...together. To put aside their differences and disagreements. It was going to be hard. Demonica thought this bitterly, looking at Nex.

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**\*\*Writer's note (Reyanna): If things don't pick up again soon, I will finish this on my own (maybe with Mike, I'm sure she's still willing to write) as soon as I get some free time (once VDE is published, about 3-4 weeks). Don't entirely give up on us yet!**

**--Reyanna--\*\***