Sinister Wake

> Inspirational Music

The cold tended to freeze those captured in its grasp, yet it seemed to coddle me like a muse. The way my thoughts presented themselves held me in rapture as I settled in my meditation for the offering of the dead. I could feel that I wasn't alone, nor that I was free of the gaze of the Others.

Their gaze was one of knives and sinew, the kind that would leave blood ruptures and sores. It was a gaze that was always heavy on my heart. As I closed my eyes I felt a drone wash over me, cupping my ears in its dulcet tone.

The voice was clouded and yet so near, piercing through the void as it spoke, "Ahhh, ahhh, mwuh...". There was a curl of a tongue on the last syllable. "My sister in heart, I wondered when the next would come. The others are ever so present and provocative. Can you feel them watching just outside. Aren't you glad you have my Welps to hold back their claws?"

As I opened my eyes to stare back, the memorial of my mothers grave lay opened and broken, and the world was asunder in a storm of ice and thunder. The eyes of Fiona stared back from beyond the headstone, her fingers casually petting the marble.

"What the other's do and do not do, is not of my concern, i am only here to offer to the dead my life", I kept my tone casual as I admired that part of me that had first shown itself in jest to those I loved. "Your presence isn't needed"

"You may think that is true pretty Winter Wolf, but I am more you then you wish to remember. I am every part you have shredded for these damnable fools that linger. The others want you and they want your body. A vessel to sail home with, beyond the very gates that linger at the edge of the void." Their was a seductive glance as the woman step from beyond the storm and settled cross-legged with me, her head tilted, "What is it we do sister, do we meditate? close our eyes and for one night cast ourselves into their ever loving hands"

Fiona brushed a fleck of snow from her pants, the almost playful nature horrific as she sneered at the flake. "Do we let them molest us and rape us? This is the world that dear little tyke with the wolf-y trike wants to save, the one that bloodies and murders us. Why would we cast ourselves further into their gaze, why must we hurt?" The way Fiona's words twist further and further in anger melted the cold.

Outside I could see the various imps of all sizes and shapes, all twisted into knots of sinew and flesh, the bat-like wings skeletal and thin as they almost danced against the torrent winds. The

distant sound of one be squashed by the clawing fevers that walked the protective edge of the storm.

"This is done for them, Fiona. Perhaps if you weren't so eager to hide in shado--"

"I am NOT the one to hide in shadows sister in heart... do you not remember the very moment I was born, as you slaughtered those fleshy bags, the one that called you Dove, the one that grinned as you said 'I Love'" Fiona eased her pose closing her eyes as the shadowed wings crawled from her back like lethargic shades. "I simply want whats best for you, sister in heart" Fiona's words simpered in a selfish sort of kindness as she reached a hand forward.

"I know my children will do what needs to be done. I have seen it Fiona. I don't need to wander to know that.", I shifted in my seat, pondering of a Welp that was almost childlike as it stumbled was it danced and poked out at the reaching masks with a sharp stick.

"You could accept me for what I am, then we would be whole again, we could start the poison that's needed to.." there was an almost lingering smile that etched its way across Fiona's lips. It was like she was attempting to savor the next words with her hand reached out, it was oddly climactic, "choke... the outside bounded."

As Fiona seemed to peer deeply at me, "Besides sister in heart, where was there in the scriptures of a Shepard having a fourth child. Are you not curious about you beautiful daughter and how not once have you seen her in your futures?"

I blinked, my hands feeling for my stomach, before shaking my head and returning them to my knees. I opened my mouth to usher the woman away and to find my peace, but something shifting inside as I felt Arktaris almost howl from beyond the veil.

"See even the Winter Wolf knows, you aren't the type to settle my dear sister in heart. You cant but help to raise up, sword held high. "Have you ever considered, that the villian in your story was never you at all, that the one that rests at the almost... ending of a story, is not even you? Dear Dear mwuh mwuh" There was a giggle that escaped Fiona's mouth as her reaching hand touched my hand that rested on my knee.

I felt my breath catch as the warmth of her hand passed up my arm and thrummed within my heart. As I studied her face I couldn't help wonder at her words. All this time I had thought, that things mattered. Everything I felt and saw pushed me in this direction. I could help guide those around me and to Shepard them to some distant truth. But what if I am wrong, what if I had truly been blindsided by everything.

"Imagine dear Gabriella... yes that is your name sister in heart, a reminder since your lover ain't here to remind you of who you are. Imagine if the golden city isn't golden at all, imagine if its a lie, imagine if all this was simply a game made for you and me. An internal and eternal battle where nothing would be right... Imagine if dear mama isn't even real"

As Fiona spoke she stood and I could not help but stand as she pulled me closer to that headstone, to the pit of darkness, as the Welps cried out in surprise against the torrent. As I stared inwards

there was nothing there, just emptiness, and a lost feeling.

"You don't remember her Gabriella because she never existed, just as you never did" Fiona whispered these words into my ear playfully her hand rubbing my soothingly. "That is until these people, "believed" in you. Oh what do you call those things, hmm gods, oh, huh Ascians, ooo no no no..." There was a sinister wake as her next words dug deep into my soul, "no... you are the very thing you sought to destroy, you... are... Primal" Each world punctured with a giggle as Fiona wrapped her arms around me.

Far off a Welp cackled madly as claw reached from beyond and in an attempt to sever it in half instead found itself tickling the little sinew.

"Stop ignoring the gift of gravitas, walk to your golden city, Sister in Heart, the almost real illusion, that even your undead lover was fooled, created by the creatures you so forth right believe will change if you ask rightly... and I will be there with you... when you burn it down..."

As the storm twisted open a portal and the stone doors that held back the inner sanctum, I stepped forward into my Sinister Wake.

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