Venturing: Halls and Tress

“Would you look at that.” I heard Zander spoke, causing me to turn around towards his direction. The black dragon was pointing onto something nearby. Upon the alleyway that was closest to him it seems. While I stared onto him, he turned to face me. His wings were spread out as a large grin fell upon his face. He turned to move forth. Entering the alleyway suddenly. He disappeared before my eyes. But I was curious in wondering what he had seen before. So I stopped. Halted my advances forth before shifting my attention to the alleyway that he had entered into. Waiting patiently for him while he brings out whatever had found. Never took long however for him to reappear before my face, holding what seems to be a red magic marker.

I stared onto him then lowered my eyes upon the object in his claw. I had the weirdest look upon my face. Yet while it shows and hardened at the same time, Zander rolled his eyes and shuffling his wings growling in response to me. HIs shoulder hunched while he spoke directly to me. “Yes… I know this is childish and stupid. But think about it for a moment.” “I know.” I started giving nothing else as an answer. I raised my eyes towards his face as if searching for a definite answer there. But his face was stone hard which made things harder. I huffed and turned around. My mind racing in wonderance about the magic red marker had something to do with the case at hand. Before I could do anything, I heard Zander walked to my line and beyond as he passed me suddenly. He moved in front, staring out to the horizon before turning to face me once again.

“So. Shall we talk with the rest of the unit? Ling?” I nodded suddenly and silently, my wings spread out before I lowered my claw down towards my waste. Grabbing onto the black walkie below my belt, I rose it high towards my face. Pressed the button before talking into it. “Ling and Zander to others. We had found a red magic marker. Perhaps it had something to do with the case at hand.” “It does actually…” Responded a voice after I had released the button. Zander’s eyes widened in surprise, shocked to see Kyro already immediately speaking after me. With a suppressed smile upon my face and my wings folding back again, I allowed Kyro to speak for the time being. “I am with Natty currently, Ling and Zander. Yang told us to head forth towards the Southern part of the town. It had seems like she was right into finding something there. A trail of broken stuff toys were found here. Lying upon the grounds beneath our feet. It heads northward towards the horizon. Although…”

Kyro stopped here. Me and Zander wondered about his suddenly silence. As we faced one another with concerns, I suddenly spoke onto the walkie after pressing the button. “Kyro, we can support you if you like to. That is if you are conflicted into heading where that trail ends that is.” “We are fine. Send back up if needed however. Or stay close by on where we are.” “Where are you?” Zander questioned, “Southward from the Police Department. Nearby eighth street and a house that was painted all yellow with red polka dots.” At that description alone we were concerned. I stared towards Zander, he said nothing in response. But our pale white faces tell it all. As a dreaded feeling sinks below my stomach and my mind racing with the possibilities of what could be beyond those description, I was tempted into requesting Kyro and Natty into standing by. Standing still upon the position of where they were at. But in the end, I said nothing else. Allowing it to be however.

Lowering my walkie, I faced Zander once again who huffed and growled suddenly as his wings spread once again. I knew that he had wanted to support Kyro and Natty. Even after what they had done to support him however. But he just held back, he was crouched and poised to fly southward. He never did it however. With his muscles easing up and an exhaled sigh escaped his lips, his eyes closed before pointing them directly towards me. A slight nod movement from his head, I paid no attention towards it while I lowered my eyes and gaze at the ground. Pondering about the red market and the trail of broken toys at claw. For within the silence, I suddenly spoke up. Zander turned sharply and gaze at me as I spoke directly towards him. “Come on. I think there something connecting between these two clues however.” “You know something?” Zander replied, a curious look upon his face as I smiled, nodding back upon him.

Taking the lead once again, we walked a few steps forth towards where we had first found the red marker. I ordered the dragon to give me that said marker which he did afterwards. After pulling onto the cover tip, I lowered the marker and stabbed upon the ground. It lit up suddenly. Glowing the same color as the marker’s color while me and Zander stepped back and dropped the marker at the same time. We stared at the glowing grounds. Watching as it brightened up. Till it was gone we were faced watching the solid dull ground for a moment before we turned to one another once again. Then back upon the grounds, spotting something drawn and revealed to us. A small map with an line of dotted dashes and an x symbol at the very end of that trail was show. Cutting through the map like scissors, we were literally surprise however. But what was even more surprising was that, after a few more seconds of staring onto the map below us, my eyes lit up suddenly and I blinked a couple of times.

Quickly grabbing onto my walkie, I stabbed my thumb against the button on the side of it. Hearing another click once again, I screamed into the mic requesting to hear Kyro and Natty once again. Nothing came back. Zander rose his head and looked at me again while I screamed again. The same result happened. WIth my voice horsed, I growled weakly while grounding my own fangs. My eyes narrowed with interest before lowering them towards the grounds. Back towards the map that was below us. “What happened to Kyro and Natty? Did the pair got into trouble again?” Zander asked. I shook my head, nervous anxious and fear all resided inside my stomach as I pondered wondering where was the pair. Wanting to try again, I had held myself back. Second guessing myself about their walkies being disabled for whatever they were doing. My whole body shook as I growled once again. Shivering before I turned away from Zander and stared upon the entrance of the alleyway. “Come on Zander.” “Where are we going?” He questioned me.

“We are going to find Kyro and Natty. The two are said to be south from where the department was. So we are going straight there.”

“Think Yang is alright with this?”

I paused before looking to him. “She should be.” After that short conversation, we spread our wings and took off into the night. Heading southward and getting further away from the Department building. We had worried faces upon our heads as we wondered what the pair was up to around this time. The winds blew underneath of us as the cold air brushes against our scales. A cold midnight day was upon our scales as I shivered and shifted my attention towards the side, gazing down onto Zander who said nothing in response towards the cold weather around us. We were silent. Neither of us were talking in the short period of time. Our lips tightened, fangs grounded as we pondered. The trip southward was a short one. It never took long for us to entered the place where we head last heard of the pair. We landed upon solid ground, folding our wings. Zander grabbed his pistol and aimed it widely, half expecting anticipating anyone would be coming forth against us. But nothing happened and I found myself rolling my eyes suddenly at his gesture.

WIth a growl, I laid my claws upon the top of his pistol. Lowering it down while shaking my head by the time he shifted his attention towards me. I nudged to the side, gesturing towards the direction in which we both have to go. Zander nodded in response, but said nothing afterwards as his body was tensed. I watched him from the backside, already holding my pistol too while I scanned the area around me. We both entered the alleyway on our westward side. Already diving in deep into the depths of darkness that awaits us from the inside. Thus as we had entered, darkness had already covered our eyes and faces. Preventing each other from seeing anyone else. Regardless of the set back, we continued forward as we turned our heads towards the horizon. The alleyway was wide. Yet it was empty at the same time. No trash cans or bags were found anywhere which was surprising for us however.

With the lights already flickering at a good distance apart from one another, I stopped. Zander heard me and stopped also a few inches away from where I was standing. He turned. Keeping his eyesight towards me while mines were pulled back. I gaze upon the walls, realizing thus they were red now. Then turned my attention towards the entrance of the alleyway. It was not far from where we were standing. A few good steps maybe would reach our destination. But back upon the body of the alleyway. I raised my pistol and whispered something towards Zander. I found myself muttering somehow as I could not hear the words that I was saying. Yet Zander acknowledged it with a nod and moved forth towards the white wall in front of me. He raised his two claws against the wall, pressed against it suddenly. He was surprise to see the solid matter of the wall turned liquid as he ‘entered’ through and disappeared. I followed through afterwards and entered after him.

Thus we found ourselves upon a pitch black room. A single light source was hanging above us, swinging slowly as it demands. But we had ignored it while we stand our ground. Zander faced me, an interest was written upon his face. I shook my head and said nothing in response towards him before eyeing around the surroundings we were in. Zander exhaled, lowered his wings before nodding onto me. Then fished for his flashlight in his pocket before pressing onto the white button. A click echoed against the silence as the light shines dimly against the white walls in front of us. Four walls stand surrounding us. One of the four was hoisting a door which was to our right side. But we were not looking for an escape. Rather, we were interested in what the room was containing. ‘A secret? Or something that would help along with the case at hand…’ I would not know. But I was curious to find out however.

“Hey Ling check this out.” I heard Zander responds upon the silence. My ear flickered and turned to where Zander was at. Crouched down and leaned forth was he when he grabbed onto something that was upon the flooring below us. I was curious that I stepped towards his line and crouched in the same way, gazing down onto his claw in wonderance of what he was holding. A stuff toy. Defluffed it seems. Same as Kyro and Natty’s description when we had a short conversation with them. Zander shifted his eyes and gaze upon me. Silence was hanging over our heads. But never took long for Zander to split his lips and speak, breaking it. “We found the toy that Kyro and Natty was talking about. Where are they?” He got up just as he said the last line. I got up alongside of him, shaking my head and responding to him “That is the thing. We do not know. Last we heard was from the alleyway behind us. After that, nothing.” “Speaking of the alleyway…” Zander trailed, suddenly turned his head towards me as he spoke his question.

“What had you found awkward upon the alleyway behind us? You looked worried, anxious and in fear. Like the color was drained from your scales, Ling.” I nodded suddenly at him, nodding while closing my eyes. I recalled a bit of memory from my head. Still gazing upon the white wall with an uncertainly feeling deep within my stomach. As I search for answers, my ears flickered upon hearing footsteps. My eyes opened, I looked towards the source. Spotting Zander already gazing down onto the opposing white wall ahead of us, already raising his claw upward and against the surface of it while he was fascinated by it however. My head tilted, but I chose to say nothing while I walked towards him again. He looked at me then to the white wall again. Pressing against it, he realized that it was solid and not liquid. As he frowned in response by the discovery he had found, I patted his back and smiled rather faintly, before shifting my attention towards the other white wall behind us and spoke,

“Want to head back upon the streets? We should be heading back home.”

“Towards the department?” Zander asked, turning his head towards me while I nodded my head,

“Yeah. Back to the department. I think we should be reporting this only clue towards Yang. She might have an idea as to what was going on.”

“Perhaps directing us towards somewhere.” Zander replied, adding additional words onto my sentence as I scowled at him angrily but he just shook his head laughing. We retraced our steps back towards the outside of the room behind us. However just before we entered onto the outside, I halted again and suddenly threw my claw towards Zander. Smacking him onto his stomach with it as he gasped in response and turned towards me. I shook my head, and retracted my claw. Grabbing onto my pistol while Zander mirrored me. We stepped outside, aimed our pistols towards the ends of the alleyway. Despite the atmosphere being silence, we both heard breaks of gunshot close by. Loud as they were with shouting that comes afterwards. I motioned towards Zander and pointed towards the entrance of the alleyway where he nodded and race towards the start of it. For he leaned against the wall with his pistol hanging high against his head. Zander waited a few seconds before launching himself out from cover and onto the ‘battlegrounds’ that await for him. But to his surprise nothing was there.

Zander motioned me. I raced after him. Revealing myself towards the public view that is the streets just outside of the alleyway. I too was surprise by how empty the place was however. “I was certain that there was a firefight going on here.” I remarked with Zander turning his head to me and shaking his head, “As it turns out, there are not any. Yang has got to stop you from watching old crime movies, films and television shows. They rot your brain.” “What are you… my hatchling sitter?” I smirked at him, Zander laughed suddenly nudging his arm against my own. Knocking me a few inches away from him. With our laugher infecting the silence surrounding us, we had decided ‘enough was enough’ and raced back to Vastertown Police department.

We arrived upon the door. Neither of us had made a move forward to it for we just kept still upon the grounds. Staring down onto it. I breathed a sigh, closed my eyes and motioned Zander. I walked up front towards the door. Grabbing onto its knob, I twisted the door to the right. Pulled the door backwards and allowed it to opened for us. The door moaned afterwards as it reveal to use what was on the opposing side. We stared for a few seconds more in silence before I stepped first. Zander followed afterwards. The door closed behind us. But we never looked over our shoulder. The room was huge; sporting few different rooms. A pale table was in front of us. A few feet from where we were standing. At the other end stands Yang. Her claws were folded. Her eyes looked up upon us. There was silence. An eerie silence that washed over our heads. Creating cold air that brushed up against our necks. Shakingly, I walked bravely forth. Taking the seat that was opposite of Yang.

Yet her claw was held up. Her head shook. I remained standing in response. As she got up onto her feet, she spoke towards me first. “What have you guys find?” “A magic marker. Does this have any significant towards the case we were given?” I questioned her, Yang remained silent. But her eyes were drawn to my shoulder. Immediately after my silence, I snapped my claw together and ordered Zander to come forth. He did so without hesitation and stepped to my side. All the while, drawing out the evidence we had seen within the alleyway of which we were assigned to. Yang unfolded her claw. Zander place the market onto her as she gripped against it tightly before raising it towards her face. Closely inspecting it.

The following silence was tensed and heart pumping. I could not feel the same heavy tension in the years to come. Because in every story that we were written in, it always ends on a happier note. With thoughts circulating in my mind pondering about the clue and its connection towards the case, I heard Yang grunt and sighed. Whether or not that was intentional or not is up to her as our eyes met once again. She placed the market upon the table surface then folded her claws back where her wings were. She spoke, clear and authority tone against us. We both nodded afterwards as she breaks into a smile. Thus turning around, she explained what Kyro and Natty had found earlier.

“A trail of defluff toys. All leading to a single hatchling murder. They had brought the head of the small dragon over to me. The trail of blood upon their wake.” “‘A hatchling murder?’ Who would do such a thing?” Zander bursted out as his fangs smashed together creating a dam while he stared angrily at Yang. “Someone who wanted the dragons out of the picture.” She answered him and returned to her chair. Lowering herself down and raised her claws to the table surface. Raising her eyes towards us as she continued explaining, “The hatchling head was bitten at the back of the throat. Then prompt tore off from the rest of the body. The body is discarded, I presumed. Both parents of the hatchling were also missing as well. There is no hint as to their reveal. Whatever this culprit is doing to them is unknown to us as such…” She paused shortly before delivering her answer, “It is imperative to figure out what this culprit is doing and stop them. Kyro also mentioned that the culprit is not a dragon, according to the small fang marks upon the throat.”

“Not a dragon?” I heard Zander whispered, a bit surprise. Yang nodded afterwards and closed her eyes as she leaned back. Giving off an exhaled, she opened her eyes and looked upon the ceiling above her. “Not a dragon. Perhaps a canine or feline. But our best bet is a wolf or fox. Either the Hunter’s pack or R7 are behind this. If neither of them, then it someone else.”

“Guess we will find out once we reach Chaos realm to regroup with Kyro and Natty after all.” I started, picking up the opened ended conversation. A quick nod came from both Zander and Yang as brought smiles came upon the black dragon’s face. But as we turned around to prepare ourselves for such a trip, Yang’s voice piped up again as the chair was knocked back suddenly, “I have almost forgot. Ling and Zander.” SHe said with a soft sweet smile upon her face. We turned towards her, curious as to what she had wanted to say. As her eyes met with ours, she bow her head and spoke rather quietly.

“For thirty years, Argon and Xenon had kept the town safe from harm. Both have died peacefully as of this night. Regardless, they did agree with my proposal.”

“What kind or proposal?” Zander quietly asked, tilting his head to the side in curious. I slowly nodded my head, questions and comments soon began to fill my mind in anticipating of what was to come. However, neither of us were prepared for what Yang was about to say to both of us.

“Addressed both Kyro and Natty as, Detective Kyro and Natty from now on…” Yang commented, our eyes widened in surprise. Shocked to see that the two dragons were already promoted. “Sure thing, Yang.” I started, hesitating was in my voice while I quickly shifted my attention towards Zander who gulped rather quietly. I knew that both him and Kyro had a bad relationship prior to both of them working together in the past. I also knew it would continue from now on considering that both are now detectives. “In addition, you will address me as Chief Yang; Captain Ling and Sargent Zander.”

“We are both promoted, Chief?” I remarked, Yang nodded in silence as a smile warmed her face. “In private we will use our normal names. But I expect you all to address yourselves and each other in respectful ranks from now on, alright?” “Alright.” Zander smirked nodding quietly and quickly as I saluted her.

With that clear and out of the way, both me and Zander prepared ourselves to join Detective Kyro and Natty in their search for the culprit at hand.