Venturing: Thunderous TImes

The sun peaked out from the horizon’s houses as we entered through the stadium’s entrance. I was a bit nervous that I felt my knees knocking against one another. My eyes were raised to the horizon, staring down upon the length of the tunnel towards a stadium that I, no we, know way too well. For it had been years since we had seen the stadium after the Olympics several months ago after the owner had attacked it with his raw fish. I shuttered at the memory and lowered my eyes, glancing upon the slip of paper that was between my claws. Turning it over, I looked at the contents of the paper. But the words imprinted had baffled me. On the paper was a clock time, in digital, followed by an at-sign and the words ‘base’. I froze and blinked suddenly, tilting my head to one side as I stared at the contents of the paper. But before I could reread it and interpret it, I felt something on my shoulder. I glanced at the source as my wings spread out behind me, hitting someone that was walking through my sides. There, I spotted Kyro who was together with Zander. Natty was a few inches away from where I was. However, we knew she was there after all.

Our unit was assigned this mission. About a threat that followed a certain team. That particular team had won many matches in the end, all end in dominance which was odd for us. Despite Kyro not taking the game seriously, I frowned when he laughed in tandem. Reminding me that the game was just a game, sore losers will be kicked out no matter what. But that alone does not concern me for my thoughts were preoccupied with something else other than the game itself. I was worried about my mate, Ling, and his unit. I pondered what his mission was at the time of ours. As much I had become worried for him, I felt something against my neck grew tighter like a cobra strangling its prey. I could not breathe and growl weakly at Kyro who noticed quickly and stopped, loosening his grip onto me. We approached the end of the tunnel, a bright light shines upon our faces as the roaring crowd grip upon our ears. My heart was pounding, I could not contain my excitement as I sprinted down the remains of the halls and reached the end first then all my other teammates who played ‘catch up to capture me.

Once outside, the stadium roared to life. There were thousands of dragons about. All shouting yelling and doing stuff as they all wait for the game to start. It had seemed to me that we were not the only ones excited for the game. With my unit regrouped onto me, I turned around and glanced towards my teammates and their breaths echoed from their mouths, staring down onto me as if I had done something wrong. But neither of them spoke their minds as Zander avoided it and stretched his back before questioning me, “Alright Yang. What we are doing here?” “It is not the first time, you had decided to drag us off onto a game, you know,” Kyro commented, a bright smile appears on his face. I nodded but fell to silence before lowering my eyes down towards the fields. It was a diamond-shaped field; three white bases were about. A stretch of line connecting each of those bases. Three dragons were on the field. One at the center and the pair in front of him, upon the pointy part of the diamond.

As the game started with the first swing, I flapped my wings to gain everyone’s attention. Their eyes turned to me while I drew my white card. Upon it was written words, however, it was short and sweet never dancing around trying to prove its point. With my eyes lowered and pointing directly upon the paper, I spoke; reciting the words written exactly upon “10:23 @ base.” “10…” Zander trailed, followed by Kyro “23…” “@ base?” Natty finished. There was a short pause of silence between us while Kyro and Zander stepped closer to me and lowered their eyes glancing at the paper I was reading to them. Then raise their eyes to me, I nodded. Relieved that they felt concerned despite the overwhelming voices of crowds surrounding us as Zander scratches his chin and rose his eyes high and Kyro stayed silent, staring upon the fields in silence. Natty, however, was the only one who broke the silence surrounding us “So let us solve it then.” “But what does it meant?” Zander protested, glaring at Natty who stared at him in response, “I had never heard such scarce information or clues before in my lifetime, especially this one.” Zander frowned, twisting his cap in silence with his arms upon his sides as he growled. “Do not worry, it is still early in the game. We will figure it out soon.” I responded, smiling brightly as his face darkened before muttering something.

Our unit resumed walking. We had decided to head for the stands adjacent to where we were standing. Up the stairs we go, we scanned the area for our seats before finding it. We were high in elevation and deeper inside the stances, yet that did not stop us from watching the fields and discussing the clue that we have in our possession. Thus, arriving upon our seats, we were surprised to see old friends sitting adjacent to us. But their discussion was not about the clue we have, rather it was about the game itself. “Think our team will win, Kivyu?” Spoke Ziouni with a smirk upon his face, Kivyu stared back at him and drew a laugh. Nodded his head before returning to the game as Ziouni chuckled in response and turned his eyes over to us. His eyes widened in surprise, he shot up quickly and his arms stretched out as he exclaimed, “Yang! Kyro, Zander, and Natty! How are you guys?” “How is it going, Ziouni?” I responded with a smile towards him while Ziouni slapped his claws upon my shoulders and smiled, “Nothing much. Just not sure why Kivyu had to drag me out for a professional game in real life than in the games we play.” “I hear that!” Zander exclaimed despite Kyro shutting his trap by smugly rubbing his forehead with his knuckle. “Where is LIng? You two have some history together all those years ago.” “He is doing fine right now.” I responded, “He is on a mission. Although I do not know the contents of it.” “Ah.” Ziouni cracked a smile, nodding his head while turning his attention towards Kyro and Zander, “Been missing him since we were together.” “Heh. You two are always the buttheads of the group.” I laughed before I remembered something.

Thus returning to our objective currently, I pulled out the paper and shove it to Ziouni’s side. He gasped in response and glanced at me before lowering his eyes as he swipe at the paper from my claws before reading it himself. “Ah. So this is why you guys are here.” He muttered with a slight nod though his eyes narrowed and his mouth formed a frowned, “I figure as much why the boss wanted us here and not back at our city.” “Yeah. This potential crime is not in Ciunx city, rather it is here in Vaster town.” “So what is the problem then? Think we can fix it?” “That is the thing, so far there are no problems right now. But I cannot stop thinking about this piece of paper we received at the entrance before the game had started.” A pause of silence fell between us as our eyes returned to the field of the game. I frowned but felt something touch my shoulder. I never had to look cause it was always Kyro who backed me up whenever my mate was not here for comfort or I had become too worried. Despite it all, my mind was preoccupied with the clue and I scanned the field, looking for anything that could catch this clue.

My eyes fell upon the LCD of a scoreboard. On it showed the bits of information that anyone wanted to know. From the obvious scoreboard towards the outs and balls, I stared onto it in silence before a voice snapped me out of here. Rapidly, I turned over to Zander; while Kyro stared at me in silence. His face looked worrying although. I shook my head, smiling brightly at him discarding anything that was concerning for me. As he nodded, however, I leaned to his side whispering while pointing at the LCD scoreboard, “Keep an eye on that can you?” A nod escaped his head, I responded with a smile while watching the game. So far, it remained scoreless on the bottom of the first inning. I pondered how long this game would be and along those lines, where and when will the attack start?

As my mind became preoccupied with those thoughts, my ears filtered out the roaring sounds that surrounded me. The voices of those spectators had become loud and clear. Their fist was raised in the air; flags, waving of the claws, and among the other stuff were in the air. Yet my eyes concentrated on the game itself. With my arms crossed and my eyes narrowingly, I caught the attention of Kyro and Natty. Both of which would not stop staring at me. Only Kyro set the move and grabbed my shoulder, pulling me to the side while as I gasped. Settling myself upon the flooring, I glared up at Kyro who became embarrassed. Zander snickered at the two of us before returning his attention towards the game. Kyro rose me up, allowing me to stand on two feet. Escorting me out upon the aisle, Kyro turned me over to face him and growled. “What is wrong?” “Not sure,” I whispered back to him, my eyes to his shoulders while our wings spread apart obstructing others to watch us. “But there is something strange upon this field.” Kyro looked at me with widened eyes, yet it narrowed again before he slightly nodded. Zander and Natty turned their heads over to us, rejoining the conversation.

“The LCD scoreboard is what Yang is trying to spit out all this time,” Zander muttered as his voice join in on the whispering. Kyro and I turned to him, but my head had became motioned in agreeance with the black dragon. “The LCD huh… Think that had something to do with this clue then?” “There is something else, however.” I started, “Have you notice how fearful the home and away teams were? Yet only one member of the away team was not. That member was calm and tranquil. However, he had a smug upon his face.” “She is right,” Zander replied, darting his eyes away from our circle to look upon the bench of the away team. That dragon was just leaning back, his arms crossed and eyes narrowed. His wings were folded behind him, yet the edges were curved backward. It was almost as if… “He planned the whole thing.” I echoed my thoughts, shifting to Kyro and Zander as they nodded quietly. “However. Did he planned the whole thing?” I questioned, adding “He cannot bring a death threat in here without getting through security first. You knew how the last one went?” “We would never forget it at all, Yang,” Kyro muttered darkly as his eyes remained unfazed and staring upon me. I ignored and acknowledged him before shifting my attention to Zander, “If that were the case. He must be working with someone. Who?”

We all fell silent. Our eyes were to one another. Quiet settled upon the rowdy crowd surrounding us. We did not even hear Zioui or Kivyu approached us joining our circle as they responded at the same time, “Yo.” “Sup.” Zander replied almost immediately as Zioui turned his eyes over to me and Kyro before pitching in his two cents, “You guys heard the thunder right?” “Thunder?” Both me and Kyro responded to him as he nodded afterward and responded, “Yeah. There was a random series of bangs that echoed the stands. Yet the skies remained beautiful and sunny while the crowd itself was jolted and scared.” “It seems like there was a threat in pregame.” Zander suggested, “Maybe that was what got them so loud and cheerful. You could perhaps hear it in their scared voices.” “Perhaps,” I responded in a whisper, eyeing Zander while he nodded, I turned quickly to Zioui and Kivyu. “So you two heard ‘thunder’?” “Yeah, weird it is not? It was supposed to be sunny and beautiful today. I wonder what-” “I do not think it is thunder at all, Kivyu.” Kyro interrupted him, crossing his arms as his eyes break away from the circle and looked directly upon the diamond field below us. “I think someone is messing up the game.” “More importantly, this game is scripted.” Zander finished, I nodded before returning my eyes to Kivyu and Zioui. “Now we got that out of the way. We need to head inside the away’s bench without getting seen by the audience, announcer, or the players themselves.” We fell silent, only the crowd filled our ears. As my wings folded and my tail swishing about, I blinked several times before breaking into a smile. “I got it. However; Zioui and Kivyu will be together with Zander for this one. Kyro and Natty, you two know what to do.” “We do not actually…” Natty frowned, scowling with her arms crossed.

Silence had come while my unit left me alone. While I stand still and stared down upon the diamond shape field before me, my ears flickered hearing the rapid footsteps faded into the distance. My heart increased in beating, I knew I had become worried. My claws rose towards the bars in front of me, latching onto them like a claw to a toy. Sweat and warmth heated a part of the bar. I exhaled then inhaled, my eyes closed around the time. Hearing sounds of beeping echoing from my walkie, knowing that three dragons have already silenced their walkie. I raised my eyes high and glance at the scoreboard in silence. Watching as the innings display ‘5’ on the LCD which was accompanied by a scoreless game. Strikes were raised to ‘3’, balls were ‘0’. I was worried, anxious as I felt my body leaned forward. I felt the tensions in my muscles, some of my bones snapped causing me to snap from my fantasy. With a sigh, I closed my eyes and turned around. Walking up the stairs towards the top where the exit was located was where I stopped, I spotted Kyro and Natty standing adjacent to the exit. Their eyes looking directly upon me. I nodded suddenly and silently pointing towards a sales dragon who was selling fresh hot dogs at the time. Kyro frowned, shaking his head.

Next, I pointed towards another sales dragon selling flyers for the next game. Natty pondered over it however Kyro shook his head again. I growled at them and narrowed my eyes at them. They were silent upon seeing my anger. Saying nothing in response while I groaned replacing the anger deep within my stomach and just let it be. For around the time, the three dragons that I had assigned the primary job to would be heading straight onto the away bench. Upon that thought, I pondered the results. For all I foresee was three. One of which was a successful escape. The other was a kick out. The last was an arrest and a riot immediately afterward. I frowned at each of them, my mind had become increasingly worried and anxious that I had found myself shivering to the possibility. Yet I felt a claw on my shoulder, warm upon my coldest body as I raised my eyes. Noticing that Kyro was smiling directly at me. I smiled in response, but that smile was short-lived. Giving off an exhaled sigh, I turned away and glanced once again onto the field, spotting three dragon members of the away team heading straight for the bench.

“They will do fine,” Kyro muttered in my ear. Natty responded with a nod. I did too unknowingly as I walked down the steps and leaned against the bars staring directly at the game. It was the seventh inning. The score now was two to zero. Our guys were leading. The audience talked excitedly. As my eyes locked onto the away bench, I spotted the three dragons arguing with the away’s coach. He seems displeased and his arms were crossed; his face darkened while his mouth tightened up. Ears pulled back and narrowed eyes directly upon the fields which meant that they were losing. I said nothing but kept a calm face and instead of looking directly at him, I turned around and headed back to regroup with Kyro and Natty. Both of them had exchanged their clothes for a hot dog selling dragon. I stared at them momentarily but shook my head withdrawing my judgment towards them as I kept up the staring. They turned to me in response, their faces brightened as I looked at them with concern. Although I shook my head, I released an exhale of a sigh before turning around and glanced back onto the game which was now in the eighth inning. An announcement had been called.

The voice from the booth remained worried. His voice shook violently as he struggle with the words let out from his mouth. Everyone in the stand somehow knew what would happen and soon became agitated and worried as I watched some stood up from their seats. The crowd turned around and walked back. Up the stairs towards the exit rooms before they disappeared from our sights. We knew what they were thinking of and it was not a good sign at all. Their worried faces tell it all. As my mouth parted and just about to let off the words that came from my mind, Kyro shut me up by shoving his claw down my mouth which prevented me from saying anything while my eyes widened in response and glared at the red dragon. The audience gave us dirty looks, although some others were perplexed by the stunt. The few others ignored us and some giggled. I blushed and bit into Kyro’s claw; he released his claw from me and frowned as he shook his claw, ridding the saliva that came with it while it pooled the grounds below us. I rolled my eyes and turned around, fixed upon the game that the audience was now leaving to.

The score was three to two. Ninth inning. One ball, two strikes.

‘Would we reach the attacking point?’ I pondered which I was convinced it was the tenth inning. I felt my claws tightened. Kyro and Natty watched me in their silence as I left myself with a shortage of excited and nervous breaths. My eyes continued perplex upon the game as the crowd dispersed and away from the stands until everything was empty leaving just me and my unit. With the silence, our ears perked up on the shouting. Kyro looked to Natty who ran in response. I followed behind her then Kyro followed me. As we ran down the line’s stance towards the bars at the end of the line, we latched upon the bars and raised our eyes. Our wings spread suddenly in anticipation of anything going wrong. However, it had seemed it had gone in our favor. All the players were turning their heads, even the umpire, and the batter. Their heads were to the away bench. Three officers came out. Zander was leading them. A confident smirk emerged from his face as if he had accomplished something. Behind him were two other officers, side by side holding a silver trash can. It looked banged up as if someone had struck against it with something. ‘But what was that something?’ I often questioned myself, staying in the silence while my eyes stared. Zander, Zioui, and Kibyu all gathered around the silver trashcan as Zioui and Kibyu settled it upon the grounds. Zander rose his eyes and declared to the empty stances that he was surprised that nothing was there anymore. Yet he went with it.

With arms spread, he declared “The scandal is over and this game is finish. The away team are found guilty of ‘fixing’ the game using a trashcan as means of telling its players of what the pitcher’s strategy is.” Thus chaos had started afterward which I am confident you know what exactly went down afterward.