

THE POWER FORCE

Mixed Trouble

Who makes your destiny? Do you choose your own path or has it already been decided for you beforehand by Fate...what you will encounter...or when you will die...

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☯ The Legend of the Soul Swords.

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"Why...why are you doing this?" said the man with the sword, with an arm over his wound.

"I'm s-sorry." said the woman. She had long, black hair, and a nice figure. Her eyes were filled with tears. And in an instant, she stabbed him.

The man was filled with shock as blood oozed from his mouth. He dropped the sword and collapsed.

The woman couldn't believe what she had done. She screamed as loud as she could. "Nooooooooo!"

The couple was on the fields, enjoying the nature. Tyson and Faith lay lazily on the grass next to each other, looking at the sky. It was a blue, calm sky, and this kind of weather was rare. Such good weather only came a few times a year, and the couple did not hesitate to take advantage of it. It's days like these that melts all their cares away from the world, and all they have is each other and ever lasting happiness.

"Your day of judgment will cometh soon." hissed a voice from a distance. **Reaver** spied on the couple with eagerness. He was a tall, slim demon with deceptive blue eyes

and whitish-gray hair. He was wearing a purple uniform and purple pants, with a red cape attached to white shoulder pads. "Once it comes, there will be no escape." He left.

Lisa and Faith sat across from each other on their table by the window, which was one of the best spots in the restaurant. Outside, the busy people of Vespene City went about their business and cars and other vehicles passed by.

Lisa ordered a cup of coffee with a salad and Faith had a small sandwich and a cup of cold water with ice. As they finished eating, they began a conversation.

"I'm going to get a manicure later."

"Man-ni-cure?" Faith asked blankly. "What is that?"

"Don't tell me you don't know! Every woman who values herself gets a manicure once in a while. It's when you get some one to fix your hands to make them look beautiful."

"Oh? That is what you call it in your world?"

"Yeah." She got Faith's hand and looked at it, then gasped. Her hands were swollen and rough from labor. "My goodness! You must be working like a slave."

"I'm used to it. I do all the things around the house. I do the laundry, mop the floor, clean the bathroom, fix the bed, and dust the walls and ceiling and cook and..."

"Does Tyson do anything at all?"

"Don't make it sound like he's not doing anything. He helps me sometimes."

Lisa sighed. "Tyson doesn't know how lucky he is."

"You don't know how lucky I am either. It's hard, but it is worth it. I mean, who else is going to do it?" She smiled.

"You shouldn't push yourself."

"I'm not." Faith replied. "I don't mind, really. It is about living with him that matters. When you fall in love, you will understand."

"Maybe..."

Back at home, Faith was mopping the wooden floor diligently. She hummed as she did and made sure it sparkled when she was done. All of a sudden, she collapsed. Tyson heard something fall and came immediately.

"Faith?" he said, grabbing her. "Are you alright? Faith?"

He took her to bed, and pulled a blanket over her. He thought she was having some kind of fever. So he called a doctor and he arrived soon.

"Hmmm..." he said, checking her pulse.

"What is it, doctor?"

Doc: "She is not sick. Everything seems to be normal."

Tyke: "But, but, she fainted."

Doc: "She fainted not because of sickness, but because of exhaustion."

Tyke: "Exhaustion?"

"She has been over working. She just needs some rest."

"Oh okay. Thank you doctor."

Tyson felt bad for what happened. Guilt took over him. Faith has been doing all these house chores so she could make him happy, and he doesn't even notice it. He sighed. He looked at her hand. For the first time, he noticed there were marks and skids on them. It was from the tough labor. Now he felt even worse. "Faith..." he whispered.

She woke up. "Oh, Tyson? I still didn't finish mopping the floor. I gotta do it." She started to get up, but he stopped her.

"No, it's okay."

"But--"

"You just rest. Let me handle things from here."

And he did. He mopped the floor for the first time in months and it was torture. All the repeating motions and scrubbing and hard work. When he thought he was done, the floor was still half-dirty. And Faith, every time she mopped the floor it was sparkling clean. He could see his own reflection, literally. He realized how hard this labor was.

He felt like a scum, making her do the work (even though it was her choice) and he was a bum. She was a princess who had servants do everything for her, and now she's like a servant herself. So Tyson took the initiative.

The battle was about to start. Tyson rolled up his sleeves and stared at the enemy – the frying pan. He was about to journey where no man has gone before – cooking breakfast.

While resting, Faith heard some loud sounds from downstairs. Tyson screamed, and things dropped. She's surprised he's trying to cook. She wanted to help, but rest is important.

"Ah, all done." The fried eggs and pancakes were done. But the kitchen was a mess. There's crap all over the place, and things were broken and on the floor.

"Tada!" Tyson said, presenting his finely-made meal. Although it looks a little rough, it tasted good.

Faith: "It's good."

"Phew, thank God."

"You didn't have to do this," she said. "You could have ordered something."

"Naw. I wanted to show my appreciation for you. I'll be doing this for a whole week. Everything that you used to do."

Faith got and walked towards the kitchen, Tyson stopped her. "Where are you going?"

"I'm going to check the kitchen."

"Ahaha, there's no need," he said, chuckling nervously. "Really."

"No, I just need to get something."

"No, I'll get it for you."

Faith grew suspicious. "Are you hiding something from me, Tyson?"

"Me? Hide something. No!"

Faith pushed him to the side and checked the kitchen, and she gasped. The mess was horrendous. "Oh my Spirit! What is this?"

Tyson: "Well, you see..."

"Tyson...you didn't have to do this for me. I can still work."

And this was the moment when he wants to tell her something. Something very important. "Faith..." he started. "I think you've been working way too hard lately. I think it's time that you take a break."

"What are you talking about?"

"Don't you feel difficult living in these kind of conditions? I mean, back at Almerak you were a princess and had everything you ever wanted."

"Here I have everything I ever wanted."

"Look, Faith, I think it's better if you go back home for a while. Just a while. So we can have some time to think calmly."

"Back home?!"

"Yes, but it's only temporarily. I think you need to take a time off."

"But I'm fine here. I'm happy and there's nothing more I could possibly want."

"I just think it's best for both of us this way."

"Best for us? How is this the best for us? I made my decision to stay here with you. And I do not regret it."

"I don't think you fit in to this world. Everything seems new to you."

"I-I can manage." She sounds desperate now.

"I only want what's best for you. You should go and spend time with your family.

"Is this because...you don't want me anymore?" she asked sadly.

"No, no, not at all. You got this all wrong. It's not you, it's me."

Faith heard that phrase before. One time, Lisa taught her what that really meant.

"No!" she screamed. She fell on her knees and grabbed his legs. "Please don't send me away! I don't want to go." She was crying.

"Don't make it harder than it has to be."

"Please don't make me go away! I want to stay here with you!"

"Get up." He shook his legs free of her grip and turned away.

She got up. She wiped off her tears and sobbed.

"You understand what I'm doing for you, don't you? It's not a breakup. It's only for a while. For us to think things through."

"Was it something I did wrong?"

"No, absolutely not." he said sadly.

So Tyke helped her pack her things. They went to the pod and got ready. Faith was a little calm now. As Tyke said, it wasn't a break up. Just a time off. To think about things.

She carried her belongings and opened the pod door. She was just on step from going inside.

Tyke: "Bye."

Faith: "Bye."

"Your family misses you. You have a wonderful father and a brother you have barely known. Get to know them. Spend some time with them."

"I will."

They hugged compassionately and she went inside the pod. The door hatchet closed, making a mechanical sound. Faith turned around to look at him one last time before stepping in. They were both very sad and quiet.

"Come back soon." Tyson said, and this improved her mood.

"I will!" she said, smiling.

The pod glowed and floated and vanished with a flash of light. Tyson stared at the empty space for a moment.

[B] Title Contents

In the inter-dimensional portal, the pod flew against the turbulence and the person inside was having a hard time. She could barely stand still, having to hold on to something to keep balance. It was like an earthquake riding this thing. On the round window she saw something that wasn't there before. An island. Not quite an island, but a large piece of rock, a meteorite perhaps, stranded in the middle of nowhere. Nothing but emptiness surrounded the six sides of the island. That's strange, she thought. There was an odd-looking palace in the middle of the island.

The pod landed there. Faith forgot all about going home. She stepped into the mysterious palace, half not expecting what was inside, but half recognizing it somehow. In the palace she went, not knowing what to expect. There, she saw a girl standing there by herself, with her back facing her.

"Umm, e-excuse me." Faith said politely. "I am sorry to intrude. But I can't help but notice this place...floating in the sky." Somehow, she felt kind of stupid being here. "My name is-

The girl turned around. "Who art thou? This place is forbidden, girl. Who

bringeth thou here?"

"Uhhh...er...." Suddenly, Faith remembered what this place was. She came here a long time ago.

She got on one knee immediately and bowed. "Lady Temari, I have returned."

Temari was shocked that this woman knows her name. "Thou art..."

"It's me, Faith. Princess Faith of Almerak."

"Princess Faith? Of Almerak?"

"Yes!"

"It has been a while, princess. I almost did not recognize thee. My, how much thou hath growneth up."

"I'm happy to see you too, my lady." She took out the Soul Swords and lay it in front of her.

The lady's eyes widened as she looked at them. "The Great Spirit asked me to retrieve these, and I have brought them."

"Child, dost thou know why thou hast returned? It is fate that bringeth thee back here."

"Fate?"

"Indeed." said Temari. "Dost thou know why there art not one, but two Soul Swords? Dost thou know why it contains so much power? Why it becomes one and comes apart, and why one has a scar on it and the other does not?"

"Umm, no. I don't know the answer to any of these questions."

"That is why thou art here, child. I am here to tell thee the answers that hath been lurking since you hath received these."

"Really?"

"Come."

Temari went into a door on the side. Faith followed. She led her into a round pillar room, and inscribed on the walls were pictures and words in another language. It stretched all the way up and Faith was surprised that it was so tall.

And indeed, she did give her the answers. The mystery of the Soul Swords is revealed. He told her the story as he pointed his finger on the pillars. It goes like this: A long, long time ago (about a thousand years) there was this loving couple who were just like Tyson and Faith. They loved each other so much they were willing to die for each other.

But all was not good. A demon named Reaver was jealous of them, and he seeks to destroy their relationship. Somehow, he used his evil sorcery to turn the lovers against each other and they fought. The battle was bloody and in the end the man died. The woman, so full of guilt, killed herself. And that was the tragic end. The demon made it so their souls were trapped within the swords, and thus, that is where the name came from.

"So that is why it's called the Soul Swords." Faith said.

And also that was why one of them has a scar. Because the swords were an invincible pair, vulnerable only to each other. It was the woman who killed the man so the scar was there. And why did the swords combine into one? To represent their love. Divided they are weak, and united, invulnerable.

Faith was astonished to hear this. So all this time there were souls trapped in the swords? Everytime she looked at them she was looking at two souls trapped inside a prison?

"Since you holdeth the Soul Sword, the demon will surely come after you and your lover. Be careful. His name is Reaver."

"Reaver!" she shouted.

"You hath met him?"

"Yes. Once before. "

"He will come again." Temari said. "The only way to defeat him is to fight with the one you love. You have such a person, don't you?"

"Yes, his name is Tyson. How do you know?"

"I know, child." Temari smiled. "You must go back to your world. If you do not, Reaver will kill him. Remember, in order to be strong, your hearts must unite as one. You will succeed only if your love for each other is **true**. That is all the help I can offer thee."

"Thank you for everything. Perhaps we can meet again. One day." Faith said. Then she went back into the pod and it flew away.

Temari stood there, watching it disappear. "Good luck, child. May the Spirit protect you."

The night was very quiet, only crickets were heard. Tyson sat by the fire he made, holding a stick with a piece of meat at the end. The meat was over the fire, and it was almost cooked. Suddenly, behind him, a pod landed with a loud THUD and the door opened. Tyson dropped the food and got up.

"Back so soon?"

"I just couldn't go through with it." she said.

They hugged.

Then they sat by the campfire and she told him the whole story.

Believe it, Tyson was in shock. "Wow! Is that really true?"

"Yes."

"So that's why it's called the Soul Swords. It's so obvious."

"Yes. As for Reaver, I met him one time in Almerak. He is a dangerous foe. And if he has it his way, we will end up like the lovers of long ago."

"He's hunting us. So all we have to do is fight together?" Tyke asked, eating the shish-ka-bob.

"We must use the Soul Swords to defeat him. It is the only way."

"But you know I don't use swords." he said.

"You must!" she insisted. "We have to try."

Tyson stood up. "Don't worry, babe. Once he sees my power, all demons will fear me."

"This is serious! We must listen to Lady Temari's words."

"Well, how am I to use a sword when I don't know how to?"

"Just try, please!" She gave him one of the two Soul Swords.

"Alright. I'll hang on to it. But I can't guarantee I'll use it."

Temari walked back and forth, worrying about the princess. "I hope she understands all that I hath told her. If not, then the tragedy will repeat." Suddenly, her shadow grew long and bigger. It stretched onto the wall and a dark creature came out. It slowly made its way out of the wall and approached girl. Temari, sensing evil, turns around.

"R-Reaver?! How did you get here? This place is forbidden."

"Forbidden? No place in this world is forbidden from me." replied the demon.

"How did you get past the spiritual barrier?"

"A demon learns a lot in a thousand years, Temari."

"You filth! Die!" Temari's wings came out, and flew up, Reaver flew up and they fought. Reaver slashed her wing, and her stomach as well. She fell off the meteorite, and into the sky.

Reaver: "Oops, you die. That's what you get for having a big mouth."

The couple fell asleep by the fire. They were in sleeping bags and next to each other, arm in arm. All of a sudden Tyson woke up. The winds were howling and trees branches waved. On the ground, a dark, slimy substance approached.

Faith woke up. "What...what is that?"

"Good question. And I don't want to know! Let's get outta here!" He grabbed her hand and they ran towards the opposite direction of the slime. But they were surrounded. The dark, black slime was everywhere.

"We're doomed." Tyke said with no hope.

"Ha ha ha ha ha!" laughed Reaver as he appeared in front of them. "Your time is almost up!"

"You...are you Reaver?" Tyson demanded to know.

"Yes. And you are dead meat."

The slime hurled towards them. Faith slashed at the slime, but it only cut them, not doing any harm. It was like slashing water. The slime got to Tyson and covered him up. They strangled his arms and legs. He powered up and the slime on him was destroyed.

Reaver raised his arm, and a blackish purple flame appeared in his palm, taking the shape of a sword. He slashed at Faith and she blocked. Clang!! They slashed at each other until Faith realized she was at the edge of a steep hill. The slime went past Reaver and pushed her down. She rolled down, bumping into everything that was in the way.

Tyson: "Faith!"

"It's too late now." Reaver fired a beam.

It hit Tyson hard. He was knocked down. The demon went down the hill as the slime got to Tyson again. After much struggling, he finally got free and ran as far away from the slime as possible.

He made a clean getaway, but Faith was not with him. Crap, he thought. She's in danger by herself. It's definitely too late to go back now. Reaver probably has captured her by now. Crap. Reaver's goal was to kill both of them. That means he's gonna kill her! More crap.

Wait a minute...Faith told him about the two lovers he killed a long time ago. She said that the demon will kill only on a specific date. June the sixth. Luckily, today was not that day. Phew! However, that day is tomorrow. Today is June the fifth! Crap, crap, crap. That means after tonight they're history. That doesn't leave him much time. In fact, that's very little time. It's almost midnight now, he figured. They slept at the campfire for at least a few hours. There was only one thing he could do. Sense where his lover was and find her and kill the demon or be killed.

[C] Title Contents

Reaver entered the garden room...a room that existed for thousands of years. Here is where all the stolen energy of his victims went to, and the energy was turned into flowers. There were all sorts of beautiful flowers. There was a tree in the middle of the place and the walls and ceiling were tree branches and vines.

Faith was by the wall, her naked body surrounded by dark vines. Roses and leaves and thorns grew on the vines.

"So...the flowers have already blossomed." he said happily.

"Please let me go!" she cried.

"I'm afraid I can't do that. You see, you and your lover will end up just like the lovers of a thousand years ago! And there is absolutely nothing neither of you can do about it. It is only a matter of time before your death day. But before you die, I will take your energy and turn it into a flower, so that I can remember you for all eternity!!" He picked a red rose from the vine on her body and sniffed it. "It smells so good. This is

one of the most beautiful flowers I've ever seen. The more pure the person is, the prettier the flower will be! Ha ha ha ha ha! Soon I will have the most beautiful flower ever!" He grabbed her chin and kissed her lips, and streams of tears drip from her eyes.

"Oh man, what do I do now?" Tyson asked. "I'm lost. Faith is gone, and I don't know where she is. This is just great." He wandered along the dark forest, going to where ever his instincts took him. He could not sense Faith anywhere. Another option was to wait for the demon to attack him, but he just couldn't do nothing. He walked and walked confusedly.

Reaver came into the garden room and walked towards the flower tree. Growing on the branches were yellow daisies. Near the tree was Faith, lying on the ground sideways. She was completely naked, and she was lying on a floor of daisies. Some of the daisy flowers were on her body, covering her breasts and her hips. The flowers from the tree fell off and dropped on her. Her sad eyes were filled with water and they were going to spill any minute. She just laid there and did not move one bit.

Reaver walked to her and bent down. He grabbed her chin and lifted her head so they were face to face.

"Please no!" Faith pleaded.

He kissed her lips and tears fell from her eyes. He touched her shoulder and kissed it gently.

"Stop it, please..."

He touched her thigh and moved his hand down to her knee, then to lower thigh, then to her ankles. He kissed the soft, sweet skin on her thigh and she moaned painfully. He kissed her hips, then moved his hand to her shoulder and grabbed it and squeezed it tightly. He kissed her shoulder. He touched her pony tail hair and sniffed it enjoyably. He kissed her neck.

"No!"

He turned her over. His hand was on her breasts where the flowers were, and his hand went under the flowers. He slapped her face and her head fell on the flowers. A red spot appeared where he hit her and it hurt. She yelled painfully.

"You're mine!" he said.

"No...please no!" she said in a weak voice.

His face got closer and closer to hers and he kissed her sweet lips. They were as sweet as sugar. Tears dripped down her eyes and fell on the daisies...and her delicate hand grabbed the flowers helplessly. His hand held her wrist tightly and squeezed it. The pain and horrible feeling was unbearable. She wanted to die as he kissed her lips. Her feet kicked the daisies helplessly. After what seemed like forever he stopped the kiss and took a flower that was on her breast and he sniffed. He kissed her shoulders and she turned her head sideways. He kissed her tender neck, then her breasts. He grabbed her leg and lifted it up and touched it all over. He kissed her knee gently. He kissed her ankle, then kissed her lower thigh then her thigh.

She moaned painfully and her fingers grabbed the flowers. His hand grabbed her wrist and squeezed it tightly as he kissed her lips.

Tyson continued wandering in the forest, with Faith's sword tucked behind his shirt on his back. It was getting quite uncomfortable. The blade felt cold and hard to his spine and he just wanted to throw it away. But he couldn't because it was the only thing Faith left him. It was also, supposedly, the only thing that can kill the "love demon," as Tyson referred to him as.

Suddenly, Reaver appeared. "Are you ready for your end?"

"Not really."

"You are lucky. It is not time to kill you yet, but it will be soon. All I have to do is trap you and by dawn I will kill you and the woman."

"That's not going to happen! Dream on, pal."

"Is that so?" He summoned his flame sword.

Tyson got ready. He charged and Reaver charged. Slash! Reaver's sword just missed his head by a hair - literally - a few pieces of his hair fell off. Tyson punched his face. Reaver wiped the blood off his mouth. He slashed and Tyson dodged. He slashed several times, and Tyson dodged each attack. He fired the Energy Blast and it hit him, but nothing happened.

"What?" he said in disbelief. All that energy into that beam and it didn't hurt him!

"Oops. Try again." Reaver charged and dives the sword at him.

Tyson grabbed his hands, preventing the flames from giving him a burn. They struggled, and the sword got closer to Tyson's face. They grunted and screamed. Tyson managed to push him away. He charged and punched. Pow! Pow! He hit both sides of his face. Reaver spit blood.

"Hmhm. Not bad for a mortal. But you will not defeat me." He charged and slashed.

Tyson stepped back, and dodged. Reaver slashed and hit a tree, making it fall. He kept slashing at Tyson and only managed to cut the trees in their path. Tyson fired a beam and hit him. Reaver got back up, unharmed.

"Nothing will work! So Faith was right...there's only one way to do it." He took out the sword from his back.

"Oh, so you have the other Soul Sword." Reaver said, recognizing his own creation.

Alright, Tyson's got the sword. (I am not really good with swords, but this is worth a try.) Now that is a big problem. How the hell is he going to fight with it? (Wait...I live with Faith and I've known Nebula my whole life! And they use swords. I've got to think of Nebula's training...) So he tried to remember. He and his brother trained together since they were little, so of course Tyke got a glimpse of his skills. He tried to think of how Nebula used it, and studied his movements carefully. Yes, that's it. Then he thought of Faith and her training.

"Alright, I'm ready!"

They charged into each other. Tyson slashed like a moron and was completely off. Reaver blocked his attacks like nothing. He just basically slashed head on, without any clue as to what he's doing. Well, it is just shocking that he actually thought remembering how somebody uses a sword would make him learn to use it.

Reaver slashed and Tyson barely blocked it. Reaver knocked it away.

"Uh oh." Tyke said.

"Oops. You dropped your weapon."

Tyson stepped back in guard. Reaver charged and fired an energy ball and hit him. Tyson was knocked down next to the sword.

Suddenly, Reaver grabbed his chest. "Oh no, not now! I'm out of energy. You're lucky this time, Tyson. I will come for you later." He ran away.

Tyson wasn't gonna let him get away, but he might lead to Faith. So he secretly followed him.

[D] Title Contents

Tyson charged into the garden room and found Faith at last. She was naked and lying on the flowers, and tears were in her eyes. As she saw Tyson, the tears spilled and she couldn't be more overjoyed. He went to her and bent down.

She got on her knees and and touched his face. "Tyson..." she said, sobbing. They kissed passionately and then hugged.

Faith was in bed, back at their house. She woke up with a huge headache. Tyson was sitting besides her, and he was there the whole time.

"Uhhh...Tyson?"

"You woke up at last, sleeping beauty."

"Tyson!!" she yelled happily. She hugged him real tight and they kissed passionately.

After they've calmed down, it was time to get to serious business.

Tyke: "Reaver is going to kill us by tomorrow dawn. We need to be ready for him."

Faith: "Tyson, before we fight him, I think you should know the whole story."

"Eh? The whole story? You already told me the whole story."

"No...there is more to it. Much more."

Faith's flashback goes back to a few years ago. Right after she was appointed the title of paladin by the Great Spirit, she is sent back to the Imperial Palace to look for a certain set of weapons – none other than the Soul Swords. Surprisingly, she found them in the dungeon area. To think, something like this existed right under where she lives. She was amazed when she saw the twin swords on the wall.

But when she tried to touch them, a barrier shocked her fingers. Zzzzt. "Aaah." And she remembers the Great Spirit telling her that in order to access the swords, she must access them through the spirit world. And in the spirit world, Faith saw the ghostly bodies of Lana and Forcis – the two souls whom were trapped in the swords centuries ago.

"Hark, who goes there?" Forcis said.

"It is I, Princess Faith of Almerak. I request permission to use the Soul Swords."

"Soul Swords?" said Lana. "For what purpose?"

Faith: "For the purpose of justice and truth, and for the preservation of mankind. I've been appointed by the Great Spirit to do so."

Forcis: "I do want to believe you. But first we must test you."

Faith: "What kind of test?"

And it was a sword fight, so Faith accepts. They fight and fight, but Faith drops her sword, and she loses.

Forcis: "Aha. If you truly are the paladin, you would have won. You are a fraud. I must exterminate you."

Faith closed her eyes and opened them. "Very well, then, kill me. For I have nothing to hide. If you feel that killing me will bring out the truth, then do so."

Forcis only managed to bring the blade to her chin, and he stopped. He couldn't go through with it. "You are not afraid. You truly **are** the paladin."

So, the couple congratulates her, and gives her permission to use the Soul Swords. They also explain their tragic story, as to how Lana ended up killing Forcis, and eventually, herself. But Forcis forgives her anyway, and thus, their love is true.

Tyson was stumped. "They killed each other?"

"Yes. And I am scared...that history might repeat."

"Don't be silly. Why would we kill each other?"

"Reaver is a master of manipulation. He turned Lana against the person she loves dearly."

Tyson grabbed her by the shoulders. "Faith, I am telling you, that is not going to happen. We are better than some petty tricks. And...I want you to know that...if I were to die by anyone's hands, it'd be yours. Because I know at least you will give me a

proper burial."

She was shocked. What he said hit her big. "Tyson..."

"This is a test of love, right? As long as we are together, we can get through this."

So they went back to cave where Faith was held prisoner. It was a bad idea – returning to that place, but that's where Reaver is. Reaver was on the top of the boulder, waiting for them.

"Well, even the heavens are in my favor! I didn't have to look for you. You came to me to die."

Tyson: "In your dreams, pal! We came here to end your killing spree."

Faith: "We won't end up like your previous victims, you can be sure of that."

Reaver: "Ooh, such confidence. This should be interesting." He opened his palm and summoned his flaming sword.

Faith and Tyson took out their Soul Swords and they got ready.

They slashed at each other. Clang clang clang! Reaver slashed and slashed and pushed them back. The lovers couldn't keep up with his moves.

Reaver fired a beam and it went between them and blew up a tree. They were lucky. Tyson jumped and slashed, Reaver blocked, and counter attacked. Cling, clang! He knocked Tyson's sword away. Twang. The Soul Sword flew sky high, then fell down. Tyke was like oh, what the hell. I don't that thing anyway. He attacked with his bare fists, punching left and right, with variations. Reaver blocked every single punch, and jumped away.

Faith came from the side and slashed. Reaver blurred. Wham! She was hit on the back.

Reaver: "Ha ha ha ha. Dawn is approaching, and there not much you can do. You two really remind me of Lana and Forcis."

Faith: "They have made a tragic mistake. But we will not make the same mistake."

Reaver: "I beg to differ." He went up to the air and released multi-directional beams. The couple braced themselves for impact.

Tyson hurried and picked up the dropped sword, and Reaver appeared behind him and kicked him. Whack. He dropped the sword. Clang. The demon's fiery sword slashed at him, Tyson jumped away, but the sword turned into a rope of fire, and got his neck.

"Ugh!"

Faith: "Oh no, Tyson!"

Reaver pulled Tyson into him, and strangled.

Faith ran and pointed her sword at Reaver, whose back was facing her. Suddenly, he pushed Tyson in front of him and Faith stabbed Tyson! It made a stabbing sound when her sword went into his stomach. They were both completely shocked by what just happened. Reaver jumped onto the roof and laughed. They were speechless. Faith pulled out her sword and Tyson fell on the ground, with blood gushing out from his wound.

The sword dropped from her hands. "No...what have I...done?! What have I done?!"

Tyson groaned and moaned as he put his hands on his wound.

She got on her knees and turned him over. His hands were bloody. The blood was stilling coming from the wound. "It's all my fault! I shouldn't have been so careless!"

"No Faith...it's n-not your f-fault...Reaver tricked u-us."

"Please don't die!!! No! Don't!" she shouted with tears.

"It's not your f-fault, okay? Uhhh! Aaah!" He coughed blood. "I guess the tragedy has to r-repeat..."

Reaver : "Tsk tsk tsk. So tragic. It was his lover that killed him in the end. What a cruel fate for them."

The tears kept coming and coming. "Don't die!"

Tyson: "After I'm g-gone...it's up to y-you...Now I u-understand...Uhhh! I understand w-why there is a scar on one sword. It is the only Soul S-Swords that can h-hurt each other. They a-are vulnerable to nothing, only each other. F-Faith...I w-would rather h-have it end this way...I'd rather die by y-your hand than anyone else...b-because that w-way, you'll b-be the last person I see..."

"No no no!" She put her hands on his chest and closed her eyes. They were glowing pink and Tyson opened his eyes.

"Huh?" The blood stain on his shirt was still there, but the wound was gone! "You healed me!"

"Oh thank goodness! Tyson!"

They hugged real tight.

Reaver's eyes widened with shock. (How is she able to do this? Unless...she is a Phenlian? Is she?) Another thought struck him like a thunderbolt. (Don't tell me...she is the one mentioned in the prophecy? She's the...cursed Phenalian Princess?)

The lovers got up and picked up the Soul Swords.

Remember, in order to be strong, your hearts must unite as one. You will succeed only if your love for each other is **true**.

Reaver jumped down the roof and growled at them. "You're supposed to die!"

Tyson: "Not in this lifetime. You're finished, Reaver."

Faith: "We are protected by the Great Spirit! You can't harm us!"

They charged into each other. Schleb! It happened so fast no eye could have seen it. They went past each other. Reaver looked behind, then down. The Soul Swords were stabbed into his stomach! "No! NoOoOoOo!"

Faith: "Begone, demon!"

"NoOoOoOo!" Reaver shouted as he faded away into smoke. "Arrrrrrgh!" There was nothing left of him. The swords dropped on the ground.

Suddenly, the Soul Swords floated a few feet above the ground. The couple could not believe their eyes. Two streams of smoke came out and turned into spirits.

Lana: "Thank you for releasing us from our prison!" She was crying.

Forcis: "We owe you everything. We have been inside for eons, waiting for the right person to arrive. You've avenged us, and now we can finally rest in peace. Thank you so much, warriors." He's crying too.

Tyson: "Ummm...you're welcome."

Lana: "Remember, princess, love is the most important thing in this entire universe. Treasure it, for you will find no other feeling like it. And never, ever betray the man you love. Our deaths were my fault...but...in the end..."

Forcis: "I still forgave you. It doesn't matter if we're dead or alive...I still love you with all my heart."

More tears streamed down her eyes. "Forcis..."

"Come on, let's go."

Lana nodded. And the spirits dissolved into the air.

Faith: "Bye!"

Tyson: "Bye!"

By now, the spirits were gone completely. It was like they were never there. Faith picked up the Soul Swords, and she probably will never look at them the same again. They've done a good thing. A very good thing. At least these poor souls can finally

move on to the next world, wherever that is.

End.

Hidden Danger! A Trip To Almerak.

Contents

[A] - Koga, Leader of the Lin Kiu Klan

[B] - Approaching Danger

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"Sire." said the soldier, "The ninjas have sent you another message. The **Lin Kiu Klan** says they will show no mercy if you do not surrender your kingdom."

Both King Midas and his advisor, **Socrates**, were shocked. Socrates had been his advisor for many years. Although Midas always questions his decisions, he is someone he can trust.

Midas: "Alas, it is them again." And he has a headache, and everyone can see that. This problem has caused him a lot of stress.

Socrates: "Sire...these ninjas are too dangerous. All the warriors we've sent to assassinate them have been **assassinated**. And we know nothing about them."

Midas: "Socrates, are you saying I should surrender my kingdom?"

He hesitated. "Sire, there is no other alternative. Either surrender or lose everything. No one is a match for the Lin Kiu Klan."

Midas: "No, there is. There **is** one person..."

Tyson was training by himself in the woods. In the morning, he'd meditate and enter the spirit world, and once he's all psyched up, he gets to physical training.

"Hyah. Hyah." The fighter punched and kicked the air, sweating heavily. He wanted to master the art of the super sayan. And in order to do so, he must master his fighting abilities in his normal state.

The same thing goes for Nebula. He's always trying to keep up with somebody - and for the past few years - it's Tyson. He doesn't like being caught up with - especially by a younger brother.

Faith came to the woods and saw her boyfriend training hard. "Tyson, it's lunch time."

"Okay, I'll be right there." he said warmly.

It's strange, really. He was training with such intensity, he looked like he was about to own somebody. But when he smiles, he's a people person. So kind and nice. That's one reason why she likes him.

So he put his arm around her and walked back to the house. They were having a good time, until a bright flash appeared somewhere within the forest. They couldn't have missed it. Something like this didn't happen everyday, so they went to check it out.

The couple found a big round pod – and they reacted with nothing but surprise and unexpectedness. The pod door opened and steam came out. Ssssssssssst. They cautiously approach the object.

“Faith, is that... Tyson stated.

“A dimensional traveling pod? Could it be from my father?”

A soldier stepped out. He had on medieval armor and a helmet, with a sword inside a holder, and combat boots. The person was in his early twenties. Blood was oozing from the corner of his mouth and there was a bloody scar on his forehead. His hand held the pod to keep balance. He collapsed after taking a step.

They went to his “He is one of the royal knights. Are you alright?” Faith asked. He groaned. “Uhhh...”

Tyke: “What happened? Why are you injured?”

“Uuugh...I need to find the princess...”

“You are looking at her.” Faith said. She began healing him. “Try not to talk too much. Breath easy and relax.”

“Thank you.” the soldier said. “It’s good to see you again, highness.”

Faith: “What happened?”

“It’s his majesty’s orders that I come here...”

“My father sent you here?”

“Uhhh...Almerak is under attack...by ninjas! They have been terrorizing our kingdom a while ago. The people are living in fear thanks to them! Even his majesty’s most skillful warriors could not stop them. That is why he sent me here. I am here to deliver a message...King Midas needs your help.”

Faith: “Attacked by ninjas?”

Tyke: “This sounds serious. We better go.”

“This sounds interesting. I think I’ll check it out too.” Nebula said, revealing himself from the trees.

Tyke: “What the? How long have you been there?”

Neb: “Heh, I’ve been here long enough to hear everything. I’ve been working on my stealth. His majesty needs our help, right? So let’s help him, as he’s helped us last time. In fact, let’s get Zelfire and Macintosh here too. I’m sure they want to see the king as well.”

Faith: “Thank you. And I’m sorry to trouble you with my kingdom’s affairs.”

Tyke: “Don’t be ridiculous. Your home is my home. My home is your home.”

Faith nodded happily. “I haven’t been home in a while.”

And with further ado, they called Zell and Mac, and they showed up right away. The party of five stepped into the pod. Just like last time, Mac was impressed with this machine’s technology. Nebula told him to get over it.

With the push of a button and the pull of a level, the machine vanished. Flash! The inter-dimensional portal was filled with whacky stuff – swirls and swirls of red and black, along with things never seen in the regular world.

And the heroes had a hell of a bumpy ride. Although they’ve been through this once before, they still can’t get used to it. It’s like an earthquake inside. A big earthquake. Flash. The pod appeared in the middle of a field, and it landed smoothly. Thud. The heroes stepped out. and the atmosphere was different than the other dimension. The air felt different. It wasn’t a big deal, but it just felt different.

Meanwhile, inside the fortress, the ninja leader was meditating in front of a candle. He had on a blue suit and black pants and a belt. His hair was black and curly. A black ninja appeared behind him. **Koga** didn’t even turn around to talk to him. “Have you sent the message?” Koga asked, opening his eyes.

"Yes, boss."

"Good. He should be intimidated by now. He will surrender his kingdom in no time."

The black ninja disappeared.

"Hey, wait up!" said the girl, jumping from tree to tree, catching up to the guy walking. "Ace, where are you going?" asked Marianna. "You're not seriously going to the Lin Kiu Klan's hideout, are you?"

Ace turned around. "What does it look like? Of course I'm going."

"But you are no match for them." said Mari-Anne.

"And why would you say that?"

"His majesty sent some of his best hunters to fight Koga, and none have returned. Koga's ninjas have the sixth sense."

"But so do I." replied the prince. "And my sixth sense is stronger."

"You really **are** going?"

"I have to. Someone has to protect the kingdom. I won't let my home be vandalized and threatened by some ninjas who think they own the place. You can either come with me and help, or just butt out."

Mari-Anne made a grimace. "Hey, you need all the help you can get."

Ace told her that a reliable source says Koga's fortress is around this forest. And he's right. He hid behind the bushes as they observed the fortress carefully.

"There they are. Those bastards." Ace said. "I'll make them pay for causing my father so much agony."

Marianna: "We are outnumbered, prince. We should head back and report this."

Ace: "No way. This is my chance to be the hero. I want to show my father that I can do something right."

Suddenly, a needle flew at them, hitting the bushes. They were shocked, and jumped out. Ninjas surrounded them. Each ninja had a different colored costume. They were black, white, red, green, blue, orange, yellow and gray.

"Ah, welcome, my prince." said the leader. "I am Koga, leader of the Lin Kiu Klan."

Ace: "You know who I am?"

Koga: "Indeed. You are not the only one who has reliable information." He smiled.

Ace: "Don't tell me...you let your fortress be found on purpose?"

Koga: "Something like that."

The ninjas attacked, Ace and Marianna flew to the air.

Marianna used her main weapon – bow and arrows – and fired. Twang twang. The ninjas dodged. Ace drew his **Royal Sword** and slashed.

Koga fired a thunder bolt at Marianna, effectively knocking her to the ground. Ace kept on slashing, as the ninjas dodged and threw shurikens. Suddenly, one hit him from behind, and as he fell, another hit him up. The ninjas were too fast to be seen – their movements were a bunch of blurs. Ace kept on getting hit and can't retaliate. Koga made the last strike, knocking him down. Crash.

As he got up, he got hit by shurikens. "Aaaah!"

The white ninja pointed his sword at Ace's neck.

Koga: "Listen, girl, if you want to see him live, go tell the king I have his son."

Marianna: "You won't get away with this. Don't worry prince, I will get you back somehow." She blurred out of sight.

Ace: "He will never give his kingdom to you."

Koga: "Shut up."

The main group of heroes made it to the Imperial Palace - and they were at the main entrance. These two guards were guarding the door, holding spears. When the gang walked to them, the guards put their spears together, forming an X, blocking their way.

A: "Holt! Nobody enters the Imperial Palace without permission."

B: "This is forbidden territory, peasants. Leave now!"

Neb: "You have got to be kidding me. Is that any way to treat your guests?"

Faith: "Let me handle this. Palace guard, do you not recognize me?"

Tyson: "I don't blame them. You haven't been at home for a while."

A: "This is your last warning! Leave now!"

Faith leaned close to his face. "Is that any way to treat your superior?"

A looked closely. He tried to think of who she was. "Ahh! Princess Faith!"

B: "The princess has returned!"

A: "Please accept my apologies."

Faith chuckled. "It's okay."

Neb: "Sheesh. It's about time."

A: "It's just that his majesty has placed strict orders not to let anyone enter or leave his palace."

B: "These people are with you?"

Faith: "Yes. Let's go."

They walk through the front gate. The guards watched them enter.

B: "I cannot believe we did not recognize the princess. It's like she's all grown up."

A: "Indeed, that man who was with her...he is the mighty warrior who killed Vega."

B: "He was the one? Oh my God! I should've been more polite!"

Once they entered the grand room, they saw a red carpet stretched from the door to the plight of stairs. Immediately, they were welcomed.

Midas: "My daughter! Welcome back!"

Faith: "Father!"

They embraced.

Midas: "I see you've brought them with you."

Tyson: "Yes, and we are glad to see you, your highness." He bowed. Nebula, Zelfire, and Macintosh bowed.

Midas chuckled. "There is no need for such formality for you heroes." He put his hands on Tyson's shoulders.

Tyke: "We received your message, your majesty."

Midas: "Come, daughter. We have much to talk about. Are you folks hungry? I had the servants prepare us a meal. Come, let us enjoy our feast. You are guests in my palace."

[B] Title Contents

Thus, the heroes were invited to sit at the dinner table. Midas sat at the head chair, and next to him is Faith, and next her is Tyson. Nebula is across from Faith, and next to him is Zelfire and then Macintosh. Midas clapped, and the servants brought them the food. The servants removed the cover from the dishes, and Nebula gasped at the sizzling, deliciously smelling food.

Neb: "Wow...do you mean...this is for us?"

Zell: "This is too much."

Tyke: "So this is how kings live."

Midas: "This is a feast for us. Eat. What is the matter?"

Faith: "Father, no one dares eat until you have the first bite."

Midas: "Ho ho ho. Silly me." He held up his cup of wine and took a sip. "Go ahead, eat. Enjoy yourselves."

Neb already had his napkin ducked into his shirt. "Then I won't mind!" He started to dig in.

Tyke: "Nebula, where are your manners? Is that how a gentleman eats?"

Neb: "Don't worry about it, man. King Midas is our friend. He's treating us."

Midas: "Ho ho ho. Indeed. Eat. If you need more, you can have more. You can eat as much as you want."

Faith was eating politely. "Don't you think you are overdoing it, father?"

Midas: "Non-sense, my dear. This is a joyous occasion, and we must be merry. So, daughter, have you been living well?"

Faith: "Of course I have. With Tyson by my side and my good friends, I couldn't be happier."

"Good. Have you been taking care of her, young man?"

Tyson swallowed the wine. "Yes sir. Absolutely."

"Good, good. Remember, treat her well."

"Of course. That goes without saying," he replied. "Oh yeah, your majesty. About the ninja clan - they are the ones who are causing trouble, correct?"

Midas: "Yes." He seemed to be less happy. "They have caused me much distress lately. I've sent many brave warriors after him, but none of them returned. I had no one else to turn to."

Neb: "We appreciate any information you can give us. The more we know, the better it is for us."

Midas: "You will help me?"

Tyke: "Of course. We are allies, aren't we?"

Midas was touched. "You are all so kind and wonderful."

Zell: "Your highness, don't say that. We are friends, aren't we? You helped us last time, so it's natural we help you back. Our job as high-level warriors is to correct injustices. And this is an example of injustice."

Mac: "I second that. We came here for a reason."

Suddenly, Marianna came in, and she was all messed up. She looked like she got attacked by a bear or something. "Your highness..." she said, panting for breath.

Faith: "Marianna? What happened?"

"Th-They've got Prince Acelot..." and then she collapsed.

Everyone was shocked by this sudden news. They all stood up. Faith ran to help her friend. "Marianna?"

"I...couldn't stop them. Sorry, princess."

Midas was overwhelmed. Koga's sudden appearance is bad news. His son being kidnapped by Koga is super duper bad news. "No...my foolish son...why did you go alone? I told you not to go. No!"

Faith: "Father. I will get him back. Rest assured. For I am the paladin."

Things were busy in the market place. Nebula strolled along with his hands in his pants pockets, watching the people pass by him. He walked past a fruit stand, and then went back. He looked at the shiny red apples and oranges. They were like irresistible jewels, tempting him to grab them. They were saying 'eat me eat me!' to him. He bought one of them (with Almerakian money the king gave him). He took a bite. Chewed. "Mmmm...not bad." He continued walking, taking another bite.

Then he heard some sounds from the fruit store. The green and black ninjas were harassing the old lady. "Where's our protection fee, eh?" Black asked.

The old lady was on her knees and she folded her hands. "Please have mercy on me! I do not have enough money to give you now. Give me a few more days, I beg of you."

Green: "A few more days?" He kicked her. She fell against the stand that held the apples, and the apples fell on her.

Black: "If you don't pay up now we'll trash this place!"

"Wait a minute! Please reconsider! I have no money! I'm telling the truth!"

Nebula threw the bitten apple at them. Green caught it. The ninjas looked at him and approached him. Nebula stepped forward proudly and confidently.

Green: "You have a lot of nerve, boy!" He crushed the apple.

Black: "Are you one of King Midas's allies?"

"That's right. Why won't you leave that poor old lady alone?"

Green: "This is none of your business, boy."

"Here's a hint for you. Don't call me boy." Nebula drew a sword. The green ninja drew two daggers and the black ninja drew a sword. They slashed at each other. Nebula tried to stay in between to carefully guard both their attacks. They slashed and slashed but not a single drop of blood was drawn.

Suddenly, an arrow went for Black's head. He dodged it just in time. Marianna jumped down from the roof and took out a sword. She joined to help Neb. Black slashed at her and she blocked. Cling clang cling clang! Nebula slashed at Green and he jumped, avoiding it, and they jumped around and tried to hit each other. Black jumped and back flipped, then tossed a silver ball on the ground. Poof! Smoke popped up and blocked their vision. The ninjas escaped.

Neb: "Oh, Ms. Marianna? You are well?"

"Oh yes. I have ample rest. It is all thanks to Faith I can fight so quickly after becoming injured."

Neb: "Yep. I've been injured a couple of times myself. She is always willing to help me. She truly is a kind person."

"Faith? Faith?" Tyson asked, looking around the palace. And it's big. Even bigger than he remembered. All the repairs have been made, and he finally gets to see it fully functional.

"My daughter is not here." said the king.

"Oh, where is she?"

"You need not worry. For the time being, I'd like to test your strength, Spade."

"Oh? Spirit world?"

"Are you up to it?" the king asked.

"You bet." replied the confident sayan.

In the forest, the animals could hear beautiful music from a harp playing. Faith sat on a rock and played the harp naturally. Her fingers played it like she was born to do it. A bird rested on her shoulder and beavers and squirrels surrounded her. Even a deer came.

Suddenly, she stopped playing, sensing an evil presence. The animals fled. A figure approached. "Now that's music to my ears." Koga said.

"Who are you?"

"It's funny that you ask. I am Koga, ninja master, at your service.

"You are the one I heard about. What do you want?" she asked.

"What do I want? Now that is a very good question, Princess of Almerak. I just want to give your father a message. Emmm...more like a warning. My clan and I will raid the palace soon. Tell him to surrender or die!"

"Sorry. But I cannot deliver that message."

"And just why not?"

"Because you're going to die now!" she shouted. She threw a rose and he dodged.

He quickly drew a sword and attacked, and slashed her harp. It broke. She got up and summoned the Soul Sword. They stared for a moment.

"Doing your father's dirty work? He must be so lucky to have a daughter like you."

"Shut up!"

They slashed at each other. Faith, with her father's sword training and confidence in the spirit, was almost equally matched with Koga's super trained skills.

Suddenly, his fingers formed a claw and a bunch of needles shot out. She dodged them, they almost hit her head. "Huh?" she said.

He slashed and she blocked. Their blades collided. Clang! "It was a good match. But you are not my target." He jumped into the trees. "Remember my message!" the echo said.

He was gone and out of sight. Faith was deeply distressed and pissed off.

Ace was tied up against a chair. He was placed in a dark room. The ropes had a spiritual binding on them, so using the sixth sense to escape is useless. Koga came to pay him a visit.

"How are we doing, my fine prince?" he said, in his usual sarcastic tone. "Oh? What is the matter? Is a prince not used to these kind of surroundings?"

Ace: "You might as well give up. King Midas is not going to give up his kingdom for me."

"So confident, eh? But I wonder if his son will betray him?"

"I don't know what you mean."

Koga: "I've been investigating the palace - it seems that our king is not dumb. There is a spiritual barrier which only he can activate and de-activate. I cannot enter."

"Heh. Serves you right."

"But this is where you come in, Prince Acelot. I know there is another way into the castle. And you are going to tell me."

Ace: "Save your breath. I'd rather you just kill me."

Koga: "Oh, there are much worse things than death, my prince. Being a ninja master, I have tortured many people to the brink of insanity. They'd wish they died sooner. For example, I could amputate one of your arms. Or perhaps both? And with my medicine skills, I can keep you alive. You'll be a walking vegetable!"

Ace realized this psycho meant what he said. Is there any other choice?

Koga: "I **do** hope you see things my way."

[C] Title Contents

Later that night, there was a grand feast in the dining room.

King Midas stood up from his chair, raising the cup of wine. "Let us eat! Eat and drink and wash away your worries!"

Cheers from everybody.

The only guests were the heroes, of course. They sat around a large table, and it was full of good food. Midas sat at the head seat, and sitting far across from him was Macintosh. There was all kinds of goods - things that the heroes could only wish for because they were so poor. Here, on the king's table, was the best chicken, duck, rice, sushi, and other delicacies.

Two guards holding spears stood on both sides of the entrance hallway. The dining room was as big as Tyson's whole house. Behind Midas, on the wall, was a red flag with a crown on it.

Tyson ripped off the turkey leg and chewed it. He drank the wine and it tasted good, so he drank it all in one gulp. Nebula poured him some more wine. "Thanks."

Faith did not eat.

Midas: "Daughter, you did not touch your food yet."

Faith: "I am not hungry. I have no appetite." She was still thinking about her encounter with Koga earlier today. Not to mention her brother being a hostage of the ninja clan.

Marianna: "Faith, don't you want to eat?"

Faith: "How can you possibly have an appetite? My brother is still captured."

Marianna: "I know. I am worried too. But everyone here is trying their best to be happy. Besides, we can't rescue Prince Acelot on an empty stomach, right?"

Tyson: "That's right. Food gives you strength. You can't without food in your stomach."

Seconds later, something went wrong. Midas gasped and grabbed his chest. He collapsed on the table. Faith quickly got to him. "Father? Father?"

The same thing happened to Tyson. He grabbed his chest and groaned. Marianna got up in reaction. The next victim was Macintosh.

"What's happening to me..." Mac yelled.

Nebula: "What in the heck is going on?"

Faith: "The food...it's poisoned!"

Marianna: "That means we're all poisoned!" She dipped a thin needle into the meat. "Nothing's wrong with this..." Then she tried the wine. "It's the wine!"

Neb: "Everybody drank it but us."

Faith: "Oh no!"

After a while, Marianna found the cause of the poison. "It's caused by a powder from a poisonous mushroom." she declared.

Neb: "Mushroom?"

Marianna: "From a **Black Mushroom**. It's one of the deadliest mushrooms in the world. And it is very rare. The person who did this must be no ordinary person..."

"It's obvious Koga is behind this. Who else can it be?" Faith said, pulling the blanket up to Tyson's shoulders. He was asleep but his face showed pain.

Neb: "My question is...how did he manage to sneak this into the palace?"

Faith: "It is impossible. The palace is protected by a spiritual barrier. No intruders can enter. Unless..."

Neb: "Unless what?"

Zell: "That is not important. How do we help them?"

Marianna: "Simple. Find the antidote."

Zell: "Which is..."

Mari: "The antidote is a very rare herb found in only a few parts of the world."

Faith: "What happens if they don't get cured?"

Mari: "They suffer a horrible death. We don't have much time."

Zell: "Fine. You three go. I'll stay and watch over them. I might as well investigate the chefs, to see if they know anything."

Neb: "Alright. Watch them well."

"I will." Zell replied with a smile.

So the three warriors set out. Faith was glad she didn't drink any wine. The thought of Tyson's painful face, his moans of pain worried her much. But do not fear,

the cure is near. At the top of the mountain was a green hill. They walked up there to the top of the hill, and that was where the herb would be found, according to Marianna's knowledge. There was a bunch of trees over there, and they went there.

"Marianna, look!" Fay said excitedly, pointing to the yellow flowers. "Is that it?"

"Yes. That's the one." she answered.

"Good." Neb said.

Marianna bent down and looked at the herbs. "Ahhh, this is it indeed." She pulled them out.

"We might need some more. Many of them are infected."

"You're right." Marianna said, picking up some more. "This should be enough." She stood up, then all three of them froze.

Seconds passed by. They did not say anything. Because they knew what was on each of their minds.

Nebula: "Some one's watching us."

Fay: "One of Koga's ninjas, most likely."

Marianna: "He is in those trees somewhere."

They all looked in that direction. Nebula gathered energy, then focused on his target. He carefully sensed where the spy was, and aimed. Bam! He fired an energy ball. A tree blew up. A ninja dressed in red jumped down and confronted them. Behind them, another ninja showed up. He was dressed in gray.

Nebula: "So, they wanna play."

Red: "Allies of King Midas, you will go no further."

Gray: "Our master Koga sent us instructions to kill you."

Nebula: "You need instructions on how to kill us? That's pretty sad."

Fay: "Marianna, go back to the palace. We can take it from here."

"Sure." She ran down the hill.

Gray: "We of the Lin Kiu Klan do not like to be mocked."

Neb: "Oh that's too bad. Cuz you're going to hate being killed."

The two ninjas landed in front of her. Nebula and Fay slid down and attacked.

Marianna seized the chance and got the hell outta there. She just wished she could've helped. After all, she's the only one good with arrows. But after all, the lives of five depended on her. If not treated soon, the poison would spread throughout their bodies and who knows what will happen next.

Nebula dodged a row of shurikens, and there's still more. He back flips away. Twang! More shurikens. He jumps and slashes at the red ninja, who dodged.

Gray threw a shuriken at Faith, and she jumped away. The shuriken blew up.

Faith: (Exploding shurikens?)

Gray jumped and threw three of them. Whoosh. Faith powered up the Soul Sword, and lets out a mighty swing, blowing the shurikens away.

Red: "They are not simple at all."

Gray: "Koga was right, we need to take drastic measures." The two ninjas powered up, and their auras were the same as their clothing colors. They floated up and fired beams. Nebula and Faith blurred. Neb kicked Red away, and slashed Gray. Gray fell down. Faith stuck her sword to the ground, and used the Ground Crusher attack. The energy wave blew up the ground, and knocked Gray upwards, to which Nebula finished him off with a beam. Bam.

Red got nervous. "This cannot be." He throws a shuriken and flies away. Nebula dodged it, then fired a beam. Faith's vine whip caught his leg, and since he can't escape, the beam hits him. Kabam!

Tyson moaned. His eyes opened. He felt very dizzy.

"Look. It's working." Marianna said happily. She and Nebula were next to the bed.

"Uhhh...what..."

"You were poisoned, dude. But luckily, Marianna gave you the antidote. You should be fine."

"Yeah, that makes sense. What about the others?" Tyson asked.

"They will be fine too. Just glad we made it here fast enough." Mari said.

"What about Faith?"

"She's training." Mari answered. "Get some rest."

Tyson shut his eye and slept for the next few hours. Faith went to check up on him once, and she's glad he's cured. Now that thing have calmed down, she needed some time alone.

Faith was taking a bath in the lake. It was so peaceful and calm. Just the silence and tranquility she needed. So much has happened already. She really needed a break from this craziness.

Craziness indeed. Faith always thought about visiting home, but never had the means to do so. Macintosh is still working on the formula to travel through dimensions. An suddenly, a pod comes out of nowhere (literally) and one of her soldiers come out, almost dying. And he delivers some bad news. She returns home, hoping for some peace, but there's already a lot going on. Her brother is kidnapped. Great. Koga, a powerful warrior, has his eyes set on Almerak. Great. Somehow, he poisoned everyone. Splendid. Then they have to go get the antidote. Wonderful. What else can go wrong?

She sensed some one close by. She quickly got out and put on her clothes. Two ninjas appeared and grabbed her arms. She struggled and they held her tightly. "Let go! Let me go!"

"Ha ha ha ha ha! Poor little princess all by herself. And no one is around to protect her. Awwwww!" laughed Koga as he approached.

"Koga!"

"We meet again. Unfortunately, this will be our last time."

"Koga you won't get away with this!"

"Ha ha ha ha. You should've been more careful. The spiritual barrier doesn't work if you know the counter-spell. Ha ha ha ha." He turned around and walked. "Finish her off." he instructed the ninjas.

Blue and Orange said: "Yes master!"

Fay: "Wait a minute...don't do this. You don't know what you're doing."

They took her to the woods and pushed her down.

"Please reconsider."

Blue: "We have to obey our master's orders. No matter what you say now, you will die."

Fay: "You would kill a lady?"

Suddenly, Sabre, the tiger, jumped out from the bushes and attacked Blue. "What the?! Ugh!"

Faith kicked Orange away, and she summoned the Soul Swords and slashed at him. Thanks to his quick reflexes, he dodged.

Faith: "Thanks, Sabre. I owe you one. Now go. I can take it from here."

Blue took out a rod and Orange took out a sword. She was in between them and they attacked her. She blocked all their attacks, then back flipped to a safer distance.

The ninjas got ready, then charged. Faith charged forward. Orange jumped up into the air. Faith looked up, then looked down. One was in the air and one was on ground. She had to think fast...within nano seconds she made a decision and jumped

into the air. She stabbed Orange and he shrieked. The sword went into his stomach and out his back. Then they fell. Faith landed on her feet, and she pulled the sword out of his stomach. Blue turned around and charged. Faith made a flying kick and kicked him against a tree. She fired the Mega Beam and Blue got hit and turned to dust.

Faith couldn't stand up anymore, and fell. Tyson hurried to the scene. "Princess? Are you alright?"

"Koga is going to attack soon...go..."

"I gotta get you back inside."

"No, it's useless. He has figured out how to break the spiritual barrier. He is going to attack palace. Just go. Forget me about me."

"I can't leave you here." he said.

"Just go!" she yelled.

"Alright." Tyke said reluctantly. He ran back to the others.

[D] Title Contents

The band of heroes flew to the energy signal.

Mari: "Where is Tyson? And Faith is missing too."

Neb: "Forget him. We can do this with or without him."

Zell: "Don't get overconfident, Nebula."

Neb: "We don't always have to rely on him, you know?"

The heroes saw the ninja clan already there, standing on the rocks. Koga was at the top rock. The two groups of warriors stared at each other.

Koga: "Hmph. So these are the vagabonds his majesty has hired? What a joke."

Neb: "Watch your mouth, ninja breath. We protect the king because we're his friends, unlike you, who have no friends."

Koga: "My friend is my fist. Would you like to meet him?"

Suddenly, Tyson showed up. "Did I miss anything?"

Mac: "Nope. Just in time."

Koga: "It is time to end this. Destroy them all!"

All the ninjas blurred, then the heroes blurred. Only Tyson and Koga were left. They blurred and reappeared on the rocks near the water. It was night time. Lightning and thunder struck. The water was very unstable. Tyson stood on a rock on the water, and Koga was on a piece of land a littler higher than him.

Koga: "I presume you are their leader?"

Tyson: "Yes I am. I've heard all about you, ninja master Koga. In fact, I'd like to repay you for that delicious, poisonous food."

Koga: "Heh. My compliments. I'll make sure King Midas receives your corpse!"

They flew and hit on the elbows. Wham! Energy waves were released. They hit each other's fists and the punching sounds echoed throughout the area, and energy waves were released from every hit. Tyson punched, Koga dodged and elbowed his stomach. Then he pushed Tyson and they descended at super high speed. Koga stopped descending, and Tyson fell into the rocks. Crash! A puff of dust appeared.

Marianna shot arrows at the black ninja. He dodged, running with agility, and the arrows hit the rocks. He jumped and drew a sword and slashed, Marianna blocked with her bow. It almost broke. She pushed him away and shot an arrow. The black ninja chopped the arrow in half with his sword. Whack!

Right next to them, Nebula and the white ninja attacked with their swords. They slashed and dodged, but neither was winning.

Close by, Zelfire dodged a bunch of shurikens. The yellow ninja jumped and threw two and three at a time. Boom. Zell fired a ball, and Yellow smashed it into bits. He threw shurikens forward, and Zell blurred, appeared in front of him, and kicked him in the head - knocking him to the side. Wham.

Macintosh fired a shockwave at Green, and his agility allowed him to dodge all of them. "C'mon, die!" Mac yelled. He kept on firing, and Green kept on jumping around.

Lightning flared. The sky was getting darker. Koga smiled and crossed his arms. A bunch of energy balls came from the rocks and Koga dodged them and almost got hit. Tyson popped out and flew at him. He punched Koga's face and kicked his stomach. Koga elbowed his foot and punched his stomach. Tyke was sent backwards and he regained control of himself, and stopped. Koga fired a stream of poison needles and Tyke dodged.

Now he's worried. (What were those? Poison needles?)

Koga's fingers made a claw, and shot out five more needles, Tyson dodged, and the needles hit the rock behind him. And he fired more. Twang!

Tyson formed a shield, but the needles went through it and one hit his shoulder.

Koga: "It's useless!"

"Ugh, damn."

Koga fired some more, and Tyson flew away, and one hit him in the thigh.

"Ugh!"

"I do hope you enjoyed the Black Mushroom poison. Because you just got it again."

"Bastard."

Koga charged forward and punched Tyke's stomach. Wham! It was a good one. Then Koga punched again even harder. Wham. Tyke was knocked against a boulder, and it cracked. It was a critical hit, and Tyke had the wind knocked out of him. "Ugh!!" He stood there, hunched over, grabbing his stomach.

"Ha ha ha ha!" laughed the ninja master.

Tyson's hand grabbed the dirt tightly. His hand formed a fist and squeezed the dirt.

Kablam. White was knocked down by Nebula. He was losing, whereas the other ninjas were neither winning nor losing. White decided it's time to use **it**. The gem on his head glowed, and he powered up. Yellow, Black, and Green also powered up, and their gems glowed.

Neb: "The hell is this?"

White's power increased drastically, as floated up due to his aura. Nebula winced from the excess energy. The other heroes were equally as shocked.

The ninjas attacked – and gave the heroes a good beating. Tyson sensed everything that's happening.

Zell got hit by a beam and ended up inside a rock. Macintosh was beaten up, and lay on the floor. Nebula got hit in the air, and fell.

Marianna shot her Celestial Arrow, Black fired a beam and destroyed it. He swoops down and kicks, breaking her bow. Crack. He kicked Marianna into the water. Splash.

Koga sensed what's happening. "It looks like your friends lost to my ninjas. That's too bad, really. I was hoping they'd last a little longer."

Tyson was really pissed off. Koga had hurt everybody he loved and caused so much suffering to the Kingdom of Almerak. Everyone's spirit signal was decreasing. And he thought about Faith – and how she was roughed up in the forest – and that look on her face when she told him to go without her. This is unforgiveable.

"But don't worry. I'll be sure to put flowers on their grave."

The hero got up, his face still facing the floor. Koga was surprised at his energy output. It was growing exponentially. Bright white and golden aura waves were released. Tyson's hair turned to gold, and he stared at Koga dead in the eyes.

[Close-up – Tyson].

"Impossible!" said the clan leader. "This does not mean anything!"

Tyson's energy calmed down, and retracted. But his gold hair still shines. He is now the super sayan.

Koga: (Is this what Overlord was trying to warn me about? Grrr.)

"I'll make sure you leave this kingdom alone, Koga."

The ninja master charged forward in an instant. Tyson fired beams, he dodged them, and punched the sayan in the face. Pow. It was a good one – or is it? Tyson's head may have turned, but he did not show any signs of pain. He still had the same look in his eyes. Koga got angry and punched, and Tyson grabbed his fist. He proceeded to dive his fist into Koga's stomach. Wham, then kicked him away. The ninja master landed in a crouch.

"You bastard. No one makes a fool of me."

"You make a fool of yourself."

Suddenly, pow! Koga didn't know what hit him. The sayan was so fast he couldn't be seen. He followed up with a punch to the face, effectively throwing his opponent against the boulder.

Nebula stood up, despite the pain on his body. "Ugh...uhhh."

White: "You are very stubborn, warrior. It would be a waste to kill you."

Midas came to the scene, undetected by others. "I cannot just sit in my castle while these warriors are fighting with their lives. This is my kingdom." He started to chant an incantation spell. Because these ninjas were part demon, they reacted with pain. White grabbed his head in agony. With this chance, Nebula drew his sword, White drew his sword, and they slashed. Blood dripped from his stomach, and White collapsed. Thud.

Midas kept on chanting. Green groaned in pain. He fired a beam at Midas, and Marianna shouts "Watch out, king!" Kaboom. Midas was blown into the water. Splash. Green turned around, and saw the Celestial Arrow coming. It's too late – squirt! It hit him in the chest, and he fell.

Zelfire used the Spirit Blast, incinerating Black. Marianna finished off Yellow, the last ninja.

As the fights were going on, Faith wandered about in the forest. She was injured, so she walked limply and she was kind of directionless. But her sixth sense directed her to this place. In front of her is Koga's fortress. Bingo. Ace is inside. Definitely.

So she went inside. She gasped as she saw Ace bleeding. "Brother..."

"Faith?" he said weakly. "Is that you?"

"Yes...it's me...brother."

It's been a while since they've seen each other. Ace ran away when he was just ten years old, leaving his sister and father, who was corrupt at the time. Ten years later, they finally reunited in the charred remains of the Imperial Palace. But they never got the time to talk and spend time like a brother and sister should. After Vega's death, Faith decided to stay in the other dimension with her true love – Tyson. And at this very moment, they saw each other again, and both of them cried.

Faith untied him and healed him.

"It looks like your friends lose. You're next." the super sayan said.

Koga fought the best he could, but he couldn't keep up. He shot a thunderbolt, Tyson flew around it, and kicked him. Wham.

The clan leader grasped for breath. He was messed up all over. But he laughed like he had won. Tyson was curious as to why. Koga folded his hands, extended his forefingers and chanted a spell. His opponent stood there, watching him, wondering what will come next.

On the spot where the Green ninja had died there was a green jewel. It floated up and away. Then a yellow jewel flew towards Koga, then a red one. All the ninjas had a colored jewel on their forehead. Now, all the dead ninjas' jewels were being summoned back to Koga. They were absorbed into Koga's chest and his body glowed. He laughed sinisterly as his power increased.

Tyson: "Uhhh! His power is amazing!"

Lightning flared.

Koga fired an energy ball and Tyson dodged. Kaboom! The ball hit the rocks and blew it up. They pounded one another with their fists and didn't hold back one bit.

Bruises were on Koga's face, and his mouth was bleeding. Tyson had a cut on his forehead, some bruises on his cheeks and arms, and a scratch on his chin.

Koga fired a bunch of beams at Tyson and they exploded when they touched him. Koga thought he had hit him and smiled, but Tyson charged out of the explosions and punched his chin. Tyson fired a golden beam and Koga smashed it with his fist, and it shattered into several energy balls, and they hit the water and splashed.

"Enough. I will have Almerak no matter what!" shouted the clan leader. "You are done for!" He shot a bunch of needles forward, the sayan merely swings his arm, and blew them up.

The titanic forces, both charged up and ready to kill, continue to hit each other crazily. Bam. Bam. Their hits echoed in the air. Koga fired a thunderbolt, Tyson disappeared in a flash, and reappeared above.

Koga fired a bunch of energy meteors...Tyson fired the Wrath Beam - and it destroyed all the meteors and hit Koga. In a state of shock, he never would've guessed he'd lose to this guy. (Is this why...Vega got killed? By him?) Kaboom!

Nothing was left of him. Tyson stood on the shore, motionless. Lightning and thunder flared and the water splashed. Now everything was safe and sound. "It's over." he said.

Faith put Ace's arm over her shoulder, as she helped him walk. "Come on brother, let's go home."

"Yeah." And they walked towards the shining sun.

End.

The Underground Prison.

Contents

[A] - The Conspiracy

[B] - The Prisoners

[C] - Infiltrate

It was very dark outside. The moon was full and wolves howled. Crickets chirped. In the forest road, there was a deep pit. A hand reached out from the pit. Then a person came out. He was dressed in ragged clothes with torn holes all over. His expression was of fear and desperation. They were out to get him. He ran like hell. Several soldiers crawled from the pit and ran after him. He looked back, saw them catching up. He ran faster and was very tired. But he'd rather run to death than go back to **that place**. Unlucky as he was, he tripped over something. He didn't know what it was- a twig or a rock or something else. He got up and ran. One soldier stood still and shot him. Bang! The bullet hit his leg. He fell as blood oozed out. "No! No!" he yelled madly. The soldiers surrounded him.

He thought they were going to kill him. In fact, he'd rather they do that. It was better than taking him back to **that place**. **That place** underground was a terror beyond hell to him. It was never ending torture. He tried to escape, and they were going to punish him. Freedom and hope is lost for good.

All this time, his best friend had been watching the scene behind a tree. He stood there fearfully and sweated. He really wanted to save his friend, but this was not a time to be brave and stupid. He had to get help.

He left the woods and found a house in the middle of an open area. He decided to take refuge there, if the owners would let him. I'm sure they'd understand. He went closer and closer. Knock knock.

Faith came down the stairs, yawning. She heard a knocking sound. She opened the door. "Who's there?"

She was surprised to see some one dressed like a beggar at her door. He looked worse than a beggar. He had brown pants and a white shirt with dirt. His sleeves looked like they've been ripped off. He had a shaved moustache and beard, his forehead was greasy, his hair was screwed up, and he had friendly eyes.

"...Can I help you, mister?"

He did the 'ah-hem' thing. "Excuse me, ma'am, may I come in?"

He seemed very polite. "Sure." So she let him in.

Inside, he sat by the dinner table with anxiety. Faith went upstairs, then came back down, holding a blue shirt and pants, and a candle on another hand. "Here. You can borrow my boyfriend's clothes."

"Thank you."

She sat across from him, putting the candle on the table. The whole room was dark except for the candle.

"Thank you so much for your hospitality." he said gratefully.

"Shhh!" she said, putting a finger on her lips. "You'll wake up my boyfriend!"

"Oh sorry." he said in a lower tone. "Thank you."

"You're welcome. Like, how did you come across from here?"

"I escaped from prison."

Faith gasped. "You're a criminal?"

"No, not that kind of prison. This prison is worse than hell, I swear it. Everybody there is innocent." He was gazing at the table.

"What kind of prison is that?"

"The soldiers...they kidnap people and bring them there."

"Are you serious?"

"Do I sound like I'm joking?"

She was dumbfounded. "That's horrible!"

"Tell me about it. I've been there for weeks! It was worse than hell. I really mean that. Do you know how I got here?"

She turned her head.

He began the story. "It all started like any other day. I was hurrying along to get to work, only to realize that my best friend was missing. It wasn't like him to miss work. He was the hard working and honest type, you know. So I thought he was sick or something had come up. I called him and nobody answered. That was strange. I never thought he'd be missing. So a week passed and I haven't heard a word from him yet. I was getting worried. I wandered along the streets in the dark, not knowing what to do. All of a sudden these two guys – dressed like soldiers – attacked me from behind. I didn't put up much of a fight. I lost consciousness and when I woke up, I found myself in a strange place. A place underground. A prison. It was **that place**. There, I met my best friend. He was kidnapped here also."

"Who is responsible for this?" she asked.

"A group of soldiers. I don't know who their leader is."

"What do they want?"

"They want us to find something in the ground. My best friend and I are not the only ones kidnapped. There are at least hundreds of others there, all innocent and take away from their homes. From their lives. They force us to work and dig...we don't know what they want. They treat us like slaves. No, they treat us like animals."

Faith listened to his story with interest. She listened to every word.

Upstairs, Tyson turned and moaned in his sleep.

"They whip us, they beat us, they give us little food and water and barely any time to rest, and they expect us to work like dogs! They are true bastards! My best friend and I could no longer stand that place. So we carefully planned an escape. It was risky, but we had to go through with it, for we would rather die than spend another day in **that place**. The night we'd escape was tonight. We managed to find an opening to the surface world. How glad we were! We ran for our lives, the soldiers were right behind us. They captured my friend and I was lucky enough to escape. I just wish I could have helped him. But...I just hid behind a tree like a coward!"

"Don't blame yourself over that. You couldn't have helped him. They are armed soldiers and you have no weapons."

"Well, there is not much more to say. After he was captured again, I wandered my way here. I'd like to thank you with all my heart for your hospitality. You have no idea what it means to me. Now that you know about this, I ask you one favor."

"What is it?" she asked.

"Please, tell everybody you know about this prison of hell. Spread the word! Let the people know about it! For that is the only thing I can think of to help my friend and all the other slaves."

"No problem."

He took out a map. "The pit that leads to the prison is not far from your house. This map will show the exact coordinates." She took the map. "I have to go now," he said, getting up.

"Where you going?"

"I have to hide. They are probably looking for me. I will go to the nearest city and spread the news. I'll tell the cops, the military, the mayor! Anybody I can think of! Only I hope they will believe me. Oh, and by the way, thanks for the clothes."

"You're welcome. And don't worry. I'll help."

He smiled, and then went out the door.

The soldiers took the runaway slave to a white room. There was nothing in it, except for a platform in the middle. Around the platform were two columns. Attached to the columns were two glowing balls on a bar. One was on each side, leaving an empty space in the middle.

"Where are you taking me? Aren't you taking me to the cell room?" the prisoner asked.

Zossimov: "Ha! Not this time, I'm afraid. You've been quite the disobedient one."

"Where are you taking me?" he asked nervously.

Soldier #642: "You'll see."

Soldier #254: "Hmmm. I'd fear for my life if I were you."

The soldiers made him bow down in the white room. The balls started glowing and emitting a strange light. Electric currents appeared, and a whirlpool thing formed in the middle of the two balls.

Everybody except Zossimov was afraid. The whirlpool transformed into a big face. It was like a computer generated face, ghost like, horrifying, and angry.

The prisoner was in total fear. "Oh my God...what are you?!"

Zossimov: "My lord."

"So, we have another rebellious one?" the face said in an echoed voice.

"Yes. He has constantly disobeyed orders and tried to escape."

"Then we do not need him, now do we?" The face vanished. The whirlpool came back. A giant hand came out from it and went for the prisoner. The soldiers stepped aside, not wanting to touch it. The prisoner crawled back. "No please no! Noooo!" Then the hand grabbed him. The hand went back into the whirlpool with the prisoner.

In the morning, Fay thought about what just happened last night. Yes, she was going to tell everybody about "that place" but then she changed her mind. As she washed the dishes in her apron, she logically gathered her thoughts. (Should I tell Tyson about this? No...this is my chance to prove myself! I can finally do something right for once.) she thought. She wiped a dish with the sponge and put it on the pile. (This time I can be the hero. I can prove that I'm not useless.) She turned off the faucet. She washed her hands and took off her apron.

This is the plan: she'd go down to the underground prison and free the slaves, beat the bad guys and save the day. She was confident, backed by superior training and faith in the Great Spirit.

Knock knock. She opened the door. There were two soldiers with rifles. "Can I help you?"

Soldier A: "Greetings, ma'am."

Soldier B: "May we come in?"

"Sure. Everyone is welcome here." she replied politely.

They came in.

A: "Last night, about one o'clock AM, a convict has escaped from the federal prison. We believe he has come to this area."

B: "Have you met anyone suspicious last night?"

Fay: "Ummm...no." She didn't know she was a good liar.

A: "Are you sure? This person is a criminal. If he told you anything--"

Fay: "I've never met anyone. I was asleep with my boyfriend the whole night."

B: "Sorry to bother you."

"It's okay."

They left and Faith was relieved. She didn't know how much lying she could keep up.

Tyson came downstairs. "Faith? Who the heck were those guys?"

"Uhhh...nobody."

"Nobody? Soldiers don't just come to our house for no reason."

"I don't know what they wanted." she said. Another lie. And the guilt piles up.

"Alright, whatever." he said.

Going upstairs, Tyson noticed something in his garbage can. Bandages. Bloody bandages. "What the heck?" he asked himself. Something's up.

Faith came in and sat on the bed, and Tyson said: "Faith, if there is anything wrong, you can tell me."

"Huh? Wrong? Nothing's wrong..."

"What's this?" he asked, showing the bandages.

Faith covered her mouth with her hand. She forgot about those. "Ummm..."

"Were you hiding someone last night? I thought I heard some sounds."

"I..."

"And those soldiers this morning...what the hell is going on? What are you hiding from me, Faith?"

"I..."

"Faith, if someone has been in my house, I need to know."

And she couldn't handle it anymore, and broke down. Tears drip down her eyes. "I...I'm sorry, Tyson."

He didn't intend to make her cry.

"*Sob* I'm sorry. *Sob* I didn't mean to. *Sob* He was a stranger, but he was injured, and he needed help, and I...*sob* "

Tyke: "Faith, it's okay. I'm not mad at you. It's okay to help people. I never said you can't." He grabbed her shoulders, assuring her that it's okay.

"You're...not mad?" she asked with her tear-filled eyes.

"No. Kindness is never a bad thing."

"It will never happen again, I swear. I'm sorry."

And he kissed her on the lips. As they were making out, Tyson's hand touched her thigh and went into the skirt. And they lay down and kissed. And before they knew it, they were both naked and doing it under the covers.

After they were done, Tyson had to go to work. And he's pretty late. He put his clothes on and flew out the window. Faith slept tired on the bed, naked, under a pink blanket. She was in pain, and sweating heavily due to a bad dream.

The dream consisted of her conversation with the runaway prisoner she met that night. All the things he told her disturbed her much. She woke up and stayed in bed for a while.

After much thinking, Faith ultimately decided to go by herself.

She took the map with her (the map the escapee gave her), going into the woods. She studied the map carefully. There was a spot marked "X" which was the entrance to the underground.

At last, she found it. It was in the middle of an open area. There were no attempts to hide it. Even a blind man could've found it...and fall in it. Here it is, she thought. She looked down the pit. It was pitch black and nothing could be seen. It was very quiet. Suddenly, Faith had second thoughts about going down there. It's so dark and creepy, who knows what can be down there? She pushed away her fears and jumped down.

It was deeper than she thought. She landed in a crouch form with one hand on the ground. She looked around. It was like a cave. Behind her was a dead end. In front was a dark hallway with a few lights on the ceiling. It leads two ways, left and right. She decided to go left. Left it is. She ran and ran. Nothing but the echo sounds of her

feet was heard.

Just then, she heard two men chatting. Soldiers came from the front; she quickly hid behind the wall. The two soldiers chatted casually, and Faith watched them pass by. When they were gone, she came out and continued running. Somebody saw her from behind and shouted, "Hey you!"

She turned around, knowing she's caught. "Uh oh."

"Hold it right there!" He fired. Bang bang. She ran away, then turned right. The soldier ran after her, and when he turned right she attacked him.

Two others were coming after her. She ran into a dead end. Uh oh, better think fast.

A: "What are you doing here?!"

B pointed his gun at her. "How did you find this place?"

Faith acted like she was really scared. "Ummm...officers...please excuse me..." She looked down. "I'm kinda lost."

A : "Lost?"

"You see, I was walking along the forest and suddenly I stepped into this big hole in the middle and I ended up down here. I'm not intruding, honestly."

B: "So...you didn't see anything?"

"No. Mr. officer, can you help me get back to the surface?"

B: "So, you're lost, eh?" He turned to his partner. "Are you thinking what I'm thinking?"

A : "I think I am."

They went closer to her. She was getting nervous. "Umm...can you h-help me?"

B : "Yeah, we sure can help you." He smiled with an evil look.

He grabbed her arm.

"Let go!"

They tried to suppress her and she kicked him in the guts. Then she punched the other guy's face. She kicked his chest and he fell. They were both down, and drew their guns. She jumped just before they fired, and they shot each other. Bang!

Faith continued traveling and finally found the slaves. She hid behind the wall and spied on them. In that area she estimated there were about 40 - 60 slaves working. They had shovels and diggers, digging the ground. All of them were in ragged clothes. They were normal, everyday people forced into this place to do tough labor. Their faces were dirty and they looked tired. Faith felt bad for them. There were soldiers watching them, holding whips. At each entrance there was a robot guarding it. This place was well-secured, Faith noticed. On the ground was a railroad track.

One of the woman prisoners fell.

"Get back to work!" the soldier said, whipping her. Whip!

"Please...I'm hungry and tired."

Soldier C: "This is not the time to be getting lazy! Now get up and get back to work!"

"I can't do it anymore...at least let me rest for a few minutes...please, sir."

Whip! "You have got to be kidding? Where do you think you are?! You will work every single second we tell you to work." He was about to whip her again.

A man got in between them. "Stop! Can't you see she's in no condition to work?!"

C: "This is none of your business, prisoner. You get back to work."

The man was angry. "Don't you have a heart?"

C: "Yes, in fact, we do. We feed you and give you water. You work, and in return, we don't kill you."

"You people are nothing but sick bastards!"

C: "What was that?" He whipped the man. Whip!

"Aahhh!"

The woman screamed. "Are you alright?!"

Watching all this, Faith wanted to help. But interfering now would be too risky. If she did so, all the soldiers and guard robots would slaughter her. She had to be smart and careful. No mistakes can be afforded.

C: "This is your last warning. Get back to work now!"

He was about to whip them, then a familiar woman intervened. "Stop!"

C: "Huh?"

It was Lisa. Faith was shocked. Lisa had been captured as well? Oh man, this underground cult, or whatever it is has gone too far. They're kidnapping innocent people and turning them into slaves. Now, one of her friends is a victim of this madness. These people are going to pay big time.

Lisa: "Don't you know any shame? Can't you see these people can't defend themselves? Can't you at least let them rest?"

C: "Woman, you've got a lot of nerve."

Lisa: "Look who's talking!"

"What?" He was ready to whip.

"You take us away from our homes and treat us like dogs! This is the biggest crime of humanity!"

"Hehe, consider yourselves unfortunate. What can I say?"

Faith saw on her right a bunch of boulders and deformed rock. She crawled on them, going to a higher level.

Lees: "I'll tell you what! I know someone from the surface who can beat all of you with one hand tied behind his back, and I mean it! I know some very powerful people. Touch me and they'll never forgive you. You'll regret it."

A bunch of soldiers laughed.

Lees: "Laugh all you want! You'll see!"

Another soldier intervened, touching his shoulder. "C'mon. Don't get angry over them. It's not worth it."

C: "Hmm. You're right. These disgraceful vermin aren't worth my time." He gave them a nasty look and the soldiers walked away.

The man and the woman on the floor were glad they left.

Lisa: "Are you alright?"

"I'm fine." answered the ragged woman. But upon closer look, she was more like a girl. "My name is **Penelope**. And you?"

"I'm Lisa."

"And my name is **Lao**."

"Nice to meet you." Lisa and Lao shook hands.

They continued digging.

Penelope: "That was pretty brave of you. I don't think if I was you I'd ever be able to stand up to that creep like that."

Lao: "She's got a point. You've got guts, little missy."

Lisa: "Thanks. Maybe it's because I know many brave people. I'm not afraid of these creeps."

Lao: "If everybody here is like you, then maybe we can start a rebellion."

Penelope: "That's not smart, uncle Lao. Why, I heard someone tried to escape last night, and the soldiers caught him."

Lees: "And then?"

"And he was brought back here, but never seen again."

Silence.

Lees: "Ha! Not to worry. I know someone who can get us out."

Lao: "Really? You wasn't just bluffin'?"

Lees: "It's the truth. His name is Tyson Spade. He and his brother and his uncle and my cousin are an impeccable team. I'll let you in on a little secret. Those four are not ordinary people, if you get my drift. They have...the sixth sense."

Lao: "Wow...incredible."

Penelope: "Oh that's wonderful! We still have hope. But do they know you are here?"

Lees: "See...that's the problem. They don't. But eventually they'll figure out I'm missing. I just hope they can find this place. Once they do, they'll free us."

Lao: "Sounds good. Finally, some good news for once."

They continued working. Lees heard a low, strange sound. "Psss..." Faith whispered. She was hiding in a niche in the wall, unseen by anybody. Lisa went to that direction. She was about to gasp, then Faith said "Shhhhh!" and put a finger on her lips.

"It's really you! You've found this place!" Lees whispered.

"Don't worry, Lees. I'll go get you outta here."

"Oh thank goodness. I thought you guys would never come. Where are the others?"

"I'm the only one here."

Lisa was surprised. "You're by yourself? Are you nuts?"

Faith was silent.

"Tell the others! Hurry!"

"Alright, I will. Wait for me."

Lees smiled. Faith grabbed the Vine Whip, which was attached to the ceiling, and pulled herself up.

[B] Title Contents

Faith had changed her mind. All those innocent lives were in her hands, and if she screws up, then everything will be over. It's better to play it safe. She had to tell Tyson and the others.

She tried to find her way back to the hole, but this place was like a maze. It looked the same everywhere. "No...I'm lost." She was really worried now.

A soldier spotted her. "Hey you! Freeze!"

She didn't look behind, she ran. The soldier fired. Bang bang! He missed. Then a bunch of soldiers were chasing her. Suddenly, soldiers were in front of her. She was surrounded. She threw a rose at them and smoke covered them. They coughed. Faith jumped into the smoke and attacked the soldiers. The soldiers from behind started shooting. Lasers fired. Bang bang! Faith ran into them and attacked. Whack! Kapow!

Metallic bots showed up. Two of them flew at her, and she fought them. She dodged their punches and punched back. She was being pushed back. The metallic bot punched her stomach and she groaned. She kicked its head, and slammed it into a wall. The second bot fired a laser at her. She dodged. She fired an energy ball and blew it up. A metallic bot came from behind and whacked her. She was knocked senseless. It took her a few seconds to recover. The robot grabbed her and she elbowed it and kicked it down. She was injured and was desperate to escape. Her clothes were a mess.

Zossimov appeared and shot her. The laser hit her shoulder and she screamed. She jumped and he fired, and hit her leg. She fell. He continued firing and hit her knees and her chest.

"Ahhh! Ahhh!"

Zossimov : "Hahahahaha! Nobody escapes my prison!" Bang! He fired at her shoulder.

Faith collapsed from the pain. Two soldiers came and lifted her up, securing her

arms. Zossimov grabbed her chin. "Well, what do we have here? An intruder? You've come down here, but you will never get back to the surface. I'll make you my personal slave! Ha ha ha ha!"

Faith yelled and kicked the gun off his hand. She got free from the soldiers and hit them. As much as it hurt her knees, she went for the hole. It was just in front of her. Only a little bit to go. She couldn't run, and she walked like a drunken person. Zossimov picked up his gun. Faith was slowly making her way there, so he took his time and aimed. Bang! Her back was hit. Faith screamed. Bang! Her leg was hit. She screamed and collapsed. On the ground, she crawled painfully. Her hand reached for the light at the end of the tunnel, and she was so desperate. So close, yet so far away. Bang! She screamed and fainted.

Tyson came home, surprised to find Faith not there. "Fay?" he called. "Fay?" No answer. She must have gone somewhere. He opened his closet door. "One of my outfits is missing." Where did it go? Did Faith take it? And what did she do with it?

He decided to not think about it, knowing Faith would eventually show up.

Tyke met the other guys in their usual spot in Harmony Park. They began talking about the usual stuff, and then Tyke mentioned Faith went somewhere without telling him. Then Neb mentioned Lisa has been gone for a while.

Tyke: "Lisa too?"

Neb: "Yep. I haven't heard from her in days."

Mac: "She probably went on vacation. You know her."

Neb: "Probably."

Zell: "Don't worry about it too much. It's probably nothing."

Tyke: "Yeah. Women tend to disappear, but they always come back."

Zossimov went to inspect the prisoners. They were working miserably as usual. He was accompanied by three soldiers, one metallic bot, and Faith, whose hands were chained. She was directly behind him. The group walked past the workers.

Lisa saw them, and saw Faith. "Oh no! Faith is captured. That means...there's no hope! No, how can this be?!" She was losing her spirit. She fell on her knees and grabbed her head madly.

Faith is forced to be Zossimov's personal servant. She's wearing a thin, purple dress. Her wrists and ankles were chained up.

She handed Zossimov his food. He began eating and made a "mmm" sound because they tasted so good. "Mmmm, this food is delicious."

"I'll be going now..." Faith said.

"Not just yet." he said, grabbing her hands. "This food is good, but I'm hungry for something else. Something new and fresh."

She tried to get free but couldn't.

"Your hands are so delicate and smooth." He kissed her hand. He grabbed her arm and ripped up her sleeve.

"No...don't..."

He kissed her arm all over.

"Stop..."

He ripped off a piece of her dress. He kissed her shoulder.

"Please stop..."

He grabbed her and pulled her into him, and they were face to face. She just stared helplessly, with her big, helpless eyes. He kissed her lips, and tears dripped from her eyes.

Faith was chained between two columns. Her arms were raised up and her head was facing down. Her feet were chained to the floor.

He drank some wine. Then he went to her and offered her a drink. "Want some?" he asked, putting the cup to her lips.

She didn't move or speak.

"Drink it! Drink it!" He grabbed her chin, turned her head up and shoved the cup into her mouth. She swallowed the wine and coughed.

He kissed her lips. Then kissed her neck, she moaned. He grabbed her arm and squeezed it tightly.

"No...please no..."

He ripped off her entire sleeve with one pull. It made a tearing sound. He kissed her whole hand up to her shoulder. He kissed her neck. He ripped off her other sleeve.

He continued to strip her until she was naked, and she begged every second. He laughed as he ripped the dress piece by piece, making tearing sounds, as she pleaded helplessly. Trrrr. Her bra and stomach was revealed. He grabbed her thigh and shoved his hand up her dress, feeling her panties.

He put his lips on her cleavage and kissed it and caressed it, while his hands unhooked her bra. Once it came off, he stared at her bare breasts.

He sniffed her bra and sighed in pleasure - "Aah." And threw the bra on the floor. Zossimov pulled her panties all the way down, and threw it on the pile of clothes. Zossimov tore her dress up violently. Trrrr. Trrrr. And she was completely naked. Butt naked and exposed. And it's only the beginning of her torture.

After violating her body, touching every spot possible, he decided to get to the fun stuff. "Don't worry. This isn't going to hurt a bit." He got a whip and whipped her back.

She screamed painfully. "Stop! Please! Ahhh!"

He whipped her again and laughed. He whipped her and whipped her arm and she screamed in agony.

"No, please!" she screamed.

He whipped her back.

"Uuugh! Stop...please!"

He laughed and whipped her leg. Then he whipped her shoulder. Tears of pain dripped down her cheeks as she screamed loud. Her screams echoed throughout the room, but nobody can help her. The soldiers outside were playing cards, and they can only imagine what horrors were happening inside.

Whack! "Aaaaah!" Whack! "Aaaah!"

It was really painful. Each whip left a skid mark on her skin. Zossimov enjoyed it very much. The whip hitting her bare skin. Her bare, sensitive skin. Whack! Whack!

He grabbed her breasts from behind and sniffed her hair. "No...ugh! Ugh! Uhhh!" He liked this position - her arms were chained up, and her feet were chained to the floor. He violated her from behind. Her breasts were so soft and squeezable. He kissed her shoulder, and her arm, and then her lips.

He took her pink panties and stretched it out. They were skimpy and almost see-through. He rubbed it against his face, and he smelled it and sighed in pleasure. Then he shoved it into her mouth. She couldn't scream and all that came out were moans.

"Mmm...mmmffffff!"

He slapped her face twice. He touched her leg and kissed her breasts.

"Mmmfff. Mffff."

Zossimov got behind her and continued the mercilessly, brutal whipping. Whack! "MMFFMFF!" Whack! "MFFMF!"

But the real pain was about to begin. He took an iron stamper and he had an evil smile on his lips.

"Now, this might hurt a bit." he said, approaching.

Faith turned her head, pleading him not to do it. "MMMF! MMMF!"

Zossimov put it directly in front of her face, and she winced with tears.

He put it on her shoulder, and it burned her skin. She moaned and groaned. He took it away and there was a mark on her skin. Then he did it to her leg, her breast and her back. It was hurting like hell. This was the worst moment ever of her life. She had never suffered so much physical pain ever.

He took the panties out of her mouth and kissed her lips. Then he shoved it back into her mouth.

He grabbed her leg and put it on his shoulder. He kissed her ankle and felt her white skin. He touched her thigh and her knee, while his lips were kissing her breasts.

Faith was tired and exhausted from the torture, but Zossimov was still excited. He took the iron stamper, and Faith feared for her life.

"You want to scream? Now scream." He took the panties out of her mouth.

He put the stamper on one of her breasts. Ssssst. "AAAAAAH!" Her screams were loud and clear, and music to his ears.

He kept on burning her, and she screamed like no woman ever screamed before.

[C] Title Contents

Zossimov was talking to two soldiers in a private room.

"Have you found the second man who escaped?"

A: "No, sir."

Zossimov: "Did you find anything?"

A: "We searched the perimeter and discovered a house just two miles east of here."

"Two miles? That is pretty close to the pit."

A: "There was a woman living in the house. We did not see anyone else."

Zossimov: "So she saw you?"

B: "We asked her if she knew anything about the escapee, but she did not know anything."

"Idiot! Of course she's gonna say no! I want that house burned down! And one more thing, when you're done, hide the entrance to the cave. We can't afford any risks, understand?"

Both soldiers: "Yes, sir."

Back at the house, Tyson was sleeping lazily. He snored peacefully, not realizing how close he was to death. Three soldiers made their way to his house. Soldier A threw a brick at the window and B lit up a torch. C stayed behind, keeping a look out. B threw the torch into the living room and the flames started. The flames were getting more and more intense. Smoke went upstairs.

Tyson woke up and smelled something burning. That something is his house. He sprang up and ran down stairs. It was an inferno. He covered his face and kept low. He busts out of the door and coughed.

The three soldiers pointed their guns at him. "Looky who we have here."

Tyke: "You set my house on fire? Why?"

A: "Just obeying orders."

Tyke ran into them. One of them fired, but missed. Tyson back flipped away. He saw a hose on the porch and grabbed it and turned it all the way. Splash! A thick stream of water shot out. He sprayed the water at A, and hit him good. Tyson took the hose

and tied it around his neck, and punched him on the chest.

"Ugh! Aah!"

B was about to attack. Tyke turned around and pointed the hose at him. Splash! Water hit his face and pushed him back. C came. The same thing happened. Then he covered his face and ran blindly forward. Tyson punched him. To keep him from attacking, Tyson kicked him one more time for assurance. He continued to spray the fire. Two of the injured soldiers ran away, supporting each other.

Eventually, he put out the fire. A was on the ground, unconscious. Tyson gave him a little splash to wake him up. He coughed and moaned. Tyson grabbed his shirt, lifting him up. "Alright, start talking."

"Uhhh..."

The four heroes gathered at Tyke's house, discussing what happened last night. The soldier hostage was tied up, safely secured in the house.

Mac: "I have a strong feeling this has something to do with Faith's and Lisa's disappearance."

Tyke: "Me too. Faith didn't come home last night. And she doesn't go anywhere without telling me. Faith and Lisa aren't on vacation. They've been kidnapped."

Zell: "They tried to burn your house?"

"Yep."

Zell: "Why?"

Tyke shrugged. "Beats the hell outta me. The one that I captured won't talk."

Neb: "Well, I'm pretty good at convincing." He punched his own palm. "Let me have him for one day and I guarantee he'll come out screaming like a baby."

Tyke: "Alright, you can have him. Don't hurt him too much."

"That is a hard promise to make." Nebula winked.

"I **almost** feel sorry for that guy."

Zell: "Almost?"

Tyke: "He tried to burn my house. So he gets what he deserves."

Faith was unconscious in bed. She was naked under a white sheet. She woke up and moaned with sweat. She sat up. She had a headache and every movement she made brought her pain. But she managed to get off the bed, wrapping the sheet around herself.

Faith went towards the door. She opened it and went outside. Nobody was there. She was tired, suffering, and confused. She just wanted to get out of this place.

She spotted an entrance and walked. Her legs were weak and tired. Each step she took was adding to the pain. Faith thought that was the exit, for some reason. Only a few steps there. She was at the entrance, and put her hands on the edges for support. She panted and breathed heavily, her head facing down. The soldier saw her and was completely surprised. He stared at her beautiful figure with wide open eyes. He walked towards her and put his hands on hers. She looked at him and gasped.

"Please no! No, officer!"

He kissed her lips wildly. Then he kissed her cheeks and her neck. He grabbed her into the room and she screamed.

"Please officer, don't!" she pleaded.

He grabbed her and pushed her into the wall. He grabbed her shoulders and sniffed her hair. He pushed her on the floor.

"Please officer, no!" She got up stepped back.

He grabbed the sheet and pulled it off her, then kissed her lips.

Thud. Nebula slammed the captured soldier against the wall. He was going to do whatever it takes to get some answers.

Soldier A was tied up, scared and hoped no more pain will come to him. His face was bruised and there was dried blood on his mouth. Nebula grabbed him by the collar. "Now, start talking."

"I will never betray my superiors. No matter how much you torture me I won't tell you a damn thing." he said bravely.

Nebula tossed him on the chair. "You know what, I like your attitude. You will never betray the person you're working for. Normally, I'd admire you, but you're standing for all the wrong things. Your people kidnapped two of my friends. Where are they?"

"Bite me!"

"Alright. You chose the hard way."

Zell, Tyke, and Mac were waiting outside of the house. They heard screams of agony and despair.

Zell: "Ooh. It sounds real painful."

Mac: "What is going on in there?"

Later, Nebula came out. "He told me everything."

Tyke: "What did you do to him?"

"Let's just say I did some 'convincing,' if you know what I mean."

Tyke: "I don't think I want to know what you mean."

Mac: "So what did he say?"

Neb: "There is a pit not far from your house. It's two miles west and it leads to an underground prison."

Zell: "Ah, Faith and Lisa must be kidnapped there!"

Neb: "That's very likely. The person in charge is a Russian named Zossimov. He has trained soldiers and guard robots protecting him twenty four hours a day. He also said there were hundreds of prisoners. All of them are involuntary workers. They are forced to dig in the underground to look for something."

Mac: "Digging for what? Gold? Diamonds?"

Neb: "Energy siphons. These things are hidden deep in the earth. They are valuable because each crystal holds an enormous amount of energy. Ten of these are enough to power up a whole city for one week."

Zelfire made a whistling sound, showing his amazement. "That's a lot."

Tyke: "This is a crime against humanity! We have to stop this."

Mac: "You're right. The sooner the better."

Without wasting anymore time, the heroes set off to find the pit. When they reached the exact spot, they had some trouble finding it. Zelfire checked the trees. Nothing. Tyson checked the grass to see if it's covered up. Nothing. Macintosh got his inventions ready for use. He had a whole bag of them. Nebula checked the boulders. He found something.

"Hey guys!"

The other three rushed to him. Neb was standing in the narrow gap between two large gray boulders. Part of the gap was a hole.

"See that? They must have hidden the pit with these rocks." Nebula spit on his hands, then got ready. He pushed the two boulders with his hands, and grunted. "Arrrrrrgh!" He did it. The rocks were moved, and the pit was revealed. "Phew."

Tyke: "Good job, Nebula."

Neb: "Thanks."

Zell: "It's so dark down there."

"I was prepared for such an occasion." Tosh took out flashlights, handing one to

each.

Tyke: "Macintosh, you think of everything."

Neb: "Shall we go?"

Tyke: "It's now or never."

Tyson jumped down, then the others followed.

They turned on the flashlights. Click. It was dark and quiet. They could hear their footsteps clearly and distinctly. Their flashlights pointed forward, lighting up part of the road ahead.

It was like a maze. They eventually found railroad tracks and lights on the ceiling. They were getting closer.

Nebula: "The innocent people are being trapped down here."

Zelfire: "Who is in charge of this? Whatever this is."

Nebula: "His name is Zossimov. Like I said, he wants the energy siphons here."

They saw three soldiers ahead. They quickly hid behind the wall. When the troops came by, the heroes grabbed them in and beat them. It took less than ten seconds to beat them unconscious. The heroes took the soldiers' clothes and put them on.

Mac: "Hey guys, I don't have a uniform!"

Tyke: "Well, then you better stay here and get one when another soldier comes."

Neb: "In the meantime watch them so they don't get away."

The half-naked soldiers in their shorts were tied up and taped on the mouth.

Tyke adjusted his hat. It wasn't usual for him to wear these clothes. It felt uncomfortable. Inside and outside.

Zell: "Okay, let's go."

The three left Macintosh and ran towards the working area. They saw miserable slaves digging and some carrying rocks, putting them into a pile. There were men, women, children and seniors. They were all treated equally cruel.

The heroes were disgusted at what they saw. Very.

Soldier D eyed them suspiciously, then went to them. "I've never seen you around here before."

"We're new around here." Nebula said. He just hoped it'd work.

D: "Well, okay. All you have to do is watch over the slaves. If one disobeys, beat him."

"Understood." Tyson said, making a 'yes sir!' gesture with his hand on his forehead.

Zelfire sighed. "Phew. That was a close one."

Lisa continued working as miserably as before. She was tired and thirsty and very tired and very, very thirsty. She hadn't had a drink in hours. She's never faced such suffering and treachery before, and Penelope and Lao wonder if she's going to collapse any moment and die.

Penelope: "Oh my, you look terrible, Lisa. You should rest. We'll do your part of the work."

"I'm fine you guys." she said, forcing a smile.

Lao: "Are you sure?"

"Here." Penelope offered a bag of water. "Drink this."

"No, no, you need it for yourself. I couldn't possibly take it."

"Consider it as a token of our friendship. C'mon. Drink it." Penelope insisted.

"Thank you so much." Lisa drank greedily. Gulp gulp gulp.

The three heroes did a quick scan around the place. There were about 50 - 70 slaves, assuming all of them were here. There could be more, maybe in other rooms. They planned to split up for ten minutes and report if they find anything new.

Tyson saw a senior collapse right in front of him. The man was frightened and

trembled. "I'm s-s-sorry, sir, I'll get right back to work."

"That's okay. Take your time." Tyke offered him some water.

He drank it thirstily. "Thank you, kind sir. I have never met a soldier quite as nice as you."

"No problemo. Say, wanna know a secret?" he whispered with one hand on his face. "I'm not a soldier. I'm here to free you."

The senior was shocked. Tyson made a 'shhhh' sound and put his finger on his lips, then walked away.

Nebula and Lisa saw each other by chance. They were both excited and surprised, and almost screamed, but quickly regained control. They whispered as low as possible.

Lees: "Neb! Boy, am I glad to see you!"

"Me too. Listen up, me and the guys are going to free you all."

"How?"

"There are more slaves than soldiers, right? We'll give the signal, then the slaves attack. We'll take care of the robots. Just spread the word."

"Gotcha." Lisa told this first to Penelope and Lao, and then they told the nearest person.

Pretty soon, this rumor reached all over the underground prison.

"What? We're starting a rebellion?" one said.

"Yes. Could it be true?" another asked.

"I don't care, I'll try anyways. Anything is better than staying in this hell."

[D] Title Contents

Zelfire walked past an old man digging. He was sweating like a pig. "Keep up the good work." he said.

The person looked at him excitedly. "It's me." he whispered. He took off his wig.

"M-Macintosh?!"

"Yeah." he said.

"You're smarter than I think. How did you manage to sneak in here?"

Mac: "It wasn't that hard. Anyways, have you come up with a plan?"

Zell: "Yes. All the slaves will attack at the same time. That way the soldiers can't fight back. We've already spread the message."

"Are you sure about this? There's gonna be some casualties..."

"I know, but that's the best plan we got."

"Okay, listen up." Mac took out a small radar-like device. "This will disable their laser guns. It will cause a malfunction to any electronic device within a half-mile radius. It only lasts for five minutes, so give me the signal and I'll turn it on." He put his wig on.

"Roger that." Zelfire walked away.

Zell, Tyson and Nebula reunited. "Guys, I have some good news. Macintosh has a device that can disable their guns."

Neb: "That guy is a genius. He thinks of everything. This is good news. The rebellion will have more chances of success."

Soldier E came towards them. "Did you hear about it?"

Tyke: "Hear about what?"

E: "There's a rumor that the slaves will rebel soon."

Neb: "Oh no! That's terrible."

Zell: "I do certainly hope that is not true. If it is, then we are screwed."

E: "Oh man! I think I should tell Zossimov about this."

Neb: "No, don't."

E: "Why not?"

"Because we're the ones who started the rumor." Before he could respond, Nebula punched him in the face. All he saw was a fist and then red stars. He fell.

Others saw what happened. "Hey, what do you think you're doing?"

The heroes started attacking them. The slaves watched them, and then joined in. Other slaves realized this must be the signal. More joined in. The alarm rang and the backup soldiers charged. Macintosh turned on the device. Beeeeeeeeeeep. An invisible wave was produced and covered the entire area. One soldier fired his gun, but nothing came out. He wondered what was wrong. Then the slaves came upon him and beat him up.

Now there was chaos. People were fighting everywhere. Even Lisa and her new friends joined in. Lisa picked up a shovel and started hitting like crazy.

A metallic bot started shooting. Tyson ran, slid on the ground, and went past between its legs. Tyson kicked the robot in the rear and it fell. Another metallic bot was about to fire at Tyson. Zelfire used the Energy Blast and blew it up.

Nebula charged and slashed the robots one by one. They were all sliced up.

Zossimov bowed down to the big, glowing face in the tube. "I sense that the woman you have enslaved has much energy inside of her. Bring her to me."

"As you will." Zossimov exited.

"Hmmm? What is this? I've never sensed so much energy in one place before. They are here in my prison?"

The slaves outnumbered the soldiers. The soldiers formed a barricade but the slaves got through line by line. They were hit with shovels and stepped on and got kicked.

As the chaos continued, the heroes went into the hallway that led to Zossimov's room. It was a room filled with glass chambers and ahead was another door. In the middle was a table with Faith on it. She was unconscious. Zossimov saw Tyson coming in, and he ran for it. Tyson chased him, and the bastard pushed a button on the wall and a secret door opened, and he stepped inside. The elevator's door closed and it took him to the surface. Tyson banged his fist on the door, and he made a dent. He kept banging it until it broke, but nobody was there.

"Darn it!" he said.

Zell and Neb came in. "Oh, Faith is here?"

Tyke went to her and took her hand. "Wake up sleeping beauty. Wake up." He touched her face.

She opened her eyes and gasped in surprise. "Tyson?" She sat up. "Tyson?!" Her eyes filled up with tears and she hugged him real tight.

"It's okay, it's okay." he said, embracing her.

She touched his chest and noticed his soldier uniform. "Why are you dressed like that?"

Tyke: "Let's just say I stole it from somebody."

Fay: "Do you want to know something?"

"What?"

"You look cool in this uniform." she said, blushing.

He blushed too. "Naw, this just isn't me."

"No, you do look good."

Lisa: "Geez, get a room."

Neb: "She's been through a lot. They need a break."

Lisa: "Uuk. She's all over him. They make me sick."

Neb: "Lees? Are you...jealous?"

"Jealous? Of who? Them? Yeah, right."

"Oh. Gee."

Fay: "Ohhh look at you. Your face is dirty. She wiped the dust off his face."

Tyke: "Faith, can you help me?" He showed his hand, which has a cut on it.

"You're hurt." She healed him.

"Thanks."

"Anything for you."

Zell: "I wonder how the slaves are doing outside."

Seconds later, a slave in ragged clothes bust in, along with a girl. He was out of breath. It happened to be Lao and Penelope.

Mac: "How is the progress?"

Lao: "We're winning! The soldiers are retreating."

Lisa was very happy. "Yay!"

Neb: "I guess the nightmare is over for them."

Tyke took off his uniform. His regular clothes were underneath. "Phew. I can finally get rid of this thing. I'm so hot."

Zelfire and Nebula also removed their uniforms. They were relieved.

Suddenly, a blinding light came from the door. Everybody winced. The light faded, and the heroes wondered what the heck was that? They went into the empty, white room.

Inside, there was nothing there but an empty tube. Then a blurry face appeared between the electric balls. The seven heroes stared in wonder and shock.

"Who dares interfere with my plans?" said the giant face.

"What...what the hell are y-you?" Tyke asked.

"It's a big, ugly face." Lisa said.

"Bah! You will pay for your mockery! You incompetent fools!"

Zelfire: "Do you know what you have done? You enslaved hundreds of innocent people to satisfy your own selfish goals!"

"What is wrong with that? I will do whatever it takes to get what I want!" it said.

Nebula: "The prisoners are free. You're finished, you...ugly face."

"Is it? You have defeated my Magnificent Seven, but you are dealing with me now. You cannot harm me!"

Everyone gasped "You were in charge of the Magnificent Seven?!" Tyson asked.

"Correct. Now it is your turn." The face screamed, releasing a wave of energy. The heroes fell and the whole room shuddered. Lao covered Penelope, and everyone winced. The face turned into a swirling whirlpool, which led into another dimension.

Nebula grabbed the wall for support.

"What is going on?!" Lisa shouted.

Faith stared at the whirlpool. A gigantic, transparent arm came out. It was about to grab something. Zelfire, thinking it's gonna get him, ducked and whined fearfully. But it was going for Tyson. He was on the floor and dumbfounded. The hand grabbed him and went back into the whirlpool. "Aaaah! Shit!"

Lao: "It's got him!"

Mac: "Tyson!"

Faith: "Tyson! No!"

A painful silence struck the room.

Faith was going crazy. "Oh no! Tyson! It can't be!"

Nebula: "Where did it go? What the hell happened?"

Macintosh was pushing buttons on his scanner device. "He's been sucked into another dimension! I'm detecting some radiation from the whirlpool."

"I'm coming for you, Tyson!" Faith screamed. She went for the whirlpool, then Zelfire and Lisa grabbed her.

Zell: "Don't! It's too dangerous."

Lisa: "He's right. There's nothing we can do for him now!"

"Let go of me! Let me go!!! Aaaaah! Let go!" She struggled crazily and got free. She jumped at the whirlpool, but a shield was in her way. It electrified her.

Zzzzzzzzzzzzzt. "Aaah!" she fell.

Zelfire ran to her aid. "Are you alright?"

"I have to help Tyson! He needs my help!"

"Don't do it..."

"I must!" she screamed, on the verge of tears.

[E] Title Contents

Tyson was in room of emptiness. Everything around was darkness, and some stars and planets. The floor was invisible, and it's as if he's standing in the universe.

"Where am I? How did I get here?" He walked a few steps, and his steps echoed. He noticed he had three shadows. What a strange place. He wanted to leave.

A figure of a man showed up. After getting closer and looking more carefully, Tyson realized he wasn't a man at all. It was the shape of a man, but not quite. Its body was solid white and shiny. It had blue eyes but no nose or mouth. Its head was bold and shiny like the rest of its body. "Welcome, my friend."

"I'm guessing this is your true form." Tyson saw that he had three shadows as well. Does everything here cast three shadows? What's with the lighting?

"Correct. Tyson Spade, you are the first person to see my true face, and also the last." **Zenulox** powered up, lighting up the area.

Zenulox and Tyke charged and hit at the wrists. The sound of the hit was loud and clear. Zenulox punched his stomach and Tyke fell.

He got back up and powered up to his fullest. His energy turned from blue to gold and his hair changed from black to gold. He was a super sayan once again. It was time to get serious.

The mysterious being charged and punched, Tyson blocked. Then Zenulox unleashed a dozen punches, which Tyson blocked, moving back as Zenulox advanced. They flew around and hit.

Faith jumped at the whirlpool and it shocked her and she fell again. She got up and got ready to go for it again.

"Don't do it!" Zelfire yelled.

"Don't be a fool. You can't do anything to help now. Tyson is on his own." Macintosh said calmly.

Suddenly, soldiers entered the room, and they attacked. The heroes had to defend themselves.

Faith ignored the situation and continues jumping. This time she was going to do it no matter what. "I'm coming to help...uhhh...Tyson!" The shield was pushing her away, but she pushed herself in closer. She summoned all the power she could handle and charged. "Aaaaah!" No matter how painful it was, she didn't stop.

Nebula noticed she did it. "Wow, no way."

The others watched in amazement.

Faith screamed madly and bam, she made it in! The whirlpool vanished once she went in.

Tyson put his palms together and fired the Energy Blast. The beam hit Zenulox's body but did no damage. He laughed. Zenulox fired a white energy ball and Tyke

jumped to the side. Zenulox ran and punched his face. Pow! It hurt more than he expected. As Tyson recovered, Zenulox was about to fire a beam. Suddenly, a rose hit his hand and he lost the energy. The red rose hit the floor diagonally, and some parts of the flower fell off.

"What?!" Zenulox muttered.

Faith appeared from above and kicked him in the face. Whack! She stood next to Tyson.

"What are you doing here?" Tyke asked, a bit surprised.

"I came to help you."

The lovers got ready.

Zenulox was angry. "Fine, then. You're no match for me anyways!" He got ready.

Tyson and Faith unleashed a combo but it didn't work. Zenulox attacked viciously and they went on defensive. They blurred and hit each other. Tyson kicked Zenulox's chest, knocking him into Faith. Faith put her fists together like a hammer and whacked his back. Wham! He fell. Faith did a flying kick and kicked his face. She kicked again and he dodged. Faith used the Vine Whip and whipped him, and his shield destroyed the end of the whip. Tyson fired the Wrath Beam and Zenulox blocked. Faith charged and used the Vine Whip, and Zenulox jumped around to avoid the whip. He kneed her in the stomach, then punched, Faith crossed her arms over her face to block, and she got hit and got knocked down.

Tyson ran at Zenulox and slid, Zenulox jumped up. Tyke missed him and Zenulox could attack either one of them. It was all in slow motion. Zenulox fired two energy balls. One went to Tyke and the other to Faith. Boom!

Tyke and Fay were injured and they stood side by side.

Tyke: "He's extremely powerful."

Fay: "We need a strategy."

Zenulox fired a beam. Tyson used the Electro-shield and Faith made the Vine Shield. Together, they made the **Electro-Vine Shield**. It was a blue sphere of energy combined with a vine spinning around and electric sparks. The beam hit the impeccable shield and broke apart.

Zenulox fired again, but it didn't affect them. He was pissed off now. Tyson fired the Wrath Beam and Faith fired the Mega Beam, and they merged together, making the **Mega Wrath Beam**. Boom! Zenulox was hit bad. He charged and punched, and Tyson and Faith blurred and appeared behind him. They kicked him together. Wham! Zenulox was knocked backwards.

Realizing their team work was too much, Zenulox gathered all the energy he could gather and produced a big energy ball. "Die, you ingrates! The Magnificent Seven lives on no matter what!"

Tyson: "He's going overboard! We have no choice but to use the Spirit Bomb."

Faith nodded.

So they formed the Spirit Bomb. It grew bigger than Zenulox's energy ball. And they threw it at the white being. The energy disintegrated his body. "ARRRRRGH! Is this why my Magnificent Seven lost? ... UUUUUAAAAGH!" Kaboom.

In the white room, the five remaining heroes waited anxiously. Lisa thought they were goners for good. Suddenly, the whirlpool appeared, and Faith and Tyson both fell out and landed on their butts.

The others ran to them, happy and relieved.

Tyke: "We made it."

Fay: "We sure did."

Mac: "You had us scared, you know?"

Tyke: "You did really well this time. I couldn't have done it without you. Honestly."

"Really? Thank you..." she said, blushing.

All the prisoners were freed from their torture, and they can return home to their loved ones. The soldiers were dispersed, never to be found again, hiding their identities, just like the Nazi's were.

Penelope and Lao thanked the heroes a million times over, since they owe their lives to them, and if it wasn't for them, they'd still be stuck down here in hell. And of course Lisa was glad to be free. After a few weeks of hell, was she ever glad to be back on the surface, with sunlight and freedom.

End.

Who makes your destiny? Do you choose your own path or has it already been decided for you beforehand by Fate...what you will encounter...or when you will die...

The Chosen Two

"The Chosen Two"

Contents

- [A] - The Proposal.
- [B] - Home, Sweet Home.
- [C] - Birth of LabyRinth.
- [D] - The Tower of Idel.
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The sun just came up, signaling the approach of dawn. The darkness, within seconds, turned into light. And it is here where the expression "It's darkest before dawn" came from. Birds that were asleep now chirped loudly. The light from the sun illuminated the forest, bring it to life.

It was a bright morning, especially for Faith. She woke up an hour before she usually does, as Tyson was still sound asleep. She couldn't help but feel excitement, as she got out of bed, and put on her casual clothes. She went straight to the kitchen to start working.

Tyson woke up lazily after smashing his fist on the alarm clock. Strange, he thought. Faith usually wakes up at the same time as him.

"Breakfast is ready!" she yelled through the wall.

Tyson finished washing his face and went into the kitchen. "Mmmm...smells good."

"I made your favorite, pancakes." She was more cheery than usual and Tyson wondered why she acted that way.

Tyson stuck his fork into the pancake and took a bite. "Yum. It's good."

"I'm glad you like it. There's some more."

"Okay." He was eating hungrily, but he became uneasy as Faith was watching him eat. Her chin rested on her hands, with elbows on the table. She just stared with a smile as if his eating was some kind of interesting ritual. "Ummm, aren't you going to have some?"

"No, I already had some. I want to save the rest for my honey." she said with a perky smile.

"Uhhh, okay."

Faith was outside, kneeling on the grass, playing with the flowers. Tyson went to join her.

Faith: "Hey honey. Looks like new flowers are growing. Look."

Tyson: "Yeah. You gave them love and care and now they grew so pretty. Just like you."

Faith: "Ahhh Tyke. Isn't all this wonderful? I am truly thankful for all that we have." She got up and walked a few steps, looking at the sky.

"Aren't we a little miss happy today?"

"Of course I'm happy. Today is a special day."

Uh oh, Tyson thought. He totally forgot. (Is today her birthday? Is it?) He swallowed hard. Gulp. This is definitely not good. He didn't even have a present ready. Oh no, oh no, what is he going to do? "Yes, today is very special indeed, my princess. I will make it one birthday you will never forget."

"Birthday?"

"Yep, it's your birthday."

"What!" she suddenly burst out. "What birthday? Today is our anniversary!!! It is exactly one year since we first met!"

"Today's our anni-versary?"

"Don't tell me you...forgot?"

His face was guilty with shame and she could see it. She was hoping he knew, and that he was pretending not to know. But his face revealed it all. She gave him a good slap in the cheek and went away.

"Ouch." His face was red. But his face was the least of his pains.

Oh well, who could blame her? It was a tragic mistake to forget an anniversary, very tragic.

One could tell that Faith was outraged and by the afternoon, she was still angry and no less angry when she slapped Tyson. Her heart was aching with pain and her head boiling with anguish.

But don't despair yet, Tyson still has his trusty friends. He revealed everything over a picnic lunch at the park.

Lisa: "You forgot your anniversary?"

Nebula: "Wow. She must be angry. Did she slap you there?"

Tyson: "Yes. It still hurts."

Zelfire: "Ouch. This is bad for your relationship."

Lisa: "How could you, Tyke? Of all the things to forget, you had to forget his super-very-important day!"

Tyson: "I know! I'm sorry!"

Lisa: "Don't you know how much that means to a woman? By doing so you have just scarred the foundation of your relationship with her. Tyke, there are two dates that you must always remember, her birthday and anniversary."

Mac: "I agree with Lees. I might know much about this stuff, but I can tell it's gonna be a tough time for you."

Lisa: "Forgetting her birthday does not hurt as much as an anniversary! You sure did this time, Tyke."

"Oh God what am I going to do?" Tyke yelled, rubbing his head.

Zelfire: "No need to despair. I happen to pass by a store today that sells rings for a cheap price. Cheap enough so someone like you can afford it."

Tyson: "A ring?"

Lisa pounded her own palm. "That's a brilliant idea. A ring. A wedding ring!"

Tyson: "A wedding ring?"

Lisa: "It's your only chance. Now go, warrior, go and apologize! Make it look like you're really sorry."

Tyson: "Zelfire, thanks a lot man! I'll never forget this. You can be sure of that."

Neb: "Don't just sit there. Go get the present and go to Faith."

Tyson: "Alright. Thanks guys. Thanks so much." He went on his way.

Once he was out of sight, Nebula said: "Dumbass."

"The princess will be coming soon..." said a hideous voice from the shadows. It was man in a black hood. "She will be coming soon. Ha ha ha ha ha."

All the demons watched him with curiosity.

Faith was standing on the same spot where they were in the morning. She was standing on a cliff by the sea, staring into the sky. Tyson approached her. She heard him coming, but did not look back.

"Hey sweetheart..." he said in a sweet voice. "Still mad at me?" He touched her shoulders.

"Don't you sweetheart me."

"I take that as a yes. I know, I know. I'm a screw up. But this time I've screwed up something that I shouldn't have. I'm really reeeeeeeeeeeally sorry."

"Is that all you have to say?" she said coldly.

"Are you going to be like this forever?"

"No. Just for one year."

He didn't know whether she was just joking or serious. "I know how much it means to you. It means a lot to me too."

She didn't reply.

"Hey, I hope it's still not too late." He got in front of her and bent on one knee. She was taken completely by surprise. He took her hand and put the ring into her middle finger. "Forgive me?"

"Tyson..." Her expression had completely changed.

"Faith...we've been through so much together. And there's no one else I could imagine spending my life with. Other than you. Will you marry me?"

"Oh, of course I will!" She grabbed his hands and he got up. "This is the most wonderful gift anyone has ever given me!" They kissed and hugged tightly.

"Faith..." Midas whispered to himself, looking outside in his huge castle. He was wearing the golden gown he wore as the King of Almerak.

"Your highness. It will be soon."

Midas was not surprised his advisor was behind him. He probably knew what he was about to say.

"The Day of Judgement is not far from now. Soon, Faith shall meet her destiny."

"No!" the old man yelled.

"Your highness," the prophet said, trying to calm him down. "I know 'tis hard to believe and accept the truth, but it is in the prophecy, and the prophecy never lies. Your daughter will come back soon, it will not be long now."

"**Socrates**, my fellow advisor for so many years, I want to ask you a question. Why Faith? Why her? Of all the women on this land, why did my daughter have to be the chosen one?"

"I have already told you before, twenty years ago. I told you about this even before she was born. I thought you would have accepted the truth over these years, but apparently you have not. We already discussed it."

"Yes, I still remember." He looked at the tiles on the floor. "Before Faith was born, you already told me her future, and I did not accept it back then, and I do not think I do now. To tell you the truth, Socrates, I tried to forget about it, I really tried. But I just could not forget that."

"You knew this day was coming, and we can not do anything to change the prophecy. Nothing. I am...sorry, your majesty..."

"Let me be alone." he shouted angrily. Then to himself: "Faith...I am sorry. I failed you as a father. My daughter, the chosen one."

"Tyson, let's go visit Almerak." Faith said out of nowhere. Tyson was startled she brought this up so suddenly.

"Almerak? Now?"

"Yes, I miss my home. I haven't visited them in a whole year." She was right. The last time they were there she was nineteen, now she was the big twenty. "Tyson, come with me. We have the transporter, so let's go."

"Alright, I'll call my friends to see if they want to go."

Every one wanted to go - Nebula, Macintosh, Zelfire - the whole gang.

[B] Title Contents

"Let's go!" Nebula shouted excitedly, almost more excited than Faith was.

Tyson was a bit shocked by his attitude. So they got into the large spherical shaped transporter and secured themselves. They tied seatbelts around them, then Nebula pushed the red button. The thing was shaking crazily. Then it was shaking more. Tyson could feel his whole body trembling. His teeth were clamping. The transporter lifted itself off the ground and zap - it disappeared into thin air. The sphere was teleported to another world-the dimensional gateway. The whole place was emptiness, lightning every where, and dark. Finally, it reached the other dimension. It stopped shaking at last. The sphere landed on the grass ground hard, and made a loud thud. Thud. The door opened and everyone got out. The atmosphere was so different in this place. Much different. Although they couldn't pinpoint what exactly about it is different, they just don't feel right. But Faith felt right at home.

As they tried to figure out what direction the castle was, some guy in the bushes was watching them like a spy. "Princess Faith..." the horrible voice called.

Faith led them into the castle, which to her still looked the same the last time she was there. One of the guards on duty watching the large door stopped them. "Welcome back, Princess Faith." he said. She nodded politely and led them into the royal room. The room was almost empty, except for Midas and the prophet Socrates.

"Welcome back, my dear daughter!" Midas tried to sound happy to see her, and she didn't see any flaw in his expression, only excited that she was home again. They hugged.

"Father."

Then Ace passed by and yelled: "You're back, Faith!" Then they hugged. "What brings you here, sister?"

"I was home sick, that is all."

"Ahh, welcome, my fellow friends. Welcome Tyson. How nice of you all to come visit me here. I have already prepared rooms for your stay." Midas said.

"Thank you, your highness." Nebula said.

"No, you have no need to be so formal here. You are good friends of Faith, and I owe you my whole kingdom."

"So, how's everything here?" Tyson asked.

"Everything is fine. My kingdom is rebuilding and prospering. It is doing much better since Vega was vanquished."

"That is good to hear." Zelfire said.

Suddenly, a bolt of lightning lit up the sky and let out a striking sound, then all the candles and fire sticks blew out, and everything in the castle became dark.

"What happened?!" Ace's voice asked anxiously. But none of them knew how to answer him.

"I don't know." the king replied.

Then the room lit up again, and every one was relieved. But they noticed some one standing on the platform attached to the wall, high above them. They were sure he wasn't there when the lightning struck. "HA HA HA HA!" the voice laughed in mockery.

"How dare you! This is my royal palace, and I will have you executed for intruding here!" The king sounded furious.

"Fool. You can not hurt me, nor your pathetic palace guards! I have come to tell you a message regarding Princess Faith."

Midas grew silent.

"What about me?" Faith asked.

"You will soon meet your fate, my dear. And there is no avoiding it. See you soon." Then another bolt of lightning struck, and darkness. Seconds later, the room was normal again, and the mysterious being was gone.

"Ummm...he's gone." Nebula said, wide-eyed. "How in the heck did he do that?"

Midas was overwhelmed. He knew that message was for his daughter, and what is to happen to her. He put his hand on his forehead and he fell on his chair. "This is not happening."

"What was that fool blabbering about?" Faith asked blankly. "What did he mean **my fate**? And who was he?"

"Maybe he was just some lunatic." Tyson suggested.

Faith: "I don't know why. But I have a feeling something bad is going to happen. It must be an ill omen."

Tyson: "Nah. Don't get so superstitious."

Faith: "Father? Who is he?"

Midas: "I don't know. But I assure you, he will not step foot into this palace again. Ever."

Midas: "Guard this palace with your life! Watch every single corner. I do not want another person sneaking into this place!"

Royal guard: "Yes your highness." He left.

Ace: "Father?"

Midas: "Do you have something in mind, my son?"

"Maybe it was not the guards' faults. That mysterious person might be the product of an illusion. Or he could be a demon."

"I am aware of that. You do not have to worry about such matters. Go with your friends."

Ace obeyed and left.

The king sighed and rubbed his head. He went towards the balcony, staring at the beautiful landscape. Stretched out in the open was a plain grass field, and beyond that laid a row of mountains.

Faith came into the throne room, joining her father.

"Father?"

"What is it, Faith?"

"Something is definitely not right. I can feel it. But I don't know what."

"Do not worry too much. That person is of no threat to you." It took a lot out of him to produce this lie, and he just wished that she would stop asking such questions.

"Do you know who he was?"

Midas: "No."

Faith: "Why do you keep lying to me?"

"What are you talking about?" he asked in denial.

"Father...then let us talk of something else. All these years...you seldom talk about my mother. When I did mention her you always avoided me."

"Have I?"

"Yes! And now I want a straight and plain answer! Who was the man who came to the palace?"

"Why are you asking about such things?"

"If you think of me as your daughter then answer me!" she suddenly burst out.

He was surprised to see her this way. Her face showed determination; she truly wanted to know about her mother. He saw that she was no longer the little girl that he loved so, she had grown into a fully developed woman. She had the right to know. All these years of hiding the truth hurt him more than anyone knew. It was finally time to tell. He gave a deep sigh, signaling that he was going to tell everything.

"My dear daughter...I did not mean to keep it from you."

She listened carefully as if her life depended on it.

"Do you remember when I said your mother came from a place very far away?"

"Yes...a place called **Phenalia**, correct?"

"Correct." Midas said.

"What does this have to do with the intruder and his message?"

"I am getting to it. But first I must explain what exactly is a Phenalian. There once existed a place called Phenalia...far far away...it was called the **Land of Angels** by some. There was a legend told that a dying traveler found Phenalia and came back healed." A sail man, nearly bleeding to death, was riding on a sailboat. He had been attacked by pirates, and he was dying. His only choice was to head forward to the island. "People thought of it as a miracle, but the man said the Phenalians, those who lived on the land, had healed him miraculously." Once he reached the island, the Phenalians, healed him. And to the traveler's astonishment, all these heavenly creatures had wings. Bright, white wings. "And that was how Phenalia was supposedly discovered. The traveler went back to his land and told everyone about his amazing tale. Some say he is crazy. But others believed him."

But nonetheless, the folklore is true. The people who live on the Land of Angels were called the **Phenalians**. The legend on the Sacred Scrolls also said that these mystical creatures had wings and could fly, as well as heal any injury. Of course, nobody would believe such a silly thing. But 'tis true. Your mother was the last of the ancient race...they had somehow all died out."

"How?"

"The legend said one hellish day, the sky turned **bloody red** and meteors fell upon their land, burning everything. Hardly any of them survived. And so the utopia was destroyed...it was supposed to be a place of harmony, happiness, tranquility. But it all ended in one day."

"And what about my mother?" Faith inquired.

"Your mother...the only woman I ever loved..."

A young King Midas, riding on a white horse, accompanied by his protectors, yelled as he whipped his horse. They galloped through the forest, hunting for animals for entertainment. They already had eleven rabbits.

Young Midas decided to rest and told his men to stop and take a break. He walked alone to the lake to get some fresh water. There he made an astonishing discovery. A woman, with white wings, was laying there unconscious, her face in the water. She opened her eyes and got up. Midas went into the water and stopped to stare at her.

"Who are you?" **Abrasia** asked.

She had the form of a perfect body and her bright eyes were innocent and frightened. But of course, the most catching thing to his eyes was her big, feathery white wings. It took him a few seconds to even believe what he's seeing.

"I am...King Midas...of Almerak. Who might thee be?"

"My name is Abrasia...of the Land of Phenalia."

"Phenalia? But that place is a legend."

"Ah! A legend, yes, and real as well."

"So the legend is true."

"Your royal highness, I am lost. Can you help me?"

"But of course. I will offer you the best possible service from my kingdom."

They took each other's hand and looked into each other's eyes. Although it was their first encounter, they could feel there was something special between them. A fated encounter, perhaps.

"We married not long after. She became the queen and we lived happily together. When Acelot was four years old, you were born."

Something else that's not as important was that Ace and Faith did not have the same mother. Back even earlier, young King Midas had married a woman from a wealthy class and soon had a child, Acelot. Then his wife got sick and died. Four years later he met Abrasia and Faith was born.

"Now I understand why I have the ability to heal. It is because I am a Phenalian. It is the gift of my race. But what about what the intruder said?"

"It is in the Sacred Scrolls. As you know, the prophecy tells of the past, present, and future. It said the Phenalian princess will one day become the **Paladin**."

"The Paladin? Yes, I have taken that title." Faith said. "I was chosen by the Great Spirit."

Midas continued. "The Paladin is one who is with nature. A pure warrior who fights with nature on her side and vanquishes evil and saves the land. One day she will save the land by traveling to another world. But one day in the future she will come back home to Almerak and fulfill her destiny."

"My...destiny?"

"It said the paladin will cause a powerful demon to arise and he shall wreak havoc on the people. You will fight him and...perish."

Faith was shocked at the truth. It showed in her eyes...Midas worried that she could not bear it and explode.

Faith: "So, that is my destiny? What is to become of me is **death**?"

"You alone will bring chaos and destruction to our land. But you also will destroy the demon and save thousands of lives with your sacrifice. I am sorry, dear daughter. I wished to tell you sooner, but then you were just a child! How could I bear to tell you the truth? You would not live a happy life."

"Father..." She ran away.

"Faith..." Midas called out, but he did not chase her. It was too late to do so.

[C] Title Contents

Faith stared at the sky, standing on a cliff, thinking about what her father had just told her. Can this be true? She has to die and there is no way to prevent it?

Tyson came in and joined her. "Don't be so worried." he said, gently touching her shoulders. "I heard everything. Don't believe in such silly things."

"Tyson..."

"I don't believe a piece of paper can tell your fate. People mold their own destinies, not have it set before them."

"But the Sacred Scrolls..."

"You shouldn't believe such things."

"So you know everything now. Why I have this 'miraculous' ability to heal others. It is because I am a Phenalian. I had already known about my origins before my father told me. But I never really told anyone. Not even you. I am sorry."

"Sorry? For what?" he asked.

"For not telling you everything. I am not purely human." Faith said, looking down.

"So what?" He grabbed her shoulders, making her turn around and look at him. "I'm not human either. I'm a sayan."

"Oh...of course. How silly of me to forget."

They both laughed. Indeed, it's easy to forget where you came from.

Outside in the woods, something exploded and all the heroes heard it. The hooded stranger stood behind the fire, smiling, knowing soon he will get what he has longed for.

"I wonder what that could be." Nebula said as he was running.

"A bomb?" Zelfire said, running besides him.

"Bomb? They don't have bombs here."

The stranger in the black hood and suit stood still, not moving a muscle. Marianna found him first and recognized him as the one who intruded into the palace.

Marianna: "So, it's you."

"I am waiting for Princess Faith to arrive."

"The princess? What do you want with her?"

"It is none of your concern."

"Maybe this will change your mind!" She quickly loaded an arrow and shot at him.

Inches from his palm, he fired a shock wave and disintegrated the arrow, and hit Marianna, knocking her down.

He grinned.

Acelot helped her get up, while Nebula, Zelfire, and Macintosh took the front lines. "Alright midget, your number is up." Nebula said. "Surrender or regret it!"

Stranger: "Heh heh heh. Why should I surrender when you are outnumbered?"

The heroes didn't know what he meant. But they knew once they saw a portal opening on the ground. The portal that leads to the **shadow world**. A horde of nasty demons came out and attacked. And now the heroes were occupied.

Faith and Tyson showed up and went to their fallen friend.

Faith arrived and found her fallen friend. "Marianna? What have they done to you?"

Ace: "She took a hit bad. I'll watch her."

Tyson: "I'm going to help them." So he charged into the army of demons.

As Faith was busy healing her friend, the hooded man showed up.

"Ahhh, Princess Faith. You finally arrived. I have been expecting you."

"Expecting me?"

Ace drew his sword and slashed. Wham! He was knocked away.

"Heh, all fools who stand in my way shall be killed. I was once a powerful demon...but now I am trapped within a mortal's body. Once I get your energy I will become myself once again and regain my true powers!"

"My energy?"

"Yes. I need the energy of one with Phenalian blood. And that is you, princess."

"In your dreams!" she said. She charged at him and he fired the shockwave right into her. She was pushed back and rolled several times on the ground.

He approached her and grabbed her head. "Now my destiny shall be fulfilled!" Her body was losing energy. The energy came out of her body in waves of steam and went towards his hand and into his body. He laughed as she moaned painfully. Finally, he let her go and she fell down. "Yes yes yes! I can feel it! All I needed was the energy from a Phenalian!"

Tyson showed up, followed by Nebula, Zelfire, and Mac. Tyson got Faith and put her arm over his neck, and he took her back a few steps to a safer distance, watching the stranger transform. The stranger's body was glowing with Faith's energy. Suddenly he blew up. Boom!

At first, Nebula thought he died. But he was wrong. He was beginning to be born.

Mac: "Look, on the ground!"

On the spot where the stranger exploded, emerged a deep and dark hole – the gateway to the shadow world. A head emerged from the hole, then two heads, then a full body. The heroes trembled at the horrific sight, especially Faith.

The demon was entirely black-skinned, he was twice as tall as the average man and his arms and legs were big. His arms were mostly bulging muscles and his finger tips were as sharp as knives, and so were his three toes. He had two heads, each with a different face. The right head was slight crooked. Their eyes were red with rage and one could see the ugly flesh attached to their teeth.

Faith: "That is..."

Zelfire: "Two heads...in one body...what kind of creature is he?"

Ace: "A demon. A very powerful demon!"

The heroes could feel Labyrinth's power force. This was no ordinary foe.

Labyrinth (left head): "Ahhh, after two centuries of imprisonment in that damned body, I am finally free! Free to do as I once did."

Right head: "Yeah! Free at last."

Left head: "And all of this would not be possible without you, princess."

Faith: "So you are the two-headed demon **Labyrinth**?"

Right head: "Precisely."

Ace: "Then you must die!" He ran at Labyrinth and slashed his sword but he got knocked by his shockwave and hit a tree.

Macintosh fired the Electro Shockwave but it had no effect.

Labyrinth blasted him and he was down. Left head: "It seems that we have not attained our full power as of yet."

Right head: "We must wait until it comes back entirely."
So a puff of smoke appeared and the demon was gone.
Nebula, Zelfire and Tyson stared at that spot without even blinking. They were bewildered and in disbelief.

Faith, still supported by Tyson, mumbled: "So, the prophecy is true."

Everybody was back at the palace.
Faith: "It is true! It is all true...everything that the prophecy has mentioned has happened."

Mac: "What prophecy?"

Zelfire: "Good question."

Faith: "I'm the one who caused Labyrinth's rebirth. It was my fault."

Tyson: "No. It wasn't your fault."

Midas: "So it has finally happened." He walked to his daughter.

"Know this. I do not care what the scrolls say, I will not let you die just like that."
"Father..."

"I know of a place where you can be safe."

Faith: "What kind of place?"

Midas: "The **Towel of Idel**. It is located on my royal land. It was a sacred tower built by my ancestors to protect themselves from demons. The tower is has a spiritual barrier on it, no forces of evil can enter it."

Tyson: "Sounds like a good idea. Faith needs to be safe."

[D] Title Contents

So the king took the heroes to the Tower Of Idel, located on a plain. It was practically in the middle of nowhere, it was an isolated structure. From that place all that one could see was the land and the blue sky. At the front entrance was a large double door, of rectangular shape and rounded at the top. It looked old but rich in design. On the large doors was a piece of paper stuck to it, with some writing on it. This was supposed to keep evil spirits and demons from entering.

The heroes were on the top floor, inside a large room with a balcony.

Marianna: "Alright then, now Faith can be safe here."

Ace: "We must not waste any time. Labyrinth is probably causing mayhem in the villages."

Nebula: "Let's go!"

Tyson: "Right." He took one step towards the balcony and Faith grabbed his hand.

Faith: "Wait. Don't go."

"What?"

"Stay with me. I don't want to be here alone."

Ace: "Hey, don't worry sis. I'll be here too."

Tyson: "They need my help! Labyrinth is on the loose."

"But...please don't go!"

Tyson: "If we take care of the demon you will be safe."

Marianna: "Tyson, can't you see she needs you? As a woman, I totally understand. This must be a very confusing and frightening time for her. She needs some one to count on, to be there for her, some one she can feel safe with. Ace, you are her brother. So you should stay with her as well."

Tyson: "But Labyrinth...you need my help."

Nebula: "Hey, are you saying we can't do it ourselves? You don't think I can take care of him?"

Tyson: "No, not at all. I know what you can do, Nebula. Go get him."

Nebula: "I thought so."

So Nebula flew out the balcony, followed by Marianna, Mac and Zelfire.

Ace: "I'll be guarding the door outside. If ya need anything, just call me." He left.

Faith: "I will."

Tyson: "Faith, you should get some rest now."

"Okay. But don't leave."

"I won't. I'll be right here, not going anywhere."

Labyrinth and his demon minions were destroying a village. He stood on a rooftop of a straw house, throwing fire balls everywhere. The people ran for their lives.

The four heroes could sense him.

Once they reached the small village, they landed on separate rooftops.

Left head: "So these puny mortals are more foolish than we thought."

Right head: "They came here to stop us. But they cannot defeat our power!"

Marianna: "Ruthless savage! You shall be vanquished."

Nebula: "You can count on that."

Zelfire: "Such an evil force as you cannot exist in this world."

All the heroes powered up. The demons attacked them, and they fought.

Marianna: "I'll make you wish you were never born!" She loaded an arrow and aimed. "Celestial Arrow!" She shot it and the arrow flew like a missile. The demon monster didn't even bother to move away. The arrow went through his chest and out his back. A little stream of red was seen at the hole, but it disappeared within seconds. He was unharmed.

Mac: "It went right through him!"

Nebula: "There must be a way to kill him." He jumped down and ran. He punched and punched but Labyrinth dodged his attacks. The demon punched his face then grabbed his head and ran. Zelfire jumped down to help his friend. Labyrinth threw Nebula at Zelfire and he fell down, with Nebula on top of him. Macintosh blasted a shockwave at him, but it had no effect.

Mac: "No way!"

Labyrinth blasted him. "Ha ha ha ha ha!" laughed both heads.

Marianna charged and got whacked and fell. Nebula fired a big Energy Bomb at the demon and exploded. BOOM! Smoke was everywhere. Just when Neb thought he was gone for good, behind the smoke was a silhouetted figure of Labyrinth walking towards him. Neb took a step back and the demon put his arm forward and fired an energy ray and hit him. Zap!

Left head: "Is that the best you can do? Pathetic."

Zelfire: "Die!" He fired the Energy Blast and Labyrinth jumped, avoiding it. In the air, the demon turned his arms stretched long and they grabbed Zelfire. Labyrinth landed, and turned his body, swinging Zelfire into a house. Crash! Then his arms turned back to normal.

Right head: "Ha ha ha ha ha! Mortals are so foolish."

Zelfire, lying on the ground, barely able to speak, let out a sigh of defeat and despair. "This can't be happening..." he said, with blood coming out of his mouth.

Afterwards, Labyrinth had made it to the Tower of Idel, knowing the princess was inside. He took a step forward and winced and stepped back. Zzzzt. He had touched the invisible spiritual shield which prevents evil spirits from entering the tower. The more evil the force, the stronger the force field.

Left head: "So, that foolish king thinks this will stop us from entering the tower?"

Right: "We must come separate in order to go inside."

So, Labyrinth's body was beginning to change. A small line appeared in the middle of his body, splitting it in half. Then, Labyrinth became two smaller demons, each with two arms. The one with the left head, **Laby**, was a little bigger than his counter part, with bigger arms and more flexible legs, and his skin was mostly black. The one with the right head, **Rinth**, had skinnier, longer arms, claw like nails, and a chest of armor, and his skin was mostly red.

One went to the left, the other went to the right.

Meanwhile, up on the balcony, Tyson stood there enjoying the breeze. The wind blew at him and his hair was waving. Faith was sound asleep by now, on the floor, covered by a blanket.

He felt very confused, not completely understanding all that has happened so far. How can a Sacred Scroll possibly tell one's future? Is there a way to prevent one's destiny? This all sounded so ridiculous to him. The Sacred Scrolls were just some silly papers written by a person in the past. How could that person know what will happen to Faith? Ahh yes, that was what all this was about...Faith. His love for her was much deeper than he actually knew. He had to protect her. She was now at a vulnerable time and his responsibility is to be here to keep her safe.

Tyson walked over to her and brushed her hair a little. Ah, how beautiful she is, on the outside and inside. And just a few mornings ago, the very opposite happened; she woke up before him and watched him sleep.

Ace stood by the closed door, bored, but alert. He was leaning on his sword and was ready to kill any demon who tried to come. He knew that no demons can come into the tower, but he was there just in case. On the wall, a foamy, slimy, black liquid was dripping onto the ground, gathering into a pile. It was not going drop by drop, rather it was going like a stream.

Ace: "Huh?"

The liquid turned into Laby right in front of his eyes.

Ace: "Laby-rinth?"

Laby: "I have come for the princess."

Ace: "You're not coming in through here!"

Laby: "Your resistance is a brave, yet futile effort."

Ace charged at him, Laby's hand stuck out and hit his chest, knocking his back against the door. The liquid from Laby's hands surrounded Ace and he struggled to get free. He slashed the slime and ran for the demon, and Laby's other arm grew long and punched him in the face, and he fell down.

Back at the balcony, Tyson heard a dripping sound. He saw a blackish, thick liquid falling onto the floor. He thought it was a leak and decided to check it out. But, his instincts told him something was wrong, and it's definitely not a leak. He jumped onto the roof and Rinth was in front of him.

"Labyrinth?" he asked, not recognizing the smaller form of the demon. "You look different."

"Indeed." said the demon with a wicked smile. "I am the second half of the complete me. The other half is after Princess Faith."

"Faith? Oh no."

"You cannot help her now."

"Yes I can!"

They started fighting on the roof, and down below Faith was sound asleep. There was a very small space between the bottom of the door and the floor, and a liquid crept inside. It slowly gathered into the room and grew taller and taller, forming Laby. As Faith was still pleasantly sleeping, a shadow covered her face.

She woke up sleepily and saw Laby. She gasped in surprise and fear. "You! What are you doing here?!"

"To kill you, princess. I hope you are ready to die!"

"No, no!" she cried, crawling back.

Laby's arm grew long and grabbed her neck, lifting her up. Her feet were off the ground and his fingers were breaking her neck. Her hands grabbed his hand helplessly and she gasped for air.

Up on the roof, Rinth turned into liquid form and spread himself all over the roof. He trapped Tyson's feet and went for his arms. Tyson screamed and powered up, blowing the liquid away. In the air, the liquid turned back into Rinth. Tyson fired an energy ball at him.

Faith, still being strangled, was helpless like a doll and tears fell on her cheeks. Nearing the end, she thought she was going to die for good. Suddenly a piece of the ceiling crashed down and down came Tyson. He punched Laby into the wall, and Faith fell on her back. She got up and hugged him. "Tyson! I was so scared!"

"It's okay. I'm here."

Then Laby and Rinth approached them. Faith went behind Tyson, grabbing his shirt in fear. The lovers took a step back, and the demons advanced.

Rinth: "There is no escape for you now, Phenalian."

Faith: "How did you find us?"

Laby: "Ha ha ha ha. I have been observing you for some time, princess. I know everything about you. Do you know how long I've been waiting for this day?"

Rinth: "Ah, I can remember it like yesterday. The day I was cursed."

"Cursed?"

The demon Labyrinth terrorized the village, and they screamed in fear. The demon laughed manically. Until a man with wings showed up. A Phenalian man.

They fought valiantly, but the Phenalian was fatally injured and bleeding heavily. So he used his blood to put a curse on Labyrinth. His blood spread over the demon's body, and he screamed as he was being burned. Soon enough, the demon turned into a human.

"No!! What have you done, you bastard?"

"Heh, you are no longer powerful. But you're a mere mortal now."

And with that said, the man with wings collapsed. That man was Faith's grandfather.

Faith: "No way. My grandfather was the one who sealed you?"

Laby: "Correct. I had to break the seal. I hated being mortal, especially with a body of only one head! Later on I learned that in order to break the cursed seal, I need to have the blood of a Phenalian. But by the time...the Phenalian race was wiped out. Luckily, my sources tell me there is still one alive who has Phenalian blood - yours."

Rinth: "And now that we are free again, we can do anything we want. And kill anyone we want. And we will start with you. Because I hate Phenalians."

Laby: "All Phenalians must die!"

Tyson: "Back off!" He charged at them and fought both demons as Faith hid behind the column, watching in fear. Wham! Bam! Pow! Crack! Tyson was punched into the column. The demons approached closer. Tyson got up and blasted Laby out of the tower. Kapow! Then he punched Rinth in the stomach and he fell into a wall.

Tyson: "Faith! Leave this place now!"

Rinth recovered and came towards them. Faith, instinctively took out her red rose and its vine whip hit Rinth and whooped him! The whip's thorns pinched him and he fell into liquid form.

In the air, Laby fired an energy beam at the tower. Tyson countered with an energy ball. Kaboom. "Faith, leave now!" he repeated.

Faith: "What about you?"

Tyson: "Just go!"

Laby gathered some energy and fired a really big ultra thick ball at them. Tyson fired the Energy Blast to counter the ball, and the two forces crashed into each other and exploded violently. BOOM! Faith picked up her fallen brother and ran down the stairs. At the top floor, everything was falling apart. The floor that Tyson stood on exploded into nothing and the roof collapsed. The whole tower was crumbling down.

When things calmed down, everything was quiet.

Faith found herself next to a pile of rubble. She got up and found nobody in sight. The Tower of Idel was no more. For a second, she feared the worse. "Ace? Tyson?" she called. But there was no answer. She found an arm under the pile of rubble and pulled it out. Ace was unconscious and bleeding on the forehead. At least her brother was safe. But what about Tyson? Is he alright? "Tyson?"

She saw him coming to her slowly. His face and forehead was blackened with dust.

"Faith..."

"Tyson..." She ran to him and they hugged.

"Listen you two..." Ace said, getting up. "I believe Labyrinth maybe still alive. You better leave."

Faith: "Then all of us will go together."

Ace: "No, I'll only slow you down in my condition. Just leave."

Tyson: "He's right." He was looking at the ground, where the black slime was forming a figure. "Let's get outta here!" He took Faith by the hand and ran away. Moments later, the full and complete Labyrinth was formed once again.

Ace, breathing hard, stood firm and waited for the demon to come to him. "Let's go you vermin!!" he yelled, and charged.

Night time came and Tyson, with Faith, stopped running. They found a place like Stonehenge, an area with a bunch of large stones and decided to rest there. The place was quiet, not a sound was heard except for them.

Tyson put his hand on the stone and put his forehead against his hand, panting for breath. "We finally got away."

"What will we do now?" she asked.

"I don't know. We have to regroup with the others to think of a plan."

Then there were a few moments of silence.

Then, Faith spoke up. "Tyson, I think I understand it now."

"Understand what?"

"The prophecy."

"What about it?"

"Don't you see? Labyrinth is born because of me...because of my Phenalian blood. And only I can defeat the demon, alone. **I am the chosen one.** I am the last surviving Phenalian in this world. And I am the paladin of the land. It is my duty to defeat Labyrinth."

"Don't talk like that Faith!" he said, getting confused.

"At this point there is no denying it!" she burst out. "Everything that has happened so far is written in the Sacred Scrolls." Then, she added grimly, "Every single event in my life."

"That is absurd! The Scrolls don't tell us our destinies! We make our own destiny, Faith. We mold our paths by the choices we make everyday, the decisions we choose, not some silly piece of paper."

"Is that what it is to you? Just some silly piece of paper?" she said in contempt.

"Look, Faith..."

"It is unavoidable. I must die to save this world. There is nothing we can do to avoid it."

"No! I won't let you die like that!" he yelled. "There must be another way."

"There is no other way. I'm sorry."

"I still refuse to believe such a thing." Tyson hollered.

"Tyson! The Scrolls said that I would travel to another world and find the man I love. And then I'd come back and cause the rebirth of the most dangerous demon ever known - Labyrinth."

Tyson's face was completely shocked. Faith had never seen him like this before, never as horrified, as confused, as scared before. He was speechless.

"Tyke, I have no choice."

"Don't go. Don't do it."

"How selfish of you! I'm doing it so I can save thousands of lives! Because you don't want me to go...and what of those innocent people?"

"Selfish? Selfish?" he said, offended. "How can you call me selfish? After all that I've done for you? And every time the world is in danger I risked my life so that every one can live, and I expect nothing in return! Nothing! Is that what you call selfish?"

"Look...It was the wrong word. Just forget it." she said, turning away.

It was an intense night indeed. He knew the argument was going nowhere, so he sighed and thought of a way to end it. But nothing prepared him for what she was about to do...

She turned around, with the ring in her hand, not on her finger. "This is the ring that you gave me on our anniversary. You can have it back." she said with much effort. He didn't do anything. She put it in his hand and closed his fist. "Goodbye, Tyson."

"Goodbye? But...is that it? It ends just like that?"

"I'm sorry it had to turn out this way. You had to fall in love with someone doomed to perish one day. I am truly sorry. But I **will** cherish all those moments we had together. All those happy times..." She paused. "Go back to your world, Tyson. I'm sure there are plenty of girls who are right for you. You'll find the right one."

"No Faith! You're the girl for me...I won't love any one else like I loved you. No one."

"It's strange, really. Right now I understand more than ever."

"Faith..."

She began to walk away, then he grabbed her and kissed her passionately. She struggled to get free, pushed him off and gave him a hard slap in the face. SMACK! It hurt him much more than she knew, on the outside and inside.

"You still don't get it, do you?" she yelled angrily. She spoke as if he had no right to kiss her at all, as if he was not her love anymore.

"Faith...I love you!"

She ran away and faded into the darkness.

Alone, he opened his palm with the ring on it. It once was worn on her finger, a symbol of their love and emotional bondage. But what love is it if one is destined to die?

Tears dripped on the ring. He closed his palm, forming a really tight fist. "FAITH!!!" he screamed madly. "Faith!"

A distance away, the princess could hear the echoes of his cries. She stopped for a second, then looked down and moaned. There were tears in her eyes. "Sorry Tyson." she whispered. She clenched her fists and continued running.

"No, no, it's not fair! It's not fair!" Tyson screamed. He punched the stone, cracking it. "FAAAAITH!" He fell on his knees, his hand still holding the ring. He couldn't control the tears as they came, and he closed his eyes painfully.

He flashed back to all those wonderful times when he and Faith were together, happily living a peaceful life. Those memories seemed like another life time to him now. The images keep popping up...their first kiss, the time they hugged so tightly after a life and death battle, the time they fought Vega, and of course, the time he gave her the ring.

[E] Title Contents

As for Faith, she saw only one path ahead of her now. The road that lay stretched before was dark and treacherous, but she faced it bravely. The forest was calm and quiet. She stood still for a few seconds to prepare herself for the moment of her life, what everything was leading up to.

Suddenly, a bright light appeared in front of her. A white horse appeared. Not just any horse...it was a horse she was very familiar with. Its eyes glowed in the night.

"Lady?" she asked, a little surprised.

The horse made a sound, signaling her to get on.

"Yes, I understand." She hopped on and pulled the straps. Lady galloped like a speeding bullet.

Within the same forest, Labyrinth knew the princess was coming. Their next encounter would be the final battle, a fight to the death. Both heads smiled.

Gallop...gallop....gallop...

Faith could sense an evil force up ahead. Lady could sense it too. Obviously, it could be no other than the two headed demon.

From out of nowhere these black slimey creatures with giant eyes popped up. They were all over the ground. They came in all size and shapes, but they were all the same thing. One of them jumped at Faith, and she drew her Soul Sword and chopped it in half. Lady galloped and stepped on some of them as Faith cut them. Slash! Whoosh! One of the slimes was above her, she slashed it into a hundred pieces.

Suddenly, Lady stopped running. It's feet was trapped on something. It raised its front legs, moving violently. Faith, unable to control it, jumped off. The slime creatures were coming from a hole on the ground and they were sucking the horse down.

Faith: "Lady! Lady!" There was nothing she could do. She watched helplessly as the slimes trapped its legs and its body, and its face. Epsilon sank into the ground and was gone forever. "Lady!" Realizing that there was nothing she could do, she held back her anger and ran ahead.

From the darkness came out a figure she recognized to be Prince Darian of Zaibach. The mere presence of him was a total shocker to her. Her old friend and enemy had come back now.

"D...Darian?"

The prince grinned maliciously. "Well well, it has been a while, is it not, Princess Faith?"

"Impossible! You're d-dead."

"Dead? Then how am I able to stand before you now?"

"No...no..." she said, taking a few steps back. He approached slowly. "This...is... not happening!"

"What is the matter? Afraid to greet an old friend?"

"Stay back!" She took another step back and bumped into somebody. She turned around and saw Vega. "Vega?"

Vega: "Hello princess."

Then from the darkness another being appeared, this one was Morpheus. Then came Zai, along with Rubeus.

Faith was surrounded and undeniably scared to death. "Get away from me!!"

Morpheus: "Did you miss me?"

Zai: "Today, princess, you die."

Vega: "You shall die!"

They approached her and they were upon her. "Get away!!! Stay back!" she screamed frantically. Then she grew calmer, then summoned her Soul Swords. She slashed at her former enemies, attacking all directions. "This is not real...you are all nothing but illusions!"

Rubeus: "Are you sure about that?"

Faith: "Illusions! Nothing more than a trick! Now begone!" She slashed at Vega, and he turned into dust. Then she stabbed Morpheus, and he turned into dust.

Zai: "No!" Then Zai, Morpheus, and Darian all turned into dust.

"Labyrinth, your petty little tricks annoy me. Come and show your two faces here!" Faith yelled, pointing her Soul Sword at the trees.

A moment passed, and Labyrinth showed himself from behind the trees. They were now a running distance away from each other. "Very good, Princess Faith. You were able to see through my illusions."

"Those were but cheap tricks. Now fight me!"

Left head: "Gladly."

Zap! A ray was fired and Faith dodged to the side. She ran forward and slashed her sword, but Labyrinth dodged. She slashed again, and the demon formed a shield around himself and she bounced off. She got back up and grunted.

"Now, behold...we shall unleash our true powers! And what you are about to see is no illusion." Labyrinth started to grow tall and big. Faith watched in a state of disbelief as he grew to twice her size, then four times, then as tall as a building. He kept on growing and growing...until she was a doll compared to him. "How do you like this?"

"Impossible!"

"I will squash you like a teensy weensy bug!"

"No!" She fired the Mega Beam at the giant's stomach, but it had no effect.

"Ouch! That tickles."

He took a gigantic step and she ran forward, and his foot almost crushed her flat. She ran past him and jumped onto one of the dojo roofs. Labyrinth walked towards her. Each step he made the ground shook and produced a loud thud sound. Thud! Thud! Thud!

She fired the Energy Bomb, but it had no effect. The giant dug its arms into the dojo and Faith jumped out of the way just in time. Labyrinth took its hand out and headed for her again.

Faith: "This is hopeless! How am I supposed to win?"

Nebula: "So, tell me...what exactly happened between you two?"

Tyson was silent.

"You were hardly like this. What happened? Something must have happened."

"It is the prophecy."

"Yes, Midas mentioned it briefly. What is it all about?"

He didn't answer.

"That bad, huh?" Nebula said, assuming from his brother's silence.

Tyson showed him the ring. "She is going to die."

"Die?!"

"Aren't you going to help her?"

"She doesn't want my help." he said, looking down.

"Snap out of it Tyson! This is your own love we're talking about. When you forgot your anniversary we were here to help...but it's YOUR relationship. Me, Zelfire, Mac are your friends, but we can't help out with everything between you and Faith. Some times you must decide for yourself the right thing to do." he walked away.

Tyson's face suddenly changed. What Neb just said was right. Very right. He must go and save her love, even if it means battling against fate.

Neb returned to the castle, where the others were anxious for the news.

Ace: "Are they-"

Neb: "They're both alive, but separated."

Zelfire: "Separated? Labyrinth is on the loose, and they're in great danger."

Marianna: "Shan't we look for them?"

Neb: "No. This is one battle they must fight on their own."

"No no no!" grumbled King Midas on his chair. "This is what I feared. The day that I prayed for twenty years would not come about."

"Your majesty, I know you are sad, but the prophecy is the prophecy. Your daughter is the chosen one. It cannot be changed." said the advisor, bowing his head.

Midas: "Just be quiet."

Socrates: "I understand how you feel." He smiled. "I feel pity for the princess."

Neb: "So it's over for her? Just like that?"

Socrates: "I am truly sorry. There is nothing that any of us can do to help her."

He smiled again. "But look at the bright side, now that she is out of the way, I can finally have what I want."

Midas: "What are you blabbing about?"

Everybody stared at the advisor, standing in the middle of the room. Something was changing inside of him and that changed brought itself to the outside. His body grew more hairy; in fact, every bit of skin was covered by gray, furry like hair. His face grew uglier and his mouth grew bigger, with sharper teeth. His eyes turned red and twisted and he started drooling. Legs sprouted from its body and its original arms turned into a giant spider-like arm, with a blade-like shape.

This transformation of man to spider-demon struck them all senseless.

Zelfire: "What in the hell!?"

Arachnid: "Now, I shall have your throne, your majesty!"

It crawled super fast towards Midas and he ran to the side. Arachnid crawled on top of the chair and on the wall. Macintosh fired a beam, the spider jumped away, and shot a web-like substance at him. He couldn't move.

Marianna: "I shall vanquish you, demon!" She shot an arrow and despite its large size, Arachnid's quickness allowed it to dodge it easily, crawling to the ceiling.

Swoosh! Marianna got hit by its web strings and she was stuck to the wall. Nebula ran to a good shooting spot and fired several energy balls, but Arachnid dodged them all. It went to the other wall to the floor. Zelfire fired an energy beam and Arachnid jumped, dodging it, and landed on top of Zelfire. He was trapped under one of its arms.

The demon spider laughed in an annoying way. "Har har har."

Midas: "What is the meaning of this Socrates?"

"I am not Socrates, you old fool. I am tired of working for you. Today is my day of destiny. Har har har."

"You damn demon." Midas got into fighting stance.

"I have envisioned this day for many years, your majesty. Oh, how I planned carefully, waiting for this glorious day." Its face was longer Socrate's face, but rather, an ugly, hairy, face.

Midas: "You are teaming up with Labyrinth?"

"But of course. This part wasn't mentioned in the Sacred Scrolls – because I deleted this portion. Har har har. The prophecy also foretold the end of Almerak. Or more specifically, the end of you, old man."

Nebula: "You ungrateful shit. After all he's done for you, you go and betray him?" He jumped at the spider, and its hind leg whacked him away. Wham.

Midas was dumbfounded. "Socrates...you never liked me, did you?"

Zelfire struggled to get free.

"You got that right, you old shit! It all adds up now, doesn't it? Remember Koga? Ever wondered how he was able to poison your food? He had to have someone from the inside deliver the poison. And have you ever wondered how Labyrinth got into the palace? And how does he know about the whereabouts of the Tower of Idel?"

Midas: "That was you?"

"Har har har. Yes! I gave away all the secrets to your palace. Har har. Your daughter shall meet her end tonight. And so shall you. The entire Midas bloodline ends now."

"I know what I must do now." Tyson said, running desperately. "I have to get there before it's too late..."

Faith fired a powerful energy ball at Labyrinth's chest, but it turned into smoke once it touched him. Then, both mouths opened and an ultra-thick beam blew out. Faith jumped onto another roof to avoid the beams. They were destroying the buildings and the ground.

Faith: "Vine Whip!" She threw a rose into the giant's chest. At first, Labyrinth thought that was all, but then roots growing from the rose tied him up and the thornes pierced his skin. The Phenalian princess gathered energy as Labyrinth ripped the vines off him. Once he was free, she was almost finished. Suddenly, a ray shot out from his chest and sucked her inside. "No!" The ray was pulling her closer and closer to him, and both heads were laughing.

Right head: "This is where you meet your end, Princess Faith!"

Arachnid kicked Zelfire away, and jumped at the king.

"This is madness!" Midas shouted, running away. Arachnid smashed the chair, and chased him. Whack! The king was knocked down. The spider shot its web and Midas was stuck to the floor.

"You are through."

"Not quite." Midas began chanting an incantation spell.

"No!" screamed the spider. "Aaargh!" He was hurting bad.

Nebula drew his sword and ran to save his king. Arachnid sliced its blade-arm and it clashed with his sword. Clang. Arachnid swings one of his legs, Neb ducked and cut off the hairy leg. Slice! Blood splattered out of the wound. Zelfire grabbed its arm and pushed it off him, and he ran off. Midas fired an energy ball and hit the demon's back. It roared in pain like a lion.

Zelfire jumped on its back and grabbed its head, and Arachnid shook its body and crawled everywhere, trying to get him off. Then its scorpion-like tail caught Zell and threw him away. Midas released a beam and it was zapping the demon senseless. Then Nebula fired the Nebulon Blast – and it was too much for him to bear.

It roared angrily as it turned into dust.

The ray was drawing her closer to Labyrinth. “I will suck you inside of me! Say your prayers, chosen one.” the giant said.

She knew death was near. Her fate would be met soon. There was nothing else she could do. “The only way to destroy him is to use the Energy Bomb inside of him - but then I’ll die too. So this is the moment my life has been leading up to.” As she was drawn nearer, she was regretting what she did to Tyson. She should have been nicer and said goodbye, instead of slapping him.

Right now, her life flashed before her eyes. Many images appeared...the time she fell off her horse and Tyson caught her and how strange and emotional she felt...the time in the cold cave when Tyson risked his life to save her and she healed him and cried for him...the time they killed Vega...the time he gave her the ring... “Goodbye everybody!” she said sadly, yet with dignity. “Goodbye dear father, goodbye my brother, goodbye all my wonderful friends...and...goodbye Tyson.”

Suddenly Tyson showed up and caught her and flew away.

“Tyson?” she asked in surprise. She thought she was dreaming and Tyson was an angel here to save her life.

He landed on a cliff and put her down. He stared at her for a few moments and did not look anywhere else. “Faith.”

“Tyson.”

“I won’t let you die without a fight! I truly believe that it was us who brought us together, not fate.”

Her eyes glittered in surprise, those same bright, admiring eyes showed when she first recieved her ring.

“If you fight, then we fight together!” He turned super sayan.

The giant Labyrinth approached them. Left head: “Looky here, the noble warrior has come to save the princess!”

Right head: “It’s too bad they don’t get a happy ending!”

“They should die together.”

Tyson: “Now give him all you got!!!” He powered up to the extreme.

Faith: “We fight together and we die together!” She powered up to the max, and electric sparks and waves of energy went through her body.

At the same time, Tyson fired the Wrath Beam and Faith fired the Mega Beam, and Labyrinth fired a black and powerful beam. Tyson and Faith’s energies merged into each other and broke through the black beam, and hit Labyrinth. “AAAAARRRRRGH!” The entire sky turned completely white and seconds later everything was covered in white light. The force cut the demon in half, splitting a red line between the two heads. Then the two halves exploded.

BOOM!

The explosion was so powerful all the buildings close by were destroyed, and Tyson and Faith were blown off the cliff. The cliff itself shattered into rocks and crumbled.

Morning came, and things were calm and peaceful. What now lay on the land was the destruction of the night before, the pieces of buildings, the burned trees, and the rubbles everywhere.

Faith woke up, finding herself face flat on the ground. Tyson was unconscious next to her. Without any strength to get up, she grabbed his shoulder and shook him lightly. "Tyson." she said softly. "Tyson."

He woke up and she smiled. "Princess? We're alive."

"You saved me."

"I had to do it."

"So I was wrong after all."

"Faith, there is only one thing I ask of you now."

"What?"

"Will you put the ring back on?"

"Yes."

He fumbled in his pocket and took out the anniversary ring. His hand was injured and scratched and trembled when he handed it to her. She took it and put it in its rightful spot. Then they held each other's hands for the rest of the time until they were rescued.

And so a legacy ends. But was it Tyson's and Faith's love for each other that defied her doomed fate, or were the Sacred Scrolls inaccurate? No one will ever know...

End

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Characters		
Name	Role	Personality
Reaver	A demon who kills on a certain day every year	A
Temari	The girl with wings who Faith respects	S
Lana	Girl whose soul is inside the sword	-
Forcis	Man whose soul is inside the sword	-
Koga	Ninja master, leader of the Lin Kiu Klan	T
Old man in hood	Someone who is very angry	?
Labyrinth (Laby + Rinth)	An ancient and powerful demon	?
Socrates	King Midas's advisor	S

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