

— *January 24th, 1918. Unknown Location, ???* —

Lui appeared in the middle of what appeared to be a town of sorts. None of the big cities like Berlin, Munich, or Hamburg. It was small, with a stone-paved road and buildings made out of wood and plaster. Lui knew from experience that this wasn't a town that belonged to the German Empire, it had to be an independent township. The first thing that offended his nostrils was a revolting blend of burning blood, hair and fabrics. He looked down and saw several bodies of various people he had never seen before. They all lied motionless on the ground, sharing the same wound. A small, bloody hole somewhere on their torso. The buildings around him burned to a crisp, big flaming chunks from them crumbling off of their frames. It seemed that the town was set on fire, probably by the same perpetrators that committed these massacres.

In front of him was a young girl's figure. Frieda. In this scenario, her face and clothes were covered in ash, her skin adorned with bruises, and a pretty nasty injury on her right leg, forcing her to walk with a cumbering limp. Her hair wasn't in its usual twin tail form, instead cascading down her back. Her face was contorted into a sea of wrinkles, sweat pouring out of her face from both the uncomfortably hot flames and walking on an injured leg. Her eyes were a mixture of anger and fear, her pupils dilated as she took deep breaths to keep calm. She was limping after a red figure in the distance. From a distance, Lui tailed the injured Frieda. It was hard to make out who the person was, but Frieda seemed to know.

Frieda continued trudging to her destination before an old man with a mustache jumped out in front of her, forcing her to stop. Lui hid behind a building to keep himself safe.

“Fraulein, turn back around! It's too dangerous!”

“I need to get to her!”

“Run! It'll save your—”

A loud, explosive sound rang out. Bits of blood littered her face. The man's voice devolved to a gargle as he looked down. The same small hole that all of the other victims had, but this time the blood poured out like a stream. His body fell to the floor. Frieda, her hands trembling and her pupils dilated, stepped backwards in horror. The figure she was chasing after held a smoking pistol in her hand. Her skin was entirely red, eyes void of pupils. The expression on her face was completely bland, unreadable.

"Aigis!" Frieda called out to her. This must have been the sister in trouble she kept mentioning.

"You don't have to do all of this! Just come back home! I miss you!"

The girl pulled out a long knife without a word. She silently charged at Frieda, forcing the girl to pull up a very faint shield. Aigis swung the knife like a sword as it caught onto the shield. It began to crack, the knife coming closer and closer to Frieda.

"Frieda!" Lui called out to the girl. Frieda turned her head and staggered upon seeing Lui here. She unconsciously let her shield down, giving Aigis ample time to strike. Aigis grabbed her shoulder and plunged it into her sister.

Frieda jumped up, immediately going into a hyperventilating fit. Crystal tears escaped from the bottom of her eyes as she struggled to breathe. A pair of gentle hands caressed her shoulders, trying to calm her down.

"Easy! Easy." He soothed. Frieda's rapid breathing slowed alongside her mind. She finally noticed her surroundings. It was still nighttime in Selkefall, Frieda was right where she was when she had fallen asleep. Once she calmed down, Lui stepped back, looking down on her with a serious expression.

“Lui?”

“Are you okay? What happened?” The boy asked, feigning ignorance. Frieda gently caressed her own chest. She was now feeling better, but the lingering panic clung to her like a snail stuck to a wall. She was scared of even speaking. Her throat shut tight, not letting even air escape. Lui knelt down and looked her in the eye.

“It’s okay if you don’t want to tell me. I just want to help you.” He spoke, trying his best to appear comforting. Frieda took a deep breath, and began explaining.

“I saw Aigis. She killed a bunch of people and burned down a city.”

“You didn’t know where?”

“No, I’ve never seen that place in my life.”

Lui thought to himself a moment. “You said you *dreamt* this?”

“I had to be.”

Lui stood back up. “That’s impossible.”

“What do you mean?”

“Psychokinetics don’t have dreams.”

Frieda looked down and sighed. Her hands were shaking again, her nerves completely shot.

“For regular people. For Psychokinetics, what you think was a dream was actually a vision,” Lui looked up at the sky. “There are an infinite number of possible realities. What you saw was just one of them.”

“And how do you know all this?” Frieda interrogated. Lui shrugged.

“A Psychokinetic’s mental health is just as important as their physical health. If your powers aren’t progressing the way you hoped, trauma or anxiety might be holding you back.”

“I asked you how you know that!”

Lui shrugged his shoulders. “I’m just a normal guy.”

Frieda didn’t buy that. Not even for a second. But she knew she couldn’t get an answer out of this tight-lipped boy. She needed something to test it. She looked around and found a small rock. She picked it up and tossed it in her hand before flinging it at Lui. She expected the rock to bounce right off his forehead and make him wince. Instead, the rock somehow flew right through his body. The boy didn’t even flinch.

“Huh?” The girl stammered, trying to wrap her head around what she just saw. Lui chuckled. Frieda tried again, picking up another rock and tossing it. Lui didn’t react, instead letting the rock fly right through his body. Frieda tried once more, this time getting the rock to ricochet off of his cheek. Five seconds after the rock flew through his face, he half-assedly brought a hand to his cheek.

“Ow. That hurt.” He whined in a deadpan tone.

“HOW?! WHA—”

Lui shrugged, throwing up his hands in surrender. “Guess my secret’s out.”

Lui’s perfectly opaque body faded into a hue of blue, making him transparent. He now had an aura to him, a faint glow of serenity. Was this a secret Psychokinetic ability?

“Are you... a ghost?”

“I prefer the term *spirit*, but yes.”

Frieda was confused, but the shock and horror were far too strong. She didn’t know whether she should scream or cry or run.

“I don’t believe you.” She finally spoke up.

“They never do.” He shook his head.

“If you’re dead, how’d you come back?”

Lui placed his hands on his hips. “It’s an ancient Psychokinetic ability. Millenia ago, they found a way to have their souls return to the real world from the Lifestream after death. Only in Aurae-rich locations, though.”

“B-B-But you touched me! You ate an apple! You seemed so... real.”

“We can choose how clearly we want to manifest ourselves and the environment we interact with. Obviously the more realistic we want to appear, the more Aurae that uses up. I actually died when I was 38, but,” Lui picked up one of the rocks Frieda threw at him and began juggling it. “I figured a middle aged guy approaching you in the wild would creep you out, so I changed into a form I thought you’d be more comfortable with. Say, myself at 18 years old.”

“If you don’t mind me asking... How’d you become a ghost?” Frieda asked. Lui tossed the rock away and started pacing.

“You remember that cottage you saw? The abandoned one?”

“Yes. What about it?”

“It used to belong to me and my family. Decades ago,” He continued to explain. He now had a sensitivity in his voice. Frieda wondered where this was when he pushed her down in that river a couple of weeks ago. “I had heard legends of an ancient PK technique that would grant eternal life. I told my family, but they didn’t believe me.”

“What happened?”

Lui now gained a snarl. “Napoleon happened. Thanks to him, the Holy Roman Empire is now a memory, and my whole family was shot down by the French. Said something about searching for a magical spear.”

Frieda felt a pang of sympathy for the boy. Even though she found him mildly annoying to deal with, he didn't deserve to go through something like that.

"I learned the skill to become an Aurae spirit. I didn't want to just sit around in the Lifestream wasting the years away. I wanted to help."

Frieda got a little impatient. "Why are you here?"

Lui turned around, giving her a little mischievous smirk. "You're not the first one to discover this spot. It's very popular among the young, trying to unlock the secrets of life and the universe," His smile faded, giving her a new serious, yet light smile. "I train them."

Frieda perked up at this. "You train?"

"Gotta use this gift of mine somehow."

Frieda looked to the side, deep in thought. She remembered the vision she had. The one with Aigis killing a bunch of people. That had to have been a warning of sorts. She was about to speak, but Lui interrupted.

"I can tell you're conflicted right now. It's a lot to take in at the moment. But you want to save Aigis, and you yourself said you didn't have a lot of time. I've trained many other Psychokinetics over the last several dozen years. I want to help you unlock the powers to save your sister."

Frieda gave a slight nod. It was true. She didn't have a lot of time, and this would be a perfect opportunity. But how would a ghost be able to teach her Psychokinesis?

"How do I know you can even still use magic?"

Lui laughed. He kept his arms at his side without moving an inch, keeping all eye contact on Frieda. On a distant mountain, a blinding light struck her eyes. A thick, white bolt of lightning struck the tip, starting a small fire. Still not moving, a bunch of water from the nearby river

splashed up and extinguished the baby forest fire before it even had the chance to grow. Lui still stood in the same position, a sly smile on his face. Frieda was amazed.

“That dream. You said that’s a possible future?”

“Could be. While there is a randomness factor in which timeline you see, if you keep seeing the same one, it could be an omen for the future.”

“Will it be the future?” She hesitantly questioned, a hand on her bosom. Lui lowered his head.

“I couldn’t tell you. But it’s possible.”

Frieda’s face hardened. If she took too long, who knows what would happen to Aigis?

“In that case, Lui. Consider me your apprentice.”

Lui saluted her. “I will not let you down. Well, I’ll try not to at least.”