# Sleeping Sound Chapter 2

The house was quiet but only for moment. The Lights turned on, people hiding behind the furniture crawled out into view, a shrill cry penetrated my ears. My heart nearly jumped out of my chest, taken aback from the suddenness of the situation.

“Happy Birthday!” everyone yelled exhaling all the breath they sucked in their lungs in preparation. Leon’s hand gently patted my back.

“You didn’t think we forgot, did you?” he whispers into my ear.

I never thought my birthday was all too important, it’s just another year on the calendar. Never needed much in the way of presents either, I never wanted to burden Kieran about it. It’s unnecessary. Yet, a smile stretched across my face. It was heartwarming to see them all there, all the most important people in my life, my misfit family made of orphans and Kieran. Kieran stood behind a splintered table, spread across it was an ugly looking table cloth dotted with woven images of flowers and vines.

To Kieran’s left stood Cara, arms open and smiling gleefully at me. Her smiling was already enough of a birthday present at least for me. Mercyhell, she is beautiful under this dim light. I’ve had a crush on this girl since she was adopted some rainy night, cold and in shock. She was defensive at first, and very alone but after a year she is fully part of our family.

In the center of the table rested a single cupcake with a single large candle standing behind it. We only had night candles, no birthday candles so they made do with that putting it next to the cupcake. I’m just amazed they even got a cupcake, I’ve never had a cupcake. The cost of one cupcake is the same for a bag of grain, there is no justifying buying one. Except now.

“Take your slacking time why don’t cha, hurry up and blow out the candle, he says playfully.

So I walk up to the table lean close and blew out the candle, eyes getting somewhat watery.

“Aw, happy 16th birthday Rin” Cara says sweetly. “I know you’ve never really celebrated birthdays, so we’re celebrating for you. Actually we’re forcing you. You are gonna stay here and you are going to like it. Register?”

Mercyhell, for how sweet she is, she could command and army with that voice.

“Haha, I got it. I can’t say no to all of this.” I say still smiling. “Thanks. This is nice. Really nice.”

“Are you tearing up? Ha, you’re slacking crying. Do you love us that much?” Leon say whilst patting my shoulder. “You we love you man, your family. Also you’re behind 16 years of birthday presents. So we got you something real nice.”

“What?” I question him.

“Open the box,” Kieran says to me smiling.

Mercyhell, these cunning slacks. They made me deliver my own present, I admire that. Must have been Cara, she is the only one sneaky enough to pull this off.

Remembering the leathered box in pocket, I reach in and grab it. Nervous as I am, I look to Kieran and she just nods. Almost just giving me approval it’s okay. I flip the lid and empty the box into my hand. Sitting in my palm was a leather strapped bracelet. The strap was a brown, tanned leather and in the middle was pinned a sigil. Made of metal, painted gold and shining in the dim light it couldn’t help but admire it. The symbol was made of three simple designs, shapes better describes it, layered atop each other. It started with a large V, a circle with its top bit cut off encases the middle of the V, and a line running down the middle of the design.

“We didn’t get it from the Reserve, it was hard to get it but you deserve it. I know you do.” Kieran says to me.

“Nifty little trick that comes with it too. Flick the metal with your nail.” Cara says anxiously. “I want to hear it sing.”

I then strap it to my wrist, taking my time to bind the leather thread. Once bound I flick the sigil, fingernail meets cold metal. It sings. The room is filled with a pleasant hum, long and constant spanning for about ten seconds. In those ten seconds no one talked, all of us were listening getting lost in its song. Even Leon was quiet for a bit.

“It’s beautiful,” I say. “Where did you get it?”

“Don’t worry about that, I am just glad you like it.” Kieran says to me. “I still remember when I found you on the street 16 years ago in a basket. You looked dreadful, you did. But right now I see a fine young man and I can’t be prouder.”

“Alright let’s cut the water works. Anymore of this mush and I might actually start tearing up myself,” Leon chiming in. “Let us get into we were all really gathered here today. The cupcake.”

I can’t help but let out a chuckle. “Well thanks for that, you really know how to make a guy feel special don’t you?” I say grinning myself.

“Slack off, you know you want it too. Like, it’s been how long since we got our hands on something this good looking?” He says tapping his chin with his index finger. “Ah it was a week after we took in Cara. You were really reserved back then, hated to show emotion. Yet when Kieran put that slice of cake in front of you, you started blubbering like a baby. Ah good times.”

“Oh nut up Leon. I remember when you pissed off a Warden and you got you your ass beat. I think it was what, a good three days before you stopped pouting about it.” Cara says in a response with an eyebrow raised and a straight smile.

“Point taken, I’ll shut up. So, about that cupcake. Anyone, no? Just me? Ah okay I don’t really want too, but if no one else want is going to have a go I don’t mind helping out.” He says exaggerating every other word.

Kieran looks at him inquisitively, “Kay, so no we’ll eat this after dinner. You guy got the meat from Emmet so I’m making Rin’s favorite meal, pork stew. She says giving me a wink as disappears into the kitchen.

“Alright, so there is another part to your gift,” Cara says blushing, head somewhat turned away. “I’m going to sing you a happy birthday. Don’t say anything till I finish though, it’s not the best but I’m sure you’ll like it. Here goes it.”

*Happy Birthday to You  
Happy Birthday to You  
Happy Birthday Dear Rin  
Happy Birthday to You.*

*Even if we are here, and you are there, remember,*

*From good friends and true,  
From old friends and new,  
May good luck go with you,*

*And happiness too.*

“That was amazing,” I say to her.

To which in response she walks over to me, looks me dead in the eyes and punches me straight in the gut. I lurch backward from the punch and rub my stomach to sooth the soreness.

“Oh nut up it wasn’t that amazing,” Cara says to me after turning around facing away from me. I’m sure she’s blush. Slack that’s adorable.

“Ha, she practiced so hard too. Would always sing it to me, ‘for practice’.” Leon mumbles. I wince slightly to that but don’t let it show. Mercyhell

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After Kieran finished making the stew, Leon, Cara, Kieran and myself had seated ourselves at the table table, talking and just enjoying each other’s company. Sure the party wasn’t fancy, or big, and it didn’t have a lot of people, but what it did have was a cupcake. And beer. A lot of Beer. Usually Kieran swears us all off of the stuff but she was incredibly lenient about it when Leon came into the dining room with a create full of alcohol. Which I’m sure was his present for me. Well it’s the thought that counts. Then again we all got mad drunk. Even Kieran had some, Leon was the first one drunk enough to break out in dance. It was weird and rigid dance that would have made me embarrassed for him if there was literally anybody else in the room other than the family. For all of his perfect-ness it is somewhat nice to know he slacks at something.

Mercyhell, I couldn’t watch anymore of that… interesting dance. I pushed the table to the side and shooed Leon off of the make-shift dance floor. I pulled Cara in close to me and staring reciting the steps in my head, seconds later mimicking those step with my feet. Though I loved dancing with Cara my mind was following the music Kieran put on her old radio. Forming the rhythm in my head, I step in and away from her swinging methodically with the music hands still clenched. I swing and she would swerve, our steps perfectly in sync. If you’re a well enough at dancing you can make even inexperienced dancers look great. I am so grateful Kieran thought me how to dance. She would always practice by herself late into the night trying not to wake me. One I just asked if she could teach me, I was curious. She was always graceful in her step arm flowing like water, body contorting along with the music. It was just a whim when I first started, but soon it became our thing, time we would bond. Like mother and son?

The music stops and me and Cara finish in perfect time, like it was scripted. Both of gasping for breath. It was fun, I’ve only danced with Kieran before so dancing with Cara was a nice change.

“Where did you learn that, mercyhell Rin?” Cara says to while trying to catch her breath.

“Secret,” I wink back in response.

“Slack, and here I thought I was the best dancer in the house.” He says while sitting backwards in the chair facing us.

“Really, like really really? Like I’m sure there are children with lost limbs that can dance better than you.” I laugh back.