

As the landscape around Lucian vanished, he found himself in a new environment. He could feel water lap at his ankles as if he were by the shoreline of a beach. Taking a look down, he saw he was standing on what seems to be the surface of a dark ocean. Letting out an inquisitive hum, he turned his gaze back up and towards the horizon. In the distance, the sky and sea met together in the middle. Their reflections were almost a complete perfection, the sight like a canvas.

Looking around him, the sea itself expanded around him for miles on end and uninterrupted in every direction. He saw not a single speck of land in sight, nor did a single ripple or wave interrupt the mirrored image of the sky on the water's surface. It was peaceful.. too peaceful and that set Lucian on edge. That feeling, similar to when a forest goes silent. Creasing his brows and eyeing his surroundings cautiously, he carefully took a step forward. This formed ripples around his feet and the rings traveled outwards towards the horizon, disappearing into the far distance.

It was at this moment that the feeling Lucian was having intensified. He did not feel safe and got the feeling he was being watched. No, not just watched.. Hunted. Hunted by something that he could not see. It was as if his movement had disturbed something, letting his presence be made known if it hadn't already been. Standing where he was, he surveyed the area to try and catch sight of what was causing him the feeling. He then looked down at the ocean's surface.

Below him, he saw the shadowy form of something huge and bestial beginning to emerge from the depths. The water's surface causing its boney figure to barely take a clear shape. That was when it hit Lucian that his feeling wasn't too far off. This ocean was like a web and he had just disturbed the spider at the center of it. Now that spider was coming towards the source of the vibrations.. him.

Before he could react, the creature's hand suddenly breaches the still water. The magnitude of it sending water spraying into the air and around the giant hand. Ripples wracked the once peaceful ocean's surface. It grabbed Lucian as quickly as it came and dragged him deep below the surface. Bringing him deeper and deeper into the domain of whoever this was.

He held his breath for as long as he could until he felt his lungs were about to burst, letting out a gasp before realizing he could breath just fine without issue here. As he descended deeper and deeper into the dark embrace of the oceanic abyss, thanks to his newfound form, his eyes began to adjust. He could hear the haunting, pitiful calls of whales and the sound of a woman sobbing reverberating through the water.

As he began to rapidly approach the sea floor below, he could see the skeletons of every sea creature imaginable, some of which he couldn't say he'd even seen or even heard of before, littered the depths like an underwater graveyard. He could feel the boney appendage relinquish its grip on him, allowing him to land and right himself quickly upon the sandy surface. Despite the descent through water, his necklace with the Vell's Crown ward attached to it managed to stay around his neck.

Looking upwards, he was quick to notice and take in the imposing form before him. Bones and water made up the likeness of the being that sat upon a throne of skulls and other bones from marine life. Sadness was etched within the horse-shaped skull, telling of an untold story of pain and sorrows. He knew for certain that this was Mare, recalling what he was told about how Lapsus had consumed her. Her tall, skeletal figure loomed before him, unmoving as she stared at him defensively. She was watching.. waiting for him to make his next move.

Lucian remained where he stood as he assessed her, managing to clear his mind of his initial feelings. He could see she was doing the same and was on the defensive after what she'd gone through. He had experienced this many times before with individuals, especially cypherus, who were hunted down by Gremcorps and were guarded, uncertain to trust. His eyes turned towards what Mare then ended up presenting to him willingly. A wound in her chest.. a deep one that is spilling out an endless amount of blue liquid. She craned over him, her bones creaking and groaning like a settling house or winds against a rickety building, hollowed blue eyes following his every move.

It took him a bit to realize and be certain that Mare was allowing him access to the injury. He wasn't quite sure how, but somehow he seemed to understand her intentions through words unspoken. Raising his hands up, he brought them towards the deep blue water that poured out from the hole in her chest and pressed them into it. As he did so, it was then that his mind flooded with memories that were not his own, but the sullen memory of two gods.

They appeared to him in flashes and segments of scenes. At first it started out happy with the two together, sitting side by side as they laughed while Mare tenderly tended to the larger, armored figure.. Lapsus. The scene then shifts to a quiet night as she goes to visit him as he stands guard over the troupe, offering gifts and exchanging gentle words between each other. It was then that things started changing.

Lucian watched as Mare tried to offer Lapsus comfort, able to feel her worry.. her deep desire to provide him with succor as he gradually grew more agitated and restless. Until eventually, the scene shifted again to where the two stood and started arguing back and forth. It continued until Lucian had to witness Mare's untimely demise. Her life abruptly came to an end at the hands of one she trusted.

Lucian's eyes had gone wide and felt a primal tug in his chest. Before he knew it, he heard himself cry out, anything to try and help.. to prevent this from happening. The scene bringing out a side of him he'd long since repressed when he took up leadership to protect hunted grems like himself and also a shame he'd felt and to this day still feels. However, it's too late as these events before him had already come to pass.

He took a breath and turned away from the gruesome betrayal before him. As he did so, the scene had changed again but this time it was different. It was his own memories that now surrounded him.

Police tapes surround the scene of a murder, sirens wailing from the surrounding police cars. The victim amongst it all was Lucian's owner, his injuries pointing to that of a cypherus' doing. Lucian had felt many things that day.. grief, anger, betrayal, etc. The very thing his owner and himself had been trying to help was the very thing that had taken his owner's life. His anger.. bitterness and resentment led him down a path of abandoning his owner's goals. Turning towards hunting down the cypher who had taken his owner's life before he'd have nothing to do with cyphers anymore and just leave them to the authorities.

Things would take a different turn of events as the authorities, particularly those at Gremcorps, would trace things from his creation commission to his owner. The scene shifted to a new one where he was among a group of other grems. He had been approached, taken in and made an offer to. The offer being that he worked for them to hunt down cypherus and bring them in to be contained by VesselCorps in return for his life. He had agreed as he didn't really have any other option at the time and held negativity towards cyphers.

One of the grems in the group he was a part of was Levi. One of the ones he knew was rather dedicated to being a cypherus hunter. Even during his service, Levi had a particularly close eye on him and disliking. The scenes shifted through cyphers that their team hunted down and brought into detainment or were to kill on sight.

The scene would then shift to when Lucian had found himself within the air ducts of the lower levels of GremCorps, where VesselCorps did their deeds. It was by pure accident he had found a way to the deeper levels and had snuck in. While he and the rest of the team were able to be in the lower levels, they had limited clearance to what areas they could access. It was here that he'd seen what happened to contained cypherus and not just them.. but also regular grems as well. Horrified and disgusted by what he was seeing and had contributed too, along with the kill-on-sights even if it wasn't by his own hand.

Having seen enough he'd escaped from the facility and with everything he learnt, it gave him a change of heart. He realized why his owner strove to help save cypherus and what happened to them if they were caught. It had caused everything to click into place about his owner who had always been a mystery to him due to being secretive about his past. He was able to piece that his owner was an ex-scientist of VesselCorps but started feeling and seeing how wrong things were and fled. Knowing he'd be hunted, he went under the radar into hiding and changed his name to not be tracked, knowing the ins and outs and workings of the corporation. With this, he was able to commission Lucian to help him with his goal.

The scenes then changed to C.A.E.S.A.R headquarters. Since that revelation, he'd gone on to carry out the mission, forming a group of other grems who were also hunted as part of a resistance group. One of the members had an outside connection which helped them to expand their cause and underground operations which led to the creation of the hidden underground facilities being built for their operations and renamed themselves to the current name. He has since then dedicated himself to saving all kinds of grems alike from GremCorps and their darker, shady side. Giving them a place to stay should they so choose.

It weighs on his conscience what he has done prior to C.A.E.S.A.R but he keeps strong for those that look to his leadership, even if he often times overworks himself and neglects his own health. To this day he still seeks the cypher that matches what would cause the wounds on his owner but not with the intent he previously had. Instead, to understand and try to help them if at all possible. He had come to learn not everything is so black and white. That there are those like his owner that can change for the better and there are those who are good but can change for the worst. Even then those ones could still be brought back for the better and good again. There are those though he has learnt and had to come to accept are beyond redemption, too beyond fixing.

Deep down, he supposed he knew and had a feeling what he was doing wasn't right, too blinded at the time to see it. That subconscious feeling may of what led him to do what he did with sneaking where he wasn't supposed to. Fate leading him back on the right path.

The scenes then faded away and Lucian found himself back in the watery abyss with the skeletal god. She cranned back from him to the more upright leaning position she had before, gazing down at him with a saddened but almost peaceful look in her hollowed, blue eyes. He returned her gaze and nodded slightly. No words needed to be spoken between them to understand the other. Their eyes and memories saying it all.

The blue faded from Mare's eyes until they were nothing but black pits. Her skeletal remains sank until they rested on the sandy ground with the rest of the bones beneath her. As he stood there with feelings of remorse and bittersweetness, he heard the familiar voice of his mysterious companion speak in his mind.

"You did it.. may Mare be able to rest in peace. Palleth is safe once more. Thank you, friend." they said.

Lucian listened as their voice faded away and he felt an odd but somehow familiar sensation wash over him. His surroundings slowly faded to black and he drifted off.

When he awoke, he found himself lying on the ground back at the spot he had been prior to being taken to the Starfix realm and where he'd woken in the realm. Standing up and getting his bearings more, he saw things weren't broken or eternally night.. he was back on Palleth!