

“Um... who are you mister?” the small child spoke, causing the man in the white hood to look over his shoulder. The child looked apprehensive, a mixture of fear and curiosity in her stormy gray eyes.

“Just an old magician, nothing much.” they said, pulling down their white hood. The dull orange glow of his gauntlet faded as he removed it, revealing a deeply scarred arm. “Are you in trouble?”

“No... I could just... tell someone was up here.” the little girl said, slowly stepping closer. “You aren’t evil, are you?”

“No, doesn’t mean you should have come alone though.” the man said, “Even someone as young as you should know better.”

“Jeez, I don’t need you to give me an earful too...” she pouted, “Do you have a name?”

“No, just a title. I don’t remember what my real name was.”

“You can’t remember your own name? You don’t look old enough to be going senile...”

“Heh, I’m a lot older than I look.”

“Yeah, but wizards are supposed to age slower, not faster!”

“Hmm, not many children your age know things like that about magic. Are you able to?”

“Mhm! Only a little though, mum doesn’t let me practice.”

“That’s a shame, people need wizards now more than ever it seems.”

“Mhm! I keep telling her that, but she doesn’t listen...”

“And what about your father?”

“He...” she began, before going silent. “He’s a magic council soldier, but we haven’t heard from him since last year.”

“She must be worried about you then.”

“Yeah, but that’s all the more reason to go practice, so I can go and find him!” she said, earnestly shining now over the fear she once had before. “I wanna be a hero like he is!”

“You want to follow in his footsteps?”

"No, I wanna be a traveller, someone who's there to help people in need when they need it! Oh! And join a really cool magic guild!"

"Big dreams, huh?" the man said, "What's your name?"

"Amelia Calding."

"Well, people nowadays call me the Peacekeeper." he said.

"W-wait! THAT Peacekeeper?! The one who went and beat that old dark wizard in grandma's stories?! But you look so young!"

"I don't age, that's all."

"So... you're a curse user like Trigno and Averill? They're so cool aren't they?"

"Yeah, there was a time that I looked up a little to both of them, but that was a long long time ago."

"Ooooooh, what's your curse then?"

"Hmm?"

"Well like, Trigno can like shoot lava and he made those cool magma blades from his arms when he was fighting this dark guild from a few years ago, and Averill has an arm made out of light! I hear all about it from the news!"

"Well, it's different from theirs," the Peacekeeper said, "The curse I hold is Absorption, the same one that dark wizard that almost destroyed the world used before I defeated him."

Amelia's face dropped. "Isn't that... evil?"

"Not on it's own. Durza, the dark wizard we speak of, was evil because he lost the ties that made him human. A magic of any kind doesn't have to be inherently good or bad, as much as some might disagree, it's the people who use them that create their roles."

"Huh?"

"Oh, i'm sorry, i'm getting a little carried away aren't I? That's a lot to front load onto someone as young as you."

"No no, I got what you were saying but..."

"What magic do you use, young wizard?"

"Fire. It's why my mom doesn't let me practice. She's afraid I'll hurt people..."

"You know, my old mentor was a master of fire magics. He was the most kind hearted person I know."

"Really?"

"Back a long long time ago, when magic was less developed, there were only 7 magics people could be born with. Of course nowadays that isn't the case, but i'm getting ahead of myself. As wizards became more powerful and experienced, their magics changed, or mutated. My mentor's fire became Phoenix magic, fires capable of healing the ones the user cares about. When I was injured during our training, he used it to aid my recovery."

"Could I get a magic like that?"

"Well, magic's don't mutate anymore, and Phoenix magic is lost to most people."

"Most people?"

"There are ways to learn magics beyond the elements that exist, I'm certain you've heard of them to some extent."

"How would I do that?"

"That's something that you don't need to know yet, but..." The Peacekeeper said, closing his eyes, "I sense a strong spirit in you. Take this," he reached into a pouch hidden under his cloak, and from within it removed an amulet with a shining orange gemstone embedded in its center.

"Is this... for me?"

"Yes. The magical potential within it is vast, but currently only small amounts of it can be removed. As you grow stronger you'll find out how to unlock its true potential."

"Th-thank you."

"Of course, I have a request of my own to make." The Peacekeeper said, "I want you to return here one day, in 20 years time. I want to see the kind of wizard you turn out to be."

"But... what does it matter to someone as powerful as you?"

“Ties to others are what keep us human.” He said simply. “Nobody can hold the burden of the world alone. I spend much of my time travelling alone, trying to find a way to ensure peace for the people of this planet, not just those living on Magius.”

“The heck, that’s a much cooler dream than mine!”

“Is it? I was under the impression they weren’t so different.”

“Nobody’s gonna believe I actually met you, are they?”

“Maybe, maybe not.” the Peacekeeper chuckled, “That’s not what’s important at the end of the day, is it?”

“I guess not... Y’know, I didn’t really expect some sort of mythological wizard to just be... normal.”

“Curse users and wizards are still human deep down. In the old days, magic used to literally come directly from the soul, and I’d argue it still does to an extent today. Someone with a weak mind or spirit stands no chance of having lasting power.”

“Woah...” Amelia said, the curiosity sparkling in her eyes.

“Of course, it’s getting late. You do live in Ironport, yes? Let me lead you back so you’re safe.”

“What are you gonna do after that?”

“Watch the sun set, then most likely leave again. My journey beckons once more.”

“You’d better not forget about our deal like you forgot your name!”

“I promise,” he said, “But let’s get you back before it gets dark.”