

Time seemed to have slowed down as the plot of torn land from Eeridi continued to rumble and seemingly fly off into the sky. The place Flynn and Crowley once called home slowly fading away into the clouds and dust below. Slowing down but still moving, Crowley let himself release his grip on the tree that they were both holding onto and stood up. Dusting off dirt from his jacket and torn jeans, he used a little time magic to summon the spiked-covered staff that was on the ground back into his hand.

“W-where are you going?” Said Flynn, slowly following Crowley in suit. “Last I checked, the ground we are literally standing on is moving!”

“Really? It’s still moving? Oh how did I not know about the rumbling ground below us as this land rises up to the sky.” With dramatic sarcasm, the crook exaggerated his arms into the sky. Looking amongst the stars at the other crumbling batches of land that flew. In the distance, various skireans can be seen stumbling about, some falling to their demise as some chunks of land crumble into dust. Screams hidden in the blast of wind that pushes through their ears. “Oh how blind I must be.” he said with an exaggerated open mouth grin before twisting around and walking closer to the edge.

Refusing to fall into the trap landed before him, he chose to ignore Crowley’s remark, “Okay, what could be so important that you feel the need to risk knocking yourself off the ledge.”

“Not allowed to be noisy, can I?”

“ Perhaps not allowed to be stupid? I may not be the most intelligent skirean out there, but I at least have the common sense to not be an idiot and walk to the ledge of this crumbling island.” Despite what Flynn said, he continued to follow Crowley. Stopping just short before the ledge. Looking on, they noticed they could actually still see parts of Eeridi. In the corner of his eye, he spotted a titan walking across the now unrecognizable land. No more attacks, but casually strolling the wreckage that was once home to skireans alike. Around them, the islands began to finally stop. Now making their surroundings more reminiscent of Stonewing or Meteor Lake but without the actual lake. Looking out in awe, he quietly commented on what might as well be considered the new world, “You know, in a weird way, the view here is beautiful. Maybe it’ll work out in the end.”

“Hmf. Beauty amongst the befallen...literally.” Nudging his head towards the direction of another falling skirean.

“Continue watching and you might notice that some of the skireans that can fly or teleport are catching a majority of them, Crowley.”

“Anyways, so what about your love for sailing? Going to start working on designing a magical flying sea ship that can be amongst the stars, Flynn?” He said as he started twirling his staff in circles.

“Maybe I will. After all, it is a new world.” The cccat said with a knowing smile. With a pause, he looked down and continued in almost a whisper, “It is a pity though, I always quite loved my first ship. She was always loyal to me.”

“Heh. Yeah, I’d like to see that happen with the resources that are available.” Crowley looked towards Flynn who was staring off into the ground below his feet. Awkwardly patting Flynn’s shoulder, he quickly added, “First things first, we’ve got to figure out what to do now. I’ve lost my home, you lost yours, and I know I need to locate where the heck my old mentors vanished off to.” he sighed.

Still not looking up, Flynn responded, “They’re probably helping out the others who are injured.”

“True.” Sure enough, one of the mentors that often take in students gathered a falling victim and returned them safely to a large patch of land located right above them. “I wonder if there’s a way we can catch their attention so we can be placed on the larger land above us. This one is a bit too small to properly function as a place to live.” Crowley patted Flynn’s shoulder one more time before turning around to make his way back to the tree they were resting against. He pulled down some larger branches and started working on making a burn pile. If they had any plans on restarting life, they needed to actually get somewhere with the resources to do so. After making what he deemed as a fairly large pile of branches and dead leaves, he pulled out one of his hand made bombs and started taking it apart. Letting a small amount of gun-powder to fall on all the branches.

“What are you doing?”

Crowley, who was so focused on the task in-front of him, jumped. Looking up, he could see an extremely somber Flynn look down at him. “W-what?”

“I said, what are you doing?”

“Oh, I’m working on a way to catch the attention of one of the flying skireans or magic users that’s been picking other skireans up and dropping them off at the larger land above us. There’s not enough resources here to live off of.” As he spoke, he turned a lighter that he stored in his coat pocket and lit the burn pile. “This here-,” he said rubbing his hands together as a poor

method to clean up,” - should produce enough smoke to catch the attention of one of those skireans. Or at least I hope it will.”

“Yeah, that’d probably be smart. Need any help?”

“If you don’t mind, you can help me fan the smoke.” Crowley passed Flynn a massive leaf from one of the nearby bushes. “Just try to fan it in this direction.” He instructed, pointing towards the direction where a lot of the flying skireans were moving about.

“Sure.”

For five hours, the two of them kept at it, fanning the flames and tossing more leafed branches to feed the smoke. Eventually catching the attention of cccat, by the name of Thes, they were finally able to be lifted towards the land above them. “If you need medical attention, please follow the stone path to the left. It will lead you to an old inn. From the outside, it may not look like what you would expect from a med bay, but it is one. To the right, their sorting places to sleep. I suggest you get in line as quickly as you can if you’re not injured. The sooner you can claim a bed and some free resources, the sooner you guys can get to rebuilding.”

“Sounds good. Thanks, lad!” Flynn said, waving off the cccat cheerfully before they flew away to help the others. Crowley was already making his way to the long line that stuck out of a city building.

“Are you coming?” Crowley called out as he continued to walk away.

“Ah, yep! On my way!” Flynn jogged to catch up with Crowley. Slowing down at the same time as the crook stopped at the line in front of them. “This is going to take a while.”

“Appears so.” He grumbled.

It was a long day for both of them. The sky darkened as they slowly made their way to the front of the line. Flynn once suggested they try to cut the line only to be held back by Crowley’s still arm. “Lazy twat. Would’ve been quicker if we did it my way.” He huffed. Crowley continued to follow the line in silence. Choosing to ignore Flynn’s complaints to the best of his ability. At the front, each of them was given two options. They could take a sleeping bag with extra resources to rebuild a home for themselves, or they can show their ID with their old home address and take a fresh sleeping bag. Those that chose to show their ID will be notified when and if they’re home is ever located. If their home is destroyed, they will be provided a new home. Likely one that became vacant after the passing of the original owner. “I’ll take the sleeping bag and resource kit if you still have it.”

“And I'll take the same thing. No need for me to sit around waiting forever just for someone to tell me my home is destroyed when I clearly watched it fall amongst the fractures.” Crowley sighed.

The tall nautipod, from behind the desk, looked up from his pile of documents. “Are you two together?”

Simultaneously, the two of them said, “No.” Before reorienting themselves to make their response less panicked. Crowley being the first to speak, “Uh, sorry. No, we're just friends.”

“Yeah.”

“No need to get all jumpy! Was just curious since that determined how I filled out these forms. We're giving skireans little plots of land and I just needed to know whether I should write down one large plot or two small-”

“No, no, we're together. Just not romantically. Sorry to be confusing, lad.” Flynn interrupted, pinching Crowley's arm to keep him quiet. “We normally share the space in-regards to property.”

“Ah okay. Yeah, just give me a second to fill this out then. Can you two tell me your names?”

“It's Crowley and Flynn. I'm Flynn-”, then pointing to the crook, “-and that's Crowley.” Crowley gave a quick irritated glance at Flynn while the nautipod, in-front of them, was distracted by the paperwork.

“Okay, you're all set. Just take this paper over to that gravent with the large flight wings. He can only take one of you at a time, but he'll take you to your given land. Resources should already be there. The sleeping bags will be dropped off shortly after you guys arrive.”

“How do you already have land set aside and resources available so soon for the majority of us?” Crowley could help but ask; meanwhile, it was Flynn's turn to walk ahead. Already walking to talk with the gravent that was preparing for another flight.

“It's the city's emergency plans.” A skirean behind Crowley was already pushing their way to the desk with an ID in hand. Still talking to Crowley, the nautipod grabbed the ID and started filling out another form. “Well you gotta admit, with the amount of disasters that happen

every year, a catastrophe of this magnitude was bound to occur at some point.” The nautipod said as they waved their hand to the side to usher Crowley away.

Flynn was already gone, presumably at their next destination already. A gravent stood waiting with a tired yet satisfied smile on their face. Likely happy to have a break, albeit a brief one, but a break from carrying others around nonetheless. “Hey, sorry for the wait! I had a couple questions to ask with the skirean back at the desk.” Crowley said as he sprinted over.

“It's alright. Gave a moment to breathe is what you did. Skireans see large wings and of course their first thought is ‘flight device’!” The gravent stretched his wings in demonstration. “Is'll be nice when I finally get to go home. These wings aren't meant to be carry'n this much weight you know? Jus to check, you're Flynn's partner, right? Don't want to take you to the wrong home.”

“Y-yeah, I’m Crowley..” Crowley stuttered at being called Flynn's partner, but did his best to cover it up with a hand shake.. “By the way, sorry about the ‘flight device’ issue. Hopefully they'll grant you a break soon.”

“Hm, yeah I hope so too. Now let’s get you where you need to be.” The gravent, with little warning, swooped up Crowley and gilded straight down to a lower island, not too far from the mainland. “If you ever need to get back up, just take the temporary copter that’s located on the opposite end of the isl. Various skireans have been hired to work there until a better form of transportation has been installed. One for each of the islands and one for the ‘Core Planet’, though I really don’t recommend going back there.” Very gently, he dropped Crowley directly next to Flynn, then immediately spun around back for the next skirean that needed to be picked up.

Wasting no time, Crowley went straight to Flynn, “So are you going to tell me how long you plan on living with me?”

“However long it takes for me to find myself my new vehicle that I can call home, my friend.” He smiled cheerfully before continuing, “Preferably one that can fly considering the circumstances, but by the time I’m gone, you have yourself a large plot of land all to yourself. Besides, look! We got double the amount of resources! Combine that with the vast swamp-like forest that’s behind us and you’re set for a lifetime.” Spinning around to look at the gloomy landscape, “Your own personal swamp in the skies.”

“I really don’t care as long as you do your half of the work. Now come help me set up a tent.”

