

“It’s all set, Yuuta,” Daiki stated with a hint of worry in his voice, turning to face Yuuta who stood by the reflection pool. The Oracle looked up from the pool and smiled, but his thoughts of the task at hand marred his composure. The two were preparing for a sealing ritual, one that was performed when Allanon first arrived in Sawagi. But recent events had shown that the seal was weakening. During the New Moon, Kakuri’s/Verwustung’s strength grew and threatened to break the seal keeping him within Allanon. It had already nearly broken a few New Moons ago but Yuuta was worried they were simply applying bandages to a bleeding wound when stitches were needed.

Yuuta was unsure if the sealing ritual was needed any longer, due to observations he had collected from encounters with the Fell Dragon. Verwustung’s taste for destruction seemed to be waning. They were unsure why or how, but the dragon’s tamer disposition gave Yuuta hope that a different sort of ritual could set positive change in motion. Yuuta walked towards the altar erected on the roof where Allanon was lying down, covered by several sheets of white fabric. The New Moon was almost at its apex and Allanon could feel the spirit of the Fell Dragon rising to the surface once again. With his eyes closed, he groaned in discomfort, trying to keep himself from turning once again. Nothing kept Verwustung from rushing to the surface and claiming Allanon’s body as his own, for Yuuta had undone the seals. The only thing inhibiting the Fell Dragon from taking Allanon’s body was the incense that hung heavy in the air.

“Now Daiki, while I enter the spiritual plane, my body will be vulnerable. Should anything happen to me there, I will not be able to return to my body. But it will unleash a seal that will bind Kaku- I mean, Verwustung to Allanon for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, he will be put into a deep slumber and will only be awoken by the Oracle that comes after me.

Please take good care of his body if the worst comes to pass..." Yuuta smiled at Daiki who glared at him with anger burning in his eyes

"I won't let you die! I know you won't. Stop making me worry about you for no reason Yuuta!" Daiki shouted with a growl, holding both of Yuuta's arms and looking deeply into his eyes. "You are the most important thing in my life... I have no idea what I would do if I lost you and Allanon on the same night..." He confessed while holding back his tears. Daiki was never one to cry and he was struggling to keep his emotions at bay. "Now, now... You've always been the stoic one. Don't break down on me." Yuuta said, gently planting a kiss on Daiki's forehead. "But I am glad you put so much faith in me. I will do my best to return in one piece... Now the balance of this plane is very delicate. Please make sure no one disturbs it until the ritual is complete." He said in a serious tone. Daiki nodded and slowly descended the stairs, stopping briefly to look over his shoulder at Yuuta. The Oracle took a seat at the pool that reflected the night sky and started reciting the necessary chants. He quickly adopted a meditative state which caused his body to give off a glow. It wasn't long until his soul manifested outside his body and stepped towards the altar with Allanon atop. He was going to speak personally with Verwustung and to do so, he would have to enter Allanon's soul. Yuuta felt a strong force pulling him towards Allanon and quickly found himself falling into darkness.

Yuuta wasn't sure how long he was falling, but it felt like hours when it could have been seconds. As he fell he found spellbooks, food, and small items Allanon held dear and were part of his character passing him. After a long fall, Yuuta gracefully landed on what seemed to be a stagnant ocean of blood. As he walked across the red water, Yuuta couldn't help but notice skeletal remains partially sunken in the blood. Yuuta believed those were the souls of the former firstborns of Ebenholz, their souls consumed by Verwustung as a result of the blood curse. He

swallowed hard at the sight, the urge to vomit grew strong but he steeled himself for the journey ahead.

Yuuta walked for a long while until he started hearing footsteps coming from behind him. However, when he looked behind him, he would see nothing but the endless ocean of blood. He took a deep breath and continued across the pool of blood and bones, treading through a thick, heavy fog that was beginning to roll in. He needed to find Verwustung, but the sound of more footsteps behind him was worrisome. He turned and once again there was nothing. But as he turned back around he was greeted by what could only be described as a child version of Allanon.

“Who are you?” The child asked, holding a tome close to his chest. He seemed to be scared and lost in the mist. The young Allanon was on the verge of tears as he looked up at Yuuta. “D-Did Zelban send you!? I promise this isn’t my fault! It’s not my fault!” Allanon cried out, tears quickly streaming down his cheeks.

“Shh now, there’s no need to cry. Nobody sent me. I’m here to help.” Yuuta said calmly, crouching so he could speak face to face with the young Allanon. Sniffing and rubbing his nose clean, the young mage looked to Yuuta with understanding. “Yuu-ta... it sounds familiar...I think I can trust you...” The young boy said hugging the oversized grimoire he held and nodded. “Are you lost...?” He questioned adjusting his glasses and blushing at Yuuta’s smile. “You could say I am... Do you know where I can find... A big scary dragon?” Yuuta questioned, trying to not mention Verwustung by name, as it would possibly scare the young mage. Allanon was probably taught to fear the dragon within him from a young age. “Y-You shouldn’t go there! He’ll hurt you!” The young boy was quick to reply, seemingly upset at the mere thought of going anywhere near the Fell Dragon who lived within adult Allanon’s soul.

“I need to speak to him. I promise to be careful!” Yuuta reassured the young Allanon and offered him a hand, which was promptly taken by the young mage. “I will take you there...” Young Allanon led Yuuta forwards through the fog, which quickly dissipated and revealed a massive library, and within it an innumerable collection of books. The whole area seemed like a massive labyrinth, but even with the oppressive aura emanating from the very walls, Yuuta could feel how this mere presence was a beacon of hope to the young mage. The young Allanon stopped in his tracks once he heard loud growls and belches carried by the wind. He looked up at Yuuta and tugged on his hand. “T-This is as far as I can take you, Yuuta... G-Good Luck...” He said, hesitantly letting go of Yuuta’s hand and walking back the way he came, but not without looking back and blushing at Yuuta again. Yuuta waved him goodbye and watched as young Allanon hastily made his way out. He walked deeper into the library, following the loud noises of eating and digestion. Yuuta was not surprised that Kakuri was such a glutton, considering the effect he had on Allanon.

In the middle of the massive collection of books was an equally massive dining table, piled high with books, tomes, and manuscripts. Sitting at the head of the table was a massive figure that resembled Allanon. It would explain the mage's immense girth after the seal first weakened. The man stirred slightly, sniffing the air at the approaching young man. "You... You smell familiar... Who are you?" the man questioned, reaching up to scratch at a pair of horns that jutted from his head.

"I am Yuuta," the young man bowed low in respect at the towering behemoth. He knew he was Verwustung but wasn't expecting such a large individual. It was rather odd that the Fell Dragon had adopted a human form and was even larger than Allanon. Standing upright once again Yuuta smiled warmly up at Verwustung. "It is a pleasure to make your acquaintance,"

“Yuuta... Yuuta... No, that isn't your name. Yuuta is the name of the pesky mage's lover. You... you are Otogi!” the Fell Dragon's eyes widened in shock and flipped the table dramatically before rushing to Yuuta. He took hold of Yuuta's hands and tears threatened to cascade down his cheeks. "Otogi... Oh, how I've missed you..." the Fell Dragon cried out and smiled softly.

"I.. am not Otogi... Well... Not fully. When they gave up their physical form, their soul began reincarnating into humans, which became the Oracles. I am his reincarnation, yes. But I am not him..." Yuuta said with an earnest smile, gently patting the chubby clawed hands of the massive draconic beast.

"So... that is where he went... When he stopped meeting me in Arechi... I assumed the worst... I fled into the wilderness and allowed sorrow and guilt to consume me... I ended up the way I am because of my emotions. Will you ever forgive me Otogi? I... I apologize, Yuuta... you might not be able to answer for my deceased Otogi... but please... I never meant to harm anyone..." "I believe you." Yuuta smiled and the Fell Dragon could feel something emanating from Yuuta's astral projection. That smile... it was just like Otogi's. That kindness. Those mannerisms... It was just like the dragon he once loved... Just much more muscular... and supple. "Kakuri... I am here to offer you freedom..." Yuuta called out, his body taking on a bright glow as he slowly started to levitate off the ground. "Kakuri... I... I don't remember the last time I was called that... You offer me freedom? All I desire is to stand by your side. Please... will you grant me my request?" “Very well...” Yuuta smiled and took hold of the ancient dragon’s hands, beaming with joy.

The light enveloped the two of them and quickly filled the surrounding area. Yuuta opened his eyes and found himself laid out on the bottom of the reflection pool, his clothes

soaked through to the bone. He blinked and focused on the starry sky above him before sitting upright suddenly. Had it worked? His eyes found the large form of Allanon sprawled out on the shrine. His soft snores comforted the Oracle but he continued to scan the surrounding area until he spotted a second figure laying on the floor at the feet of the altar. “It worked...” Yuuta muttered softly in shock. The two heavy figures shifted and slowly sat upright, quickly noticing each other. Blinking away sleep they stared at each other until the realization sunk in.

“AAAAH!” Allanon shouted in shock, clutching the sheets to his naked form. “AAAAAH!” Verwustung shouted in response to Allanon’s shouts, covering his privates with slightly scaled hands. “Yuuta! Who is this! What happened?” the mage questioned as he turned his attention to the drenched Oracle. “Yes! Please explain!” the dragon questioned and quickly crawled towards Yuuta.

“I... I gave Verwustung his own body... he wanted to stand at my side and Otogi heard his prayer,” Yuuta smiled, leaning in to plant a kiss on Verwustung’s forehead. No... Verwustung was his old name. He deserved a new one. “Lanon... that is your name now. Allan and Lanon, in the flesh.” “Oh, I wouldn’t say just flesh... more like fleshy,” Daiki stated with a smirk, appearing at Yuuta’s side. “I take it the ritual worked?” Yuuta could only nod and smile at the two draconic mages in front of him.