

((Note: The following sections take place during [Chapter 23](#).)

Zaros turned suddenly as people started to pour into the city hall again. Evidently, there were going to be more classes. "It's still going on?... Interesting," he looked to the edges of the room to see the dragon masters coming back out to represent their elements. He muttered, "Dragon teachers... a good choice." It was better for crowd control in case of incidents. Not to mention, dragons tended to be a bit better at magic. Akira folded his arms across his chest, watching people flood in. He scanned everyone's face. It was a habit he nailed down with his profession. His eyes drifted over a silver-haired boy in a wizard outfit before snapping back and locking on to his face. He had seen that face before. Zaros slowly turned his head as he noticed Akira start to fidget, bringing out a piece of paper with a face; a wanted poster. Zaros rubbed his temple and directed, "Make it quick, I'd rather not dawdle here." Akira's form hunkered down, looking like a cat watching a bird as he gripped his sword handles. The bounty hunter walked swiftly through the crowd, gaining speed as he drew one of his blades.

Zaros watched Akira with his arms folded across his chest. He watched someone come barreling through the crowd, crashing carelessly into the bounty hunter. "What the he-" the silver-haired swordsman said. Akira stumbled, but quickly caught his balance. He growled, turning to see who had run into him but the swordsman told him, "Don't even try what you are thinking, I don't really care. Just not in a crowded place like this." The stranger continued on running.

Akira yelled after him, "What the hell was that over!?" He stood up straight; any chance of getting the jump on Tyler was now gone. He was quite close to the conjurer in any case and stuck his sword out. He smiled smugly, "On full legal terms, I'm here to collect your bounty. I don't forget a face. And there's a pretty pile of gold on your head. That means guards can't interfere. Get what I'm saying?" Lowering his voice as he drew his second sword, he said, "How about we make this easy?"

"Akira," Zaros called after a moment of silence.

Akira looked over his shoulder briefly and then back to Tyler. "It's been great," he said, sheathing his second blade. The swordsman followed after Zaros as he exited the building.

Zaros said, "I've gotten a good tour of the city tonight; we have some more recruitment to do, though. Elsewhere. Recruiting from this city is too risky." He looked about at their surroundings.

Akira whined playfully, "What? Not going to watch the fireworks they're putting off later?"

The mage paused and turned, murmuring, "Perhaps that would be a fair enough distraction for me to do harvesting tonight." Zaros walked down the road of Windfall and out towards the city gates.

Akira continued to trail behind his employer with his fingers laced behind his head. He heard a familiar whistle and stood still, catching a blur of an arrow skimming past his face. The bounty hunter buckled backwards, yelling a few profanities at the surprise. He looked around angrily as Zaros stopped to see what the commotion was about. Akira muttered under his breath and looked at the arrow. There seemed to be a note on it. He ripped it off and read it hastily. The bounty hunter screamed nowhere in particular, "That is NOT THE WAY TO ASK FOR HELP!" He finished the note and shoved it into his pocket. He turned to Zaros and then outward again, yelling, "And do I look like a dog? Fetch your own damn arrow!" A few people had stopped to stare, so Akira moved quickly along the stone path after Zaros. The mage stared at him curiously, but turned to walk again. He did not have much care for the bounty hunter's affairs. Zaros led them out of Windfall, across the plain, and to the forest outside. He pulsed out his illusion spell to make the two appear invisible to eyes outside their small bubble.

((**Note:** The following sections take place during [Chapter 24](#).)

Chi glanced down to make sure her little friend was still following. Her wings flayed up in alarm as she discovered Zeditha was gone, scaring a few people around her. The hybrid twirled around, looking through the crowd. She paused to sniff the air, only to stop soon after. *'Oh it's no use... My sense of smell may as well be human level,'* she thought, sighing. Chi's resolve kicked in and she moved backwards the way she came. The little dragon must have gotten lost somewhere in the festival crowd. It was not uncommon anyway. There was a loud, little voice piercing through the crowd. Her eyes scanned the ground for it, settling on a small pygmy through many legs. Chi parted her way through the crowd, sighing with relief as she saw Zeditha chatting with the pygmy. "There you are? Get lost?" she asked, crouching down on her haunches.

"Ladies, see ya in the funny papers," Petey said before scurrying off.

Chi nodded at him as he more or less said he would steal the research papers himself. "Be safe, little guy," she waved after him. She wondered if he really was okay physically. But if he said he did not want help, there just was not much she could do about it.

Rika stood at the woods' edge on the outside of Windfall. Perhaps she could get some more practice in tonight. She pulled an arrow from her quiver, notching it on her bow and pulling back the string. She exhaled softly and let the arrow loose. It sang as it cut through the air, smacking into the tree in front of her with an emanating *'twang'*. "Dammit," she cursed under her breath as she hooked another arrow. She pulled the string back again and held it there, concentrating hard on something. A faint light the size

of a marble formed in front of her arrow, glowing. Rika grimaced, holding her breath as the light expanded to the size of a golf ball. She exhaled loudly and let the arrow fly. It smacked into the tree again but this time took a noticeable chunk out. Pieces of bark flew off in different directions. "Ha?" she uttered in a questioning exhale of her labored breathing. She inspected the damage she left on the tree and threw her hands up, "HA!" she yelled. Perhaps attending those magic classes would be helpful after all.

Rika sat down on the cool grass of the meadow. She looked up at the sky, watching the oranges of sunset start to fade into the deep blue of night. She heard rustling in the trees and glanced up and around. While it could have been the wind, hunting dragons for so long had made her edgy to noises. Her eyes were not like a dragon's though, she could not see through the dark shadows of the forest as the last rays of sunlight had already gone. Rika looked over to the side to double check her surroundings. She could see Fayt and Albel in the distance still practicing. This made her feel safer. Well, Albel did anyway. The black hybrid did not stop to ask questions before charging 'to the rescue' unlike his brother, Fayt. Rika shook her head, muttering with a frown, "Well, what the hell am I supposed to hunt now?" Aquarians were swarming the place, so dragon-hunting had phased out over night. *'Well looks like that hunting spree is over,'* she thought as she stood up and notched another arrow on her bow. "Unless," she whispered, pulling back the string. There was silent concentration as she focused to create another ball of light at her arrow tip. She let the arrow fly and it pummeled through the tree, crashing out the other side and sticking into a rock on the other side. "Unless I'm attacked first..." she smirked. The tree groaned as more bark was blown away. There was a loud crack and the tree collapsed down on itself before tipping off to the side and crashing to the ground loudly. Birds and bats scattered about the area frantically at the sudden chaos.

Rika let the sound of the tree-collapsing settle as the forest fell back into a peaceful silence. The wildlife had calmed and the trees blew softly in the wind. There was a loud thud as if someone dropped to the ground. The woman notched an arrow and aimed it at the shadowy figure running off into the night. She paused, seeing it looked human and frowned, lowering the bow. She thought, *'What the hell? Were they stalking me?'* Rika sat back in the grass, muttering, "Tch! Weirdo."

Kai beckoned her guardian dragon over, "I have better use of my time than putting up with your petty dancing like you got something to prove." She snorted as she received no reply from Spinx as the man retreated. "As I thought. Pitiful!" The girl really did not like any other necromancers. She had yet to get along with another of her kind. She did not even like her master. But that was because he was always breathing down her neck. Though, Spinx was doing just the same, though maybe creepier. *'What the hell is his problem anyway? A few minutes after meeting me, he has a problem with his ego and comes cleaving at me? What a nut job...'* She rolled her eyes, starting to mend her guardian dragon again. Kai muttered to herself, "Stupid drunk necromancers. What else is new?" She finished the repair on her dragon. She muttered, "What a creep. Doesn't even have a personality and he calls me boring." The girl snapped her fingers and the now sparkling guardian dragon sank into her collection. "That's enough

practice for the night. Sir Bastard took up all my time," she spoke to her shadow. Tix clicked back in response. "Oh that's right, there's fireworks." She slapped her fist into her open palm as she recalled the fact. Kai looked at the bar Spinx had come from, "Maybe I'll get a drink after all..." She put her hands into her pockets and wandered into the bar. She ordered a long island and picked up the drink. "I'm taking the glass," she said flatly, flipping the bartender an extra coin, to which he simply rolled his eyes. Kai walked towards the festival again, picking up the lemon garnish and licking it as she went along.

Zaros wandered through the forest for a while before seeing what he was after. A nest of unattended hatchlings. He motioned for Akira to wait where he was. The bounty hunter leaned against a tree. Zaros cast a dreamlike illusion over the hatchlings. They were a nest of golden wyverns upon closer inspection. There seemed to be six. They stared up at him as he drew closer. "You are lost children," he spoke softly, shifting the illusion over them into a different gnarled forest while keeping them in a lucid state. "Your parents are gone. They will not return," he spoke again. Even in the delirious state they were in, the hatchlings started to look flustered at the illusion over them. The mage added, "You will perish on your own." He remained quiet for a few minutes as he let the hatchlings soak in their new information. Their little minds could do little to prove otherwise under the illusion. Zaros gave a wave of his hand to the air. From the clouds came a large, white eastern dragon, Yuki. Yuki landed softly and curled around her summoner. "But do not fear, children," Zaros spoke up, parting his way into the illusion. "Come with me and I will take care of you. You will be safe," he said, his words echoing within the bubble of the illusion. The hatchlings wandered over in a trance-like state. The man smiled, "That's it... we can go home now. Where you'll be safe and comfortable. A loving family." He nodded to Yuki and she slithered her long, slender body around the children before disappearing in a flash with them. Zaros turned to Akira.

The bounty hunter cocked an eyebrow. "You know... sometimes you scare me," he laughed. "Doesn't that bother you to steal kids in the night?"

The mage replied coolly, "Not if for the sake of something better. They will not be harmed."

((**Note:** The following sections take place during [Chapter 25](#).)

Crowe was hovering over the area and spotted movement among the trees. A drake with a human on board starting fires. "Fire Squad, to me," he called over the increasing crowd of dragons who had come to aid. He said, "Drench the place. Emergency procedure." Nine waterhorses and a gray dragon stood together and used their combined ability to create a powerful storm spell. The clear sky turned thick and grey before a heavy rain poured over the land, drenching out all the fires. Crowe would have to let the stranger go due to the lack of visibility in the heavy rain, but it was worth saving the forest. He muttered,

"What in blazes is that idiot's goal?" He recognized the human's smell. The man had been the one causing trouble in town. He was not very subtle about his tactics.

Rika cringed as the sky overhead started to pour down rain. "Dammit!" she yelled, shivering at the cold. She just had to be out in the woods when some psycho went on a pyromaniac spree. She ran out towards Windfall, almost slipping multiple times on the wet grass. And it had to be night time so the sun could not dry her. She came to a halt outside the city gates and stopped to pant. Glancing behind, she saw Fayt and Albel join her, also drenched. She muttered, "Well that was a load of crap." Albel snorted, wringing out his scarf.

Kai glanced over her shoulder as the forest was temporarily set ablaze before being quickly snuffed out. She snorted quietly, saying to no one in particular, "Sore loser. So he sets the forest on fire. He really is a nut." The Aquarians seemed to have it handled, so she stared up at the fireworks, enjoying the spray of colors across the dark sky. What a pleasant way to end the festival. She sipped away at her drink until it was gone, smiling at the warm feeling it gave in her belly. She nibbled at the salt garnish idly. She still had something to attend to at her home, but given the state of the forest... she paused. Maybe it was better to sleep in an alley way tonight. "I got time tomorrow," she muttered. Her grip on the glass tightened.

((**Note:** The following sections take place during [Chapter 26](#).)

Kai licked the remaining salt from the rim of her glass. Perhaps she should have ordered something on the rocks for a warm summer night. Well, too late to regret it now. Kai watched the last of the fireworks pop into the sky with a long finale. As the last loud boom echoed through the festival, people cheered, chatted, and started to disperse. She looked down a dark alley that seemed to be relatively vacant and made her way down it. She slumped against a wall and breathed out a heavy sigh.

The waterhorse team let up on the storm when the fires had been all smoldered out. Vine dragons started to creep in to begin the repair work on the burnt parts of the forest. They used their earth magic to sprout healthy plants and trees where the smoldering remains were left.

((Note: The following sections take place during [Chapter 27](#).)

Akuma rustled awake in the early morning. He tried to shift his position, but found his legs tangled. His eyes strained to focus past their blurry haze, finally settling to see his legs tangled with Nick, who let out a loud snore. Perhaps two people on one couch was not the greatest idea. Then again, it did not seem that strange to the hybrid since dragons often clumped like weasels while sleeping. Akuma had managed to participate in a few dragon 'clump sleeping' by blending in with his dragon form on cold winter nights. He pulled himself free and stretched, yawning quietly. He stood up and fiddled with his hoodie, which had become unzipped, twisted, and bunched in his sleep. Akuma turned, staring at Nick for a moment, before moving forward and prodding at the mage. He stepped away when the mage stirred. "Who, what, when!?!?" Nick cried out as he rolled over the edge of the couch and onto the floor as he fumbled around.

Nick landed beside Akuma and gave him a little spurt of reassurance. The hybrid did not really care about any law system the humans had. He just did not want to be the cause of the human's death. He stared down at the river in silence and frowned, realizing he had also left his hunting prize behind as well. So much for eating good pork. Akuma sighed and flicked his claws, murmuring, "I keep having rushes of violent thoughts though. It let me kill those others so easily." He looked over at Nick and paused, "It crosses my mind to attack you sometimes. What it would be like to run you down and rip you up. But I don't want to."

Nick went on scratching his own head as he guessed, "Maybe it's puberty. You're going through a period of change, from child to adult. During this time, humans tend to get moody and sometimes aggressive. I'm not quite sure how it works for dragons, but you're not a dragon either. You lie somewhere in between the two, right?"

Akuma sighed and plopped down by the riverside. He stared down into the water, though the water was rushing by too quickly to see any reflection. The sound of flowing water and tree leaves swaying in the wind that gently tickled his face put him more at ease. Birds chirped tunes that seemed to echo from all directions. It was so much more peaceful here than the busy city. Yet, sometimes it was lonely out here. "Becoming an adult?..." he murmured. It did not seem fair he had to go through his childhood alone and without family. Why was it when he reached an independent age that he finally met someone that noticed his existence for more than a nuisance?

Nick explained to the hybrid boy, "Yes, you're on your way to becoming an adult. But don't worry, if you're anything like humans at all, you still have ways to go. Puberty is just the very beginning." Akuma half-shrugged and mumbled a quiet 'maybe' under his breath. Maybe it really was simply growing up. He did not really know. He just hoped he did not claw up Nick while they waited to find out. The mage went on, "Don't feel too bad about killing the others; they wouldn't hesitate to do the same to you, and they

weren't doing it in self-defense. They just wanted your pelt. Just keep a clear mind as best as you can, and try not to tear me to bits."

"I won't kill you," Akuma shifted down to human form again, sitting in the grass with his legs folded in pretzel style.

Nick sat down next to him. With a sigh, the mage wrapped an arm around the hybrid and Akuma lazily let himself be pulled over to Nick as the mage hugged him, placing his forehead against the hybrid's head. Akuma's mouth curved to a frown briefly at the hug. It was a strangely pleasant sensation, though felt uncomfortable due to him never receiving much physical affection. Nick said, "I never believed that you would kill me for even a second. I view you as family, Akuma." The hybrid sighed quietly as the mage released the embrace.

"I'm sure Albel would be proud," the hybrid picked at the grass. "He took me hunting once. Resulted in my throat being slit."

The mage joked, "You spared that man's life. The thought would never pass Albel's mind in a heartbeat. If he had a heart at all to give him a heartbeat that is." He continued, "Albel's opinion doesn't matter at all, except of course when his opinion is that you should be dead, then it matters a lot." The hybrid rolled his eyes. Yeah, surprise that was. Akuma shut his eyes, putting more of his weight against Nick. The peaceful breeze in the morning air made him feel drowsy. Of course, that was short lived as Nick looked at the water, asking, "Hey, have you ever been swimming before? I mean properly swimming not er... Drowning. I know a place downstream a bit where the river evens out to almost a crawl if you wanted to go."

Akuma's claws curved in, grabbing onto Nick's robe as his eyes flicked open. "No, I haven't. I've just drowned in the water. Almost anyway." He bared his fangs at the thought of the icy water.

The mage's eyes widened and took in a quick intake of breath. "Okay, okay, I see no swimming." He quickly said as he winced through the pain. Stiffening his position and staying very still, he quickly told the clutching hybrid boy, "Now please retract your claws from my body very carefully." Akuma blushed and retracted his claws from the mage, who now relaxed. Nick added quickly, "I don't think you've ever told me the full story on how that happened. It was the bad, huh?"

The hybrid could recall briefly explaining to Nick about the fear, but the entire memory remained imprinted on him. Akuma shivered a bit at the memory, but felt relaxed again from the warm sun rays piercing the forest's veil. "I never really learned to swim in the first place. I could... sort of float about, but I couldn't control where I went. Rivers were especially rough then. So I just avoided deep water. But one winter, I came across Albel for the first time. Dion had told me to avoid him but... I didn't know what he looked like. He didn't like me very much and we scuffled. He put me under the river ice. I couldn't swim and was being pulled away from the surface by the current and it was so cold... I couldn't move.

Fayt got me out after but... I just don't like water..." He clutched his own arms.

"Ah, Albel," Nick said biting his lip. "I should have guessed he would have something to do with it," he concluded before laying back.

Akuma shook his head at the ground, murmuring, "It wouldn't matter who did it. I was already uncomfortable around water. That just finished it off."

Nick shrugged at him and said, "It's fine then. I guess we can do something else." The mage laid back in the grass, closing his eyes. He warned the hybrid, "But you'll have to think of it, because I'm fresh out of ideas."

Akuma would have to think up something? He straightened up and offered a toothy smirk. "Well, now that you mention it... I did all that hard work. But I didn't get my prize in return. I'd still like some meat to chew on," he said, shifting over and pouncing on Nick.

"Yeah heh, find some meat to chew on. Very funny. Good thing I'm a person, not an animal," he pointed out to Akuma uncomfortably. "Besides you can't be that hungry right?" he said, half-laughing. "Right?"

Akuma tilted his head. "Well you're made of meat, aren't you? Always kind of wondered what human tastes like... But..." He chuckled, "I'll stick to animals."

Nick chuckled and joked, "Nope, I'm just skin and bones; sorry to disappoint."

The hybrid looked the mage up and down, explaining, "My poison acts rather fast, you know. It paralyzes and hurts you from the inside out. But I'm sure you recall that well. I can't be affected by my own poison. So I can eat any animal I poison."

Nick said, "Yes, it is very painful, I've already experienced it once and I wouldn't like to again." He futilely tried to push off Akuma, who made a toothy grin at him.

The hybrid grabbed onto Nick's clothes with his claws, sticking himself to the mage like a cat. He licked the poison from his teeth and grabbed up Nick's arm, nibbling playfully on it for a moment. "Guess it's a good thing those scientists put that safety harness on us after all, huh? You would've been dead. You'll have to thank Dion," he grinned still at the mage. He released Nick's arm from his grasp and unhooked his claws from the mage's robes. He was surprised he had not torn up Nick's cloths from all the clawing he had done collectively in the past.

The mage said sarcastically, "Yeah it would be really unfortunate if your mobile food providing entertainment system died, would it."

Akuma nodded and muttered quietly with a smirk, "Yeah, replacements don't come along that easy."

"Fortunately for me," Nick replied. Standing up and looking at his clothes, he frowned slightly, "By the rate you're ripping my cloths up, I'll be out of thread within the week. I've already had to patch this up three times this week." He shook his head and jumped towards Akuma, who ducked away from Nick's attempt to grab at him and instead stood up. The hybrid dusted the dirt and grass from his backside. "Come on, let's get out of here," he motioned for Akuma to follow along, to which the hybrid nodded. They made their way back to town.

Coming through the gates, the guards paid them no attention. They seemed to be on edge though. As they walked through town, the morning seemed about as normal as ever until a loud twang hit Akuma's ears. Someone was shouting loud... really loud. He looked for the source and they came across a man standing on top of a stall shouting out into a bullhorn. "Are you tired of living under the tyranny of dragons? Then join the Equalist! For too long, the dragon elite in this city have forced non-dragons to live beneath them as second class citizens!"

Akuma pulled his hood over to hide his horns, frowning. "That doesn't even make sense. You've been living with them for three days and only asked to co-exist. No one's enslaving you or forcing you to stay here," he piped, annoyed at the loudness of the speaker. The hybrid was not fond of humans, but this was ridiculous. Crowe swooped onto a rooftop, peering down as a couple other guards joined in watching. His eyes seemed to burn angrily under the armor, but he remained silent... for now.

Nick facepalmed and shouted at the protestor in disbelief, "Really?"

The protestor pointed a finger at the mage and hybrid pair and accused, "Oh, let me guess you two are dragon huggers, aren't you!?!?" He threw in making a sweeping motion through the air with his hand as he spoke, "I bet you'd just love to have one of your dragon friends knock me off this podium, wouldn't you?"

"I'm seriously considering it," Nick spat back at the man before leaning in close to Akuma, whispering through the hood and into his ear. He said half-jokingly and half-serious, "I wouldn't be angry with you if you just ate him."

"SEE!" the protestor shouted to the rest of the gathering crowd around him. "Dragons only want to use their powers to oppress us!"

Akuma shook his head, frowning, "Still doesn't make sense. He's a human, not a dragon. So, only another human is 'oppressing' you." He sneered, "In fact, that just proves that humans are fine with it. They haven't made you do anything aside from live in peace. God forbid that." He did not understand this human's stupidity. "Dragons rebuilt your crummy city when it was nothing but smoldering ashes. All they wanted in return is for you to not be vile towards them. How grateful you are. Let me guess, you're upset you don't have a slave to polish your house anymore?" He smirked with arms folded across his

chest. Crowe settled on the rooftop, easing in his spot. He was not generally good at diffusing these types of situations, but perhaps the humans could squabble it out themselves.

Someone called out from the crowd, "Yeah, but the dragons made it a smoldering pile of ash in the first place!" Nick simply shook his head. Then a crowd started to form, supporting the protestor.

The man on the podium smirked as he saw the crowd growing. "Look at this!" he motioned at Akuma and Nick. "The dragons have brainwashed our youth now, too! When will this ever stop? Never unless we stand up and stop it ourselves!"

A bunch of fists went up into the air as the crowd resounded, "Yeahhhh! Take back the city!!"

Standing a bit closer to Akuma, Nick cracked his knuckles, muttering, "You've got be kidding me." The hybrid scowled at the stupidity of the commentary.

Crowe stared up and around as if waiting for something. A glimmering golden dragon appeared in the distance, flying closer. Upon coming closer, it was easy to see it as Woltar. He landed as softly as a large dragon could manage in the street, folding his wings as he catches the last bit of the conversation. He asked in a level tone, sounding very grandfather-y, "Why, whatever is the matter on such a fine day?"

Akuma turned around, muttering, "These idiots think they're being enslaved by dragons. As if they know what that's like."

Woltar paused, "Seems unreasonable to shoot down these two younglings' opinions as being brainwashed just because they're different from your own. Neither me or any of my kin from Aquios took part in destroying this city. I had it rebuilt for the simple purpose of encouraging a working relationship between our races. Is this slavery to you?"

The crowd of disgruntled humans were shouting. Things were escalating very quickly as Akuma looked over them in disgust. The heck was wrong with these people? "Listen to yourselves!" Nick shouted out to the crowd, standing up on the ledge of a nearby fountain to stand taller and gain more attention of the mass. He shouted out to them in disbelief, "Have you forgotten so quickly that it was us that enslaved the dragons, not the other way around? You've abused them for years and now have the arrogance to say we are better than them? You're all lucky you haven't been eaten, smashed or burnt to a crisp!" Angry shouts and calls ensued, someone even threw a Molotov cocktail at the mage, catching him off guard and setting his cloak alight. Nick cursed and dropped on the ledge, rolling into the fountain. Static sparked around the hybrid as his brow furrowed and the mage pushed himself up. The crowd was growing more and more restless and they began to pick up sticks and post as weapons before advancing towards the guards. Akuma's eyes flickered to Woltar next, who seemed taken aback by the human's reactions. The large dragon's mouth moved in consoling words to the crowd, but Akuma could not hear them over his pounding headache as the crowd increased in its uproar. A few

more from the safety of the crowd started throwing rocks at Woltar in response to his words.

The little rocks bounced harmlessly off Woltar's hide; if he even noticed the feeling of the rocks, it didn't show. Akuma sneered and stepped forward, hunkering down to the ground, screaming suddenly, "QUIET!" A shockwave of electricity pulsed out from him over the crowd in a crescent shape so as to go around the fountain where Nick was. His chest heaved and his golden eyes smoldered, glowing slightly. Nick pulled himself out from the water and stood next to the hybrid as they watched the crowd fall involuntarily silent.

After the crowd recovered, all hell broke loose. "The dragons are attacking!" someone at the back of the crowd shouted, fueling the fire. Out of the shadows, more organized figures armed with blades charged and attacked the guards, enough to push the disgruntled humans over and start a riot. The mob could still feel the after effects of the shocks, but adrenaline kept them going as they armed themselves with whatever they could find, attacking the guards.

Akuma grimaced as he was suddenly yanked by the back of the shirt away from the mess. Moving off in one direction, the mage shouted to him through the roar of the crowd, "It's time to go." The hybrid grumbled still, static still flickering around him.

The Aquarian guards moved down off the rooftops and surrounded the crowd, blocking the streets and alleys to contain the event. Woltar signaled back to the city hall to send daydream dragons to calm the people. The gold dragon moved into the crowd and told them, "Calm, people. Do you want to burn your city again so soon? Your voices can be heard without this rioting." Akuma fumbled after Nick, slowing as he saw the dragons block all exit routes. One unarmored dragon seemed to be creepily staring at them. What was so interesting about two "humans" in a large group of humans?

Kai blinked her eyes open and stretched. She stood up and stumbled out of the alley way. The crowd of Windfall was already bustling about. Kai moved down the street, passing a bagel stand and casually pocketing a piece of food as the owner was busy. Once a good distance down the street, Kai pulled the bagel out and started to nibble at it. She pondered over what she would do about yesterday's incidents.