

Zephyr and the others rushed through the alleyway. They were desperate to catch up to the kidnappers and save Glacies before it was too late. Hitomi was leading the boys in hot pursuit, but she was not going fast enough. The girl was holding back a bit of her speed, so that she will not accidentally run into another obstacle today. Hopefully this pace will still allow her to save Glacies. Nemo immediately took notice of her speed and asked, "Hey kid, can't you go any faster? We got a girl to save!"

Zephyr defended her, "Hitomi's just a child, Nemo. Of course, she's going to be slower than us. But she's still trying to help."

The blonde knight replied, "I know that, but we're going to be left behind in the dust if we keep going like this. We got to hurry!" The group came out through the other side and got to the middle of the next street. They looked around for any signs of their bluenette friend, but she was nowhere in sight. Nemo cursed, "Damn! Where'd they go?"

Touketsu said, "I don't see them anywhere." Without looking at the girl, he asked, "Hitomi, where did they turn after this?"

Hitomi answered, "I don't know." She wished she was not blind, so that she would be a better help in this situation.

Nemo gritted his teeth hopelessly and said, "Well that's just great! The bad guys got away with Glacies and we don't even know where they're at. How are we supposed to find her?"

Everyone was at lost on what to do next. Zephyr sighed to himself, "I sure wish Chase or LimeX was here. Their portals would be useful right now." Hitomi overheard what the fellow apprentice said and her mind reacted to the word "portals". She started to remember everything about them such as the forms of them and how to create them. The traditional portals needed a special kind of magical elixir to be drunken in order to gain the ability to create them. Another kind of portal that was easier to create, but came with risks if used too often, was the corridor of darkness. This dark portal can only be created by those with an affinity to darkness and can be successfully opened with a strong heart. Because she did not have the ability to create normal portals, Hitomi attempted to summon a corridor of darkness instead. She put her arm straight out and opened her palm like she was reaching out to something. She channeled a tremendous amount of energy and darkness began to appear and take shape of a large black and blue oval. The boys looked at this in surprise and Zephyr asked, "Hitomi, you can use portals?" They never thought a child this young would know how to cast a spell like that.

The girl told him, "It's just a corridor of darkness. It's not the same as a portal, but it'll take us to Glacies."

Touketsu smiled, "Awesome, we have a shortcut! Let's get in, guys!"

Nemo replied, "No need to tell us." They all went into the corridor to wherever Glacies was.

---

After running through the streets, the kidnappers opened the cellar basement door and went downstairs to the hideout, carrying the girl they had taken in their arms. Down in the room was their gang of teenage ruffians hanging out and smoking cigars. The wavy-haired boy showed them their prize and said, "Hey guys, look who we have here."

The gang turned their eyes to the unconscious Glacies and was gladly surprised. One of the gang members said, "Whoa, is that the girl who was with that fag?"

The black-haired kidnapper smirked and confirmed, "Yep, we hit her and snagged her while blondie was getting his ass kicked by another dude."

The gang leader got out of his chair and smiled wickedly, "So it looks like the bitch is ours. Alright boys, put her on the bed and restrain her. We're going to get kinky and make her scream." They were looking forward to seeing the girl wake up to getting raped and seeing her scream and cry. They were going to teach her a lesson for resisting them.

The wavy-haired boy obeyed, "Sure thing, boss." The kidnappers carried her off to the bed and laid her there. They grabbed some ropes out the closet and used them to bond Glacies's arms to the headboard's appendages. Her legs were spread apart before her feet were next to be tied to the footboard's appendages.

With the girl fully restrained, the leader approached his prey and looked at her crotch area. He said, "Now, let's see how tight you are." He licked his lips hungrily and began to unbutton her capris.

The flap opened and he put his hands on the rim of her pants, but before he could pull it down, the gang heard a yell, "Don't touch her!"

"Huh?!" the gang all said as they turned towards the voice. They saw Zephyr, the one who yelled, and 3 others coming out of the corridor of darkness behind them. The rescuers all had their keyblades summoned to fight.

The gang leader grimaced and cursed, "Ah shit, it's blondie and he's brought knights with him."

Nemo swung his keyblade through the air and demanded, "You creeps better let Glacies go or else we're taking you down!" He was ready to deal a world of hurt to the gang if they did not comply.

The gang leader smirked confidently in defiance and said, "Hah, like you can take us down. You're outnumbered here, buddy. And that little brat here won't be much help either." Zephyr glanced to Hitomi and knew the redhead was right about her. Hitomi has only started training and she is neither

experienced nor old enough to take on a single ruffian. As well trained as he and the knights were, they probably might not be able to protect the child at all times. Bringing her with them was a mistake. The gang leader summoned his dark keyblade and said, "Alright boys, let's send them to hell!" The whole gang summoned their keyblades and charged at the rescuers.

Zephyr took a step forward as he was about to rush at them to fight. But Touketsu stopped him with his arm out to block the way. He smirked, "Wait Zephyr, I got a trick to wipe the floor with these guys." He raised his keyblade up and cast, "Confuse!" A white flash appeared around his torso before purple wave spread out all around from him followed by a white swirl that grew larger into a purple & black form before evaporating. The spell affected his intended targets, causing them to hallucinate and lose sense of rationality.

The gang members no longer saw their allies as their friends, but as the rescuers and dangerous-looking monsters. Their true enemies were nowhere to be seen in the illusion. The gang began to fight each other as they yelled, "Die ya punks!" "Gah! Get away from me!" "Oh shit!" "You're going down!" Sounds of keyblades clashing, pained screams and spells cast filled the room. Some of the boys had gotten killed from cracked skulls and electrocutions from thunder spells. And some others had their hearts unlocked.

Zephyr frowned with an open mouth as he knelt beside Hitomi and covered her eyes. He did not want her to be mentally scarred by all this brutality. Nemo leaned back against a wall and crossed his arms. He smiled in relaxation, "It's nice being able to chill and watch the show."

Touketsu nodded and agreed, "Yeah. And after the spell wears off, the fight will be easy."

The scared gang leader stood by the bed, hesitating to move as he watched the horde of hellish-looking monsters tear each other apart like wild animals in a nightmarish world that was once his hideout. How did it all turn out like this so fast? He saw flesh being ripped off and blood being spilled in gruesome ways. One of the monsters saw him and began to charge towards its new victim. The gang leader screamed before he cast Firaga at the creature and set it ablaze in large fires. He watched it turn and flee as it flailed its arms in pain. The redhead gasped between breaths as he felt the shock from his encounter. He tried to calm down and think how to survive this situation. He is a leader of a gang and he needs to act like it, tough and fearless. After collecting a bit of his wits, he wondered if this was all an illusion. The brown-haired knight did something to him before this. He must have cast an illusion spell on him; no, he indeed cast one on him. The leader raised his keyblade and cried, "Esuna!" The effects of Confuse and the flames on the burned boy were removed and the world around the gang was back to normal. The boys stopped attacking each other and realized to their horror what they had been doing this time. Their leader told them, "Alright boys, stop fucking each other and kill these fags." The furious gang went to attack their enemies.

Without taking his eyes off the enemy, Zephyr told the child, "Hitomi, stand behind. We'll try to keep you safe." The male rescuers then engaged the survivors in combat. Zephyr took on two of the gang members, parrying their attacks as well as evading some. The knights were disposing their enemies with

ease by striking at the vital points as taught in their career.

Hitomi had stayed back against the wall as she watched the keyblades being swung around. One of the gang managed to get past the trio and get over to the girl. That hooligan sneered at her, "Hah, I can't believe those retards brought a little girl to a fight." Then he lied, "Don't worry, kid. I'll go easy on you." He raised his keyblade high up in preparation to strike hard.

The girl watched the keyblade, fearing the damage she was going to take. Suddenly a forgotten memory brought itself into her mind like a savior arriving just in a nick of time. It was a spell, one that would be very useful here right now. She threw her hand out towards him and cast, "Slow!" Her attacker's movements drastically slowed down as his keyblade flew down softly like a dust particle towards her head. Hitomi took the chance to jab her keyblade into the heart of his chest and watched him disintegrate into light particles as his heart flew away.

Glacies's consciousness returned and she heard noises somewhere. Her eyes began to rid itself of the tiredness numbing them before she opened them to find herself in some unknown place. She thought, *'Huh? What's going on? Where am I?'* She got alarmed by a scream next to her. She turned her head to the side to see the fight between Zephyr & co. and the young ruffians. Shocked by what she had awoken to, she let out a gasp. Then she started to ask, "Zephyr, what's going on? Why are you-"> She tried to get up, but only to discover that her limbs were being restricted. Glacies looked to her hand to see that it was tied to a rope. After seeing the same thing happen to her other hand and feet, she then felt that the buttons of her capris have been loosened as the air was touching the crotch. Out of dismay for her position, she cried, "Oh my god!" Did someone attempt to rape her? The thought of that disturbed her, even frightened her to the point of shuddering.

After Zephyr took out two of the gang members, he felt a keyblade struck him from behind, causing him to fall face-flat on the floor. He groaned in pain as he heard the gang's leader telling him angrily, "You're not getting the bitch back, punk! I'll make sure of it!" The blonde boy quickly rolled to the side, having luckily dodged a downward thrust that he did not see coming. Once he was sure he was at a safe distance, Zephyr pushed himself back up and blocked his foe's weapon in time. The leader swung at him and got blocked again. When the third swing came, the blonde dodgerolled and came up with an Aerora spell to blow the leader hard into the wall. "Ow!" the redhead cried before he slumped down to the floor with his back against the wall. The apprentice followed up his attack with a strike raid hitting him square in the chest. "Gah!"

After Zephyr caught Spring Breeze back, the leader fought his pain as he attempted to get back up. But then he stopped and dropped when the two knights stood before him. Touketsu gloated, "All your friends are dead, pal. Looks like it's game over!"

The gang leader's face contorted into a grimace, feeling defeated and powerless. "Ah shit!"

Touketsu told him, "We could kill you here right now, but you're not much of a threat when it's just you.

So I'll give you two choices: we can either put you in prison or we'll give you a quick, painless death." He wagged the tip of his keyblade in front of the leader's chest as the redhead watched it nervously. He asked, "So what's it going to be?"

The leader gritted his teeth for a bit. He answered, "Fine, throw me in jail. It's not like I have much of a choice."

The brunette smiled in satisfaction, "Alright, prison it is." Then he cast a Stop spell on the leader to keep him from causing any trouble on the way. The knight turned to Hitomi and told her, "Alright kid, open me up a corridor to the prison compound." The child created the corridor of darkness to that exact place. Glacies watched this in surprise; she did not know that Hitomi can do this. Touketsu and Nemo picked up the gang leader and walked with him to the corridor. The brunette said to Zephyr, "Here's to a job well done. We took out a bunch of thugs and saved a damsel in distress."

Nemo smirked, "That's a story we'll tell to the warden."

The apprentice appreciated, "Thanks a lot, guys! I couldn't have done it without you." He looked down to Hitomi next, smiling, "And we wouldn't have gotten here without you, too." The child made a small smile in response.

After the knights and their prisoner disappeared into the corridor, the dark portal closed up behind them. The two apprentices then heard a bluenette asking them, "Zephyr, can you untie me now?"

The blonde turned to his frowning friend and remembered, "Oh yes, I was getting to that." He went over to her side and untied the ropes from her. With the teen girl freed, he asked, "Glacie, are you feeling alright?"

As she buttoned back her pants, Glacies answered, "I'm fine, at least I think so." She was unsure of what happened to her between the knockout and the present. Maybe something vile must have been done to her. Her unbuttoned pants was a sign of it. Not wanting this topic to be heard by Hitomi, she got closer to the blonde and asked him quietly, "Zephyr, did anyone rape me while I was asleep?" Her stomach churned at the thought of being used as a living, breathing sex doll by the dirty gang.

Zephyr could see the worry on her face, desiring an answer that did not confirm her fears. He reassured her truthfully, "I don't think they did. They were just about to pull down your pants when we got here."

The bluenette was relieved that her virginity is still intact, but she is still disturbed by the thought of having been kidnapped to be raped. She hoped will not have any nightmares about this later. She gave the boy a hug and said, "Thanks for coming to save me, Zephyr. Thank you and everyone else." Because of them, she was clean for now.

The boy smiled, "You're welcome. But now we got to get back to the castle. We must be late by now."

Glacies let go of him and agreed, "You're probably right." Then she looked to the child and asked, "Hitomi, can you take us back to the castle?" Hitomi created the corridor to Leohart's castle and the apprentices went in.

-----

Leohart was standing at the courtyard, waiting for his students to return. They were never late from a lunch break before and he wondered what was keeping them up. Then he saw a corridor of darkness appearing nearby. "Hm?" he hummed curiously as he looked at it. He saw his apprentices coming out and the corridor closing behind them. He asked them, "Students, you're a bit late to return. What have you been doing?"

Zephyr told him, "Sorry about that, master. We met a couple of knights and had a bit of fun sparring. Then Glacies got kidnapped by some gang and we all had to rescue her." With a smile, he added, "They were pretty easy to beat. They had some strong spells, but they were no match for us."

Leohart commented, "That must have been quite the experience. Well since you all got into some rough activity, I'll give you another 30 minutes of break. But you are to stay here at this castle, so that we don't have another incident like this again."

The teens replied, "Yes master." They went to a tree and sat underneath its shade.

Although she was saved, Glacies was still shaken by her incident. She attempted to get her mind off of it with a pleasant subject by asking Zephyr, "So Zeph, who won? You or Touketsu."

The boy answered, "Touketsu did. He got me off my feet and had his keyblade right at my spot that would have killed me in a real fight."

The bluenette replied, "I guessed he would have won. You were up against a knight and you're still an apprentice."

"Yes," agreed Zephyr. He continued with confident smile, "Yes, but once I become master, it's going to be round 2. And maybe this time I'll win."

Glacies giggled, "I'm looking forward it." Then she turned to Hitomi and asked, "So Hitomi, where did you learn how to create corridors?"

Hitomi answered, "Nowhere, I just thought of it and I did it." She was still puzzled about how she was remembering things she should not have been able to know before. It was very confusing to her.

The blunette asked curious, "Just thought of it?" The child's answer did not sound right.

Zephyr explained to his friend, "I think it's a lost memory she just remembered, Glacies. Things like that happen with amnesia."

Glacies said, "I guess you're right." The trio continued to have a time-passing conversation until it was time to train again.

-----

After bringing Kumo to the Land of Departure, Chase gave his apprentice of tour of the entire castle, telling him where certain rooms are and where they will be training. After that was over, they made their way to the library as Chase said, "And that's the Land of Departure for you. I hope you'll like it here, because it's going to be your new home from now on."

Kumo asked eagerly, "So when do I learn how to fight? Are we going to play games?"

The man laughed softly, "Not right now, I'm going to need you to rest first before this. So I'm going to read you a storybook before our first lesson."

The boy smiled excitedly, "Ooh a story? What's it going to be about?"

"Don't know. We have plenty of books, so just pick one you think you'll like when we get there."

"Okay." The two got to the library and went to where the children's books were. Kumo picked out a picture book about a squire fighting a dragon to save the king from being eaten. Chase read it to him and the boy was not disappointed with the adventurous tale.