

A shocking pain. The man would find himself blown back from a strong force. The searing slices of pure wind and velocity cutting up his pristine suit. His feet plant themselves into the cobblestone pavement and drag him to a stop. A sharp gasp fills his chest as his eyes look straight back to his attacker. The gilded brass shines in the lamplight while the buzzing of coils fills the iron smelling air. The loud *THUMPS* barrage his ears as his eyes stare upon the brass beast.

An elf, contorted with many brasses and coils to keep them alive. The claws whirr while a crimson fluid drips from them. Heavy breathing can be heard while it approaches, the deep soft purple skin only visible upon the face of this monstrosity. Their eyes gleam with brass and the sights of changing artifice within them. It was a foot taller than the human before it. Steam bursts from its carapace as a screeching vox-laugh comes from its molded gas masked mouth.

“Pity,” The Elf’s voice hazily comes through, the vox spitting steam while it spoke, “I thought you would have given a better fight, detective.”

The human’s right arm releases its own steam, the colored brass being dyed to match his own skintone of a tanned brown. The other hand held a shortsword sleek with dark oils and blood.

“I’m not a pushover like the others you killed elf,” The Detective states as his sword flicks the mixture off with his arm now being done from the charge, “and as for attacking me, punishment by the Great City of Ethos shall be death.”

The charging of the beast would commence. The stomping of the massive brass feet come upon the man as it yells a binary sound to bring down its claws upon the human. It was quickly blocked by the human’s shortsword while using his arm to help with the force. A quick turn of the man’s body would throw the attack off balance and reinforce his attack with a quick slash upon its legs. Sparks fly from the metal while doing so. The Beast would step back from the sudden attack, though feeling nothing from the blow.

The human quickly bounces to the stammer with a quick strike to its face. The only seemingly part of flesh would be felt upon their face. A loud

vox screech fills the air while the detective goes for a quick slash at the face. Before his blade was met with the sound of tearing flesh, the sudden and seemingly quick kick from the monster would fill his ears with his own cracking of bone. The searing shooting pain flew through his body as his throat let out a searing growl of pain. It forces him back once again. His breathing was stammered, though a soft feeling of calm would fill his body. In his mind he knew it was a Medicae Coil. The Artifice would numb the pain in it as The Detective realized he really had no other choice if he wanted to make it out alive. A subtle click and whirr would fill his arm. He knew what he had to do.

The binary screech of the elf would fill the area as they charge straight towards the human. They go for a quick rake of their claws with a sweep towards the detective's chest. With a precise block the man would parry the claws and force the hand to swipe away. With a quick hand his brass arm would send a quick punch straight into the metal carapace of the beast. It didn't affect the beast as another strike from its other hand forces the human to take a blow to his side. The pierce of the brass claws made him yell as his brass fingers quickly unfold.

A quick whirr of Artifice could be heard as a gentle heating glow starts to appear on his arm. The Elf's eyes gently widen from this sound as it pulls its claws from his side to get away. The human stares at the Monster with a growl in his throat.

BOOM!

A loud explosive force comes from the human's dyed brass, forcing both of them back. The man found himself on his back while the whirring of his opponent was suddenly louder. Along with the sizzling of metal was the exposed remainder of the monstrosity's humanity. The chest carapace was compromised to reveal the beating, decaying heart along with greying organs. The Detective would slowly force himself up using his weapon with the new smell of cooked flesh. The shoulder of his brass appendage was now exposed with the reveal of burned flesh and many scars. It seems it

wasn't his first time using his Artifice. The human limps to the beast as its body is trying to regain function.

The Human quickly stabs his sword into the coils and small gears the Elf has within his chest, forcing them to grind into a halt with discharges of colorful dancing lightning. The Monster screeches in pain as The Detective holds his heating arm to then shoot out a used Artifice Coil, now empty from its use. The Elf's decaying vision looks to the grey and empty coil.

"A coil?.." The beast states confusingly before another stab was felt in his chest into his grey lungs. Another vox yell was heard as they felt the sheer pain.

"Usually keep one on me, elf. Now.. By the Principality of Ethos and Her Majesty, you have permission to state the last words you wish to have sent to your loved ones if any?" The Detective holds his blade to the being's throat, ready to finish them off. The Elf would stare at the damaged human. A laugh only comes from their vox while the last lights of Artifice flickers within it.

"What does a being have to say when it loses everything? Dying slowly by the years. I did what I must do to protect my people," Coughing could be heard from the vox while its head looks up to the starry sky, "And to make sure my own kind will live. You know nothing of our Curse. If you had everything taken, beaten and cursed to die without barely living your life.. You would be like me, human."

The Human was silent. He took in his words as he then thrust his blade into his fleshy head, widening eyes of pain before the color fully leaves them. His own eyes stare at the now lifeless automaton. A quick pull would dislodge his blade as it flicks off the oily blood and sheathes it.

"I would never be a monster like you." Said the man. When the last breath was said, a sudden weakness filled his body. The Medicae coil was wearing off. A lump of pain fills his throat while kneeling down to the ground. The detective slowly puts his hand into his cloak and pulls out a long piece of mineral, a crystal. More pained grunts force themselves out as The Detective lifts the crystal to his lips.

"Ignire Vias Orationis." His weakening voice stated. The crystal would light up with soft teal hue, filling the grey colored crystal with beautiful life. It kept glowing until a soft hue of crimson red and lavender filled the small crystal. Soon enough a voice came through.

"Angelo?" A masculine voice speaks through the crystal. The tone was one of both concern and anger.

"Hey, Valefor.." Angelo spoke before the voice spoke again.

"Why did you run off like that?!" Valefor shouts.

"The criminal was getting away.."

"But it's an elf! You KNOW how they are!"

"You don't think I know that?" Angelo says with the tinge of pain. It was silent for a few seconds before Valefor spoke up once again.

"Where are you?" Valefor asked. The Detective looks to his surroundings once more. The brick buildings, broken and