

## Chapter 2.A flux in time

Mexico 3:00 A.M. (8:00 A.M. Nafrece)

"You have failed to capture her yet again, Jodie."

Jodie sighed quietly. Those weird triceratops/ninja hybrids found her about an hour ago, knocked her out and brought her to a closed bar. When she came to, she found herself hanging upside down, just above a billiards table while a ninja held a cell phone to her ear. Her coven's chairperson was scolding her for again failing to get Ellis. It was becoming quite routine actually.

It had been a while since the events at Wiñay Marka, and Jodie decided to leave the Coven and work at Amigo Tacos. But they contacted her about a month ago, informing her about some ancient and powerful artifacts, and Ellis's possible role with them. Because of what happened, Jodie, Ellis and Nadie had become good friends. She worried for the girl's safety, and so was forced to come back. Of course, her assignment was to follow Ellis and retrieve her, but she had no intention of doing the latter.

"I hope for your sake you will follow through next time." The chairperson said through the cell phone's speaker.

The ninja hung up the phone, signaled for the others to let her down, and left her lying on the table. She dusted herself off quickly, walked out the door and immediately went back to staking the two girls out once again. Neither Jodie nor the ninjas noticed the tall young woman watching nearby (unless either she or they could sense the Gift or temporal fluxes they weren't going to see her at all.)

"It looks like things have begun to move here. I'll have to wait till tomorrow for that part of the show to really begin." The young woman said to no one in particular and giggled slightly at the last part of her statement. She looked at a watch on her wrist and smiled as Jodie got into her car which the ninjas had taken to bring her here and drove off. "We'll get a chance to speak soon Jodie Hayward. But now I have a show to catch in Nafrece. Ta, ta." The woman pulled out a small device, looked at it and then pressed a couple buttons and then she was gone.

Nafrece 7:15 A.M

Kirika and Mireille emerged from the alleyway as they hurried along trying not to draw attention to themselves. They quickly walked a couple blocks as they heard sirens in the distance. When they thought they had gotten far enough they slowed down. Mireille wasn't in a good mood and it showed on face. Kirika noticed the look on her face. She was going to ask what the matter was when she noticed a tiny outdoor café. "Mireille let's rest a bit." Kirika said gesturing to the café. Mireille was going disagree but the grumbling in her stomach and the fact they weren't being followed changed her mind. "All right, I could use a bite to eat." Mireille responded and the pair went to the café.

When they got there the only other people were a bored waitress and a tall young woman chatting away to herself till they noticed the Whiteberry in her ear. They sat down at a table that wasn't noticeable from the street. The waitress took their order with a tired smile and trotted off. The waitress soon returned with their tea and scones. When she had left Kirika asked. "What's wrong?" Mireille gave a slight sigh and then she answered. "I'm just a little frustrated. I can't figure out why the Soldats are after us again after all these years. Something has changed but I don't know what."

"Well maybe it has something to do with the last person you pissed off!" The woman said loudly as Mireille turned to the woman who was engrossed with her conversation. Mireille was about say

something but a thought crossed her mind. *"Who did we piss off in the Soldats? Breffort? Breffort said they'd leave them alone. He was either dead or switched sides by now"*. She thought to herself. She couldn't really blame him. She and Kirika were mad dogs on the run, tearing the entire Soldats system apart. Killers who refused to kill. It was so ridiculous, she couldn't laugh.

"I have a hunch on whom, but following that lead will have to wait." Mireille said turning her attention back to Kirika.

"What do we do?" Kirika asked.

"We lay low till tomorrow and leave by train." Mireille responded.

"Yeah, I wouldn't expect leaving the city anytime soon so you two will have to handle it by yourselves."

This time Kirika turned her head towards the woman on the phone. She wondered if the woman was listening in on their conversation and or be a Soldat. She calmly got up and walked over to the table where the woman was seated. Kirika noticed the woman's green eyes and short brown hair.

"Excuse me." Kirika said putting her hand in her jacket pocket and grabbing the gun within.

"Find out who decided to torch our warehouse!" The woman said apparently ignoring Kirika.

"Excuse me." Kirika said again this putting her finger on the trigger.

"Look, I don't care! It's Roanapur! Bribe someone or suck their dick, I don't care! Just find out who did it!" The woman said loudly. Then she pressed a button to end the call.

"Excuse me." Kirika said in louder tone ready to pull the trigger when she felt Mireille's hand on her shoulder.

The woman looked at Kirika and Mireille with a frustrated look. "Yes? Can I help you?"

"Could you please keep it down some of us are trying to have a quiet breakfast here." Mireille replied a tad annoyed.

"Oh, I'm sorry. It's just we've had some unexpected trouble in Roanapur lately and it's getting on our, well I mean my nerves. I'm terribly sorry to disturb your breakfast. Elsa Rene, Pegasus Imports. Here's my card." The woman said pulling out a business card. Mireille looked it over and handed it back.

"I'm we're not interested but thank you." Mireille replied thankful she got her to shut up.

The woman shrugged and picked up the business card. "Again I apologize." The woman said and Mireille silently nodded with a satisfied look. Mireille and Kirika went back to their table as the woman called for the waitress.

"That woman could be a Soldat." Kirika said quietly to Mireille.

"No, she's just a frustrated business woman. Nafrecean companies with holdings in Thailand have been attacked recently. But anyone with holdings in Roanapur is just asking for it anyway." Mireille replied as she watched the woman leave and get on a nearby Vespa scooter and ride off.

"Roanapur?" Kirika asked having never heard of it before. If Kirika said anything else it was quickly drowned out by the sound of Elsa starting up the Vespa.

"It's a total shit hole in Thailand. Rumor has it not even Infant or the Soldats couldn't or wouldn't touch the place." Mireille said recounting the stories she had heard about the place when Elsa had left.

Elsa rode off farther away from the pair and when she was far enough she turned down an alleyway. She pressed a button on the scooter and a nearby garage door opened. She went into the garage and parked the scooter and closed the door.

"Hmm...for a few seconds there I *really* thought Kirika was going to shoot me right there and then." Elsa said as she pulled out a device but not before she noticed a sticky note.

*Mom needs milk.*

*You know what kind*

*3 bottles*

*Do it before she starts to worry...again.*

10162033 E☺

Elsa smiled as she read the note. She had a habit of leaving sticky notes when she travelled. She wondered if she in her travels actually helped invent sticky notes. Then she heard a slight beep and she opened her cell phone. A holographic image of male anime rabbit dressed in green cloak and hat appeared.

"Yes Falcheto?" Elsa asked as the hologram appeared.

"Was my performance to your liking Lady Elsa?" Falcheto asked.

"Your performance was superb." Elsa said with a smile at her A.I.

"Thank you, Lady Elsa. But may make a suggestion?"

"What is it?" Elsa asked knowing that he made few suggestions.

"I suggest Lady Elsa; through the dummy company of Pegasus Imports we buy a warehouse in Roanapur, Thailand and then through other channels hire someone to torch it."

Elsa wasn't sure if he was joking or not.

"You do know that was all an act." Elsa tried to explain.

"I am aware that was a ruse to pass information undetected, Lady Elsa. But there is the distinct possibility that Mireille Bouquet would investigate. Though I could manage with some difficulty to bribe someone, the act of sucking a human male reproductive organ is far beyond my capabilities." Falcheto said in a deadpan style which made Elsa really wonder if he was joking or not.

"Are you joking?" Elsa asked.

"If you ordered I will do my best to comply with your orders Lady Elsa. As for your current query; I believe my statement could be taken in a humorous way."

"In other words you were." Elsa said with a sigh.

"Affirmative, Lady Elsa. Will there be anything else?" Falcheto asked.

"No, that will be all." Elsa said.

"Thank Lady Elsa." Falcheto said before disappearing.

Elsa closed the cell phone with sigh and smirk. "Ah my dear Falcheto, sometimes you take things far too literally." She lovingly said of her A.I.

Then she replaced the cell phone with another device, pressed a few buttons and in a flash of light she was gone.

Syracuse Sicily 215 B.C.

"Eureka!" Archimedes shouted as he ran naked from his bath passing an unseen Elsa along the way.

"Oops, Wrong time period." She said with a little chuckle and she pressed a couple more buttons and she disappeared. But not before she took a quick picture of the naked scientist running past her.

Northern Nafrece July 7<sup>th</sup> 2011 (4:30 A.M.)

The phone ringing woke up Douglas Rosenberg from a sound sleep. He looked at the caller ID and pressed speaker.

"Hello Sir." Douglas said trying not to sound like he was still asleep.

"Did you receive the package I sent Douglas?" Friday's voice echoed from the speaker.

"Yes sir, but I highly doubt she's in this country Sir." Douglas replied.

"She'll be there soon. How is the current operation going?" Friday asked.

"We haven't found the goods yet, but we do know that the Soldats don't have them either."

"As long you keep the Soldats distracted from our real goal, finding the artifacts is trivial. Oh you might not know this but Altena has sent her errand girl out to your area. I'm curious what she is up to. "

"Yes Sir. I'll get on that immediately. Anything else Sir?"

"Next time don't use Speaker phone." Friday hung up and a dial tone came over the speakers.

## Third Moon Rising

“What are you up to Friday? And why her of all people? Though his choice does intrigue me. I will look forward to meeting you once again Miss Hayward.” Douglas asked himself as he sat in bed.

Unseen Elsa had listened to the entire conversation. She wondered if Friday knew she was there.

“Ahhh...If you only knew Dougie. You would’ve wished you’ve stayed dead.” Elsa said with a sly grin knowing that he couldn’t hear her.

“Better go get the milk before mom starts worrying...again.” Elsa said sighing and she pushed a couple buttons and she was gone.