

[Adam C. POV]

When I had felt another demonic presence, I had expected a lot of things.

Another demon wanting to possess me? Sure, been there, done that.

Maybe one of Zeref's failed creations? Why not?

What I didn't expect was to find myself in a... normal town, watching humanity's greatest weakness, the fear of many, also known as mob mentality.

Perched precariously atop the neighboring building, I crouched low, my fingers curled around the cool, rough edges of the weathered bricks.

The sight that unfolded below filled me with a sense of disgust that coiled itself around my heart.

From this vantage point, I had a bird's eye view of the mob that had congregated outside a modest house across the street. Their faces, illuminated by the harsh glow of flaming torches, twisted into grotesque masks of hatred and fear.

Each rock they hurled crashed against the house, shattering the quiet night with a chilling echo.

Within the house, hiding in a corner I could feel three... presences, one vastly stronger than the others, that presence felt... demonic, but not completely, it was weird to explain.

The three presences felt... afraid.

I leaned forward to get a better look, my eyes widening in shock at the silhouette that moved behind one window. It was small... too small, and fragile looking.

Children...

I couldn't see them, but I had no doubts that... this mob was targeting... children.

I couldn't feel... a lick of evil intent within the house...

Nothing...

Just... three small presences, afraid of what awaited them outside.

"Monster! Demon!" They shouted, their words melding into a horrifying chant that filled the air. The accusations ricocheted off the silent walls of the surrounding buildings, amplifying their intensity.

I swallowed hard, trying to suppress the knot of... anger that threatened to choke me.

Inside that besieged house were three innocent children who were caught in this nightmare through no fault of their own. I could almost picture them, huddled together in fear, their wide, terrified eyes darting towards each new crash, each fresh wave of hateful slurs.

My hands clenched into fists, and I took a deep breath to calm myself before I did something I might come to regret. This was not the time for anger.

It was the time for action.

Wasting no time, I leaped off the rooftop, the wind whistled past my ears as I descended towards them, my eyes locked onto the ringleader.

He was a burly man with a wild look in his eyes, brandishing a flaming torch like a weapon. As I landed gracefully on the ground in front of the house, he turned to face me, his mouth gaping open in shock.

"Who the hell are you?" he snarled, his grip tightening on the torch.

"A decent human being," I replied coolly, my voice echoing against the night.

He lunged forward with a primal scream, I didn't move, instead, I released a bit of my power, cracking the earth beneath me, pushing the man back with a force he couldn't even comprehend, dropping him on his back.

The mob fell silent, all eyes on me as I turned to face them with a cold, hard stare.

"I don't know why you are doing this, nor I care, but this ends now," I said, my voice cutting through the air like a blade.
"Am I clear?"

The ringleader staggered to his feet, his eyes blazing with anger, and fear as he looked at me. "You don't understand," he spat, his voice thick with venom. "Those... things in there aren't children anymore. They're demons! Trying to trick us!"

I raised an eyebrow, unimpressed. "Is that so? And how did you come to that conclusion?"

This felt familiar somehow...

Three presences...

One demonic in a way...

Could it be... The Strauss Siblings?

"They're not human! Go inside and look at the oldest girl!" He exclaimed, gesturing wildly towards the house.

"Please... sir... help us..."

I turned to see a small figure in the doorway of the house I was protecting, their face hidden within the shadows. As they stepped forward, I was able to confirm my early suspicions...

Lisanna.

Taking a deep breath, I turned to the man, and with a low, cold tone, said. "Leave, and don't come back."

The ringleader opened his mouth to protest, but I didn't give him the chance, this time releasing enough power to send a gust of wind that extinguished their torches, knocking every single of them back with enough force to hurt them.

The sudden display of overwhelming strength seemed to snap the mob out of their trance, and they began to scatter in all directions, tripping over each other in their haste to escape.

I watched them go, my eyes narrowing in disgust, before turning back to the house. Lisanna was still standing in the doorway, her eyes wide with shock, relief, and awe.

Without a word, I stepped forward into the house, scooping the little Lisanna up into my arms as I made my way inside the house, the funny thing here was, that I didn't even realize I had scooped her into my arms at first, it wasn't until she eeped that I realized I had done it.

It was almost as if I had acted out of instinct.

I guess all that time carrying Cana around left some muscle memory behind.

Inside, I found the remaining Strauss Family, a boy and a girl, huddled together in a corner, their small bodies shaking one with fear, and the other with self-deprecation.

Mirajane.

And Elfman.

"Who are you?! Release my sister this instance or... else!"
Mirajane threatened, her voice shaking with fear.

I didn't blame her for being scared.

After all, I was a stranger who had just burst into their home and was now carrying her baby sister like it was my own, in fact, she had every right to threaten me, all things considered.

"Just a guy that was passing by," I replied, slowly lowering Lisanna to the ground, watching as she ran over to her siblings, wrapping her small arms around them in a tight embrace.

It really broke my heart to see... such young souls being victims of the reality of the world.

No one should have to deal with this shit before adulthood.

The ignorance of some is the damnation of others.

"He's a friend, big sis, he helped us!" Lisanna said, her voice soft and shaking as she looked up at me with wide, grateful eyes.

Helped us?

I only scared the mob.

That barely qualifies as helping.

Taking a deep breath, I smiled reassuringly at them. "That I am," I said, my voice gentle. "At least to you guys, not to the morons... outside."

Elfman and Mirajane looked at me with cautious curiosity, but they didn't seem to be as scared or shocked as before, which was good.

"You... scared them away," Elfman said, his voice cracking with emotion.

I nodded, leaning against the wall as I gazed out the broken window in their room. "Yes, I did, for now at least. So tell me, why was that mob after you all?"

Mirajane hesitated for a moment, her eyes flickering between me and her siblings. "It's... complicated," she said finally, her voice barely above a whisper.

I could see the fear in her eyes, the fear of rejection.

I didn't remember Mirajane's backstory too well, but I knew that it had something to do with her power.

"Does it have something to do with... the hand you are hiding away?" I asked, as kind and soft as humanly possible.

Mirajane's eyes widened in shock as she slowly revealed her right hand from beneath the folds of her dress. Her hand was twisted and gnarled, with sharp claws protruding where her fingers should have been, and multiple purple gems that vibrated with demonic power.

"How did you...?" she trailed off, her voice barely above a whisper.

"I'm a licensed mage," I replied, taking a seat on the ground.
"It helps to know things."

Mirajane's eyes filled with tears as she looked at me, her demonic hand trembling with fear. "I... I don't know what happened, all I can say is that this is the result of me helping the village, I was cursed, and now I'm a monster."

"You're not a monster," I replied, my heart aching for her.
"Nor you are cursed."

Mirajane looked up at me, her eyes filled with confusion.
"What do you mean?"

"This world is filled with magic, and well... the magic you were given is known as Take Over magic," I said, smiling at her as gently as possible. "Take Over magic is... rather vast, there's Animal Soul, Beast Soul, Machina Soul, and yours... Well, it's Demon Soul."

Mirajane's eyes widened with surprise, her hand trembling even more violently. "Demon Soul?"

I nodded, reaching out to place a comforting hand on her shoulder. "Yes, Demon Soul. And it's nothing to be ashamed of. Your power is a gift, a powerful one at that, it allows you to... subjugate the power of demons to make it your own as you did with whatever demon you encountered."

"A... gift?" Mirajane echoed, still visibly stunned.

I nodded again. "Yes, a gift. A gift that you can use to protect yourself and those you care about."

Mirajane looked down at her hand, and then back at me with tears in her eyes. "This curse... a gift, I never thought of it that way before," she said softly.

It seemed my words weren't reaching her as much as I wanted them to.

Perhaps the Old Man would have a better time helping her.

I took a deep breath before continuing. "I know you have no reason to trust me, but I want you to know that there are people in this world who can help you, who understand what you're going through, better than anyone."

Mirajane looked up at her siblings, her eyes filled with hope for the first time. "Really?"

I nodded, smiling at her. "Really. In fact, I know a guild that specializes in being a big... somewhat annoying but loving family."

"What guild?" Lisanna asked, her voice filled with curiosity.

I grinned, standing up from the ground. "Fairy Tail. It's a guild filled with the rowdiest, craziest, and most powerful mages in the kingdom. But they're also the most loyal, loving, and protective family you'll ever have."

Elfman and Lisanna looked at each other, their eyes shining with hope, hope that perhaps they didn't have to be alone.

Mirajane looked at me, her eyes filled with uncertainty. "Would... that guild take us in?"

I... think I suck at recruiting members.

The old man makes it seem... so easy.

I nodded, smiling at her. "They would be honored to have you. But I won't force you, it's up to you to decide."

Mirajane looked at me for a long moment, her gaze resting on her siblings, seeming to be considering my words.

Finally, she nodded, a small... almost sad smile forming on her face. "I... would like to go to Fairy Tail. Could you please take us there?"

I could see hope in her eyes, but at the same time... resignation.

I sighed, it seemed this kind of emotional support was really out of my league, hopefully, the old man would have better luck at easing the darkness of her heart.

"It would be my pleasure," I replied.