

Stage II

A Debt Repaid

Act 5

CRASH!!

Silverware clattered and glass shattered. All of it sprayed across the grounds. Men and women alike ran screaming from the source, an entire table flipped onto its side. Troops of the Federation marched in, their arm cannons primed.

Bound in thick metal plates, helmets with great big cross-shaped visors. Thick shoulder armor, thick knee armor, truly akin to walking humanoid tanks on some level just looking at them. They moved through, a couple of the soldiers grabbing members of the crowd. The people grabbed were pulled back, soldiers disappearing with new troops stepping to take their place.

Some people ran right on by without incident. Those with horns, those with colored skin the likes of red and green and blue, those with strange eyes, all abnormals were grabbed. Behind the lines of soldiers a single man moved dressed in an officer's coat, arms crossed behind his back, soldiers in black with orange visors and rifles stationed around him. He looked left, and then he looked right, pulling his hand out and pointing to one civilian.

Almost immediately the one was grabbed, curly ram horns. His knees buckled, dropped to the ground, the soldier aiming their arm cannon into the back of their head-

BAM!!!

Thump-

The civilian slumped over with a massive hole in their head absolutely smoldering. The man pushed his glasses up, after which he ran a hand through his hair- slicking it back further. His attention shifted, another group of civilians. A single nod and with it ran his soldiers, all pushing into the crowd and grabbing hold of the group.

A single smirk, looking back ahead and continuing to walk. The Federation Soldiers ran through swinging arms and throwing tables out of their path.

“We shall continue to purge this heathenness establishment until we find him men. Do not relent. The Gorgon is here,” the man spoke aloud.

He continued moving with his hands crossed behind his back. Booths were torn up and their curtains ripped down. One man was grabbed by the tentacle and dragged from a booth, slammed upon the ground- the soldier’s weapon shoved to the back of the civilian’s head. Another group of the people were flung against walls, the soldiers raising their weapons.

Pop- pop pop pop pop pop pop pop pop pop pop-

A whole bushel of people fell to their knees, slumping over atop one another. Holes in their heads and abdomens smoked, some blood spilling out but not a considerable amount. The line of soldiers fell back, swiftly turning about and moving forward. One soldier stood there, a slight bit of a shutter.

Place

The hand of another soldier was then immediately placed on the shoulder of the shuttering one, “Steady men. Remember- these are demons, not people,” he spoke aloud.

“Indeed,” the officer spoke, “Demons and heathens the lot of them. Like the Vampires, they are beasts to be exterminated.”

One soldier pressed forward with a mighty swing of their leg, kicking an entire table over. Drinks spilled and crashed.

Step... step step step- STEP STEP STEP STEP STEP-

William flew from around a corner. **Grab.** And quickly he was grabbed by the shoulder by a soldier. Raven came flying around next and was quickly grabbed with an arm flying around and taking hold.

“H-hey!” Raven shouted.

“Let us go!” William barked struggling as another hand flew out and took hold.

“Well now. What have we here?” the officer questioned aloud, moving right on over step by step.

“Let us go!” Raven yowled still struggling.

“Hmm... Sergeant?”

The man from before, in their armor who had grabbed hold of his own shaking comrade moved up. A small screen flipped open on his left gauntlet, the back of which was leveled up to the twins. It flickered red for a few short seconds, though quickly turned blue.

“They’re clear sir.”

“Ah. Human children. Down here? Unexpected,” the man murmured walking over, “Tell me dear children, wherever are your parents? Do you perhaps- require Federation Assistance?”

Step step.

“Mmm?”

“*Huff* *Huff* *Huff* You...” the voice of Almec carried, “Get your hands OFF of them.”

Heads shuffled, visors glowing. Many sets of eyes that were unseen had moved to see the butler-dressed old man. Almec stood there, teeth gritted, eyes aglow red.

“Oh? And who might you be?” the officer questioned.

“A-Almec!” Raven called.

His sights shifted left and right. Soldiers stood everywhere and both of the children were wrapped up with them. The officer smirked, the sergeant to his side with the scan screen up. The officer glanced, watching the visor flash red repeatedly.

“Ah- I see. We’ve got a demon enslaving these youths,” the officer spoke, “Not to worry children. The Federation shall make quick work of this wretch.”

“Almec!” the voice of Danielle cried out, following which she in her dark red jacket came running around.

She stopped just to the right of Almec, staring out at the legion. Her blue and red eyes set themselves on the twins immediately.

“OOOooooooh. I recognize that face,” the officer said immediately, snapping his fingers.

All around the soldiers trained their guns forward. Their sights, their scopes, their blasters- all were set on the duo of Almec and Danielle. They did not stutter, they did not hesitate. The sergeant did just the same, his scanner getting flipped back over.

“Danielle Mersella, isn’t it?” the officer questioned.

“Tch-”

“Mmmm hmm hmm hmm hmmm hmmmmmm delightful~” the officer chirped, “Ah yes, I see it now. Danielle Mersella and her hired hand. What a marvelous catch you shall make~”

“Let them go!” Almec demanded again.

“Oh I think not-” the officer began, “Almec was your name? Yes, Almec, I see no record of a demon by that name in our record. Danielle though- oh yes. The former aid to Zero Blackheart himself. And you- clearly her attendant. Heh heh yes, I shall do no such thing. These youths are under our protection, and you my friend shall be under arrest.”

The soldiers pressed forward slowly.

“Careful now men. Danielle is an S-Class criminal. Who knows what sort of tricks she may throw upon us. Who knows the stature of this man whom she calls friend,” the officer spoke, “Though I wonder how they might manage with over twenty barrels pointed in their direction with nowhere to run? Or-”

Blasters raised, arm cannons set for the broadside of the twins. They struggled, their arms twisted and pulled as the muzzles connected. Both were gagged swiftly. Almec stepped back, Danielle throwing both of her hands to her mouth.

“Perhaps we should set an example, if you find value in these children.”

“Don’t hurt them!” Danielle shouted out.

“Surrender yourself.”

“I...” she began, her arms and hands lowering.

“Surrender yourself, or watch them die.”

“Danielle-” Almec hissed.

“I can’t let them be hurt,” she spoke.

“So what, you’re just going to give yourself over?!” he growled questioningly, keeping his battle stance firm and his arms up.

“What choice have I?” she replied.

“Ah come on now, that’s no fun now is it? I was expecting you lot to be tougher. Is it the fact that we’ve got a couple dozen gunners set on you? Or do you actually care about these kids? No matter- best tell your hired hand there to settle himself.”

“I refuse!” Almec spat.

“Almec-”

“If we give up we all die anyway!”

“... you would risk their safety though, Almec?”

"When people are backed into a corner you really get to see their true selves," the sergeant spoke.

"Hmhmhmhm, indeed," the officer spoke, "You seem rather submissive and willing to give in. This fellow though, a true warrior at heart. And I'm afraid I can't have that. So let me ask you there, Almec was it- do you really think you can knock out all of my men here and save your brats without a single shot being fired?"

Almec's eyes darted, first to the twins, then to the soldiers, then to the twins, then to the soldiers, to the officer, and then back to the twins. His fists clenched up. His teeth grit together almost grinding.

"Is that hesitation? Or are you trying to figure out if you have any vantage in this? I can assure you that you have no room to do anything demon."

"Almec don't do anything stupid-" Danielle growled.

"There won't be anything stupid about it," he grumbled back, "I've already got it figured out."

"Just- stand down for now," Danielle murmured raising her hands up.

Almec would do the very same, his own hands being raised up while his stance died off. The soldiers moved closer, the officer standing with a grin. Cuffs with a blue glow were pulled, a few soldiers moving behind the duo. A few clanks and clatters and it was done, the bindings placed on both Danielle and Almec.

"Those binders disrupt the flow of energy within the body. Makes it very difficult to pull off spells and mana based attacks. Well, now that that's that, onward to the Gorgon."

"You won't find him," Danielle spoke aloud, "He left an hour ago after trying to kill me."

"No matter," the officer replied, "He's inside this hellhole of a town, I know that much. If he's not here then we will purge the residences until we find him. Sergeant Kazvash, have your men search the rest of this place and promptly burn it down when you're done. I shall personally see that this band of misfits is transferred to a proper holding facility."

"By your command Lord Providence," the sergeant replied.

The soldiers moved down the halls while others pushed both Almec and Danielle ahead. The leader turned and began to walk, his special onyx guards sticking close to him. The two youths were drug out kicking and struggling. Through the broken club, over the broken wood and splinters left from tables and chairs.

Down a few steps and around a bend, straight forward to the main chamber.

Step step ste-utter.

Wooooosh

His hair flapped undone, “Eh?”

A blur of glimmer shot straight by his head, a blur that became a ball, a ball that became a hunk of metal, and a hunk of metal.

“... what?!”

CRRRRAASSSSHHHH

The object crashed into the side of a bar, splinters of wood and shards of glass flying everywhere. A loud rain of crystal as it sprayed across the ground, the clatter of planks followed by a tumbling suit of armor. Arms flopped and legs dropped, a Federation soldier hitting the ground with a bunch of wood falling down atop. Glass bottles fell and shattered atop, their contents spilling out.

A large hand print stuck out, the chest plate pressed in. Providence turned about, his soldiers doing the same. Danielle shot around despite being bound. The expected result was to be expected- but expected it was not.

She blinked rapidly. A wisp of smoke traveled up from the man’s abdomen where there rest a hole blown straight through, a sword sticking straight out of the hole which was wider than the sword itself. A gut strike off center, smoldering and straight through.

“*Huff* *Huff* *Huff*”

The man stuttered and slumped over holding his wound. His salt-pepper hair spilled over his pinkish eyes, the tails of his butler coat striking blood on the floor.

“What load of bullocks-” Providence began, “Don’t we have you in chains?”

“Almec-” Danielle whimpered.

Almec lay against the wall dead ahead. To her now-left the Almec in binders dropped like a rock. It crashed and popped, an air of darkness escaping the dissipated form. The shackles clattered to the ground, their glow fading.

“Ah, a clone,” Providence stated looking down at the shackles, soon looking back up, “Well done agent.”

A man stepped forward from the darkness behind, the broadsword in hand. As he moved the sword pressed further and further into Almec’s body with the wound burning up more and more. A gold decorated hilt, a red gem embedded. He wore a trench coat, a buttoned dress shirt.

Longish hair for a man dancing around messily. Green eyes glimmered from the dark as he stepped up, a tie hanging forward. As he came into focus the shirt came clear as red, the coat a dark ash gray, his hair blue. He glared down upon Almec.

“Hmhmhmhmhmhmhmhmhm~ Did you think I would come to arrest the Gorgon and bring only my foot soldiers? That’s hardly the case,” Providence spoke as ahead of them the man ripped his sword from Almec’s body, kicking the butler in the back to send him crashing forward, “Meet Sylver. I borrowed him and his comrades from my good friend Rookwood.”

A few more steps echoed out, a whole pose of goons gathering from the corners of the room. Another man in a black trenchcoat, a black hat, done up all cowboy-like. Another a priest, or rather a combat priest, long robes with a large spear in hand.

“I knew it wouldn’t be that easy to take Virgil, not with Vox Tatara hanging around. And I also knew that a man like Almec wouldn’t go quietly. He has the resolve of a warrior. So what do you think? Are you impressed child?” Providence questioned glancing down to Danielle.

“ALMEC!” she yelled out.

The old man struggled, quivering on the ground. He coughed, choking practically on his own spit. Eyes strung back and wild.

“Don’t waste your breath. They all use the Holy Element. That sword is imbued with enough Godly Power to take down a rampaging Spirit Beast. Right now Almec shouldn’t be able to move with that much poison running through him,” Providence chuckled.

“GYAHHH-” Almec croaked out.

His head slowly turned back around, looking up at Sylver. Right into the gaze of the young man, the fierce sharpened inferno of determination, a resolve to kill.

“You may have been a powerful warrior once; but you haven’t seen battle in decades, have you old man?” Sylver questioned.

His eyes popped forward, teeth grit again, hands slamming down. **KICK!!** Sylver stumbled back, a blow dealt to his knee. A low grunt escaped the holy warrior. A scowl crossed his face near immediately-

“Well old man, it wasn’t my intention to kill you but if you’re going to be like that then I suppose I just as well finish the job!”

Step

Loud Straw Sucking Noises

The sound echoed behind. Sylver and his crew turned straight around. The officer looked beyond. What stood a few paces behind the attempted murder, of course, a man in white sucking on a straw with a large drink cup full of ice and a cola of some sort.

“*Suuuuuuuuuck-uck-uck-uck*”

He paused, looking down at Almec, then looking back up.

“... wha-?” someone called out.

Alexander pulled the straw, “Mmm? Oh, sorry. Felt like grabbing a Dr. Pepper. Thought about grabbing something to eat too but I couldn’t find the snack bar.”

“... who the fuck?!” one of Sylver’s squad members barked.

Almec scowled looking at the white haired man, “Alexander you prick!”

“What? I thought you could handle it if I’m being honest Raikor.”

“Raikor?” Sylver questioned audibly.

“D-don’t bullshit me!” Almec howled.

“Alright, I won’t bullshit you.”

“They stabbed me- and you’re still fucking around?” Almec hissed.

“In my defense you told me to piss off at one point so- I was just abiding by your wishes. Course now you’ve fallen down on the job soooooooooo-”

“I’m sorry but who are you?” another of Sylver’s squadmates questioned.

“Alexander Blackheart,” Providence spoke out, scowling then after.

Alex looked back up and over to the officer, “Christ I can’t get away from it. First Virgil and now you? How’ve you been Providence?”

“Would you stop pissing around Blackheart?!” Almec howled out.

“Sorry but no.”

“... everyone... focus your fire on that man,” Providence called in response, “TURN HIM INTO BLOODY PULP!”

All around the room the gunners took aim, aim right at Sylver and his group with Alexander being just behind. Sylver’s eyes popped and immediately he leapt forward. Behind him his crew shot left and right, nailing the wall and dropping.

“FIRE!!!”

**Pop pop pop pop pop pop pop pop pop pop PEW PEW PEW PEW PEW-
VOOOOOOOOOOSH KABOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!**

Bullets flew, blaster bolts fired, and even some rockets went flying in. The explosions howled out and tore the hall itself to shreds. Those who had been with Sylver crawled beneath the fire, their faces a mix of pants-pissing and being pissed-off. Danielle dropped to her knees, eyes wide and shaken as she stared at the fireball just beyond Almec.

The twins screamed audibly despite the muffling, both shaking. Shots plunged through the smoke, dozens of men all firing on a single individual. A few more rockets flew in for good measure all the same-

“That’s good... that’s enough,” the sergeant murmured, “THAT’S ENOUGH!!! HOLD YOUR FIRE!!”

“No!” Providence yowled, “Fire EVERYTHING!! I will NOT have that man stop me a second time!!”

And so the shots continued and continued and continued with the hall collapsing just behind Almec, even some of the rubble falling atop his legs. The firestorm continued, every soldier pouring everything they had into blowing the hallway up- grenades being tossed straight in and detonating at that point. An entire infantry’s weaponry, all going off in one fell swoop at a target no one could even see any longer.