

## *Estel City.*

The city streets were full of life tonight. Small groups of people walked door to door singing Life Day carols. Others rushed out to buy last minute gifts, or get food they had forgotten for their family's dinner. Green, red and blue lights hung in strings from one building to the next, making a web of festive colors throughout the city. Children pulled at their parents hands, unable to contain their excitement as families walked around looking at all of the decorations.

Revs Insrya basked in the mix of wild emotions he could feel coming off of people around him as he walked down the street. The Assassin had always loved this holiday. Memories of his childhood came back, of him and his little sister running through the streets chasing the carolers and looking at all of the lights. Thinking of the old times brought a feeling of regret to twist in his stomach as he approached the small house that was his childhood home.

It was a small single story home, with a small fence around the front yard. The little house seemed almost shoved into the space between the larger homes to either side of it. Strings of lights hung across the front porch, and inflatable decorations stood on the grass inside the fence.

Revs smiled at the decorations as he walked through the gate. His father had always insisted on decorating the front yard for Life Day. "It's just selfish to not help spread the holiday joy to the kids." He could hear the old Miraluka lecture him as he remembered all of the times the two and fought tangled stings of lights into place around the house.

He paused as his foot hit the first step onto the porch. When he was a teenager, his mother had always left the door unlocked for him. She had promised that it would never be locked until every member of the family was safe at home. It had been five years since he had been home, off fighting in Arcona's countless wars. Half a decade had passed and the knight had not even contacted his family. Would the door still be unlocked? Did they even think that he was still alive?

He reached out and turned the knob. The door slid open as if it had been awaiting his return. He could feel the warmth from inside the house on his face. Music and laughter filled his ears, filling him with the urge to just run in and scream 'I'm home!'. But it had been so long since he had been here. Uncertainty filled his mind as to how his return would be received.

Walking into the house, Revs peered into the living room. He could see the outlines of two figures with their backs to him sitting on the couch. The pair had the all two familiar auras of his father and his little sister Starlynn. He waited just a moment as it set in how much she had grown in the last five years. The smell of a home cooked meal filled his senses and brought his attention to the next room.

He turned and walked into the kitchen. He could see his mother standing at the stove, preparing plates for the holiday meal. He was tempted to call her name, to let her know that he had finally come home. Instead he stood there frozen, not sure what to do. In the next moment, the decision was made for him.

His mother had finished the last of the plates and turned around. "Dinner is ready! Come to the...." she stopped mid sentence. The tray of cooked ham fell from her hands, making a loud clang as the pan hit the floor. The two stared at each other, both frozen in shock.

"Honey!" Revs' father screamed, freezing as he ran into the room followed by his daughter. The Shadesworn's entire family now stood in small kitchen staring at him. His body quivered all over from nerves. He had to force himself to speak. His voice came out broken and quivering, "Momma."

"My baby!" The older Miraluka screamed as she ran forward throwing her arms around her son.

"Bubby!" Starlyyn screamed as she pushed past her father to get to her brother. Revs wrapped his arms around his mother and sister. His father came behind him, wrapping his arms around his whole family and embraced them in a long awaited moment of his son's return.

"They..they told me to give up. That....that you were dead!" Revs' mother sobbed, her head buried in his chest.

"I told them my boy was too hard to kill, there was no way you wouldn't make it home." His father stated proudly.

Revs turned and kissed his younger sister on top of her head as she cried into his shoulder. "It's ok," he said hoarsely. "Go lock the door, we are all home now."