

Bleeding Brotherhood

Von Peacer

Kapitel 4: Desmond Miles, 2012

Desmond was in a dark mood when he heaved himself out of the Animus and couldn't even muster his trademark grin when he noticed Lucy's ever worried look. Instead he made his way straight to the little cabinet where they kept the aspirin and popped two into his mouth before going to grab the bottle of water from the fridge to wash them down. He didn't even feel hungry this time, even if it was ridiculous that the death of a recruit five hundred years ago should affect him that much. He had Ezio to thank for that, and the strong synchronization he had with the old Assassin.

"Desmond, are you alright?" came the mandatory question and he turned to Lucy, forcing a smile on his face. According to the look she gave him it probably came out more as a grimace. Well, at least he had tried.

"Certamente. Ho solo bisogno di un po' d'aria fresca. (Sure. I just need a little fresh air)," he replied and before she could worry even more, he grabbed the earpiece he was supposed to put on when venturing outside and hurriedly left the Sanctuary, leaving a flabbergasted team behind.

"Is it only me or did he just speak Italian?" Shaun said while Rebecca and Lucy looked at each other worriedly.

In the meantime Desmond sprinted across the courtyard of the villa at full speed, fully enjoying the wind that blew in his face and not caring that his legs already hurt, not used to the exercise anymore after so many weeks spent lying motionlessly in the Animus.

It was good to finally get out of the cave, breathe fresh air and run with his own legs instead of his ancestor's in a virtual world. It helped him clear his head and try to remember who he was outside of Ezio's memories, something he had started having some trouble with. He knew he should probably tell the others and cut down on his time spent in the Animus, but he also knew how important finding the Apple was to their cause, and maybe even the world, if one really believed that the calamity Minerva had told them about through Ezio would come to pass.

Desmond miscalculated the distance to the next roof and scrambled to catch the edge with his hands, hissing when he felt the force of gravity in his shoulders, as unaccustomed to the strain as his legs. He pulled himself up and shook his head. No more thinking about what might or might not be. He had enough on his plate already, and this was the only time he could really enjoy himself, the only time he felt really free, even if the earpiece was a constant reminder that he still had a leash on.

But that didn't matter right now; he wanted to run, to fly through the night, not as Ezio Auditore, but as Desmond Miles and push his body to the limit and beyond so his

mind wouldn't be able to get confused anymore about who he really was.

He jumped to another roof and from there, over some beams to the next one, taking a turn to the right when he spotted the grey image of Ezio on his left, refusing to acknowledge it.

He continued running, easily finding his path on the rooftops, so familiar from both Ezio's and his memory from previous nights, until he finally came to a stop on one of the higher buildings near the gate leading outside. Out of breath he sat down, his back leaning against the chimney, looking over the countryside, so near and yet so far away.

No matter how much he liked the little city - he still wasn't sure if that was him or Ezio - he yearned to get out of here, to see something other than the Sanctuary and the same rooftops every night. He was also starting to miss the sunlight.

Desmond couldn't even remember the last time he had seen the sun rise. It had probably been in New York, after a long shift, sometime before Abstergo had caught him.

That seemed like a lifetime ago, or maybe even two lifetimes, considering he had lived - and was still living - through the lives of both Altair and Ezio.

Hell, before his capture he hadn't had a worry in the world. He had been convinced he was finally free to live his life and it had been awesome. Being a bartender had maybe not been his dream job, but it still had had its advantages. Having lots of contact with different people, for example, was something he had craved all his life after being held prisoner in the Farm, growing up with the same people and never meeting anyone new.

And now it was the same again and he was starting to wonder if it would ever end, if he would ever be free again to walk the streets as he pleased. Maybe after they had found the Apple, but he doubted it. He may have clung to that hope in the beginning, naïve as he had been, but he had started to realize that nothing would ever be able to completely end the war between Assassins and Templars. They had fought since the beginning of time - some battles lost, some won, but it would never truly end as long as even one of them still breathed.

And there would always be one.

"Desmond, you should get back. In a few minutes, the sun will rise."

Lucy's voice startled him out of his musings. When he looked around he noticed that it was indeed starting to dawn, so he got up with a sigh, turning his back to where he knew the sun would rise, resisting the temptation to stay just long enough to get to see it again.

He slowly started to make his way back to the villa, trying to stay out of the cave as long as possible, unwilling to return even one moment too soon. All the fervour from his free run earlier was forgotten as he lazily swung himself from a beam to a roof below, and then climbed up another one, staying out of sight of the windows, not willing to take the risk of being seen, even if it was unlikely anyone was up already. This city lived off tourism, and no tourist got up that early in the morning.

It was probably his reluctance to return that made him careless. One second he was jumping to another rooftop, and the next he was falling, having missed the ledge by an inch. His heart surged and his calm was completely forgotten as he desperately tried to grab hold of something to break his fall, but there was nothing.

He steeled himself for the impact that came a moment later - fortunately not as hard as it could have been, as he landed on a car that somehow cushioned his fall. Unfortunately, the car didn't appreciate being misused as a cushion and promptly

sounded alarm.

Hastily, Desmond scrambled to get off and away, ignoring the pain in his back and sprinted towards the villa as fast as he could, not answering Lucy's worried questions in favour of simply getting enough air into his lungs to continue running.

When he finally was behind the villa again, he took a moment to lean against a wall and catch his breath. He grimaced as he massaged his bruised shoulder. So that was how Ezio felt when he tumbled down a building and flew from crime scenes. He really hadn't wanted to know this in such detail.

"Desmond? Desmond!"

He sighed. "Don't get your panties in a knot, I'm back already." The silence that followed clearly indicated that Lucy was sulking and with a last look at the ever brightening sky, he made his way back down to the dark safety of the Sanctuary where he was at once welcomed by a rather flustered Lucy.

"What happened? The alarm-"

He scratched the back of his head, grinning sheepishly. "It seems cars don't really like being used as landing platforms."

Lucy frowned, but before she could ask what the hell he had been doing, he explained. "I kinda missed a ledge. I swear I didn't do it on purpose."

While Lucy's anger immediately switched to worry, which was so very surprising - at least the anger had been new and even kind of refreshing. Shaun of course couldn't let the matter go without giving his cynical comment. "I guess that will help you remember that you are, in fact, not Ezio, despite your wishful thinking."

Desmond didn't answer, but he silently wished it was that easy.