

Tobias

It was good to be back in Piltover. The last time Fate had made a stop here, the Clockwork Vaults turned out to be a fitting investment. Fate adjusted his wide brimmed hat, sweat pouring down his face, sipping from his dark ale, while messing with the cards in his pocket. His coattails made the room almost seem unnecessarily hot, but it was a necessary evil, considering that his recent winnings were buried deep in those pockets.

Fate observed the bar. Red cheeked men with handlebar mustaches slapped their knees, laughing while talking too loudly about their particular “conquests,” two women devoured the same meat pie, laden in gravy. They both wore diamond necklaces, the collars wrapped around their necks.

The newest line of Hextech technology allowed music to be absorbed from those gems and translated into what the wearer wanted to hear, intoxicating the user in a reverie of bliss. Fate had no use of technology, though that necklace might charm Miss Fortune. Then he considered Shock and Awe and almost choked on his beer.

The buzz continued. Fate eyed the door, flipping his cards in his coat pocket, faster now. The door swung open, and the barkeep swore loudly. The room suddenly caught in a commotion, and ablaze in a flurry of whispers.

A small girl sprinted into the parlor—a nest of brown hair, ashen face, and grubby hands clutching a coin purse; she slid under Fate’s table and grabbed ahold of his coattails, wrapping herself in them like a tablecloth.

Fate sputtered and turned, his beer spilling all over the table as he turned to look at the girl whose frightened blue eyes peaked just above the hem of his coattails.

“Please,” she pleaded, her voice muffled in the fabric.

“I—” He struggled to find the right words, and he saw her eyes, pleading. He remembered who he was, and what he’d overcome. In that worried face, he saw his past—an unfair exile, stripped of everything he loved, what he’d never go back to or never could; he put on his face, a mask of charm. “I’ll do what I can,” he tipped his hat. “Miss.” He grinned and flipped the barkeep a coin to stay quiet.

And the door burst open again as several armored guards from Zaun filed in, dressed in uniform, hextech paraphernalia covering their bodies, their skin half synthetic, half covered in dark cloth. Eyes black and senseless, they had already forfeited their humanity, and with it had given themselves up to Viktor’s hive mind.

Viktor spoke through them, his voice a hollow echo, devoid of any emotion. “Where is our lady?”

The guard with more than half his face exposed approached Fate’s table while the room bathed in silence. One of the handlebar mustache men hiccupped and the soldier’s dead eyes adjusted to the man. He stepped toward the bar and inspected the man who now held his breath.

“There’s a window in the ladies room,” Fate said to the girl. “It’ll get you out of here. Go.” he ordered her.

This was more than Fate ever bargained for, but this was his chance if *luck* ever had it out for him. He threw a card into the bottle behind the barkeep and the glass shattered, liquor scattering all over the floor. The soldiers turned and Fate rose. Adrenaline seized every part of his body, as he rushed towards the legion, poised, ready. *Luck was on his side.*

His head snapped back, and the wind was knocked out of him immediately. He reeled as he took another punch to his stomach and fell to the floor.

The legion surrounded him and the world became a blur, a barrage of jabs met his ribs, his stomach, his face, and he struggled to breathe, felt death encroaching, felt the world turning over.

And then he was taken.

In the prison below Zaun, the guards left him with his coattails in one piece. Ripped and stained but somehow still attached to his body. It hurt to breathe. A couple cracked ribs. Maybe Nurse Akali might see me, he thought, a weary smile plastered on his face. He felt for his pockets. They were empty. He should have been angry, furious, that all his work in Piltover had been for nothing.

Instead he broke out into a fit of laughter. *I suppose she'll be needing it more than me.* She was good, he had to admit. She'll go far. First stealing from Viktor and now me. One day. He sighed. Not too far I hope, he thought as he inspected the scrapes on his elbows.

Luck'll be on her side. I'm sure of it.