Garen tugged harshly on the straps of his gauntlets, checking to ensure that the equipment was secured to his wrists. While it was hard to fathom, there had been a before he was a member of the Dauntless Vanguard. Those days were full of merciless training, error in his footwork, and a loss of armor here and there.

Those days were ones that he preferred to forget. Reminiscing over the past was often a dangerous thing.

As he held out his arm and further inspected his armor, a young page ducked into the room, his hair wild. The sound of his voice snapped the warrior out of his thoughts.

"Lady Crownguard wishes to speak to you," he said. Garen stood from the wooden stool, towering over the boy.

"Thank you for the warning," Garen responded, cracking a small smile. The page seemed to be unamused. Just as suddenly as he had entered, he turned heel and left, disappearing out of Garen's line of sight in seconds. His smile vanished simultaneously.

Garen pondered whether or not the joke had been too simple for the boy to understand. Then again, few knew Lux as he did, thus he did not expect them to find humor in his snide remark. She was rather formal towards everyone else. As she should be.

To the citizens of Demacia, Luxanna Crownguard was a precious soul that embodied their spirits. She was a shining beacon of hope. Of course, she was much more fragile than Garen, and was often coddled by everyone despite being a young adult. Still, she remained an important figure of Demacia.

To Garen, she was a gentle soul who spent far too much time joking around and roaming the great city. She was, and always would be, a child in his eyes. One that shared the same blood as him. There was no doubt that he loved her as a sibling, but there were far too many times that he found himself regarding her as somewhat of an unequal companion. He might even call it dangerous.

The mighty knight made his way out of the preparation room, his fingers wiggling inside of his leather gloves. With each step he took, the armor clanked against the marble floor, echoing throughout the empty hall. He made his way to a room at the end of the hall.

The door was ajar. He turned his body sideways, slipping into the room. The motion was awkward with his armor, but Garen managed to make his way into the room without needing to push the door open further. There, his sister was seated, playing with her staff in her lap.

"You called for me?" The knight asked, his gaze calm and collected.

"I did," she replied, not looking up from her staff. "You didn't have to come right away."

"It would be rude for a man to stand idly by when his sister calls, you know."

"Since when were you concerned over being rude or proper?" Lux finally turned her attention to her brother, her own gaze calm. But Garen knew better.

"I have always been concerned about my attitude, Luxanna." Garen shifted his weight to one side, narrowing his eyes.

"What have you called me here for?"

"You're going to attack a Noxian camp on the edge of the forest, right?"

"You are *not* coming," Garen said sharply. "The Vanguard can take care of this matter."

Lux opened her mouth, but quickly shut it, staring at her brother. Tension hung in the air for a matter of seconds.

"That was all I wanted to know," she hummed quietly as her gaze turned back to her staff. "Come home safe."

"I will," he replied. He stood there, watching his sister. A part of him wanted to say something to her, if only to say that he wanted her to come. He trusted her war instincts just as much as he valued his own.

However, to her misfortune, she had been asked to stay behind in Demacia for this mission. And, as all Demacians knew, orders were orders.

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Nighttime had fallen by the time Garen and his squadron reached the location of the Noxian encampment. Fortunately, despite the long trek, many of his men were still energetic and

ready to battle. He expected nothing less. These were soldiers of Demacia's army, one that had many strengths and few weaknesses.

The mission was simple: Drive the Noxian soldiers out of the territory. Dead or alive. They had to protect Demacia at all costs. Garen signaled to his men as they charged into the camp, slashing and hacking at their foes, their golden armor shining in the moonlight.

Then… Why? Why were his men dropping like flies? He swung his sword in an arc, watching the steel pierce through the armor of his foe. Beside him, a Noxian soldier swiftly decapitated the head of his last comrade. Garen spun around, extending his sword away from his body. It sliced through the armor of several men, including the killer. They fell in unison, the clatter of their armor ringing in Garen's ears.

The sound of battle was starting to deafen the warrior. He let his sword fall to his side, his focus slipping. What was this? The feeling of defeat? No. Garen was a Demacian. He was a warrior of the Dauntless Vanguard. Defeat was not an option.

Garen was so immersed in his self-rallying that he didn't hear a soldier coming up behind him. The opposing warrior raised their sword above their head, ready to deal a devastating blow. He did, however, hear a cry from someone he recognized.

"Garen!" Lux cried out, holding her staff before her. He barely had time to turn his head and meet his sister's stare before he saw it: light, building up from her staff. He threw himself to the ground.

From there, everything happened in slow motion. The soldier's blade met his armor, getting stuck just before meeting his skin. The light coming from Lux's staff had built up, and it flew out at the Noxian, piercing through him. He fell to the ground beside Garen, his backside seared as if the wrath of a thousand suns had been unleashed onto him.

Garen could not wrap his head around what he had just witnessed. Lux dropped her staff to the ground, running to his side. She knelt beside him, shaking him, repeating his name over and over. He ignored her, his eyes locked onto the staff. There was only one word to describe what he had witnessed.

Magic.

Lux's magic.

As Lux kept trying to grab his attention, he slowly pushed himself off of the ground, glancing around at his men. At this point, the remaining Noxians had seen Lux's power and were fleeing. Many dead from both sides laid on the ground, their bodies unmoving.

"Garen," Lux repeated for what felt like the hundredth time. "Garen, please, tell me that you are okay."

"You were asked to stay back in Demacia," Garen said, his voice laced with anger. "I told you, we had this covered, Luxanna."

"You were a liar, Garen."

Lux looked as if she was fighting back tears.

"I am no liar. That would go against my code."

Garen reached up for the sword stuck in his armor, pulling it out. He cast it aside, letting it slam against a dead Noxian soldier.

"You had a choice, Lux," Garen said. "Listen to orders, or ignore them."

"I chose to save lives, Garen! Surly you understand! If you had a choice--"

"If I had a choice, which I did, I would follow orders!" He shouted. "My choice is always Demacia."

As Garen turned from his sister, who stood in disbelief, Garen wondered if he would choose Demacia first. Even if it came to her.

He knew the answer. After all, it was always his choice.