Side Story War

Deep in the trenches a battle wages on. A man in a tan-green uniform peers over the battlement. He sighs seeing that like always they seem to be surrounded on all sides, chances of making any headway seem pointless. Yet their defense was rather strong as well leading them to an endless stalemate. “General? Shouldn't you stay where it's safe?” One of the men taking cover close by asks.” He thinks for a moment before answering. “What kind of leader would I be if I did that.” the leader said to the man. It seemed to gain some admiration, but also something else. “An alive one,” he said in response. Before anything else could be said a mortar shot into the air and right into their location. He quickly pushed the other man out of the way saving him from being destroyed by it but injuring himself in the process and causing him to pass out.

The man looked at his commanding officer grateful, but concerned he may have doomed himself. He quickly carries him away deeper into the base to the med bay. When the General finally wakes up he is surrounded by an older gentleman and a younger woman who are treating his wounds. “Why do you always do this Lucius do you have some sort of death wish?” She asked concerned. “Your carelessness may bring doom to us all.” The Old man said to him.

Lucius took a deep breath before answering. “Does it not frustrate you? This pointless war that

has long lost its meaning? Caught in an endless draw. I will take any measures to find a way free of it. What of you Oswald? Have you made anything that will give us an edge?" The Old man doesn't seem to like that response. "It's not that I lack vision. I have countless ideas, just no resources to create any of them. For now, the enemy has stopped their approach giving us respite. I suggest you restrain yourself from any suicidal acts." He said taking his leave and returning to his laboratory.

The woman stays to tend to him. "I understand how you feel. I wish we could end this war just as much as the rest of our men, but it's gone on for so long longer than our lifetimes." She said wiping his face with a rag. He takes hold of her hand causing her to blush flustered a little. "Don't lose hope. As long as I draw breath I will find a way out of this to a real future." He said causing her to frown slightly. "That's what I'm afraid of."

Before they can say more another man enters the room saluting. "Sir! It's the enemy they..." He said wavering. "Spit it out soldier," Lucius demanded. "They have returned already and this time with a force unlike any I have seen, it looks like they fully intend to take this base this time." He said nervously seeming to have no hope they could defend against it. "What? That is grave news. Take some of the prototypes Dr. Corvus made and use them. This very well may be our last battle we will give them no quarter!" He said sitting up and pulling out the IV as the person reporting salutes and runs off to do just that.

"Wait stop what are you doing." She said in protest trying to keep him down. "What I must, go to the safe point, and wait for me." He quickly brushes her off ready to join the fight himself. She seems reluctant but listens to what he says. It didn't take long for him to enter the chaos. They had already broken the front line and trenches entering into the base. Some of his men were equipped with far superior weapons than the opposing side which seemed to give them the edge, but it was not enough.

He was about to jump into the fight to help when out of nowhere there was a flash of light and a strange girl wearing steampunk-themed clothes appeared from nowhere she seemed confused like she

didn't know much about this world quickly dodging out of the line of fire upon seeing both sides attacking her. She ran toward his direction as he pulled her towards cover. “Are you mad? How in the blazes did you even get here?” He asked fully putting his attention on her. “Ah well. It's hard to explain to a layman like yourself.” She laughs and absent-minded as they are discovered and attacked by the enemy forces.

He again pushed her out of the way as his forces repelled them with their advanced weapons. “Sir the outer walls are completely taken we need to retreat to the safe zone.” One of them said. He just sighs helping the strange girl to her feet. “Very well. Come.” He said leading the way. It was true a majority of the base had been overrun with the other side's forces only the middle, but a more defensible section remained. They managed to slip into it right as the doors shut.

Finally, they had made it to the safe zone as the building shook from the conflict surrounding them. All that managed to make it was a small company of men, Dr. Corvus, and the Nurse from before. “Is everyone alright?” He asked looking around the room at his forces that had lost all hope. “For now but it's only a matter of time before they break through and slaughter us!” One of the men said panicking causing the others to follow suit arguing with each other as the room devolved into chaos.

The strange girl looked a bit conflicted like she didn't know if it was a good idea to speak, but her empathy got the better of her tugging Lucius's sleeve. “Um. I might be able to help?” She said nervously. “How could you possibly help at a time like this.” He said dismissing her. The walls shook as explosions broke the outer doors. They had at most a couple of minutes. She sighed understanding but because of her lack of time, she elected to just vanish from his sight before returning almost right away. “Just trust me, ok, I can lead us out, just get everyone to lock arms.” She pleads with him. He still seems skeptical but seeing no real other options he nods his head. “Everyone take each other's hand and follow us."

They didn't seem to understand but as he took the girl, and the nurse's hand, and they saw them

disappearing they quickly followed suit. Lucius looked around him amazed they were in some sort of vortex as she led them forward. “Whatever you do don't let go of my hand!” She said as she kept going. Eventually, she led them out and into a calm forest. They all looked at their new surroundings with confused aw. Most of the men started to celebrate their escape the details lost to them. “What did you do?” He asks the girl with wonder.

She averted her eyes hesitantly answering. “Well ever since I was young I had the power to traverse worlds effortlessly.” She said nervously laughing. He seemed shocked looking around at the woods that seemed to be spared from any sort of war, and destruction. “You mean we are not only somewhere else, but an entirely different world? It would be hard to believe if the proof wasn't right in front of my eyes.”

“Yes, incredible indeed. I'd love to study you.” Dr Corvus said as he studied her body looking like he was ready to dissect her right now. She backs away in disgust. “Where are your manners Oswald this young lady saved all our lives thank you I mean it from the bottom of my heart. Please tell us your name.” Lucius pleads. She smiles doing a pose. “Oh me. Well, they call me Raleigh the Explorer.”

“I see, thank you, Raleigh, we have nothing to give you but our gratitude.” The General says “That's alright anyway I should be going now.” She said turning away to vanish into another world, but Lucius stopped her. “Wait please I'm sure once we find our bearings we can find a way to repay you. Won't you stay with us?” He pleads once more. While reluctant she relents. “Alright fine but just for a little while.” “Wonderful. We will set up camp and set out to see what this world has to offer in the morning.” All his men cheer as they do just that.

In the morning, Lucius, Corvus, The Nurse, and Raleigh all set out to explore this new world. “There should be a city over the hill,” Raleigh said to them leading the way. “Oh? Have you been here before?” Corvus asked with skeptical eyes. “Well no but, I never have trouble finding the places I'm looking for. I guess you could call that part of my powers too.” She explains and just like she said a

massive city was over the horizon.

They entered it with their hoods up in awe. They saw it was highly advanced, people were laughing, and dancing in the streets with no worries and food seemed to be plentiful. The Nurse was in awe to look around at all the different wonders she had never seen before. “It's amazing if only we could live in a place like this!” She smiled holding his hand.

He returned her smile. “Indeed this place does appear to be a utopia if only we could bring it to our people,” Lucius said for once in his life feeling calm and peaceful. “Everything here all of it. I've dreamed it up myself, they simply had the chance to act on it.” Corvus said seemingly more resentful that anyone else tried the things he considered his vision. “But bringing it to our people as you say.” he started laughing a little. “What are you suggesting taking it for ourselves?” Lucius protested but the more he thought about it the more it appealed to him.

He turned to Raleigh who now seemed to be with them more out of obligation than anything else. He grips her tightly. “You said you could go anywhere, and know where you're going? I know it's a lot to ask of you but. Please help me take this technology back to my world.” He said desperate. She simply backs away. “I um... I don't think that's a good idea, I'm not a warrior. Why don't you just live here in peace?” She said not on board with the idea.

“I'm not asking for you to fight our battle, but I can't ignore the countless people trapped in the cycle of violence in my world. Help me free my people. Please I will do anything.” He begs getting on his knees. After a moment of silence, she finally answers. “Alright, I'll help you.” He looks happier than he had ever been hugging her tight even though it looks like it's making her uncomfortable.
They travel to many worlds mostly in the direction of Dr. Corvus. They steal technology far more advanced than anything they have seen, and body modification devices that make them much stronger even without it. After that they return, and even with their small number they can retake the base they had lost and advance. They meet others on their side giving them the same power they had obtained, and through a long process they can completely overwhelm their enemy.

Now Lucius stands triumphant above everyone. He had won the war. He stood before the crowd cheering for him as Raleigh and the others watched. He turned back to her incredibly grateful. “Thank you so much, Raleigh because of you we are now able to free the world and usher it into peace forever.” She smiled happy it all worked out, but it seemed there was a lingering question in the back of her mind.

“What about your prisoners of war? You'll afford them the same kindness right?” She asked with shaky words. He averted his eyes frowning. “It's not that I wouldn't like to, but I know where that would lead. They would resent us causing issues down the road. I don't want there to be any more strife so with a heavy heart... I'll have to execute them all.” He doesn't seem proud of this fact but is resolute and going with it.

She steps back shocked. “How could you! They were as much of a victim in that war as you were!” She protested. “You're right, but that changes nothing and you know it. Let my sins be the last of them.” He said hoping she understood. She grits her teeth “I won't be part of this any longer.” Before he can say another word she vanishes.

Through the years like he promised there was peace. Nothing bad happened and the nation was very prosperous under his rule as the emperor. He married the nurse, and they had a happy life together, but peace was never to last. One night he approached his wife smiling taking her hand happy to see her. “You look wonderful tonight my dear.” He smiled at her. “Thank you. You look dashing as usual too.” She said teasing him. She turns her back to him overlooking the balcony. “Isn't it wonderful? Our children won't have to grow up in a world like the one we did. They will live in peace.” She smiled patting her belly. “You're not saying?” He asks only for her to turn and nod at him with a smile. “That's wonderful.” He says returning a smile, and some light tears.

She was about to say more, but her body abruptly began to burst into flames right in front of him. She falls to her knees trying to grab onto her husband. He panics looking around for something to put out the fire. He tried pouring water from a glass nearby on her to no avail. “What... is happening...”

She says crying out in pain. He desperately calls for help trying to put it out with his clothing now, but that doesn't help either. She smiles at him one last time saying. “I love you.” Before turning to dust before him. He falls to his knees screaming into the sky. What happened made no sense there is no reason for what happened.

After that everything changed the only explanation for such a thing was the multiverse itself took her from him as every possibility had to exist. He abandoned everything growing his empire more for revenge against it and its creator, and more even fighting other versions of himself with the same goal after years of fighting he finally hit a wall. He could not expand his empire anymore with his lack of reliable navigation through the multiverse that's when he finally found her again.

She wasn't much of a fighter so the now very powerful Multiversal Empire had no trouble restraining her and dragging her before him. She weakly looked up at him so worried, and disappointed with this outcome. “Lucius... I heard what happened with your wife. Stuff like that should never be allowed to happen.” She said trying to appeal to his emotions while truly believing it as well. He doesn't answer her just looking at the sky through the same balcony she had died. “Look I know you Lucius you're not a bad man. You did want what's best for your people, but this is not it. Please don't do this.” She said pleading.

He looks back at her with anger picking her up by the hair. “What do you know of me? Nothing that thing took her from me, and for what? Just because that outcome needed to exist? No, I won't let it stand I will do whatever I need to. I will walk through hell itself if it means I can find the means to destroy that thing!” He sighs calming down and letting her go. “I'm sorry. I really am, you don't deserve this, you helped me so much. Unfortunately, I see no other way.”

He looks away from her as they drag her off screaming. Dr Corvus approaches him. “With her, we will be able to expand infinitely more and find many worlds of interest though I fear she won't be enough alone. Using her I believe we will be able to find other versions of her who can do the same, but only if that's what you want to do great leader.” the old man suggested. “Do it,” Lucius said coldly.

Corvus smiles walking off to do just that.