

## Requiem

The sounds of the lyre fill the air around me, and the sensation of the mortal, undying cold of the frozen wastes of Asgard fades.

So delicate...

So full of feeling...

So full of sorrow...

So beautiful...

How does he know ? Why did I meet such a terrible opponent ?

It doesn't matter much... No, it really doesn't. He simply forces me to face the truth. The truth that I hide in the darkest place of my soul. The truth that hurts me so.

I look into his pale red eyes and somehow I feel my lips shaping a smile.

Why a smile ?

In his eyes shines a pain that is twin of my own, even though he refuses to acknowledge it. It is there.

I hurt, while he has let an icy shroud slowly devour his heart.

And that, coupled to his music, gnaws at my soul even more.

The music...

Each vibration, each brush of his fingertips on the lyre's strings sends a shiver through me, it is like throwing a pebble in a dark pond, but for the fact that here the ripples are amplified with time... Oh, but not endlessly.

No...

I am a bow which has been bent too much, too often. And I am on the verge of breaking.

I do not have the strength it takes.

I never had it.

Seiya...

Saori-ojosan...

You didn't answer me.

Why ?

Even if there is no answer to my question, you didn't tell me so. I didn't feel your presence, your support, your understanding...

My smile gets bitter.

Here I am, busy feeling sorry for myself, like a child.

Maybe I still am a child...

A child who sees his dreams crumbling into dust.

A child who watches as the wind takes away the sand he thought he could keep in his closed hands.

A child who falters as his hopes are repeatedly broken.

Mercilessly.

Yes, life is this way.

I KNOW !

Damnit I know...

Oh how I wish I could scream this to the sky...

Not that it would help.

Somewhere, very far away, I can feel the warm liquid running along the deep cuts the lyre's strings have opened in my body.

My blood slowly paints the pure white snow.

I cannot feel the pain anymore.

I suppose that is his mercy.

The darkness awaits.

Is that the only thing left to me ?

It would seem so.

Then... Why not embrace it ? Why am I arguing with myself like this ?

I am not afraid of death... Then what ?

Peace...

Happiness...

Illusions, terrible illusions.

I believed in you.

You were my life, the core of my being.

Now the veil has been torn.

The music has broken through the spell.

Or has it simply made me grow up ?

I know why I haven't let death carry me away until now.

There are two reasons : one is because the requiem is not over yet, the other is because a part of me still cannot accept to abandon those who are my friends.

As if I could be of help to them anyway.

As if my power could make a difference...

The lyre's pure, crystalline sounds pierce through my heart, again and again, forbidding me from yielding to the illusion of my absurd dreams.

Life is nothing more than a succession of fights.

Of deaths.

And it will never let me rest.

If I go on, I will be forced to hurt, to kill, to fight, as I have had to do until now.

And I cannot.

Not anymore.

Not without the hope it will stop one day.

Not now that I know it will never end.

It is my destiny to fight until the time of my death, and I cannot change it. The only thing I can do is die.

Now.

Ikki-niisan...

You told me to keep on believing...

Forgive me.

It is beyond me.

When a bow has been strung too often, and too harshly, it breaks.

I suppose I could kill my heart the way Mime has, and then become some kind of fighting machine, of monster that would live only to kill...

But if I have a choice, I would rather die.

I should thank Mime for offering me this death... But then, I am sure he knows. Yes, he knows, I remember the way he smiled at me, so gentle, so sad...

Ikki-niisan...

You have hope, even though you have been hurt so much, even though you have known a sorrow so terrible... You still have the gentleness in your heart, even though you fight and kill when you must. You go on, and your dreams remain in your heart no matter what.

You are so much stronger than me...

I am a coward.

I am weak.

Faith...

Yes faith is what I lack. It is too hard to keep it. It is too hard to believe.

I have had enough.

There is a short break in the melody, and I hear Mime's soft voice :

"The Requiem is almost over. Farewell, Andromeda Shun..."

As his fingers touch the strings, I close my eyes.

What is going on ?

Why do I not feel the music's vibration resounding through me ?

Why can't I hear the last notes ?

Silence...

Darkness...

Cold...

I...

A light ?

Yes, it's a light, but so faint... No, it moves, it... Is coming towards me...

A flame.

A fire.

Warmth envelops me.

The fire should be devouring my body, but it is gentle.

Comforting.

Soothing.

Sheltering me.

The flames rage, and prevent me from hearing the end of the Requiem.

I want to hear it.

I want to die !

Please, stop this !

Let me go !

Sobs shake me.

Let me go...

Beautiful wings of fire fold around me, holding me ever so gently.

Ikki-niisan, I do not want this...

Hot tears soak my face.

It hurts... To live hurts too much...

I am not worth it anyway, I...

"Hush..."

I yield, leaning against him. Smiling in spite of myself.

You will not let me, will you ?

I should feel anger, resentment, hatred even.

Yes I should hate you for denying me death. It is my right after all, but...

I love you Ikki-niisan.

Strange, that this feeling will never go away, no matter what.

Not even when we were enemies, not even when you almost killed my friends did I feel anger. No, I am unable to feel that.

While my sorrow and my pain grew, my love for you held true, all my life.

And I know that it will not leave me, as the hurt will not.

This love is the only thing I have, my only shelter, and somehow, I trust it.

It is an instinct like breathing.

I cannot help it.

But...

In a way, isn't this love some kind of faith ?

Isn't it ?

I feel lost. Bereft of choices...

What should I do ?

On one side, a dark torrent which wants to pull me down, which will give me the silence, the peace I want so much, the rest I yearn for.

On the other side, an ocean of flames, blood and tears, which will only feed the pain inside my heart.

Black soft velvet.

Or crimson red thorns.

It should be so easy...

A part of me knows the sorrow my death would cause, and refuses to hurt the ones I love.

What should I do ?

Why can't anyone help me ?

Why can't anyone take the decision for me ?

I want so much to forget and to sleep...

And my heart wants so much to be at my brother's side...

Should I trust what I feel ?

Should I trust this love ?

I chuckle silently.

I'm stupid.

Of course I should. That love is the one true thing I have. How could I doubt it ?

But then...

Yes, I do not need to believe in dreams, I do not need to hang on to illusions...

I love my brother.

I have faith in him. An absolute faith.

And thus, I embrace his beliefs.

Yes, my love is enough.

Perhaps one day I might learn to dream again, to hope again... Perhaps...

But for now, my love will suffice.

I open my eyes and smile gently at my brother.

I am not surprised to see him.

I knew he had come.

I should have known he would come.

On the blood-tainted snow lie lyre strings, that were severed by two Phoenix feathers.

My brother's deep grey eyes are alight with worry, so I shake my head slowly, saying in a whisper :

"It's all right, I will live..."

I feel so tired... I close my eyes again, concluding :

"For you."

End.