Tales #4:

The Cage

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**Chapter One**

Tony felt an incredible amount of pain sear into his neck as his captor bit into it. The pain was quickly replaced with an odd sense of contentment. That mixed with the sight of Samantha escaping was a small comfort in what was the most terrifying moment in his life, but it was all he could hold onto as the world around him went black.

 He felt himself falling forward towards the ground, all thoughts and feelings leaving his body as he fell. He knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that he was dying. This was how it all ended. Only it didn't. He landed with a thud on the ground. It was a painful fall, only after the pain resided he felt great. Better than he had in years. All the little minor aches and pain that came from just being alive seemed to have faded away. Including the headache that had been bugging him since he woke up that morning.

 He didn't have long to dwell on the issue before his attention was turned elsewhere. All around him he could hear fighting, screaming, explosions. It was almost as if he fell into a warzone, and left his school behind. His first instinct was to open his eyes and take a look around, but a small part of him was terrified. Whatever was happening, seeing it would make it real. So instead he closed them tighter. Tired to shut out all the noise. But no matter how tightly he shut them, it didn't make any difference. He could still hear the warzone all around him. And then there was the heat. It was hotter than anything he had ever experienced before. If he didn't know better he would have sworn he was in the middle of a fire.

 He jumped up, opening his eyes wide as did. For a moment he was sure the creatures had lit the school on fire with him in it. Only that wasn't what he saw. Instead he found himself in the middle of a large cage, with thousands and thousands of people fighting. Although, the longer Tony looked, the less the word people seemed to apply. Sure there were plenty of humans. Wearing all kinds of outfits from across time. Was this some kind of weird cosplay event? He figured it had to be, because along with all the people, there were creatures. Some that were out of this world and others that could only belong in hell itself.

 He slowly got to his feet, just as a grayish muscular creature landed in front of him. A bat like creature dive-bombed him. Tony watched on in awe as the gray creature jumped to his feet and grabbed the bat creature by the wings and ripped them off. He let out a howl before speaking in some language that Tony had never heard before, he turned to run but stopped cold in tracks as he saw two men flying in the air shooting energy attacks at each other. It was something out of a dragon ball z movie.

 “What the fuck is going on?” Tony asked himself. He scanned around the cage, the fighting was everywhere. Time and again he would witness someone or something being murdered only for them to come back to life as if nothing had happened. A small human with graying hair was thrown down by another one of the gray creatures. The human tried to back up, turning towards Tony for help. Not wanting any part of any of this, Tony backed up. He wanted to turn and run, but he couldn't take his eyes off the events unfolding in front of him. The gray creature started hitting the human in the head, again and again until his head burst, blood and brains flying everywhere, some even landing on Tony. He wanted to scream but he was beyond terrified.

 Right in front of his eyes the man's head grew back from the neck as if nothing had happened. The gray creature slammed his fist right through the mans chest, pulling out his heart. Moments later the man was once more alive, trying to get away. The gray creature grabbed both his arms and started pulling back. The man cried out to Tony, begging for help. Tony said not a word. What could he say? There was nothing he could do to help the poor man.

 “Please, just stop. I give up!” The gray creature let go of the man, letting out what could only be a laugh as the man burst into flames. They weren't ordinary flames either. His body didn't burn so much as it disintegrated.

 “This can't be happening!” Tony said to himself as he took a step back. The gray creature stopped laughing and locked eyes with him. In that moment he knew he was going to die, only he had already died. Back at the school. He was in hell, he suddenly knew it, with every fiber of his being. He was being punished for leaving Brandon to die.

 “I'm afraid it is.” A grim voice said from behind him. The gray creature let out a snarl and turned and ran off, going to fight someone else. Tony swallowed hard as he slowly turned around. Before him stood one of the most stunning handsome men that Tony had ever seen. He looked almost angelic, even had pointy ears like a Vulcan to complete the oddly that was his appearance. He had an almost glow around him that made him stand out amongst the endless battles behind him.

 “What are you?” Was all that Tony could think to ask. This man clearly wasn't human.

 “My name is Gabriele, as for what I am, the obvious answer is damned. Damned to this inferno cage for all time, or, well until someone makes it over the cage wall.” The man calling himself Gabriele said. Tony looked around at all the fighting, they were all in the middle of a giant cage, going up almost a mile high. A few people tried to climb up the wall but were pulled down and beaten for their effort.

 “But before I was damned, I was one of the first archangels. I left heaven in my quest to continue the battle against Lucifer, and for that, my wings were clipped. Me and my followers were stranded on your godforsaken world, no longer divine, nor were we mere mortals. Your kind began to refer to us as Elves and the name stuck.” he continued, almost bored as he looked past Tony, watching the bloody battles lustfully.

 “Elves were real?” Tony asked, his mind racing with the information that he was being given. “Angels were real? I think I need to sit down.” Tony said, his heart racing as he attempts to process everything he was being told.

 “Are, there are legions of my brothers and sisters still above. Just because I've been forsaken to this hell doesn't mean they cease to exist, not even I am that arrogant.” Gabriele said, almost sounding bored. Tony turned to face him.

 “Why are you telling me all this? Shouldn't we be trying to escape?” Tony asked, hoping the former angel was there to help him.

 “Because that is part of my curse. In the battle with my brother I invented a weapon. I gave a human, one of your kind the power to bring down the devil himself. And how was I repaid? The man allowed himself to become corrupted. He became almost as evil and vile as my dear brother. I took it upon myself to attempt to stop my creation and. . .well he killed me. A human that I lifted up and made more than he had any right to be, and he paid me back by slaughtering me like I was nothing more than some sheep.” Gabriele stopped, his eyes glazing over as if he was reliving some painful memory.

 “And that caused you to be sent here?” Tony asked, hoping to get this story over with so they could move on to figuring a way out of all of this. Gabriele smiled, it wasn't a happy smile.

 “It caused this place to be built. It would seem that during my battle with my creation I had started my path to redemption, only I didn't quite achieve it. My father, being the forgiving man he is, gave me this place as a second chance. All I had to do to earn a second chance was to climb over the side. Only before I knew it, the cage was filled with people from all over the universe. Mortal, demon and even the occasional angel, all on the path to redemption when they passed. Fighting for all time for the one shot at a second chance. I'm burdened with explaining all of this to each new soul that is thrown into this fight, not giving me much time to plot my own escape, but we all must do what we must. If at any time this all becomes too much for you, simply give up. Say the words and you will be freed from the cage, tho you won't like where you end up.” He said, his eyes filled with pain. Tony's breath gets caught in his throat as he figures out what Gabriele is telling him. Gabriele walks up to him, until he is standing right in front of him.

 “Do you understand what I have told you?” He asked. Tony nodded, wishing that he didn't. “I need to hear you say it.”

 “I understand.” Tony said, almost choking on the words.

 “Good. Have fun.” Gabriele said smiling as he reached out and snapped Tony's neck, dropping him to the floor. Once more the world faded to black.

**Chapter Two**

Just as suddenly as the world went black it came into focus. The fighting around him was still raging on, only Gabriele had vanished. He was nowhere to be seen. Tony slowly sat up, watching the fighting unfold when he felt a pair of hand grab him from behind, lifting him into the air.

 “Let me go!” He screamed out. Whoever or whatever was holding him up growled at him in some form of language he had never heard before. “What?” He asked, not entirely sure he wanted to know. Without warning he was lifted higher still and tossed across the cage. It was an odd feeling, flying through the air. If it wasn't so terrifying it would have been almost magical. He landed hard in the middle of two demons tearing each other limp from limp.

 Tony could hear his leg snap as he landed. His whole body was sore, the leg was the worst of all. He tried to stand, but he couldn't move his leg. Even trying caused him to scream out in agony. It was pain unlike any he had ever known. Since he couldn't stand, he started to scoot back, but he didn't make it more than a few feet before one of the demons stepped on his chest with it's razor sharp feet, killing him instantly.

 Seconds later he awoke once more. The demon who had killed him, had ripped off the other demon's arm and was beating him with it. Tony tested out his leg, it was as good as new. He quickly got to his feet, looking around at the bloodbath that was his new life. He knew he needed to do something and quickly if he hoped to avoid another painful death, but his mind seemed to be stuck. He couldn't think about anything but the horror he was witnessing all around him.

 “Hey!” A voice yelled out to him. The kid, couldn't be much older than 16 or 17 was snapping his finger in Tony's face. “Can you hear me?” Tony nodded, slowly. His mind working in slow motion. “Good, come with me if you want to live.” He said in his best Kyle Reese voice. Tony nodded and followed after him. They rushed through aliens and demons alike.

 “Did. . .did you just quote Terminator?” Tony asked, once his mind started processing information again. The kid smiled as he lead him through the fighting.

 “I couldn't help it, it's my favorite movie. Names Juan, Juan Patino.” He said, holding out his hand. Tony takes it.

 “It is a badass movie. Names Tony Crusher.” He said. Out in the distance, near one of the gates, he spots a group of normal looking humans. Nothing special about them, at least compared to the powerhouses surrounding them.

 “I take it our angelic friend Gabriele filled you in on everything?” Juan asked as they closed in on the group.

 “Yeah, the elven angel sang me his tune. Pretty crazy, if you ask me.” Tony said, as they stopped running, the group was largely ignored by all the fighting.

 “I was eaten alive by Santa Claus, this really doesn't seem all that crazy.” He told Tony, who had no idea to respond. Eaten alive by Santa, that couldn't be real. Than again, he was killed by a vampire, so anything was possible.

 “Still telling the same tired old story?” A woman in her mid-twenties asked.

 “The girl who died in an underground military base filled with people who haven't slept in a decade doubts my story, give me a break!” Juan said with a laugh. “Our new friend here is Tony.”

 “Amber.” She told Tony, before looking back to Juan. “It took you long enough to get back. Tommy V. was getting pissy.”

 “Cute, this the new guy?” Another man said as he walked over. Where he walked the rest of the group followed. It was clear to Tony that this guy was in charge.

 “Yeah, Tony, this is our fearless leader, Tommy V.” Juan said, with a smile.

 “I don't know about fearless. When we first met, I scared him shitless.” Amber said with a laugh. Tommy V. smiles.

 “Not how I remember it.” He said, his eyes lighting up as he looked at her.

 “A few decades in hell can ruin anyone's memory. Don't be so hard on yourself.” he said, if Tony didn't know better he would have sworn they were flirting, but what kind of freak would flirt in the middle of hell?

 “We have enough people now, right?” Juan asked, his voice hopeful. Tommy V. looks around at all the people he has gathered around them. There had to be at lest 20 people, or close to it.

 “With the addition of our new friend here, it brings us to 20.” Amber said, looking at the people gathered around.

 “Glad I could round out your numbers.” Tony said, not knowing what was going on.

 “You know what this place is right? You heard Gabriele's whole pitch?” Tommy V. asked.

 “I heard him.” Tony said, not sure he was liking where this conversation was going. If he understood correctly, only one person made it out of this mess. Teaming up didn't seem to be the best course to making sure that one person was you. No sooner the thought cross his mind, than it was replaced with a sense of guilt. After all he was here because he left a man to die, just to save himself. He couldn't do that again, not if he wanted to be worthy of this redemption that was being offered. “What's your plan?” he asked, not sure if he really wanted to know.

 “Look around.” Tommy V. said. Tony did just that, taking in the battles that waged on around him. The wizards in the sky throwing energy beams at each other. Demons ripping each other apart. Every once in a while someone would burst into flames, having given up hope. “We are surrounded with demons, aliens and sorcerers with more power than any of us will ever know. None of us have a chance. Not really, not when we are going against these lot.” Tommy V. said, it wasn't defeat in his voice, it was something else. It was determination.

 “So we just give up?” Tony asked, knowing full well that wasn't what Tommy V. was suggesting.

 “We use the one thing we have that they don't.” Tommy V. said. It was clear that he had pitched this idea before. If Tony had to guess, this was the 19th time he made the pitch.

 “Our dashing good looks?” Tony asked, trying for a humor that even to him felt out of place amongst such pain.

 “I like him.” Amber said, with a smile.

 “Our numbers.” Tommy V. said, ignoring Amber.

 “Our numbers?” Tony asked, knowing he had to have heard him wrong.

 “You heard right.” Juan said, almost as if he could see the doubt on his face.

 “Everybody here is out for themselves. That's why nobody wins. Gabriele has been here since before time began, and yet here he is, still fighting for a way out. No one wins.” Tommy V. pointed out.

 “But us having numbers changes that?” Tony asked, not sure he had any idea what he was missing.

 “Only one person gets out. None of us here have a shot. Not on our own. We don't have the power, the strength, but we have numbers. There are 20 of us. We split up, five people per gate. All at once we start up the side, racing as fast as we can up. And every time we die and come back, we do it again. Until one of us makes it over. The rest of us lose, but it's the only chance any of us have.” Tommy V. said, pointing out what logically made sense, but it didn't make it any easier to swallow. Going with this plan would give him a 1 in 20 shot at escaping. Not great odds.

 He looked around the cage, there had to be hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands of creatures all around him. All more powerful than he could ever hope to be. The more he thought about it, the more he realized that Tommy V's plan was the only chance he had, even if it was a small one. He had to take it.

 “I'm in.” Tony said. Tommy V. smiled.

**Chapter Three**

Tommy V. told the gathered masses the plan in detail. There were to be five people per gate, evenly spaced. Once everyone was in place, the first person would nod to the next, so on and so on, until the nodding got back to the first person and then they would race to the top. If you died, you started back to the nearest gate and tried again. They weren't to stop till someone made it over. It was the only way to end all of this once and for all.

 The four squads of five were to each head to a different gate and then each split off to their individual spots. Two of the squads had it easy. They were hiding out near the corner, where two of the gates met. It was the other two squads that had the real work, of making it across the battlefield to their spots.

 Part of Tony was hoping he would get to be on one of the lucky squads, but like everything else in life, luck wasn't his to have. He got stuck going clear across the battlefield to the far end with Juan, Amber, Tommy V and an older man named Bryan Williams. Bryan wore an old biker jacket that read Warhawks. It also marked him as a founding member. He seemed friendly enough for a biker, but the only stuff Tony really knew about bikers came from Sons of Anarchy.

 “You ready for this kid?” Bryan asked. He had a charm to him, an old timely charm, if Tony had to guess, this guy died a long time ago. Maybe not as long back as Tommy V, but close.

 “Not much of a choice, is there?” Tony asked, not meeting the man's eyes.

 “Not at all. Stick by me, I'll see you across.” Bryan told him. Tony smiled and nodded, just as a kid landed with a crash in front of him, his head turned all the way around. A moment later he was back alive. Tony made to help him when the kid lit himself on fire and flew towards the oncoming demon with batlike wings that had killed him.

 “What the fuck was that?” Tony asked, his mind stuck on Fantastic Four comics.

 “He's a mage. Deals in elemental powers. Killed damn near everyone here his first day by flooding the place. It wasn't pretty.” Bryan said with a shudder. Clearly the memory of drowning in the cage was more than he cared to remember.

 “I'm glad I missed that.” Tony said. Bryan let out a laugh.

 “Everyone ready?” Tommy V called out. The 10 people who were set to run all nodded, Tony included. “Let's go!”

 They set out at a run. The plan, one that Tony thought was foolproof, was for all 10 of them to run together till they hit the center of the arena before splitting up into two groups of five. But as Tony's history teacher always tried to teach him, no battle plan ever survives first contact with the enemy. They were no more than ten feet away from their camp when out of nowhere a man grew in size in front of them. Before long he towered over their heads, an evil grin on his face. Tony didn't even have a chance to scream before the foot came smashing down over his head.

 Moments later he was back, Juan helped him to his feet. He could see Amber dusting herself off as Tommy V. and Bryan started helping the others. Tony turned around to see the giant swatting people out of the sky and stepping on people.

 “What the fuck is that?” Tony asked, his mind wheeling.

 “He can shrink and grow at will. You see some crazy shit in here man, let me tell you.” Juan said, his voice kind of far off, as if he was thinking back to everything he had seen.

 “Why doesn't he just step over the cage? Or walk through one of the links? He could have won the second he got here.” Tony said. Thinking of all the ways he would escape if he could.

 “And why don't the cats who fly just fly over? I mean shit, there's a guy who can turn to water.” Juan started saying, before Tony cut him off.

 “And fire. I saw him!” He still couldn't believe what he had saw.

 “Right, right, well you should have seen him then. He filled this whole place up with water. I thought for sure he was going to escape, flow right through the cage, or over it or both.” Juan said thinking back to the moment the water filled his lungs and snuffed out his life, he gave a shudder.

 “What happened?” Tony asked, for the life of him he couldn't figure out how someone stopped him.

 “The water wouldn't go through the fence links. Just stopped when it came up to them. And it wouldn't rise up past the top. It was as if he was trapped in a box and not a roofless cage.” Juan said.

 “There's no way out?” Tony asked.

 “You have to climb over the top. This place pays by it's own rules. Rules that we have to now play by. It's what we get for a life of skating by the rules as if they didn't apply to us.” Tommy V. said as he looked around at the fighting going around. A group of wolf like demons were eating the leg of the giant.

 He let out a grow before bursting into flame and vanishing. He had given up, the pain was too much for him.

 “We need to go now!” Amber called over to them. Everyone nodded before Tommy V. led the charge back towards the middle of the cage. Tony took a deep breath as he looked around, the battle was worse than ever. The elemental mage dive-bombed a group of the gray aliens, engulfing them all in fire. They screamed an inhuman scream as they were melted alive. Moments later they back, only the mage had stayed, once more they burned. Then they were back, only to burn again. For the life of him, Tony couldn't imagine how horrible it must be to burn alive, over and over again. He couldn't help but shudder at the thought, at any moment that could be him. He knew there was no way he would be able to hold out, through all that pain. He wasn't that strong willed.

 “You okay?” Juan's voice snapped him out of his trance. He turned to look at his new found friends, all of whom had already started running, all but for Juan, who waited for him. “Tony, we got to go!”

 “Yeah.” He grabbed Juan's arm and started running with him after the others. “Let's go!” He risked a glance back at the gray aliens burning alive, his stomach dropped. The fire that consumed them this time wasn't the mages, it was the hellfire that consumed those who gave up. The mage defeated them all. The fire collapsed into itself, turning back into a man. He had a grin on his face that chilled Tony to his core. He tripped and fell forward. He looked up, only to find that Juan had kept running, he must not have seen him.

 Tony quickly gets to his feet, only to be knocked back down from behind. He turned around to find a man with a long trench-coat standing over him. He had long flowing hair. A sense of wonder seemed to radiate off of him.

 “Give up now boy, I know a million ways to kill someone, and I will use each and everyone on you.” The man said, with a thick English accent. Out of nowhere a wolf like man, wearing Bryan's leather jacket flew through the air and landed on the man, biting his neck and tearing it apart. The man in the trench-coat laid there dead as the wolf turned back into Bryan.

 “Run!” Bryan screamed at him, Tony nodded as the man came back to life and snapped Bryan's neck without missing a beat. Tony couldn't just leave Bryan behind. He took a step forward, wanting to figure out a way to help.

 The man started towards Tony, who didn't move, he was scared stiff. The man smiled as he cracked his neck. “Time to die boy.” The man said. Tony wanted to run, but couldn't bring himself to move.

 Out of nowhere a lightning bolt landed in front of the trench-coat man. Causing him to step back a few feet.

 “Not another step Rupert!” A man said, floating down towards them. “These two are now under my protection. Understand Van Helsing?” the flying man said, his voice low but firm. There was no room to question it, even Rupert Van Helsing couldn't argue the point. He bowed, before turning and walking off. Bryan got to his feet dusting himself off.

 “Rupert? I always thought Van Helsing was named Abraham.” Bryan said.

 “Also, fake.” Tony said with a laugh.

 “The famous one is, that was the great, great grandson of the one you know. He sold his daughter for a son. Horrid man. No idea how he earned even part of a redemption.” The flying man said. Tony's mind was racing, he had no idea what was going on, it was information overload, nonstop since he arrived in this place of the damned.

 “Your plan is a good one.” They flying man said. Bryan and Tony exchanged looks, no one was supposed to know what their plan was.

 “What plan?” Bryan demanded, moving in front of Tony, so as to protect him. The flying man just smiled.

 “Your thoughts betray you. I've been rude, allow me to introduce myself. I am Simon.” The flying man, Simon, told them.

 “Simon, Simon?” Bryan asked, fear seeping into his voice.

 “You've heard of me?” Simon asked, feigning modesty.

 “When I first got here. You're supposedly one of the strongest guys in here.” Bryan said. His voice a bit on the shaky side. Which only frightened Tony more. If Bryan was scared, he stood no chance.

 “Am I?” He waved his hand behind him and everyone behind him with a few exceptions were tossed against the back wall, incinerating as they did so. Moments later they were back. “I may have some power.”

 Tony's heart sank. If he could do that without even looking, who knew what he could do to them if he really wanted to. Simon grinned as he looked over at Tony. “Don't worry Mr. Crusher. I'm here to help.” He said with a kindness that was far too rare.

 “Why would you want to help us?” Bryan demanded. Simon turned his head back to look at Bryan. Really look at him, almost as if he is looking through him. It was unnerving for Tony, he could imagine how unnerved Bryan had to be feeling at the moment.

 “Do you have any idea how long I've been here? In this hellcage?” Simon asked. Tony kept tensing up, waiting for someone to attack them, and yet no one did. It was almost as if one of the few things everyone in this cage agreed on was leaving Simon be.

 “No?” Tony said, unsure if it was a real question.

 “Nor do I. Nor do I.” He said, he looked around at all the violence and bloodshed all around them. “All I know is it has been far too long. Far longer than I ever thought it would last.” He said, more to himself than to them. “Would you care to guess my greatest sin that landed me here?” He asked them, a weird, sad smile on his face.

 “No clue.” Bryan said, doing his best to sound firm. It wasn't that convincing when compared to the easy confidence that radiated off of Simon.

 “I wasn't a bad man. Not really. I mean, if I'm being honest, darkness always came easy to me. Truly, it did. But I never took much joy in it. Not in the way my apprentice Ka'Lar did. He burned the world to the ground before coming back to the light. No, darkness wasn't the root of my great sin.” Tony and Bryan exchanged glances. Neither one of them knew where he was going with this. “He earned redemption for his crimes, but there is no penance for my great sin.”

 “You going to tell us about this 'great sin' or just keep spilling on about your life story. In case you didn't notice, we have somewhere to be.” Bryan said, taking a step forward. Fur was starting to grow on his skin. His eyes were turning a hint of yellow as his teeth sharpened.

 “Am I boring you doggy? Allow an old man the chance to ramble on a bit.” Simon said, amusement in his voice. He snapped his finger and Bryan was once more human. “I'm sure you wouldn't deprive Lycus his rambling, now would you?” He asked, just a hint of anger behind his voice. Bryan fell back a few steps.

 “Who?” Bryan asked, all sense of bravado gone.

 “The wolf king.” Simon said, almost sounding confused for the first time since they met him. “The father of your kind. You know him not?” Simon asked.

 “Never heard of him.” Bryan said, matter of factly.

 “It would seem not even immortals live forever. A shame, he was a nice enough man. I'll get to the point wolf, my sin wasn't that I was a bad man, no more than most. It was that I was indifferent. I spent centuries not caring. Playing both sides. It wasn't until Ka'Lar fell to the darkness that I started to try to care. By then, it was too late.” He said, thinking back on his life. “Falling for the succubus Sin'Ta didn't help. Who knows what she did with all my power.”

 “You're saying you are here because you didn't help enough people while alive?” Tony asked. Simon smiled and nodded.

 “If you can help, you must help. And that, that is my sin. For that I deserve whatever in on the other side of this stop gap. I tire of waiting for the end to come. I mean to face it head on, and if I can help a worthy soul find their way back to the light before I go, all the better. I can't promise you that your plan will work, but I will do my best to keep the hordes off your back. Just promise me, when you return to Earth, you'll help where you can.” It came out almost as a plea, which was odd to hear from someone who wiped out thousands with the snap of a finger. Tony and Bryan nodded and agreed to live better lives. There was no reason to anger the man. With that he flew away from them, leaving them alone in the midst of the battle.

 “We need to get into position!” Bryan snapped, tearing his eyes from Simon who was killing anyone who moved near them. Tony nodded as he turned to follow him.

 “So uh, you're a werewolf?” Tony asked, still not sure he believed in werewolves, despite seeing it first hand.

 “You got a problem with that?” Bryan asked, his tone suggesting that it would be better for Tony if he didn't.

 “Not a one!” he said as they made it to the gate.

 “Bout time you guys got here!” Juan called out to them, giving them the signal. Tony passed it on to Bryan, who passed it onto Amber. The time was here, one of them was escaping the cage, the rest of them were going to hell. Tony had never felt so scared in his life. He tried to tune out the cries and screams from behind him.

 “Tony!” Bryan called out to him, Tony turned to look. His heart pounding in his chest. “I need you to do something for me.”

 “Anything.” Tony said, not knowing what else to say.

 “I need you to find my son. His name is Wesley Williams. He rides with the Warhalks.”Bryan stopped, thinking for a moment. “With the Wolfpack. Such a stupid name they took.” He shakes his head, clearly not happy with the name change. “It's a werewolf biker gang, I need you to find them, if, if you're the one to make it over.”

 “What do you want me to tell him?” Tony asked, not sure why Bryan was asking him. Tony had never been first at anything in his life. He knew in his heart he wasn't going to make it over the fence.

 “Tell him this isn't the life I want for him. Tell him what happened to me and that it isn't too late for him.” Bryan said, the sound of desperation in his voice.

 “I'll tell him.” Tony said just as out of the corner of his eyes he saw Juan start up the gate, he followed suit, next to him Bryan shifted partly to wolf and jumped, clearing nearly half the fence in one jump. For a moment Tony was sure that Bryan was going to be the one to make it to the top when it all came crashing down.

 A giant tentacle came out of nowhere and wrapped itself around Bryan, pulling him back and strangling him in the air, before tossing him to the ground. Another tentacle knocked Juan off the gate, Tony knew he was next.

 Only it never came, instead he heard a loud crack, almost like a lightning strike. He looked back to see Simon flying over the creature. Power flowing off him in waves. With the flick of his hands the flying demon that was dive-bombing Tommy V. vanished. This plan might really work.

**Chapter Four**

“Ahhh” Tommy V. cried out as a spear went through his chest, he fell backwards landing on the ground. Tony looked back to see another sorcerer flying behind Simon. He tossed another one, this one coming right for Tony.

 Without thinking Tony jumped. He caught the fence with his right hand, almost pulling his arm out of its socket as it held his weight. He quickly got hold of the gate with his left hand and started hurrying up the gate once more. He looked around for any sign of the others, but there was no sign of them. The plan was for everyone to keep trying till one of them made it over, but as of yet none of them made it back to the fence.

 BAM!

 He looked behind him to see two sorcerers teaming up on Simon, who was easily holding his own. The only downside, he was now focused on them and not preventing other people from attacking him. He needed to hurry up! He started speeding up the gate as quickly as he could, his right arm was not helping him.

 “Get off of me!” Amber screamed from over to the right of him. Tony looked up and saw Amber near the top of the fence. She was almost to the top when Gabriele came out of nowhere and put his hand through her head. His beautiful angelic wings were splashed with her blood, he turned around to face Tony, shaking his head. Tony swallowed, and started back to the top, he wasn't going to go down without a fight. Gabriele had to follow the rules of the cage, he couldn't just fly to the top, he had to climb. That meant Gabriele wasn't trying to escape, he was just trying to keep him from escaping. He just had to keep dodging him.

 It was only a matter of seconds before Gabriele swooped in towards him, but Tony let himself drop a few feet before grabbing hold of the fence again. He started climbing back up once again. His right arm was killing him, but he pushed past it. For the first time since he heard about the plan, he really thought he might be the one to escape. Gabriele spun back around and started towards him again, he didn't think he could just drop like that again, but he had no choice. Just as Gabriele's fist went past him he dropped, stopping his descent a few feet below.

 He looked over as a flustered Gabriele turned back around to face Tony. This plan of dropping a few feet before hurrying back up wasn't going to keep working. He took a deep breath and started back. Moving as fast as he could. Every few seconds he would spare a glance towards Gabriele to see when he was dive-bombing him again. Only he was gone. Tony panicked and looked all around him. There was no sight of him, anywhere.

 Simon was knocked to the ground, a score of sorcerers floating above him. They seemed to have overwhelmed him. If Tony didn't hurry he wasn't going to make it. He started back towards the top. It was within reach, his hand grabbed around the top of the fence as he started to pull himself up. Just as he was starting to swing his leg over Gabriele showed back up, flying right towards him. In a panic Tony threw himself back, over the other side of the fence, just as Gabriele grabbed hold of his shirt. Without meaning too, Tony pulled Gabriele over the fence with him, they were both falling.

 Tony looked back into the cage as he fell for what felt like forever. The fighting inside stopped, everyone turned to look at them. Tony thought for sure they would start to burst into flames with the hellfire, only they didn't. Instead they were enveloped in blinding white light. Vanishing within it. It was both terrifying and beautiful at the same time. Tony looked away, forcing himself to look back at Gabriele who was still holding onto him, refusing to let go of him as they fell to the ground.

 BAM!

 Tony felt himself hit the ground hard. It hurt worse than anything he had ever felt before, only when the pain from falling had passed he felt strong. Far stronger than he had ever felt in his life, even when he was in the cage. He opened his eyes and found himself back in the school. There was no sign of Gabriele, nor of the vampires that had killed him. Slowly Tony got to his feet, still in shock that he was back from the dead. Given a second chance at life.

The End