

## Star of Fire

Ignis was being pushed toward the execution platform, his bonds raking into his skin. He lashed out, trying to break free from the guards holding him, jaws snapping at their hands. They backed off but came back, persistently jabbing him with their spears. The steel tips glinted in the torch light that illuminated the area, shining like the stars in the night sky. The guards finally managed to pull him up onto the platform, where they secured his chains to the deck. Retreating, the guards relaxed, trying to get as far away from the “monster” as possible. Ignis shifted in his kneeling position, the chains making a horrible scraping sound against the uneven wood, making him flinch. Underneath the platform were thousands of people from the town of HawksBill, and tension was thick in the air as they stared up at him. The moon was in full view along with millions of bright stars. It seemed like everyone wanted to watch the horror that was coming tonight.

Ignis shook his head, his vision blurring. His greasy brown hair hung down on his sweaty face, which was accompanied with droplets of blood. He didn't like being messy. Two guards stood on either side of him, their swords inches from his neck. Ignis looked at his reflection in the sword. His hair was more red than brown because of the blood that stained it, and his fire red eyes were dim. The blaze in his soul had died down and all that was left felt like ashes. Ignis felt the pains of loneliness wash over him like a tidal wave, making tears well up in his eyes.

“As we can all see, we, the government, have finally caught the assassin Ignis. He was been terrorizing the streets of our city for too long!” the announcer said, his shiny boots clicking against the deck of the execution platform. He was neat compared to Ignis, with a full suit and tie and neatly combed brown hair. He also had shocking blue eyes that shone in the darkness, a lot like Ignis's. The people screamed and cheered with joy, the noise filling the square. Ignis tensed, overwhelmed by the sudden mood change. The announcer, who was a tall and handsome man,

leaned down next to Ignis's face, his toothy smile one of victory. His eyes laughed mockingly at him. The announcer stood up tall again, spreading his arms out wide, his smile plastered on his face.

"Yes, this is indeed a great moment." he yelled. The crowd roared once more and the ground shook and trembled as they stomped on the ground. The announcer turned, facing Ignis's limp form. "Any last words, oh great monster assassin? Maybe an apology for being such a monster to these poor, innocent people." he hissed, gesturing down to the crowd.

Ignis trembled, feeling the fire inside of him beginning to ignite once more. Warmth spread through his body as memories flooded back to him. Monster. That's what everyone in this blasted city had called him ever since he was born. His eyes were said to have brought misfortune to the place, cursing all of the people inside. They were scared of him.

And now he was going to die.

"I'm not going to apologize for the things I have done!" Ignis yelled. The crowd fell silent, shock rippling through them. Ignis stared into the announcer's shocked blue eyes, feeling his own eyes burning once again with an undesired rage. He sat up tall, his chains no longer binding his spirit down. The moon seemed to shine brighter, focusing on his figure. Everything was clear now, he could see every detail on the announcer's face. The stars twinkled in the inky sky, as if all of his friends from the heavens were satisfied with the words he had spoken. Some green, others yellow. Some purple. They winked at him from above. Ignis smiled up at the sky before turning his attention to the silent crowd that waited below.

"You heard me, I'm not apologizing. You've all lied, saying I'm bad. That I'm a monster. Why should I apologize for being a monster if no one apologized for making me one? Well?" Ignis yelled. The crowd remained silent, as did the announcer. Ignis felt a fire spreading through

his body, it's warmth beyond compare. If this was what dying felt like, Ignis would've gladly tried to die a long time ago. He looked down, his eyes ablaze with his spirit that had awoken inside of him. He raised his head high, shaking his dirty brown hair out of his face. And he spoke three words.

"It's not fair!"

The crowd fell silent, as if the words had a silent command. Ignis continued.

"It's not fair! Ever since I was born, you all criticized me because of my eyes. You never even let me have a chance. It's not my fault I was born like this!" He stared down at them, his eyes glowing as if they were sucking the light from the torches. He looked at the announcer, who gulped, eyes fearful.

His long ago brother.

"Shut up!" his brother hissed, combing his brown hair.

"You shut up" Ignis replied. "Or if you want me to shut up forever, then..."

His brother nodded curtly. "As you wish." He nodded to the guards. "Prepare the swords. This execution will be the best one yet."

The guards nodded, lifting their swords. Ignis felt the tips scraping at his neck. He stared at his brother, who had turned around. He could tell he was crying. Ignis smiled, feeling the fire die down.

"Goodbye Aquari. I hope we can meet again someday. I'll be waiting, I promise."

The sound of swords cutting flesh filled the silent night, and the stars and moon kept light over the land.

Among the stars, another was born, one that shone red and bright in the sky. One that stood out from all the rest.

One that burned like fire.