Summary

How could the world suddenly fall from his grasp, just as Handsome Jack had unlocked the key to his ultimate success?

What role did Rhys play, in the rise and fall of the man he worshipped above all others?

How will Jack cope, when he realises the depth of his true feelings; too late?
This has been sitting in my fanfiction inbox for iver a year now i think and i cant really work on it there as i an reduced to using my ohone entirely now my laptop is truly dead. Um...

I hope you like, let me know if you wana see the full story - though i probably wont update til i finish my Endless Summer series .... unless you ask real nice :p

x My love to you all x
The Beginning Or The End?

Handsome Jack was a man very used to betrayal by this point in his life, but this? This really took the trophy. He screamed every obscenity, every single stinking filthy curse word he could possibly think of, as he fired a pistol in any and every direction he was able to point it. Statues of his own handsome face exploded, showering the room with debris. When the pistol finally ran out of ammo, he threw it harshly against the nearest wall, smashing it to pieces from the force he exerted. His breaths came deep and ragged, the heavy rasp barely containing the rage in his heart. He glanced around himself, and if an object wasn't nailed to the ground, then it was soon in his hand and being tossed as far as he could manage to throw it, or smashed into as many pieces as he could break it into.

By the time he finally exhausted both himself, and his supply of throw-able or smash-able objects, he stumbled numbly backwards, his legs buckling as he fell in a heap against the nearest wall. He slammed his head backwards, grunting from the impact and relishing the pain of the sudden contact between his head and the hard wall. His eyes drifted closed, and he tried to stop the treacherous feelings in his heart from overwhelming him, although, it was to no avail. His eyes stung, burning with the tears he stubbornly refused to allow to fall. He curled his hands into fists, and smashed them into the wall beside him, a scream of denial and rage erupting from his throat and piercing his otherwise silent office. This wasn't supposed to happen, it wasn't in the plan. How, why?!

He'd had everything under control, he was just about to win, at last.

"Dad?" Jack scrambled to dry his face, determined not to let his baby see him in quite such a deplorable state. However, as Angel slowly, carefully made her way through the debris that was what remained of his office, he could tell from her expression that he had failed exponentially. He added it to his growing list of failures for the day. "I heard the noise stop, figured you were probably out of things to throw or shoot... for the time being at least..." She said, crouching down beside him. "Hey, baby girl," Jack said, mustering the best smile he could for her, though he could tell himself, it wasn't his usual charmer. He averted his eyes and surveyed the destruction he had managed to cause. "Just suddenly decided I hated everything." He half joked, though the words were hollow in his own ears. He glanced back at his daughter, finding she hadn't moved at all, and was merely watching him sadly. After a moment, she crawled closer, curling herself beside him and wrapping her arms around his chest. Jack closed his eyes, returning the gesture as his arms fell lightly around her shoulders, tucking her head under his chin.

"I miss him too." Jack felt his throat throb, his heart crashing painfully in his chest. His rage still simmered, but with Angel tucked in his arms, he wasn't able to use it to fully drown out the pain. "What... what happened? Why did he...?"

"Because he's a goddamn little dipshit who thinks he knows better than me!" Jack spat vehemently. Angel flinched, but didn't move away, used to her fathers temper.

"You don't really mean that." She said quietly, and Jack would have laughed at her astuteness, if the pain and anger in his chest weren't so out of control.

"He..." Jack paused, wanting to rant about what a complete and utter selfish, dickish, unthinking, universal asshole his most trusted personal assistant was, only to remember that he wasn't anymore. He wasn't anything but dead anymore.

"I'm sorry..." Angel whispered, her shoulders shaking as she cried silently.

"Hey, hey, baby girl," Jack cooed softly, rubbing her back gently and leaning away enough to tilt her
head up and meet his own troubled gaze. "You have nothing, nothing, to be sorry for sweetheart." He said, pressing a kiss to her forehead.

"But, he saved me, even after I almost-"

"It doesn't matter Angel, it wasn't you're fault. Rhys..." Jack hesitated, his throat tightening painfully at the mention of his personal assistants; his most trusted companions name. "Rhys... made his own choices. You aren't to blame baby girl." Angel wiped the tears from beneath her eyes, shaking her head as if she didn't fully believe him. "Hey, what was the last thing he said to you?"

"He... he said he loved me." Angel said after a momentary pause. She glanced up to her father questioningly, and he nodded gently, as if this proved his point entirely.

"There, see? If it were anything to do with you, it would have been something way more depressing. Not something... good." Jack said, moving a strand of his daughters hair as it flapped in her face.

"What about you?" Angel asked. When Jack didn't answer, she pressed again. "What did he say to you, before he-" Angel trailed off as she looked up, for even though her father met her eyes, she could see his thoughts were somewhere else, remembering whatever had happened between them before their world was turned upside down.

"Jack please, listen to me..." Rhys tried again, hoping to break through the older mans stubborn will of steel, even though he already knew from years of experience how impossible it was to change Handsome Jack's mind about anything once it had already decided something.

"Rhysie, I'm done talking about this, those Vault Hunter, bandit scum are gonna pay, and the only thing I'm gonna accept as payment, is their blood... well, maybe their screams too..." Rhys frowned at Jacks back, the man still staring out the huge window in his office, at the wasteland that was Pandora. Only from such a distance could the planet ever hold any semblance of beauty, the planet itself was fifty shades of fucked up.

"Jack-

"C'mon cupcake, lets celebrate. This time tomorrow, The Warrior will be under my control and all the wonders of that Vault will be ours." Jack said, spinning around quickly and crossing his arms in his trademark hero pose. Jack smirked, raising a brow as he saw the concern and doubt on the younger mans face. "I promise Rhysie, we're gonna remake the whole damn planet, in whatever way we want." Jack's eyes burned with passion and determination, and Rhys swallowed whatever other protests he had thought to make, knowing in his heart that Jack's mind was set. He offered the other man a small, tired smile, his robotic hand coming to restlessly run through his hair.

"You'll make it beautiful all the time, not just from space..." Rhys said quietly, admiration filling his gaze even as it his heart broke and he was smothered in sadness. He watched Jack, careful not to let on to the other man about his thoughts or feelings. "Here," Rhys said, turning away to a small table suddenly, grateful for a moments respite to gather himself together before facing his the man he would do anything for once more. "To your victory." He added, raising a glass of champagne in the air for a toast. He carried a second glass over to Jack, handing it to him with only the slightest of tremors in his hand, something the elder male thankfully missed as he grinned and accepted it eagerly.

"Our, victory cupcake." Jack corrected, taking the flute of champagne as it was offered by the younger man. "You saved this war more times than I can count Rhysie... Only man I know, who stood beside me no matter what. Never once doubted me." Jack leaned back and stared down at the planet which had taken that which he had cared for most in the world. He may not have always
agreed with his daughter, but he had loved her unconditionally none the less, and her betrayal struck a hard blow to the mans well hidden heart. He narrowed his eyes, and raised his glass in silent tribute, not noticing that Rhys merely set his own glass down on the side, as he tipped his head back and downed the entire drink in one go. He swallowed and closed his eyes, relishing the satisfaction he felt that only too soon he would finally be able to see his plans through to their completion.

"Jack..." Rhys's voice seemed to waver slightly, and Jack glanced back to show the other man had his attention. A sudden wave of dizziness hit him hard, and his free hand came to his forehead, while he seemed to stumble over the floor as it began to move beneath his feet. He dropped the glass from his hand as he reached out towards Rhys, who grabbed him forcefully around the shoulders and slowly sank to his knees, holding the President of Hyperion close to his chest as he eased him to the floor. "Jack, I'm so sorry..." Rhys whispered, stroking a stray hair back into the mans impeccable style. Jack gazed up at Rhys with eyes that blurred, unable to focus as both his panic and his fury began to rise.

"Rhys...!" Jack attempted to growl, but his tongue was thick and unresponsive, slurring the word as he tried hard to glare angrily at the younger man. Rhys merely chuckled sadly, ignoring the obvious fury coursing through the man who was his idol, his hero, and the best thing that had ever happened to him in his life.

"Jack, I can't let you go down there." Rhys said slowly, gently stroking his hand across the President's jacket to smooth out the wrinkles which had formed as they sank to the floor. "See, I know just how this will end. They're going to kill you, and Hyperion will die without you to lead it. I can't let that happen, I can't let everything you've ever worked for, just go to waste like that. Not after everything... not when I know you're the hero this godforsaken planet needs to finally save it from itself." Rhys murmured, purposely avoiding Jack's gaze. "I'm going to go and wake the Warrior for you, Jack... and I'm going to do so, by keying it into your blood."

Rhys gently raised one of Jack's hands, bringing it close to his face as his other hand picked up both a small vial, and a sharp pin. He glanced at Jack's face briefly before focusing on his task. "This may sting for a second." Rhys said quietly, before he jabbed the pin into Jack's finger. He dropped the pin and raised the vial, squeezing lightly on the new wound to encourage the blood to well at Jack's fingertip. He turned the finger and squeezed harder, watching with a morbid fascination as Jack's blood slowly filled the vial. Jack tried hard to watch, but it was taking all of his raging fury just to keep his eyes open, which he did purely out of stubbornness as he could barely see through all the dizzy, blurry vision he currently had.

"I'm not a martyr, just so you know." Rhys explained, "but I believe in you. I always have. I believe in what you've made Hyperion and, without you, Hyperion will fall. I can make it so you get the Warrior under your control, and I can make it so you live to lead another day. I can handle your temper, so long as you live." He said, snorting as he shook his head briefly. "Besides... I'll probably die in your place, and then I won't have to worry about your plans to kill me anyway." He added, laughing blandly at his own joke.

Jack felt a spike of fury in his chest, and he used the power of it to raise his hand enough to grab Rhys's wrist, trying to clench tightly, but only succeeding in gripping it lightly. Rhys smiled tiredly, finally placing a stopper into the top of the vial and drying Jack's finger with a small cloth. "You don't need me anymore Jack," Rhys said, patting the other mans hand gently. "Now, I've got someone coming in to take care of you, so don't worry." He said thickly, nodding his head as if to confirm his own words to himself. He swallowed heavily, clearing his throat as his eyes glistened with an unusual wet gleam. "It will all be over by the time you wake up." Rhys concluded thickly, as he eased his legs out from beneath Jack, thinking it better to leave the move to his bed to someone.
more capable of carrying the other man's bulk easily.

"Jack," Rhys said suddenly, tensing for a heartbeat, before shaking his head and huffing out a light laugh. He got to his feet, and brushed invisible dust from his clothes. A faint touch to his foot had him smiling down at Jack sadly, eyeing the weak grip the man had on his ankle. "Jack," he repeated in a whisper, easing his ankle free before hunkering down beside the Hyperion President.

Jack fought to keep his eyes open, to glare at Rhys so he understood the level of this betrayal, but the energy he had used trying to move was catching up to him, and his eyelids were far too heavy for him to continue to fight against any longer. As his world went black around him, he was aware of a whisper into his ear, though he could not decipher the words. He felt a soft touch to his cheek, before a jarring wetness struck the side of his nose.

Beyond that, Handsome Jack knew no more.

Jack shook himself from the memory, closing his eyes as he clenched his fist, feeling the betrayal and rage grow inside him once more. "He didn't say nothing but a bunch of typical martyr shit." He said roughly, squeezing her shoulders briefly. "Didn't even tell me about you, sneaky little bastard." He said, changing the subject unsubtly. "I didn't know anything about you until I woke up and saw you... half thought he'd killed me after all."

"He wanted to..." Angel defended, biting her lip as she sat straight and turned to look at him over her shoulder. "I just... I needed some time. To... to readjust after, well... after everything." She said, looking away guiltily.

"Hey now, baby girl," Jack said, sighing as he sat forward and ran his hands over his mask tiredly. "I get it, I'm- I'm not mad... at you. I just... I can't forgive that, stupid little-"

"Dad... what happened?" Angel asked, her crystal clear eyes raising to Jack's intently. Jack hesitated, leaning back to the wall as he considered for a moment. "How did all of this even happen? What did Rhys mean-?"

"I don't know, Angel!" He roared suddenly, grabbing the nearest hunk of debris and tossing it towards his already destroyed desk, scowling hatefully towards the planet looming through the great window. "I don't know. All I know, is that the snivelling little dipshit thought he knew better than me... and he got himself killed!"

"Dad..." Angel pressed, curling into his side again. "Tell me." She said, taking his hand between her own and rubbing it gently. "Please. I wanna know everything I missed..." She insisted, looking up with such a confident smile, that Jack was almost reminded of the little girl she'd been so long ago, before the curse of the Siren had touched their lives.

"It's a long story, baby girl." He said tiredly, shaking his head as he felt his fury begin to dissipate, replaced by an amused sense of resignation to his daughter's curiosity. "But, I guess I can make time to talk about myself..."

"Daaaad," Angel protested, groaning as she nuded him firmly, while he grinned at her fondly. He sighed and tipped his head back to the wall, searching through his memory for the best place to begin weaving his tale.

"I guess, it all started before you were even born," he said thoughtfully, narrowing his eyes as he recalled his first meeting with the gutsy kid who'd become his most loyal and trusted follower; and ultimately, his worst betrayer...
Arrival

Chapter Notes

Urgh...

I hate this. Buuuuut my Rhack brain wont shut up so, here ya go :)

hope you enjoy... I promise the story does get better (I just suck right now)

Please let me know what you think so far - I'll hopefully be getting back into this properly soon and chapters should grow as the uh, boring crap gets outta the way :)

Okie Dokie, thanks for reading <3

x My love to you all x

Helios Space Station. The plans only just finalized and construction barely begun, running only with the most minimal of skeleton crews. Yet every scientist, engineer or robotic designer for galaxies around wanted a position on the prodigious, one of a kind station; with only a slim proportion achieving their dream. Rhys Andrews, considered himself lucky to even be standing on the station; let alone at the threshold of the new Robotics Department. He’d never confess to the things he’d done to earn his place on such an esteemed team; the backs he’d stabbed or the lives he’d no doubt ruined. Hell, he barely acknowledged them himself, except for in his darkest nightmares; where he couldn’t escape. His heart hammered as he stood just outside the main entrance, taking a heartbeat longer to savour the sense of satisfaction and glory he felt, drinking in the sleek workspace and the brand new cybernetic enhancements on display. When he’d first applied to Hyperion, Rhys had expected to receive either a steaming pile of nothing, or a particularly derivative refusal. However, the mention of his willingness to volunteer for a new and highly advanced Cybernetic procedure, had earned him an interview; his eagerness granting him not only access to the position he’d applied for, but also some nifty upgrades which would give him a boost over the other applicants.

Six months later, here he was; stood on the space station he revered, outside the very department where an exceptional new arm awaited him, as well as an ECHO eye and a neural port to complete the enhancement. His heart skipped a beat, a jolt of nervous energy rippling down his spine as he licked his lips, excitement and anxiety churning in his gut. Rhys cleared his throat, sucking in a slow, deep breath to calm his rising nerves, before finally stepping through the doors to the Robotics Department; the first step towards his new life and new future.

“Ah, hello! I’m, uh, I’m looking for a mister-“ He said as he stepped into the bustle of the busy department, only for the man he’d addressed to turn away as if he hadn’t heard him, muttering to himself as he swiped furiously through an ECHO log. Rhys’s brow furrowed briefly, but he let the man go, instead glancing around to spot a young woman nearby, who appeared to be re-wiring a cybernetic arm.

“Wow, that looks... awesome.” He breathed, impressed by the sleek design of the mechanic limb, despite it having no plating to protect the delicate wires. The woman did not look up, her eyes remaining on her work. Rhys cleared his throat, his hand rising to his neck briefly as he loosened his tie. “Uh, I’m looking for a uh, mister Na-“ The woman growled beneath her breath, scowling as she pulled a wrongly configured wire free, her eyes narrowing as she redirected the wire to the correct outlet. “Um, nevermind...” Rhys muttered, sighing as he moved away and tried to navigate his way
to find his way by himself.

“Um, hi! Hello!” He called, reaching out to a passing woman tentatively, though he hesitated before actually touching her. “Could you, uh, could you help me? Please?” He asked, sighing in frustration as she continued on her way without responding. Rhys scowled, biting the inside of his cheek at the rudeness of those whom he’d asked for help. He wondered if all scientists were so single minded and rude; while simultaneously making a mental note to delay the results of any future data mining requests from the Robotics Department. “Okay... well, I guess that’s a no then! Thanks very much for your time!” He called after her with false cheer, shaking his head as he looked around for anything that might resemble an office. “Hmm...” He hummed, making his way towards a closed door with what he hoped was a name plaque upon it.

Rhys paused just outside the door, glancing both ways down the hall, before turning back to the plaque, his eyes narrowing as he tried to focus on the small words printed upon it. “Professor... N-“ he murmured lowly, shaking his head when the letters blurred slightly. Rhys sighed, glancing down the hall again longingly, before biting his lip and tentatively reaching up to knock on the door. He waited a heartbeat, followed by a second, before knocking a second time. Rhys was just about to give up and head back to the main department, when the door was flung open and he instead stepped back in surprise.

“Yes?” Snapped a slightly hunched, wiry man with a lab coat which drowned his body. “What is it? I don’t have time for your stupid-“ he paused, adjusting the glasses on his nose and leaning towards Rhys with a frown. “Hmm... you’re not part of Robotics.” He declared quietly, as Rhys leaned away from the strange man, wrinkling his nose as he took a discreet step backwards. “Hmm, minor ocular trauma in the left eye... recent? No... six months old at least, from the scarring...” He muttered to himself, as Rhys grimaced and blushed simultaneously, attempting to avoid looking too closely at the man's strangely blistered skin.

“Oh well, I uh... yeah.” Rhys said awkwardly, exhaling sharply in relief, as the strange man finally shifted back and turned his attention down to his right arm. “I was caught in the blast of a grenade and... I mean, my arm took the brunt but, some shrapnel still got past...” He explained quickly, gesturing to his mostly unresponsive right arm. “They’ve both been, uh... lacking. Ever, uh, ever since.” He coughed, shifting his weight uncomfortably beneath the other man’s intent gaze.

“Ah, so you’re the one.” The man leered, his excitement clearly growing as he peered at Rhys’s left side, narrowing his eyes as he dragged the tip of his finger across Rhys’s brow. “Yes, yes... the port will fit nicely...” He drawled, as Rhys tried hard not to show his discomfort. “Come in, come in! I’ve been waiting... waiting for you!” He leered excitedly, an uncomfortable grin on his face as he gestured Rhys into his office. “I am professor Nakayama... I designed your neural port myself, specifically.” He drawled luridly, as Rhys found himself chuckling with awkward discomfort.

“Ha, ha... great, that’s great because, ha...” He coughed, clearing his throat as he reluctantly stepped into the scientist’s cramped office. “Yep, totally not creepy at all.” He said in a rush, hurrying to sit in the chair which was offered to him; hoping to get the meeting over with so he could go down to the medical bay for his surgery. “Uh, so... what exactly, did you want to see me for?” He asked, his voice rising nervously as he tugged at his collar with his one good hand.

“Hng!” Professor Nakayama growled abruptly, stalking around his desk as Rhys tensed with alarm, his hand gripping the chair arm tightly, despite the twitch of his fingers. “Ugh, now where did I put it?! The scientist grumbled, as Rhys glanced around, curious despite the other man’s strange behaviour. “Ah!” He cried joyfully, the sound similar to a child; albeit far more disturbing. He moved back around his desk to Rhys, thrusting a piece of paper into his hands. “This file was incorrectly filled in! We have to know where you’re from!” He yelled quickly, wringing his hands
together as to the small empty box next to the ‘homeworld’ question. “Sometimes people have planet
specific reactions to certain meds... we must make certain we do not take you to theatre and begin
operating; without the necessary medication on hand.”

Rhys stared at the document, the flicker of a frown marring his brow for the briefest of seconds,
before he looked up to Nakayama with a lopsided grin. “I don’t have any allergies,” he said warmly,
moving to set the paper back on Nakayama’s desk. “I can assure you that I won’t have any kind of
adverse reac-“

“No, no, no, no, no!” Nakayama screeched, gritting his teeth as he leered at Rhys and insistently
pressed the paper back into his hands. “We have to have the correct information, or else we can’t
operate!” He explained in a rush, his hands raising to his balding crown and scratching the faintly
blistered skin. “Wrong information leads to incorrect meds, which leads to incorrect treatment and
suing, followed by the company falling!” He cried, growing steadily louder as Rhys glanced around
and moved back in his chair slightly. “Without the correct information, Hyperion would be forced to
terminate your employment, effective immediately!” He wailed, a sickly rasp escaping him as he
growled in frustration. “You’d be sent back, back to whatever cesspit planet you crawled out fro-“

“Okay, alright already...” Rhys sighed, grimacing as he fondled the edge of the paper and reluctantly
reached to pluck a pen from the other mans desk. “I get the picture. No info, no job.” He muttered,
tapping the pen to the paper hesitantly, before slowly printing a single word in the appropriate box.
“There.” He bit out with obvious disgust, grimacing as he thrust the paper back at Nakayama and
tossed the pen back to his desk.

Nakayama looked down at the paper, adjusting his glasses briefly as he squinted at the page before
his eyes widened in surprise. “Pandora?!” He yelped, turning to Rhys with a disbelieving stare, as
Rhys snorted and purposely averted his gaze, his left hand curling into a tight fist upon the chair arm.
“Oh... oh my, yes...” Nakayama muttered to himself, peering at Rhys with new interest as Rhys
continued to avoid the mans gaze as much as he was able to. “I wouldn’t have guessed it, but it
certainly makes sense... the danger, the aura, the power...” He breathed in a low, awed rush.

Rhys’s breath caught in his throat and he stood abruptly, causing Nakayama to squeal with alarm and
surprise as he was forced to take a step backwards. “If that’s everything...?” He asked tightly, his left
arm coming to cup his unresponsive right for a moment. “I should really head over to the uh, the
waiting room. For the uh, you know... the surgery.” He said, clearing his throat awkwardly as he
stumbled back towards the door, unwilling to turn his back on the strange scientist.

“Hmm... yes, that’s all for now.”Nakayama hummed, eyeing Rhys thoughtfully for another long
pause, before looking back down at the form curiously. “Hmm, yes... yes. A pandoran would be far
more resilient... I could add in a small modification on the design,” he muttered to himself, finally
distracted from Rhys as he turned to his desk and snatched up the pen Rhys had returned, frantically
scribbling across a schematic on the far side of his desk. “Put a thing, into the arm here... and then,
attach it... to the eye there and.. Yes! Grrrr! I am so smart!” He hissed to himself, his teeth grit tightly
gether as Rhys backed away slowly, slipping out of the man’s office door and quickly turning
away; jogging away from the excitable scientist quickly.

“Oh god...” Rhys sighed, rubbing his face with his hand. “I’m gonna die.” He muttered, strolling out
of the Robotics Department before pausing to lean against the wall briefly. He inhaled deeply,
closing his eyes as he held his breath and counted to fifteen, before slowly opening his eyes and
exhaling. His unease about the imminent surgery faded, but his frustration over the issue of his home
world lingered. Rhys felt his brow furrow slowly, his good hand curling into a fist at his side. Pan-
goddamn-dora... He thought sourly, hissing to himself as he glanced down the hallway, his temper
rising at the reminder of the inescapability of his past and origin.
Pandora was simultaneously the most revered; and the most feared planet in the galaxy. While the planet itself appeared peaceful, beautiful even, from the safety of space; the planets surface was a dangerous mess of blood, murder and mayhem. Tales of legendary Vaults, treasure troves left behind by the mysterious Eridians, lured adventurers from all over the galaxy to brave the wild planet. There were few, however, who ever lasted more than a week. Rhys’s father had been one such adventurer, though he’d given up the chase for a Vault upon the discovery of a small village, regularly raided by a gang of bandits and psychos who’d resided nearby. The discovery of a young woman who’d been lucky enough to escape the harsh conditions of the planet had caught his eye, and upon taking up the mantle of Guardian; he’d driven the bandits back, and chosen to remain in the town with the woman, marrying and starting a family within the year.

Rhys blinked quickly, trying to force away the too vivid thoughts and memories of his home world, his frustration mounting as he anticipated the strange looks, the whispers of his soon to be co-workers when they discovered his origins for themselves. Pandora was known for its violent nature; and its inhabitants were no different, regardless of where they ended up in life. To be known as a Pandoran, was to be doubted, to be feared. Rhys had hoped to avoid anyone discovering the knowledge he was from the crazed planet, but the odds it seemed had been stacked against him. “Well…” He sighed, pushing away from the wall and walking slowly away from the Robotics Department, heading towards where a small yellow, highly irritating robot had told him the medical bay was being constructed. “Nothing to be done now.” He muttered, running his hand through his hair as he began to walk with more purpose, pushing aside his melancholy as he looked forward to the possibility of having his full vision returned to him. “Guess the skag’s outta that bag.” He snorted, rolling his eyes before glancing down at his gleaming skag skin boots, grinning goofily despite himself.

When he arrived in the medical bay, he was immediately swarmed by doctors in white coats, all eager to meet the brave volunteer who was willing to prove their loyalty to Hyperion, through cybernetic upgrades; something which if done right, could turn out to benefit the company tenfold within a year alone. Rhys bore their questions with a practiced calm, smiling as he was led through to a small cubicle where he could change into a thin gown. He blushed as he changed, realising the small garment would do little to cover his tall frame, but ultimately deeming the new arm and eye worth the embarrassment of a few hours wearing a revealing gown. His stomach flipped nervously, as he laid down on a small gurney, allowing himself to be wheeled through to the room where he would forever say goodbye to his right arm and his left eye.

“Hey, looks like you got lucky!” One of the doctors commented brightly, smiling before their face disappeared behind a small mask, as Rhys raised an eyebrow at them curiously. “You’re ink is only down one arm! It would have been a shame for you to lose it…” They said, gesturing to the blue marks which swirled over Rhys’s left arm and chest. He glanced down, his brow creasing briefly, before immediately smoothing out again; so quick, nobody could have noticed unless specifically looking for the reaction.

“Yeah, I guess my drunk ass got lucky alright.” He lied cheerfully, forcing a dry chuckle as the doctor hesitantly ran a finger along one of the markings. “Pretty sweet right? Thought they looked badass…” He said thickly, averting his eyes to his fingertips, resentment burning in the back of his throat like acid. “Almost chose the other arm, but… just seemed to fit better. Ya know?” He muttered, swallowing thickly and fighting a grimace at the awful taste which resided in his mouth.

“Beautiful.” The doctor breathed, as a surge of irritation swept through Rhys’s gut. He grit his teeth tightly, determinedly locking his jaw against the spiteful retort which sat on the tip of his tongue. “Just like a Siren... truly remarkable.” They said, before turning to one of the other doctors and seemingly forgetting the marks entirely.
Rhys felt himself pale, his heart skipping a beat at the unintentional barb. He glanced again at the mark’s on his arm, immediately looking away when his stomach churned warningly. He sucked in a deep breath and exhaled shakily, staring at the ceiling blankly as the doctors swarmed around him, preparing him for the surgery and finally placing a mask over his mouth; his eyelids growing heavy as they injected him with a sedative. Rhys’s frantic heartbeat slowly dropped, his thoughts growing thick and languid as unconsciousness rushed to consume him. With his final moments of coherency, he wondered what they would have done if they’d known the truth. That of the six Siren’s in the universe at any one time, the mystical beings who could open the highly sought Vaults of legend; they currently had one laying vulnerable within their grasp.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!