This is a collection of mini fics around the main story of 'For Cayde'. I tend to think up little moments between them that never really seem to have a place directly in the main fic, so I decided to create a side collection for those pieces. Each 'chapter' will have an *END* since they are just snippets or moments in time. The chapters won't be linked to each other like the main works. So when you see *END* that just means that's the end of that moment but more chapters will appear as I write little moments out and post them. Hope you all enjoy! :D

Notes

This first entry is a little in between piece that takes place during Part 2 not long before the Dawning Celebrations begin.
Chapter 1

THE JOURNAL

It was that time of year again. When the days were short and cold and the ground frozen, blanketed in patches of snow and dried, chestnut-colored grasses that were once green and full of life. Winter had finally set in over the Last City and the lands surrounding it, cold, biting winds billowing up over hills and through the mountains, leafless trees doing nothing to shield anyone or anything caught outside.

It was only half past five in the evening, but the sun had already set and now the only light was from the city below and what reflected off the underbelly of the Traveler.

A warm fire crackled away in the fireplace and the lights in the apartment had been dimmed, creating a relaxing atmosphere. I was in the kitchen, slowly stirring a pan of melted chocolate, cream and cinnamon, while Cayde sat in his corner of the couch in the living room, quietly scribbling away in one of his journals while the television was on, the sound muted, one of the City channels on, broadcasting the news.

While I stirred, I looked over toward the living room at the tv to see what was going on - nothing really interesting - then at Cayde, seeing only his head and part of his shoulder and knees over the back of the couch as he balanced the journal on his legs and finished off a sentence before looking up and off at nothing in particular, clearly in thought.

We had been busy the last few days, helping out around the EDZ and the Farm, securing as much as we could for the winter while fending off enemies - mostly Fallen. With the cold weather coming in, as what happened every year, Fallen and Cabal in the area grew more fierce and deadly as they and those who lived in the Last City and surrounding areas fought for whatever supplies and resources they could scavenge against Fallen and Cabal who were doing the same. There were certainly a lot of winter festivities that took place throughout the cold months as distractions and ways to keep the cheer through the short days and long nights until the warm weather returned, but they were always shadowed by the threats that lingered just outside the walls.

For the time that Cayde and I had been helping out, we actually ended up staying at the Farm, camping out with others there and securing checkpoints, laying traps and warning systems, and keeping an eye on the supply trails until the first heavy snows arrived just yesterday. Tonight was our first night home since and, I had to admit, while the Farm had its charm and the people there were wonderful company, especially for Cayde who had really enjoyed himself sitting around the campfires and trading tales, playing a few poker games, and enjoying some drinks like he used to do out in the Wilds, it was nice to be back and have our space to ourselves and the quiet that came with it.

Of course, after checking in with Zavala and Ikora and filing out our reports, the first thing Cayde wanted to do was take a hot shower and make a fire to drive away the chill that had constantly settled in with him while out there, despite the temperature regulated armor. He also wanted to write in his journal. There had been a lot that had happened over the last few days he’d wanted to record.

A flash of light caught my eye and I turned my head to see Ghost floating over to where Cayde was and settle on his shoulder. Cayde never looked up from his journal but reached up and softly pet Ghost before going back to writing. I smiled. Those two had become so close over the last couple months, forming their own special friendship. I suppose, from the outside, looking in, someone would likely think I would be jealous or upset my Ghost had taken to someone else the way Ghost
had to Cayde but, the truth was, I was so glad for it. I already had a connection with Ghost. He was, originally, my Ghost. The bond had never been severed and was still as strong as ever. But Cayde had lost his. Lost Sundance. And I knew Ghost’s reasoning for being so close to Cayde and paying more attention to him and spending time with him was to help fill that void and ease the pain of Sundance no longer being here. The bond formed between them on Io was so very similar to the one formed between every Ghost and Guardian but, for Cayde, it would never be exactly the same. The wound would always be there. It was just the price of losing a part of yourself.

I poured the hot chocolate mixture into a cup, filling it half way, then added some coffee to it for myself, before I took out Cayde’s Spicy Ramen mug and filled it with the rest of the hot chocolate to the brim, adding a couple dollops of whipped cream. He liked his coffee but was serious about hot chocolate. He loved chocolate. It was his comfort food next to ramen.

After setting stuff in the sink, I brought our mugs to the living room and walked around the couch, offering Cayde’s to him. He blinked up at me in surprise, obviously having been lost in what he’d been writing, and smiled at me, taking his mug. I leaned over, caressing the back of his head as I kissed the top of it, then moved to sit on the other end of the couch and quietly drink my coffee and chocolate, letting him write undisturbed while I watched what was happening on the tv.

A few minutes later, I saw him move, getting up and setting his mug down on the coffee table up near me, before he sat back down and wordlessly moved to snuggle back against me. I smiled and moved my arms apart as he scooted back and up over my folded leg, pulling his knees up, balancing his journal on them, before he went back to writing as I casually laid my left arm over his shoulder, giving the side of his head a tender nuzzle and another kiss. I felt a little tingle wash over him and I smiled again, then glanced at the journal while Ghost resettled on my shoulder this time, my eyes trailing over Cayde’s incredibly neat and elegant handwriting.

I’d never forget the first time he’d shared his journals with me. It wasn’t long after that time he’d had a horrific headache after fighting some Cabal and stayed in my apartment for the first time after I’d given him the injection to help with the pain. I’d been cleaning up and changed into my civilian clothes to join him in our usual spot in the hanger after returning from a mission, only to open the door and find him standing there, looking completely flustered, as if he’d been out there for a while, but unsure if he was overstepping, coming back again. I’d been surprised, certainly, but smiled and invited him in, noticing he was carrying a small book and a little paper bag. When I’d inquired what was in the bag, he nervously handed it to me and I discovered, inside, was a box of a dozen chocolate truffles from one of the finest shops in the city. He’d bowed his head, looking down at his feet, and shrugged, saying how they were a thank you for taking care of him. I’d given him a hug and told him I’d be here whenever he needed me, which made him smile before he cleared his throat and gestured to the book he was carrying, asking me if there was time to show me something. I’d told him I had all night and sent him to the living room while I got us some tea, then joined him on the couch. That was when he’d handed me the book and I looked at the cover. It was quite old, that I could tell from the condition of the binding and the aged and worn appearance of the cover, as well as the yellowish tint of the outer edges of the paper. The cover art was a golden tree, who’s roots weaved down into an elaborate Celtic knot design and, below that, was the title: Treasure Island. I’d looked over at him curiously and saw he still looked nervous, fidgeting with his fingers as he gave me a little nod to open the book.

When I did, I saw it was, indeed, the storybook of Treasure Island but had the elaborate and beautifully perfect handwriting I would come to know as his scrawled on the blank cover page and the one with the large bold print of the title of the book. There were also little sketches, one being the Clovis Bray emblem, another a spade. There was also a decal affixed to the top of the title page that I immediately recognized at the Clovis Bray Exoscience symbol. I looked at Cayde again. If he’d had lips and teeth, I knew he’d be biting his bottom lip about now while still fidgeting with his fingers as
he gave me another motion to go ahead and read the hand written parts. I’d cleared my throat and quietly read aloud: “Floating in the black. I’ve been listening to nothing but my heart knocking for over twelve hours. EMU’s low on air. I promise myself this job is the last. Promise myself this time I mean it. I feel the hull vibration through the station's thin metal skin. The airlock pump hisses. Long wait's over. Time to go to work. I'll spare you the gory details. Afterwards, fuming. Clovis Bray sends me a bill for the hull damage. My fault the target put a blast wall between us. My fault things went wrong and we had to let our rifles do the talking. I tear the packet open. Tattered pieces of the envelope drift to the floor. Surprise. It's not just a bill. There's a job offer tucked in. Seems old Bray's been looking for someone like me. Willing to forgive my debt, and not just for the orbital station. All of it. Suddenly, I ain't so mad anymore.”

I’d looked over at him after reading that. “This is yours,” I’d said and he nodded and explained it’s the journal he had on him when he first woke a Guardian. It was his guide he’d left himself incase something happened. That it was deeply personal and no one else had ever seen it, save Sundance. It had dawned on me then how deep he was letting me in; that he trusted me that much. Then he told me how he could have tried to tell me about it but that he’d wanted his old self to do the talking. That he’d wanted me to know that part of himself, even if that man was long gone. After that, he and I spent the rest of the evening looking through the journal and, as I read passages, he’d talk about them and how they made him feel, what, if anything, he could remember in flashes of memories and dreams, and the pieces he’d put together to understand who he’d been and who he wanted to be now. It had been his way of opening up and saying to me: ‘This is who I was and this is who I am. I’m not perfect, I wasn’t necessarily good, but this is me. And I’ve tried to be more. I know I don’t always have to be as good as long as I do good and I try my best.’. He’d wanted me to really know him if we were going to be close. And I remember thinking how much more endeared to him I’d become that night and wishing there was more to myself I could have shared with him but I hadn’t been around anywhere near as long as he had. Still, we’d talked all night, and I shared what I knew of myself with him but quickly came to realize, it was very hard for me to open up. It wasn’t because I didn’t trust him, either. I did. As much as he did me. I just didn’t know how to be open with him then because I’d never been open with anyone.

“Ais? Hey, babe? You okay?” Cayde asked, and I blinked myself out of the memory, realizing he was talking to me.

“Hmm? Oh, sorry, sweetheart. Yeah, I’m fine. What is it?”

“You sure? You were just … staring, your face totally blank,” he said.

I smiled and jutted my chin toward his journal. “I was thinking of that night you stopped by the other apartment and showed me the Treasure Island book for the first time.”

“Oh,” he said, smiling back. “Seems like forever ago, doesn’t it?”

I nodded. “It does,” I murmured and he handed me the book he’d just been writing in, letting me read it.

I set my cup down and read over the paragraphs of Cayde retelling not only the mission but the fun and heartwarming nights with newly made friends at the Farm and how he felt sharing those moments with me, glad I was now there to be part of it all with him. I felt his fingers lightly caressing over the engagement bracelet on my left wrist and settled my finger next to a paragraph to hold my place as I looked over to see his eyes on the bracelet as he traced the wove strips with his fingertip. I could feel something welling up inside of him - a mixture of deep love and other strong emotions he seemed to be trying to force himself to keep at bay. I mentally noted where I’d left off in the journal to read later and closed it, setting it on the table, then wrapped my arm around him as I pressed a kiss
to his temple, letting my lips linger there, closing my eyes. “You okay?” I whispered.

He nodded. “Yeah,” he quietly said, not looking up from the bracelet. “Just, uh … Just thinking how this will be the first Dawning I ever celebrated with someone. Not just friends. I mean, not that those times weren’t special, just …” He swallowed and I more felt than heard his breath hitch a little before he cleared his throat again. “I have a family,” he uttered, his voice incredibly soft. “A real family. Not … not somethin’ I made up in my head to get through.” He blinked rapidly as he reeled in the emotions, trying to force himself to gain control. He was still having a hard time balancing the changes since Enceladus but doing better. He looked at me as if he had a million things he wanted to say and no idea where or how to start. “I feel like I wanna get you something really, really special,” he said.

I smiled, feeling tears well up in my eyes at the sweetness of his statement. “You already did,” I whispered, giving him a soft kiss. “And he’s right here in my arms.”

*END*
Chapter 2

The Hot Springs - Io

After taking care of the loose prisoners at the Prison of Elders, then spending some of the afternoon in the Dreaming City helping out Petra and the Corsairs, Cayde and I decided to head home. I was looking forward to making some fresh tomato soup and I knew Cayde was still determined to make that apple pie. I was a little surprised, though, when I noticed he’d switched course and brought the ship out in Io’s orbit.

“What are we doing here?” I asked him, but his only reply was to smile at me and wink, then bring us in low over the Lost Oasis.

“There are a few Taken in the area but, otherwise, no activity,” Ghost told us.

While Ghost took over the ship, Cayde motioned me to follow, so I did, and Ghost transmatted us down near the Taken so we could clear them out of the area, making it safe. After confirming all was quiet, Cayde led me over toward the cliffs and under a rocky archway that overlooked the entire valley where the Traveler had last touched Io. The light was just starting to dim and the stars were twinkling high above. Off in the distance, to our left, the immense structure of the Pyramidion stood, reaching far up into the sky. In front of us, billowing clouds of white and grey smoke, with glowing aqua fire and heat rose from Io’s surface from the volcanos, ethereal blue light shining up around the openings and onto the smoke as it rolled and billowed up toward the sky, casting a calm yet dream-like glow over the whole landscape.

In front of us, there were two crystal blue pools of water from the hot springs, one upper, one lower, and, as we stepped closer to them, I noticed Cayde began taking his armor off. I chuckled and followed suit, removing my armor and my clothes underneath.

As the sun dimmed further and night began to settle over Io, the pools of water began to glow with tiny particles of blue crystals that shimmered like glitter within the water and soft tendrils of steam danced over the surface. The stars above us shone even brighter, and the entire landscape became a soft aqua blue and green.

It was undeniably stunning.

Once he was fully undressed, Cayde came over to me and helped me with the last of my armor and clothes, then softly gasped when he looked up at me from where he’d crouched down in front of me to help pull off the last of the underarmor. I was completely naked now, the only light on me the soft glowing greens and blues of the planet.
“What?” I asked, and looked down, only to see the way the light reflected and reacted to my body and the silvery tendrils that slowly and softly rippled like water under my skin. Cayde was still crouched and looking up at me as if he were seeing me naked for the first time, his mouth agape. “Oh wow,” he breathed and finally stood, taking a step closer to me, laying his hands on my sides, tenderly caressing them. He pressed closer to me and I slipped my own arms around his waist, looking into his eyes. “You’re … so beautiful,” he breathed, and leaned in, the tiny ridges of his nose brushing against the tip of mine in a sweet little gesture of affection before he kissed me so very softly.

I sighed into his mouth and pulled him closer, my breasts pressing to his broad chest as my eyelids unconsciously closed at the feel of his warm body against mine.

When the kiss ended, he eased away, sliding his hands down over my arms to my own, his fingers curling into mine, as he gently tugged me to the upper pool and guided me into the water with him.

It was only once he turned, that I noticed the light of Io had a similar affect on him, making the thread-like strands of teal metal woven into his deep gray skin shimmer and glow.

I stopped to look at him, the motion tugging him back a little. He turned to look at me questioningly and opened his mouth as if to ask me something but then saw how I was looking at him and closed it, letting my eyes wander over his body. I moved around in front of him in the knee-deep and soothingly warm water, sliding my fingers up his arm and over his shoulder, then down along the defined pecks of his chest and a little lower over his stomach, lightly - but not enough to tickle - tracing the shimmering pattern of metal mesh that now appeared as if it were glowing. His stomach muscles fluttered at my touch and I licked my lips, smiling at the reaction. When I looked back up at his eyes, I saw he was watching me, not my hand, and could feel a welling of excitement and warmth rising within him. He smiled back, then took my hand again, and led me over to the edge of the pool, where he sat down, his back against the stone edge, the water coming up to his chest, and gently tugged me down to join him.

I returned his smile and straddled this lap, easing my hands up along the sides of his neck to his jaw as I cupped his face, stroking it lovingly before kissing him. He moaned into my mouth, his arms wrapping around me as he pulled me in close, the two of us sharing long, slow, deeply passionate kisses and tender touches for the next several minutes. The low sound of rippling water, the soft hissing of the heat vents, and echos of things both above and blow the planets surface added to the strange and surreal, yet wonderfully intimate ambiance.

The longer we kissed the harder and hotter I felt him getting, even within the warmth of the water surrounding us. His breathing got deeper, his kisses more urgent, his arms and hands tensing more and more at my back as he shifted his hips from side to side beneath me. I smiled, feeling the pulsing of his heart beneath his chest, and nuzzled him, then kissed the tip of his horn as I sat up a little and reached under the water, taking him in my hand. His lips parted in a soft gasp and his eyelids fluttered as the tip of his tongue traced along his upper lip in rapt anticipation at my touch. I gave him a few slow strokes, carefully squeezing, and his eyes closed, his head fell back, and he hissed and groaned, his hips pushing up into my palm. It was such a turn on to see him like this, and I felt my heart speed up, along with my breathing, and between my legs tingle needfully as I gently guided him inside me. He moaned and let out a shuddering sigh, resting his forehead on my shoulder as I settled. I wiggled my toes at the pleasant and full way he felt as my body adjusted to him but, otherwise, remained still, giving him a few moments to adjust, himself, as I stroked the back of his neck, the tip of my middle finger lightly circling the port at the back of his head. He groaned again, then eventually looked up at me, his eyes brighter than normal, his optics dilated, the plates of his cheeks radiating heat as his chest rose and fell with deep, controlled breaths.
I grinned and traced the lines and shapes of his face, the ridges of the cream-colored metal of his forehead, and the underside of his horn with my fingers, making him close his eyes at the pleasant sensation. He leaned forward a little and kissed at my neck and possessively breathed me in, his hands sliding down to knead at my bottom, lifting me up a little as he rolled his pelvis up into me with a soft groan. I gasped and lightly hugged his head to my chest as I took the hint, starting a slow and steady rhythm, rocking my hips as I leaned back a little, feeling him lower his head and kiss my breasts, flicking and circling the tip of his tongue over my nipples. I gasped again, and moaned his name reverently, excited goosebumps rising all over my skin.

He was hotter than hot, and sexier than any other man I’d ever met or seen!

And I loved him. Oooooh, how I loved him!

I felt him shift under me, sliding down a little, and bend his knees, planting his feet to give himself leverage as he held my hips and started carefully bouncing me in his lap, his excitement growing as the water around us splashed and rippled with our movements. I gasped his name again as I swelled and tightened around him, bracing myself on his shoulders, arching back from each pleasurable thrust. He let out a low, purring growl, squeezing my hips. I knew he was close. So was I. But oh, how I wished we weren’t. I wanted this moment with him to last forever!

I pawed at his chest and leaned back down, kissing his lips, wanting to touch every part of him I could as I started grinding my hips into him, growing right back at him as I felt myself beginning to teeter on the edge for a few very brief moments before I tore my lips away and gasped, shuddering and throbbing all around him.

He moaned and slowed his hips under me and, as I caught my breath, I looked down at him, seeing him smile. I smiled back and he sat back up and kissed me, then eased me off him and moved me to the edge of the pool so I was leaning forward. As he knee-walked in behind me, he kissed up along my spine, and traced the curve with the tip of his tongue, making me shudder. I looked over my shoulder at him, biting at my bottom lip and felt him teasing my entrance with the tip of his erection, playfully inching it in, then back out. I hissed and grinned and reached back, tugging at his hip. He could be such a shit and I loved that about him. He chuckled and eased all the way back inside me, both of us moaning at the renewed joining.

One of these days, I’d work up the courage to actually spank him for being such a terrible tease.

As I felt his hands pet my sides, I couldn’t help but admit, I was pretty sure this was my favorite position with him. Cayde was Cayde. He was goofy, funny, silly, playful. He liked to joke around and had a clever wit about him that always made me laugh. He was, most of the time, a big kid.

But, when he was like this, he was anything but. There was a passion in him that just seemed to radiate in this position. He was dominant and forceful, but gentle and loving. He knew what he wanted and knew how to say it without words. And he possessed me.

Oh, how he possessed me.

When his arms wrapped around me and he pulled me back against his chest; when he held me so securely as he draped his chin over my shoulder and kissed up the side of my neck and cheek, his hot breath ghosting over my skin as his hips started moving again, I was his.

His and no one else’s.

Ever.
And when I felt him tense and shudder, gasping my name as he pressed his face to the back of my shoulder, riding out the waves of pleasure …

I knew he was mine and mine alone.

Always.

“We should probably get going,” Cayde whispered to me as we laid together on our backs atop one of the wide platforms of the smoothly carved rock formations near the spring, staring up at the starry night sky. He had his arm folded under his head for a pillow, his other hand holding mine between us, our fingers laced together. I had my own arm pillowed under my head, my cheek resting against his shoulder.

After getting dressed, we came up here to relax for a while and enjoy the view. I felt both sleepy and wide awake, and blissfully spent, all at the same time.

It was a wonderfully content feeling.

“I really hate to,” I whispered back to him. “It’s so peaceful here right now. So perfect.” I turned my head to look at him. “I don’t want to break the moment.”

He looked at me and smiled. “Me, either. So let’s make a promise to come back soon, hm?” He asked, rolling onto his side to caress my cheek. “This is our spot now.”

I returned the smile, nodding, and coaxed him down for one more kiss before we reluctantly headed home, plans for next time already settling into the back of my mind.

*END*
Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

A little - maybe a lot - NSFW, but it's a sweet NSFW. Just came to me for whatever reason, so I decided to write it out. Hope you all enjoy it!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Beyond Words

Chains of lightning flashed along dark and angry looking clouds in the night sky high above the Last City, reflecting off the white, marble-like surface of the Travelers sphere. A loud rumble of thunder quickly followed, shattering what had once been a quiet evening.

I jerked awake at the sudden, loud noise, half-lidded eyes glancing out the window just in time to see another series of flashes before a heavy rain began pouring down. I closed my eyes and took a slow, sleepy breath and shifted a little, settling back down. The mattress dipped beside me and I heard the shifting of sheets, then softly smiled as the familiar warmth of Cayde’s body pressed against my side. I heard him softly moan as he rested his face against my upper arm and shoulder, sighing before his head settled more comfortably into the pillow. His hand slid up over my middle and laid over my own, the tips of his fingers finding the leather engagement bracelet he’d given me, lightly tracing and caressing it before he moved his hand over it further, closing around it. He lifted his right leg, laying it over mine. Another smile tugged at the corner of my mouth and I settled my right hand on his thigh, idly petting it. I felt the plates of his face move, and knew he was smiling, too, before his lips pressed a kiss to my shoulder.

It was moments like these I truly came to love. We’d had similar moments, when we’d been just close friends, sitting together, cuddled up on the couch watching a movie, or sitting together in the Hanger - A simple touch of the hand, or light entwining of a couple fingers. Looking back on it, I suppose it was our way of saying so much more to each other at a time when neither of us was ready to say aloud what we were really feeling deep down. Seemed so silly now. It’d been so obvious how much we cared for each other - how much we wanted each other - yet neither of us had dared make a move beyond that close friendship; those intimate moments of simple embraces and loving shows of affection and comfort.

As I felt Cayde’s thumb lightly caress over the bracelet again, I lifted my index finger and gently returned the caress to the side of his wrist. His hand moved back a little and he slowly curled and uncurled his fingers over the back of my mine before his thumb and middle finger moved up and down over the sides of my wrist. After a few moments, I turned my hand over and we both started to tenderly entwine and stroke each others fingers in a lazy yet loving touch.

After a little while, I felt him wrap his hand around mine, lifting it. He moved his head and I glanced down to see the soft aqua glow of his partly opened eyes looking at our joined hands. The lightening flashed again and I turned my hand in his, holding it up and open for him. He laid his palm against mine and I watched him look at the way our hands pressed together before I looked at them, myself. His hand was bigger than mine, but not by a lot, and he had long, slender fingers. The silicone-like material that made up his skin was so soft and smooth, as well as warm. I could feel the life radiating from it - from his whole body, really - and it never ceased to amaze me that his body was man-made,
basically a prosthesis for his consciousness.

It was a beautiful body, though. Made like a piece of art. And I really couldn’t help but look at it - truly see it - as a body just like any other. I mean, after all, whatever one believed, if you looked at it logically and simply, all bodies were just vessels holding consciousnesses. Just because Cayde’s was man-made, it didn’t make it any less. He was in there. He was just as alive as any of us.

I felt his fingers slip between mine and fold over, lacing them together. I turned my hand in his, just a little, and caressed the side of his index finger with my thumb, the pad of it tracing the edges of silicone that separated at the knuckle exposing the silky-feeling black mesh underneath. I smiled. He’d put the Exo lotion on before bed. That’s why it felt so silky.

Before getting to know him more intimately, I hadn’t realized the little things Cayde did to maintain his body - the things that were similar to Humans and Awoken. He was so far from being a ‘robot’.

When I’d first met him - the day I woke a Guardian and Ghost brought me to the Old Tower - I had no idea what he was. I just remember walking into the Hall of Guardians and seeing him standing at the large conference table he, Zavala, and Ikora always stood around. When he looked up at me coming in, I briefly paused, frowning, thinking: ‘Whoa. Is that a robot? No, that’s a guy, isn’t it? He’s wearing a helmet, isn’t he? Wait, no … no, that’s his face. What is he?’. Okay, so it wasn’t exactly a swooning moment, I’ll admit, although, after those initial thoughts, I do remember thinking the horn was cute, which made him cute.

Zavala had spoken first, though, apparently seeing what I was wearing and knowing I was a Titan, even before I did, and directed me over to himself. I’d walked past Cayde on my way to Zavala and he’d looked at me again as I passed him, giving me a brief nod. I don’t remember nodding back or anything, just looking at him, my eyes looking him over from head to toe as I moved behind him. I remember the heady scent of leather, gunpowder, and mint as well. Even at that first meeting, I remember the smell of the air all around him.

I remember loving that smell and wanting to just stand behind him and press my face into the back of his cloak and breathe him in till my heart’s content.

What was it about the way he smelled, I’d never know. I just know it was the most comforting thing in that moment. Everything had been a confusing and frightening whirlwind since I’d woken up in the Cosmodrome. That had been the first moment I felt … safe.

Strange, I didn’t really think about that until now.

I smiled, my attention going back to his knuckles and the soft mesh that held them together. It was such a seemingly delicate material, but so strong. Just like him.

My eyes drifted back to his and I saw him looking at me - watching me.

How long had he been watching me, I wondered.

I smiled at him and he smiled back and I eased my hand away from his, lifting it to his face, my fingertips lightly touching him, tracing his unique and handsome features. He laid his hand over my stomach and held my eyes with his, saying nothing, yet saying so much at the same time.

As my fingers continued to explore, they moved down toward his throat and he slowly rolled onto his back as I rolled onto my side, propping myself up on my elbow beside him, our motions seeming to be in unison, as if we were one. Lightning flashed through the window behind me and Cayde blinked as he watched me, my eyes shifting from his down to his chest, my fingers following the lines and curves of his anatomy from his throat, down over his collarbone, to between his pecks. He sucked in a quiet, yet slightly hitched breath when the tips of my fingers settled over that spot. The
spot that had once had a huge hole in it left by Uldren shooting him with his own gun. I looked back up at his face and saw his eyes were closed. It didn’t stop a single tear form slipping past, out the corner of his left eye, though, disappearing into the crease of metal that separated his cheek and temple. I leaned over and tenderly kissed the spot as I laid my palm more fully over his chest, feeling the guilt and sadness within him. He felt terrible he’d been so reckless, rushing in against the Barons and Uldren alone thinking he could take them all on by himself. That he’d put me through the pain of seeing him like that. Of thinking I was going to lose him. But I could also feel happiness and love. They were stronger feelings than the guilt and sadness. The tear hadn’t been from the sadness or guilt but came from feeling so grateful to be here with me right now. Of knowing that I loved him so much I’d managed what others might have seen as impossible. That I’d basically looked death in the face and told it Cayde was mine and it wasn’t taking him just yet.

I moved my lips up to just above his left eye and very gently kissed his eyebrow, then moved along even further, kissing just under his horn, then down to his lips, my own caressing over his, ghosting soft kisses against them, making him sigh as he tilted his head back a little, raising his lips to meet mine and return the kisses. I smiled and my hand slid down his torso and over his abdomen, rubbing gently, letting the heat of my palm warm him before I slid it back up to his chest. He let out a relaxing sigh, his eyes closing, lips parting as he then breathed deep, his chest rising a little. I smiled again and shifted my right arm under his head, curling it around him, cradling his head against my chest as I stroked the side of his face and forehead. Lightning flashed again, and a low rumble of thunder accompanied the rain. My left hand slid back down Cayde’s body, this time at his side, my thumb moving in slow, deliberate, massaging circles at his hip. I felt his chest heave a little as he let out another deep breath. I could tell he liked how that felt, especially when he twisted a bit, lifting his hip for me.

He was such a strong man. He really was. But he was also a man who’d been alone for so long when it came to physical affection. Even emotional affection in some ways. All he’d ever had was the thought of his Queen to keep him company and stave away those particular moments of loneliness. And, while we’d definitely had some intense and extremely pleasurable moments together, it was moments like this that I truly loved. When it was all about him. I loved taking the time to make him feel as special as I truly believed he was. Loved giving him slow, deliberate attention and let my touches and kisses convey what words couldn’t. To tell him how much I loved him; how special he was to me. And he always seemed to know exactly what I was saying, even without any words. Of course, our bond certainly helped with that, but, even before then, we always seemed to be able to tell each other things without words.

Sometimes, I truly wondered if we hadn’t been together throughout time and many different lives, always managing to find each other in each new incarnation. I did wonder if that’s why his scent had been so comforting from the first moment I’d met him.

I also wondered if he’d had the same reaction and thoughts and just never told me?

I felt a soft kiss to the side of my throat and smiled, tilting my head down to nuzzle him. I could feel excitement welling within him and it only fed into my own. I lifted my hand from his hip and traced his jaw with my fingertips, coaxing him to tilt his chin up as my lips found his. He sighed into my mouth and my hand moved back down. As I teased his mouth with my own, my tongue darted out to taste his lips and my hand slipped further down, between his legs, cupping his swelling heat. I stroked him slowly and gently and he made a little gasp, pushing into my hand, his kisses growing a little more forceful and needy. I smiled and rolled us a bit, getting him to lay on his back again.

When I eased my lips from his to catch my breath, I saw he was looking up at me, his eyes bright and almost fiery as he shifted his hips a little, moving his legs apart under the sheets. I lifted my leg
over his and he smiled and touched my lips with his finger, drawing a slow little circle over them before trailing it down over my chin and throat to my chest. I closed my eyes and focused on the way it felt, shivering decadently when it slipped between my breasts. More lightning flashed and thunder followed, the sound oddly exciting in the moment. I felt his hand moving down further and further and I couldn’t help but grin. Even though this moment had been about him he still liked sharing it with me and I soon felt his fingers between my own legs, carefully teasing me. I shuddereded and stroked him a little faster, hearing him gasp. I leaned forward, resting my forehead against his as both of us started rocking our hips into each others touches, whimpering and panting in unison as we both felt the pleasure quickly rise. I could feel the heat rolling off him and the metal of his face getting warmer and warmer.

The rhythm of his fingers matched the way I was stroking him and I felt his other hand slide under and around me, wrapping around my back to hold me close.

In a few brief seconds, my mind seemed to play out every moment we’d had together. From that first meeting in the Hall of Guardians, when he’d introduced himself with a friendly handshake and, what I came to recognize now, a smile, to remembering the first mission I had were he spoke to me over the comms, offering up a couple jokes to break the ice. I remembered the way he guided me through some places on the Moon and tried to cheer me up after fighting the Hive for the first time, telling me about his time there, going up against a ton of Thrall and fighting along side a Fallen Baroness. I remembered Mars and Phobos, and then finding his stealth drive and going to the Dreadnaught and fighting Oryx. The first time I saw genuine concern for me not only on his face but in the way he spoke to me once it was all over. I watched the memories show me how he’d gradually grown to care for me as much as I had him. And I remembered the first time he invited me out for some Ramen, seeming to sense I needed a friend and how we started chatting more and more. I remembered the Red War and losing our Light and rescuing him from Nessus once I got mine back. I remembered how things really changed after that and how he started staying with me in my apartment. The late afternoons in the Hanger, talking. The moment he opened up about Andal for the first time and cried, allowing me to hold him. Of my sharing the nightmares I still had from the Dreadnaught and the Ascendant Realm with him and the fear it generated. The way he held me after, so understanding because of the ones he suffered through, too. I remembered him showing me his journals, letting me read them so I could better understand who he’d been and why he was the way he was and did the things he did. I thought of how we gradually found a familiar routine with each other and how he started coming with me on some of my missions and inviting me along on a few things he took care of for the Vanguard. All the things that led us along the path to where we were now, growing closer and closer with each day.

I felt the rushing tingle of excitement pull me back to the moment as it began to build to the point there was no stopping it. Lightning flashed again and thunder rumbled, and Cayde’s fingers moved faster and faster, my own hand stroking him with equal urgency before both of us gasped and shuddered against each other, holding each other close and tight as we rode out the shared climax, moaning and panting, our bodies shaking as they gradually relaxed.

After we’d cleaned up and settled back down, we found ourselves right back where we started. Cayde was snuggled up against my side, his face pressed against my upper arm and shoulder, eyes half-lidded, as he looked at our joined hands laying over my stomach, our fingers idly caressing each others in soft little loving caresses.

I smiled.

We were so beyond words.
Chapter End Notes

If you are giddy mush, I did it right! ~ <3 Hope you all liked it!
The last couple of days, work has kicked my butt. I’ve come home so tired and sore. Tonight, I wanted to go to bed early, but with an elderly diabetic dog to look after, who needs to go out at certain times, I opted to stay awake until I knew he’d make it through the night without having to go out. So, of course, in between working on chapters for ‘For Cayde’, I wrote this little piece to stay awake but also fulfill a bit of a fantasy I was currently imagining. Ooooh, if only Cayde really was here. This would have been so nice to come home to today.

Love you, Firefly. ~ ❤ ♠ ❤

Enjoy.

MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETHING IN THE TEA

“Oh, Traveler,” I groaned, flopping back onto the couch with a heavy sigh, having dropped my armor on the floor, not the want or energy to properly put it away. I gazed up toward the ceiling in a daze of exhaustion and softly ebbing aches all over my body. “I hate the Cabal. Uuurgh,” I weakly moaned.

“Still hurtin’ pretty bad, huh?” Cayde asked, frowning as he gently toed my armor out of the way, scooting it along the floor as he came over to me.

“I think they stepped on every single part of my body,” I uttered, closing my eyes.

“She’s healed, but I’m afraid I can’t do much about the lingering soreness,” Ghost quietly told Cayde, sounding regretful. I smiled a little. “It’s okay, Little Light. Hazard of the job. You healed me up good. Cabal are just assholes.”

I heard Cayde snort then felt the couch dip a little beside me. I opened my eyes just in time to see him leaning over toward me and kiss my cheek. “Not that I think you’re gonna get up and go anywhere, as sore as you are, but wait here,” he whispered, then winked at me as he disappeared, heading upstairs. I closed my eyes and was pretty sure I drifted off to sleep because it seemed like Cayde was back in a flash, changed out of his armor and wearing his usual pair of lounge pants and a t-shirt. “Come on,” he murmured and scooped me up in his arms. I blinked, a little startled as I draped an arm around the back of his neck.

“What are you doing?” I curiously asked.

“Racking up good husband points,” Cayde answered and I smirked. He carried me upstairs and, as we neared the landing, I heard the shower in our bathroom running. “Go in, take a nice hot shower, let your muscles relax, then dry off and come back out. And don’t you dare get dressed,” he murmured, giving me another kiss as he eased me onto my feet.

“Oh, Cayde, I’m really too tired fo-” He put a finger to my lips and shook his head. “Not that,” he whispered. “Trust me. Go on, now.” He shoed me toward the bathroom.
When I stepped inside, I saw he’d not only lit some candles for me and set them around the room and dimmed the lights, but he’d also set up a little lavender incense that was slowly burning from a lotus blossom bowl set out on the counter. I also noticed he’d placed a little shower fizzer in near the drain, the minty scent mingling with the lavender in a soothing ambiance that was already helping me feel better. I smiled with a warm fondness. He was such a thoughtful man.

I stayed in the shower for a while, letting the heat and incense relax my sore and stiff muscles, feeling much better than I had before, save the back of my neck and head where I’d gotten slammed by one of the Cabal shields.

It reminded me of that time Cayde had gotten slammed really hard by one of the Cabal not long after the Red War while we were clearing out districts in the City. Thankfully, he’d had his Light back by then, because the hit had killed him. But he’d rezzed with one hell of a bad headache and Exos … Well, Exo’s can’t take pills like the rest of us. The only way to help their headaches was with an injection at the base of their skulls to relieve the pain. I smirked. Cayde was feeling so awful but hated needles. You could brandish any number of nasty weapons at him and he wouldn’t bat an eye but one little needle … He’d trusted me, though. Even though we were still just friends then. He’d trusted me to take care of him and give him the shot more than he trusted the doctors. It was also the first night he’d stayed at my apartment. On the couch. But, still, it was a special memory just for him being there.

When I came out of the bathroom, dried off, damp hair brushed back, and wearing absolutely nothing - as requested - I found the bedroom lights off, candles lit everywhere, and the comforter pulled down. Cayde was sitting on the mattress, leaning back against his pillows waiting for me, two cups on his nightstand, one regular sized, the other a tiny espresso-sized one. He smiled as I came out and stood, picking up the tiny cup and bringing it over to me. “Ikora said this would help. One of her specialty teas from the monks. Not hot, just warm. She said drink it down quick, ‘cause it’s not the best tasting stuff, but works wonders.” He handed the cup to me. “And, don’t worry. I got some better tasting stuff on the side to wash the flavor down.” He smirked.

I smirked back and downed the contents of the cup, nearly gagging as I handed it back to Cayde. “Oh, that better work like she said. Wow,” I wheezed. “Not the best tasting is an understatement.”

He snickered and brought the other cup over to me. “Coffee. With cinnamon, cocoa, and a hint of cream and sugar.” I took the cup, gladly, and sipped it, letting the flavors wash away the raw earthy bitterness of the tea. I knew Ikora. Whatever that tea was, it would work. But, figures, some of the best stuff was the worst tasting.

“You know, um, how you mentioned racking up husband points?” I asked, grinning at him.

“Yeeaaah?” I smirked at me taking the cup as I offered it back to him.

My grinned widened. “You got one or two so far.”

He lowly chuckled. “You’d be terrible at poker, babe. You can’t lie for shit.”

I laughed, then winced. “Oooh, my head,” I muttered, pressing the heel of my hand to my temple.

“Ahh, fret not, beautiful, disgusting magic Warlock tea is not the only thing I have up my sleeve.” He then pulled out a couple aspirins from his pocket and handed the coffee cup back to me. I took them, grateful, then let him usher me to the bed. He instructed me to lay face down, so I did, and got comfortable, curling my arms around a pillow as I rested my head on it, closing my eyes. “Got a cool
herbal … pillow thingy, too,” Cayde offered, gently laying it over the back of my neck. “How’s that?”

I sighed, more tension leaving my body. “ Wonderful.” I murmured with a bit of a nod. “You realize, by doing all this, I’m going to expect to be treated this good every time,” I added with a bit of a sly smile.

“You say that like you think I’d do anything less,” Cayde countered just as I felt his oiled up hands slowly and gently slide up over my back and shoulders, minding the sore muscles while trying to soothe them. I nearly sobbed at how good it felt. “You okay?” He asked. “Need me to ease up more?”

“No, it feels really good,” I breathed with a relieved sigh. “I was just thinking how many times I could have used something like this over the years. How many times I needed you. I just didn’t know it.” His hands stilled for a moment and I felt him lightly kiss my shoulder before starting up the gentle massage again.

“You know, when we started gettin’ closer and would sit together and talk, when you’d help me with the nightmares and just … be there, no matter what,” he murmured, “I’d think the same thing. I’d think back over the … well … this lifetime and flashes of the others, how much I wish we’d known each other. How much I’d wish you’d been there because you were exactly what I needed and never knew it, either. But we got each other now. And I plan on spendin’ the rest of forever showin’ you how much that means to me, Ais.”

I opened my eyes and looked at him over my shoulder, smiling softly. “Maximum husband points achieved. Bonus level unlocked.”

Cayde’s eyebrows rose as his eyes widened. “Bonus level? And, uh, wh-what, uh … What’s the bonus level?”

I grinned. “Keep massaging handsome,” I said, settling my head back on the pillow, closing my eyes. “You’ll find out.”

“I thought you were too tired and sore?” He asked, sounding surprised.

My smile broadened. “Must have been something in the tea.”

~END~
Chapter 5

She Knows

I sat out on the balcony, my fingers curled around the handle of a hot cup of coffee I had balanced on the arm of the lounge chair. My knees were pulled up, casually bent, my sock-clad feet comfortably mashed into the cushion, and a warm blanket was loosely wrapped around my shoulders. It wasn’t a particularly chilly night, but there was enough of a bite in the air, the blanket gave just the right amount of warmth. The elbow of my other arm was perched up on the other armrest, my chin propped up on the heel of my hand. The sun had set a while ago and I was staring out, unseeing, at the colorful lights of the city below, the occasional set of blinking lights from a passing ship crossing in front of my view, my eyes not even moving to follow them. I was lost in thought, a strange surreal and unsettled ache throbbing about my person. It was that feeling one had when something bad had happened and you were trying to comprehend it - make sense of it - and wondered how could it have happened while another part of you was trying to pretend it never happened. It was an awful feeling, really, a melancholy sensation so strong you lost your appetite and felt both exhausted and restless at the same time.

I hated this feeling. I hadn’t felt it for a year now but had been dreading it, knowing it was coming. One whole year ago, already. And I knew, as surreal and unsettled as things felt for me, remembering that horrible day, I knew, for Cayde, it felt even worse. He was dealing with a loss different than mine - one that hadn’t ended in getting someone he loved back.

The door behind me slid open, then, and I looked over my shoulder to see Cayde coming out, dressed in a pair of pants and his sweater. I offered him a soft smile. “There’s coffee,” I said, lifting my mug.

He shook his head. “Nah. Thanks, though,” he murmured, coming over to me. “Got room on that thing for one more?”

My smile broadened a bit and I moved over, opening up the blanket. Cayde settled down, pulling the open half of the blanket around himself as he rested against my side with a sigh, tilting his head onto my shoulder and gazed up at the stars twinkling far above us. He pulled his knees up, shifting to get more comfortable, and I settled my arm along the inside of his left leg, resting my hand on his knee, lightly caressing the familiar ridges of the joint under the cloth of his pants.

He curled his arms around my arm and took another slow, deep breath, then let out out. “When he killed Sundance, the shards of her shell twinkled like stars scattered on the floor,” Cayde whispered. I turned my head a bit and pressed a tender kiss to the top part of his forehead just beside his mohawk, then rested my cheek in the same spot. “You remember how it felt when Ghaul took our Light?” He then asked, his voice remaining low and quiet. I nodded. “It weren’t nothin’ like that,” he said. “That was … like gettin’ the wind knocked outta ya. Suddenly feeling drained. Feelin’ shakily and weak and … outta breath.” His head gave the faintest little shake. “But … the instant Pirrha … the instant Sundance …” He shook his head again, still unable to say it. “It was … it was like someone reached inta me … ripped at my insides,” he said, pressing the tips of his fingers into the
center of his chest for emphasis. “It hurt in a way I ain’t got words for. And sick …” he swallowed and cleared his throat. “I felt so sick. Everything inside-a me tightened up so bad it hurt and it felt like it was all gonna come up at once.” He turned his head a bit, so his face was partially mushed into my shoulder and breathed me in, relaxing a little. I could feel the hardened shape of his lips and his hot breath as he carefully let it out while I slowly and softly caressed his knee, a gentle breeze blowing up from the south. “I got myself to my feet and looked down at the pieces of her shell and … time just seemed to stop. Like … like I saw everything - every moment with her since the first one all in the blink of an eye. The one that stood out the most was that night she brought me back and I was so scared, I ran off a cliff.” He briefly chuckled at the memory before it faded to a sad little shudder. “I … I wanted to cry,” he finally murmured. “I wanted to call out to you … And then I saw them comin’. Saw Vahn, leadin’ … draggin’ that … that spiked weapon-a his, chains rattlin’. And when it lit on fire and he lifted it …” He shook his head. “I knew that was it. I knew I wasn’t gonna see you again.”

I set my cup down on the table beside me and lifted my now free hand to the side of his face, caressing his cheek as I cradled his head against my shoulder, feeling my own chest tighten a bit. I hated seeing him like this and knowing I couldn’t just snap my fingers and make it all better. “I’m here,” I whispered. “And when and if that day comes, I’ll take your hand and we’ll go together,” I vowed. “You won’t be alone.”

He lifted his head and looked at me and we both knew nothing more about that needed to be said. He knew I was serious. He knew I wouldn’t leave him. We’d both died so many times. Never the final one - since we were both still here - but neither of us were afraid of death. I just knew Cayde was afraid of being alone. Of drifting forever in the darkness like in his nightmares. And I knew he knew there was no way I’d ever let that happen. If darkness was all there was, then I’d drift with him. But he’d never be alone.

He finally nodded, acknowledging the vow, then shifted his eyes to the Traveler. “Do you think she’s alone?” He asked me.

“Sundance?” I asked, following his gaze up to the Traveler.

He nodded.

I shook my head. “No,” I told him. “I think she’s with the other Ghosts and Guardians that have passed on.”

He nodded and sighed. “I hope she’s safe, wherever she is,” he whispered. “I hope she knows -” He suddenly stopped, clamping his mouth shut and I looked at him, seeing tears well up in his eyes, a couple spilling over. He cleared his throat and lifted his hand to his face, quickly wiping them away as he took a steadying breath.

“Knows what?” I gently coaxed, feeling my own throat tighten a little as I sensed what he was feeling.

He looked at me and swallowed with difficulty. “Knows that I love her. That I always did. And that I’m so sorry.”

Tears stung my eyes and I twisted to my side and slipped my arms around him, both of us holding onto each other tight as I rubbed his back and rocked us both. I nodded. “She knows, Firefly,” I whispered. “She knows.”

*End*
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