

CasualRO - Gralis Fanfics

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Kapitel 1:

It had been a hard day at work in Prontera and despite the rainy weather, Gray had at least managed to get back to the GM-Base in time before ending up completely soaked. Fiery red eyes searching for any of the others being around, the young man headed toward the dressing room for the males.

It was a nice thing, being the only male GM around... well... except of that childish, hot tempered idiot Ralis... The thought of the blue haired man had him groaning in annoyance already...

"Gray!" A familiar voice suddenly cheered behind Gray as Neimi came into the base, taking off the batman mask she had put over her head to stay dry in the awful weather out there. "How is it going?" She chuckled happily before giving him a peck on his cheek as usual, following toward the dressing rooms. "I heard one of the adventurers was really annoying today... Were you the poor guy having to handle that?" Her bright green eyes looked up at the man with a hint of amusement as she skipped ahead a little.

Gray barely had time to shake his head as the door behind them banged open forcefully, followed by a loud explosion not too far away. It was easy to guess who the new arrival was... There was only one person among the GMs that nuked the adventurers as often... Ralis. Completely soaked and with his long hair glued at his face, chest and back, the winged man walked inside, his expression dark and annoyed as he simply walked past the two others without a greeting. Making a pouty face at being ignored, Neimi quickly hurried after the blue haired man, tucking on his arm to stop him before leaning up to give him a peck on the cheek as well, able to guess he had been the one having to handle the annoying player...

"Bad day, huh?" She smiled warmly, throwing her own pony tails behind her shoulder before beginning to untangle Ralis' wet blue hair some. She knew that the man in front of her was very impulsive and let his emotions often get the better of him, making it all the harder for him to handle a tricky case with an adventurer that just didn't want to listen. On the other hand it was an ability that made the players really enjoy having the blue man around as he forgot easily that he was actually of higher rank to them, taking part in pranks with them, celebrating with them or laughing openly with the members of the community. Gray was different in that regard. He was like a cool lake... and no matter how many stones you threw at his surface, you would never get him to turn wild and simply nuke someone as Ralis often did. He was by far the more professional GM... but didn't get as easily into the community.

"Yeah, some stupid idiot that is obviously unable to read because otherwise he would have seen that big, fat 'FUCK OFF' written on my face. In the end I think, despite me explaining it to him like... at least twenty times, he still handed in a support ticket... Need to find and burn it before Justin does." Ralis growled, shaking his head while beginning to wring out the water of his blue hair.

"Or you could start acting like a professional and stop nuking the players whenever

they question your words. Might make them doubt your words less." Gray had caught up by now, his arms crossed above his chest as he stared at the other man's cool blue eyes evenly, his own red ones twitching in slight annoyance.

Oh great... there they go again... Neimi rolled her eyes with an exaggerated sigh at those two in front of her. There really was no way on earth the two wranglers would ever get along... Though... it was actually funny... Ralis, with his blue hair and angelic wings gave an icy and cool impression, as if he was a person of ice and water, calm and self confident... but he was impulsive and passionate, like a burning fire. Gray on the other hand looked like a fiery demon with his red eyes and the demonic wings, his cape adding to the effect even more, but he was the one that never seemed to lose his cool, remaining calm and collected even in the worst situations... Maybe that was why they seemed to hate each other so much? Having to chuckle at that thought, Neimi patted both men on the shoulders. "Come on, be nice to each other! You will get a cold if you don't get something dry to dress, Ralis! And you should take a shower too, Gray, you have MVP blood all over you."

"Mhmmm..." Ralis pouted at that, wanting to protest that he wouldn't get a cold, but he could feel the cold wet clothing clinging to his body, all warmth disappearing already... so he really had to change.

The men's dressing room was still rather improvised. For a long time, there had been only one person using this part of the GM Base and now it was suddenly two... The front part of the room was like a small lounge where they could sit down and drink some coffee when taking a break while the dressing area was separated by those typical asian paper walls with the nice drawings on them, just that in their case, it showed the card arts for their latest event... There used to be only one closet and a chair, but now it was two all of a sudden, the second closet half blocking the way to the bath and shower area.

Heading toward the dressing area right away, Gray got himself a pair of spare robes and a towel before going toward the shower area. No way he'd undress around that damn idiot and having to listen to stupid comment the entire time!

Once the sound of running water filled the area, Ralis headed toward his own closet, removing the dripping wet cloths and putting on a new set of trousers, throwing the robes over himself loosely, not bothering with closing all the buttons on the front, keeping it open simply as he'd go to the bath area soon anyway. It took a while to brush his hair and getting the knots out of it, but eventually, he had managed rather nicely, quickly binding them to a loose pony tail. Listening closely, he heard the water stopping... good... that meant he could soon go and take a hot bath himself. Waiting a minute more and figuring he could go now, Ralis stood up, heading straight for the narrow door toward the showers.

Just great... Gray let out a deep breath as he picked up the wet top from the ground. He hadn't noticed the piece of fabric had fallen to the ground while he had been showering and now it was all wet... This meant he'd have to get a new one... just perfect... He really could hope only that he had another spare set of robes in his closet. He was still fairly new here so there wasn't much in stock for him yet...

Hurrying toward the narrow door, he threw the wet clothing over his bare shoulder, small drips of water running down his chest.

It was perfect timing... or in the two men's vocabulary, worst timing possible. Both walking straight toward the narrow opening, they were suddenly forced to stop as the other tried to get through from the other side.

"Oh, no, newbie! You wait until I am through!" Ralis growled lowly, his eyes narrowing dangerously, but Gray stared back evenly, his crimson eyes meeting those blue ones with icy determination. Both men stepping into the opening at the same time, they tried to press past one another, but suddenly, Gray's white horns tangled into Ralis' blue hair, forcing them both to stop. "Shit! The hell?! Go back! Ah! What are you doing!?" The blue haired man complained, trying to free himself from the nasty horn but each movement both of them made had them stuck more against each other, their bare chests pressing skin against skin as they were stuck in the narrow opening, unable to move anymore.

"..." Gray froze all his movements, his face only an inch from Ralis', their breaths mingling softly as they tickled each others moist and bare necks. "So trivial... Just because of you we are stuck in this." The white haired man said with an almost monotone voice, the heartbeat of the other against his own chest being more of a distraction than he'd like to admit to himself...

Ralis simply stared back at the other, letting out a sharp hiss. "Says the one that pressed in here after I said I'd go through! I have a chest-- err bellyful of you and your accusation!" He barked right back, being confused by the fact their heartbeats actually matched rather nice!—No! Stop! No no no! He wouldn't even think of something like that!

"We need to free ourselves!" Gray eventually suggested, not liking how he felt his cheeks turning hotter and hotter the more he looked at Ralis lips so close to his own.

"Yeah, right, Einstein. And how?" The blue haired man tried to draw his head back some, but being pulled right forward again because of his hair tangled with Gray's horn, one of his legs accidentally giving in a bit. His hands shot up to hold on whatever was in reach to keep himself up... and there was only Gray around unfortunately, so his one hand came to rest at the other man's hip while his second hand grasped his shoulder and pectoral.

At the sudden contact, Gray stirred, his mind going completely blank for a couple of seconds as he had to realize first what had just happened. "....." Closing his eyes, he tried to make a pouty face, but his flushed cheeks made that a rather pointless effort. "...hands... off...." He said coldly eventually, his heart beating so loudly at the moment, he was afraid the other would hear.

"F-fuck..." Ralis growled, trying to get a stable position again and eventually letting go of the others moist and firm skin. "Alright... We need to get your horn tangled out of my hair! Once that is free, I can focus on freeing my stuck wing. With that out of the way we should be able to get out of this!"

Gray nodded slowly. Anything was better than being stuck here with the idiot... or so he tried to tell himself... "Alright..."

Ralis carefully reached up, his fingers wandering along the smooth surface of the others horn to try figure out how his hair was tangled around it. Being able to feel rather well in his horns though, the white haired man couldn't help but stir as the fingers glided along its surface, gently fondling along it while searching for the tangled hair.

"I think I got it..." Ralis murmured, beginning to move forward to peel the knotted hair off the cursed horn... However, suddenly he froze in track as he noticed how their faces were so close, their lips were brushing against each other even. It was as if his heartbeat got stuck between his lips for a second until eventually, the angel winged man regained his composure, quickly freeing his hair before leaning back far further than would have been necessary. "G-good... Now I only need to free my wing and we should be able to get out. C-can you slide down some?" He quickly looked away, glad that some of his hair was covering his cheeks rather nicely, as he couldn't help but feeling his face was burning... and especially his lips where they had just brushed those wet and juicy others...

"Alright..." Gray murmured, having to bite his lower lip so harshly, he had to wonder why it wasn't starting to bleed. Trying to wiggle his was down, the white haired man tried to ignore the fact his face was just wandering along that bare, lean yet well toned chest as he tried to kneel down somewhat, Ralis helping by putting his hand on his head, pushing him down further. Eventually, the blue haired man managed to lean forward though, his white angelic wing stretching immediately, so they finally had some room to get away from the narrow opening, Ralis quickly stepping toward the shower area while Gray rolled toward the dressing room. "FINALLY!" The demon winged GM let out an almost untypically loud exclaim of relief, as he was able to stand up again, rolling his shoulders to ease out some tension.

"Damn..." Ralis shook his head, his hair a complete mess again. "No one will ever hear about this, or else I will tell around I saw you trying on Lorelei's undies!"

"But that's a lie!" Gray protested, crossing his arms while staring at the other with incredulous eyes.

"Yeah, and? I don't care~" Ralis smirked triumphantly, the color on his cheeks finally having disappeared, even though he could still well feel those lips on his own.

Gray's skin tingled where the other had touched before, but he did his best to ignore it... which was harder than he thought... so eventually he just gave a lame "I hate you!" as response.

"I hate you more~" Ralis smirked right back.

"I hate you most!"

"I hate you always two times more than you hate me!"

"What?! Where are we, in kindergarten?! So immature, Ralis!"

And as every day, their bickering could be heard through the GM Base, though today they both had to admit that there was a weird feeling hanging in the air around them...

Kapitel 2: I hate you most

Silence... that was all the white haired man really wanted at the moment... Holding events for the adventurers was always nice, but sometimes it was just so noisy. Not to mention the one voice that managed to get right under his skin and seemingly trying to jump trampoline on his nerves. Gray narrowed his crimson eyes again somewhat as the man said voice belonged to continued speaking.

"Haha! I hope you enjoyed the event! Join again next time!" The blue haired GM with the angelic wings and icy horns high fived one of the players before sending another nuke seal at one of the participants who seemed to like blowing up...

Strange people. So trivial... Somehow Gray never got how most players ticked. Why would someone enjoy dying? Well, sure, as long as they were under the protection of the Heart of Ymir, they could be revived all the time without trouble, but still. Also he couldn't understand why everyone seemed to like that idiot. He was rude, misbehaved the entire time, used the nuke seals for fun rather than to punish those misbehaving,... but people liked him none the less! Even saying he had... potential... whatever that was supposed to mean...

Once he felt like he had spent enough time among the adventurers, Gray eventually headed back toward the base. Due to the events held today he had to restock on seals...

Seals were a rather handy way for those chosen to be GMs to keep the adventurers obeying the law. There were many different ones... from muting them, to changing their size or even making them look like monsters... Only a GM was able to use them, so there also was no danger of one of them being stolen. Even more handy was though, that a GM could apply any seal to any player they wanted.

"Ah, Gray!" The familiar voice of Justin, the administrator of their little world, reached Gray's ears, causing him to place the new seals on the side and give a greeting nod. It was really rare to see Gray smile for real... or even have him change his expression at all... but those knowing him could tell either way if he was in a good or bad mood. "Do you have a few moments?"

"Of course." The GM answered flatly, looking at the other man with his usual emotionless expression, red eyes focusing on the administrator.

"There were a couple of problems lately... the world is a bit unstable. I need to reload everything soon and I have a special job for you." Justin nodded, crossing his arms over his chest before letting out a deep sigh. "One of the MVPs seems to be affected by the energy of the Heart of Ymir and respawns almost immediately upon death. It has caused many adventurers to return to Prontera, hurt and defeated. I will turn off the Heart of Ymir for a bit until I reach message from you that you have defeated the monster. With the seals and everything you shouldn't have any trouble." He smiled at the white horned man before giving him a reassuring nod. "I will need most of the

others to take care of the adventurers but I will send one of them along with you. The bugged Adamantoise is in the Cavern d'Bastion on the 3rd floor."

Nodding, Gray followed Justin to the dorms, going to his room quickly though, to get his equips... An Angry Manyu, some gems just in case, ah, his shield of course,... The task was trivial but necessary... MVPs were actually really dangerous monsters, but with a Monster-Ignore seal, it would be a piece of cake.

Deciding that it would be wisest to take a nap, Gray threw himself on his bed after having double checked his regular inventory... Too bad he had forgotten to check his GM items as well...

"Oh, come oooooon!!" Ralis whined, running after Justin, unable to understand the administrator's decision. "Why do I have to go with the stuck up?! Won't I be of more use around the adventurers, keeping them calm and entertained?"

"I thought about it, Ralis..." Justin shook his head, pointing toward Gray's room. "You go with Gray. In case one of our members starts getting on your nerves I won't risk you losing your temper and nuking them while no one can be revived, having everyone running around in panic and bringing the freaking apocalypse over us."

"... I-I could keep my nuke seals at the base~" The blue haired GM suggested with a sheepish grin.

"Then you will just stab everyone to death." Neimi chuckled bemused, liking the idea of those two fighting block heads being stuck on a mission together. Smirking evilly, she knocked on Gray's door, wanting to be the first one telling him the 'great' news.

"This is going to be the worst day ever..." Whining, Ralis flipped his hair over his shoulder in an annoyed manner before spreading his wings some and leaning back against the wall, pouting like a kid that had to give back a toy...

Gray had napped for two or three hours, but the knock on his door made him jump up, instantly remembering about the important task he was supposed to fulfill. Putting his robes back on and closing them neatly -whoever it was would have to wait until he was perfectly dressed again- the white horned man walked over to the door, and smiling at the smaller woman... or... at least the corners of his mouth twitched upward a tiny bit. "Hello, Neimi! Are you coming along with me today?"

"Hehe, nope, not me." The girl chirped in an almost mischievous manner before stepping aside, giving perfect view on the annoyed, blue haired man that managed to get right through Gray's skin and right to his nerves. "But he will come along."

"..."

"..." Ralis and Gray both stared at each other, for once being of the same opinion again: Oh gods, why HIM!?

"Hey!" Justin smirked, unable to suppress a giggle at both men's expressions. "So, here are the details. Travel to the Cavern d'Bastion and get to the bottom floor, annihilate the bugged MVP and come back to Prontera. Once you are back, I'll activate the Heart of Ymir again." The administrator smiled sheepishly before heading off with Neimi, though the girl looked like she'd rather stay some more to watch how those two would be doing... Luckily, Justin eventually dragged her away, back to Lorelei and the waiting adventurers.

"..." Ralis' eyes narrowed, his arms crossing in front of his chest as he eyed the other man wearily. "Alright... let's get this over with the quickest way possible. Premium Warp right down, Convex Mirror and then killing that thing nice and cleanly. Understood?"

"For once we agree." Gray murmured with just as cold eyes, heading toward the Warper. Wanting to walk through the door, Ralis was about to make a point in going through first. Oh no, not with him! Speeding up, the devil winged GM quickly caught up with his rival, the door was almost there, and the winner is...?

"Ugh! Are you crazy!?" Ralis barked right at Gray as they were both stuck, shoulder by shoulder in the door frame.

"I went through here first, idiot. Learn to walk in line, goddammit!" The other grunted right back, his demonic wings flailing on his back helplessly as he tried pushing forward.

"Says the one who can't count to 5!" Pressing forth, they managed to get toward the releasing exit inch by inch.

"Are you still going on about that old—AH!" Suddenly both men fell forward on the ground, landing face first on the hard cold floor. "I hate you." Gray hissed darkly.

"I hate you more!" Ralis grunted right back in a dangerous tone before picking himself up by pushing the other back to the ground, finally walking on to the Warper.

"Hmpf! So trivial." Gray murmured, his face a little displeased... To anyone meeting the GM for the first time it would probably look as if he was just a bit moody... as if he had just dropped his sandwich or something... but for those actually knowing him, it would be obvious he was more than furious. Watching the other with narrowed eyes, he suddenly realized something though. "Oh... do you have a Premium Access Stone to spare?" He asked, though it left a bitter taste in his mouth to having to ask *him*...

"Mister Perfect forgot his warp stones? I got to mark that day in my calendar." Ralis rolled his eyes but handed one over eventually. Gray was by far more organized than Ralis, always having his inventory ordered neatly, taking only those things that were actually necessary to do a good job as GM with him,... and as GM you didn't usually need Premium Access Stones, Ygg Berries, Lattes, Candy Corns, ... Ralis on the other hand always just threw whatever he could get his hands on into his inventory, even when adventurers dropped their junk loots, he picked the items up, running around

with a stuffed inventory filled with garbage all the time. On the other hand, he at least always had things like these stones with him...

"Let's just get this over with." Gray murmured, quickly using the Premium Access Stone to get directly down to Cavern d'Bastion Floor 3.

It was strange to step into the dungeon... all other monsters were gone, so in the distance, the heavy steps of Adamantoise could be heard, echoing through the surreal cave. The angel winged man appeared right behind Gray, stepping forward and looking around before turning to the other. "Let's use the Convex Mirror, get the idiot and get back out of here."

"Yes." Nodding with slightly narrowed eyes, the white haired GM reached into his pocket to fetch his seals.

"Uhm... can you borrow me an Speed seal? I didn't restock on them before coming here..." Ralis scratched his cheek with an innocent grin, holding out his hand for the other to hand him one. "Only have a Monster-Ignore seal left..." He added with a murmur, as if it made the situation any better.

"That happens because you always come back to the GM base, throw everything aside and lay up your feet on the couch instead of restocking for the next day! Of course you will always forget your seals that way! You should learn... to..." Gray stopped, seemingly freezing in mid movement as he reached deeply into his pocket... and suddenly it was like a flash in front of his eyes. How he had returned from Prontera, placing his old seals on the counter and about to take new ones as Justin came in, giving him the mission... and he followed him to the dorms without restocking...

"What? Can I have a seal now or not?" Ralis groaned impatiently, his hand still outstretched for the other.

"I... don't have any..."

"Wait, what!?" He shouted loudly, the sound echoing through the cave around them, causing some of the crystals which hang on the walls to crackle and fall to the ground.

"If you had restocked on yours instead of being a lazy sloth just like usual, we could have used your seals! So don't you dare blaming me!" Gray shot back evenly.

"Gra, I just HATE you!!" Ralis yelled, letting his frustration out fully before heading toward where the Convex Mirror guided him.

"I hate you more!" Gray hissed back in a cold tone that was rather untypical for the young man. "Just use the seal for yourself and make sure you keep the damn MVP distracted."

"Hmpf! Fine!! Just make sure you don't get yourself killed!" The blue haired GM grunted in response before starting to search through his bag with the countless junk items.

"So trivial." Groaning, the evil winged man walked ahead, his eyes searched the surrounding tunnels for traces of Adamantoise. "I am Sura class... and you?" He asked eventually to know which tactic they'd use to slay that beast.

"Oh, I am Bard." Ralis answered casually, busy stuffing everything back into his bag now, causing the other man to groan in annoyance... before Gray suddenly noticed something.

"Wait... Bard? You mean Maestro, right?" He asked with a perplexed expression but the other man's cocked eyebrow didn't please him at all...

"Nope, Bard. As I said it... I wanted to play some music for the adventurers waiting in Prontera for the Heart of Ymir to be activated again. I mean, come on! 'Clown' sounds simply stupid... and have you ever looked at Maestros? No offense against their class but their outfit looks horrible... those trousers would fit Bangungot but not me! How was I supposed to know I'd have to slay an MVP, duh?" Ralis grunted back, making it sound as if it was the most obvious thing in the world. Gray on the other hand wasn't amused at all, his face buried in his palm already as he tried to stay calm rather than letting out a scream of frustration at that guy. How could someone be so... so... UGH!!

"Alright, you just... shot arrows and keep it distracted, I will use Asura Strike and Hell Gate to kill it." The white haired GM snapped eventually before taking another very deep breath to calm himself again, straightening up and putting his cape and robes back in order. Once all of this was over he'd have to talk with Justin why this guy was even allowed to call himself a GM... seriously... all he did was causing trouble abusing his powers and partying in town with the adventurers.

Eventually, the tunnel they walked through spread into a giant cave room. The water that covered great parts of the ground held a slick and muddy violet color, reflecting all the giant gem stones and crystal around. In the middle of it though, the bugged MVP became visible: a giant gray and purple tortoise, wearing the uniform of a general and two giant swords in hand. Adamantoise.

This fight wouldn't be easy... especially since they didn't have their Monster-Ignore seals...

Ralis started by sending a Double Strafing at the MVP, managing to gain its attention and luring it into his direction, Gray following with a well placed Asura Strike. Before Adamantoise was able to chase after the white haired GM, another arrow hit him right against the shoulder.

Turning back toward Ralis, the Adamantoise fixing him with crimson eyes and walking right toward him again. The blue haired man quickly started running to the other side of the room, his high agility helping him to dash between the crystals, hiding from the MVP long enough for Gray to reload the critical state and spirit spheres to cast either Gates of Hell or Asura Strike again.

It was a long and tiring fight, the bugged MVP being way stronger than it was

supposed to be, not to mention it slowly started to get their attack rhythm. Their strategy didn't work so smoothly anymore.

Mainly dodging by now, Gray used his Body Relocation skill again and again to get away from the Adamantoise before it was able to thrust down its swords on him while casting Pneuma so Ralis was unable to hit it with his arrows any longer.

Rolling aside and trying not to be killed, that was the only moves they were able to make for the moment.

Ralis fired another Double Strafing at the MVP once its Pneuma effect wore off for a couple of seconds, managing to pay Gray a few moments to load Gates of Hell again and strike. Only a bit more... the Adamantoise was as good as finished!

"I will get him with the next hit!" The white haired man shouted over to his rival, starting to run again as the giant monster continued to chase him.

"Don't get sloppy!" Ralis barked after the other, sending arrow after arrow, even though it was little use at the moment.

And then it happened... the desired opening came. One of Ralis' arrows made it through the MVP's defense, hitting it right at the neck and distracting it for a short moment.

Deeming this to be the perfect chance to end the monster, Gray stopped running, summoning his spheres again. Ralis wasn't too far away from him at the moment, though was not as convinced of the situation as the other.

"Get away from there!!! That's not enough time!!" The angel winged GM shouted as he threw his bow away, starting to run toward the other man.

Not listening anymore, Gray concentrated to regain the Spirit Spheres... almost there!! The smirk on his face faded though, as the Adamantoise suddenly clenched its swords tightly again, starting to run toward the white horned man. This was bad!! Bringing up his hands, Gray saw how the MVP came closer and closer, his own crimson eyes widened in horror as they met those cold cobalt orbs that belonged to the monster which was about to slay him down if he didn't manage to kill it before it managed to reach him.

Everything seemed to happen in slow motion to the young man... How the tortoise rose its sword and began to slash it down, at the same time the skill finally releasing from his hands. Gray's whole body trembled as he saw the big sword going right through him, from his upper left shoulder down to his right hip before the bugged MVP suddenly sank to its knees and began to fade. For a few long moments, the devil winged man just stared at the empty space ahead of him, everything else around being blocked out entirely. Was this his end? Would he die and fade now too, just as the Adamantoise did? Slowly reaching up, he began to feel around his chest, his usually neutral lips curling up more and more to a grin as he felt that he was still in one piece and very much alive.

"I did it!!! I defeated the Adamantoise!!" He shot his arms up in the air in a triumphant pose, letting out a loud and uncharacteristic shout of relief. As he had his arms put up like this though, he suddenly felt something weird... something warm and rustling at his shoulder. Reaching back, he pulled a seal from his cape. A Monster-Ignore seal... How... did that get there?

A sinking and sickening feeling grew inside the GM as he slowly puzzled the pieces together, turning around. It felt as if an ice cold fist suddenly closed around his heart. The water on the ground had a deep red shimmer to it, usually white feathers tainted with crimson swimming on the surface.

Ralis lay in the bloody water, motionless and with his face half submerged, a deep cut showing from the one side of his chest, down to his hip, a stream of red coming from it.

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Everything had happened so fast. Ralis saw how Gray stopped on the spot, preparing his final blow, but this wouldn't be enough time!! Throwing his bow away, he started running toward the white haired man, pulling a seal out of his pocket. He usually hated the other, but he was no idiot... of course he hadn't used the Monster-Ignore seal on his own yet, in case the other needed it. And Ralis knew way too well what would happen if he didn't make it over there in time!! It was a really weird feeling in his chest that seemed to fasten his long strides almost unnaturally, as if the fear of what would happen to Gray managed to make him faster than mortally possible, the scenario of the other man being slain while being unable to rebirth without the Heart of Ymir playing in his mind again and again.

Ralis already saw Adamantoise's sword rising, but he was almost there!! Activating the seal, he pushed it against the other man's shoulder just in time as the blade fell and Gates of Hell finally going off.

He barely felt the cut... the cut that was meant for Gray and that would have meant his death. Despite the hot blood that began streaming down his body, Ralis couldn't help but smile softly, a warm feeling in his chest as he saw Gray still standing in front of him. He was okay... he was alive... and that was all that mattered.

With no regrets, Ralis slowly sank to his knees before slumping entirely into the shallow water, the world turning black around him.

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Gray had managed to somehow pull Ralis out of the water and toward a dry patch of earth near some crystals, removing his torn upper robes and trying to press the cut shut somehow, but no matter how many heals he sent into the man beneath him, it had absolutely no effect. This was beyond his skills!! What he needed was a

Resurrection spell or a yggdrasil leaf! But he was neither a priest, nor did he have any such 'useless' items with him as in a regular situation a GM wouldn't need something like that.

"You damn idiot! Why did you do that!!! Do you always have to try and beat me?! You did it, okay?! You are the hero! Now wake up, goddammit!! Wake up!!! Please...wake up..." Seeing how his vision blurred, Gray quickly whipped over his eyes, trying to regain his composure. Yelling at the other man was no use, he was beyond his reach. The Heart of Ymir was deactivated, so if Ralis died, he'd be gone once and for all! Sure, he could hurry back to Prontera to make Justin activate it again, but walking there would take a few hours and Ralis didn't have that much time. "You stupid idiot..." Gray pulled his knees up to his chest, hiding his face behind them as he tried to remain calm and coming up with a logical solution.

He felt so damn useless... as if everything he could do was sitting here and waiting for the other to die. The thought was enough to turn his eyes watery again... Not because he was useless... but because he'd lose Ralis. Because he'd lose the one man he always thought he hated with his full and entire heart, bickering day in and out, doing nothing but arguing and insulting each other,... and yet, the thought of him being gone from his side was almost unbearable.

"Selfish until your last breath..." Gray's voice was crackling as he spoke slowly, just letting his emotions out for once. "Leaving me all alone here, moaning for you and your annoying voice, your damn attitude, ridiculous hair flipping, your stupid power abuse, your untidiness and junk filled bags, your premature--!!!" Suddenly his eyes widened. Ralis' inventory! Stumbling over toward his torn robes, Gray began throwing everything out of his pockets, his eyes searching desperately for something small and green among the items.

And there it was... Like an embodiment of hope it lay there between all the junk: a yggdrasil leaf.

"Hang in there... please..." Gray whispered before opening the other man's mouth carefully, beginning to press the yggdrasil leaf out above him, eventually a small, shimmering, emerald colored drop falling from the squeezed leaf down into the unconscious man's mouth. Watching with intense eyes, Gray saw how the cut on his front slowly began to close, flesh mending together again with the help of the leaf. Placing his hand on the other's chest, he began using his own Heal skill again, sending one wave after another into the man to ensure the cut was entirely closed, leaving nothing but a reddened, slightly irritated spot. Now, Gray could only wait and hope for the best...

Having removed his cape to place it on the ground, Gray had placed Ralis on the makeshift mattress before putting off his top and putting it like a blanket over the other's cool body, making sure he'd be warm before using some of the items lying around on the ground he had scattered there before to make a fire. An old elven bow, elder's branch, log hat,... at least something all of this junk was useful for. Who would have ever guessed Gray would be grateful for Ralis' chaos some time? ...who would

have ever guessed he'd feel so attached to him...

Thinking about all their fights and how Ralis seemed to be the only one to actually break through his cold outer shell and hit his core, Gray couldn't help but smile one of his rare, true smiles. There really was only one person that managed getting right under his skin.

Eventually Ralis stirred next to the white haired man, seemingly about to wake up finally. With a perplexed expression, Gray shot around, leaning over the other GM while looking at his eyes intensely, his hand cupping the others' cheek subconsciously.

Almost painfully slowly, those blue orbs that rested beneath the long haired man's lids were revealed again, eyes fluttering open tiredly, trying their hardest to focus. "Mhnn..." Ralis groaned, feeling his head spinning from the blood loss still. Suddenly though, the memories of what had happened entered him again, his eyes widening as he shot up abruptly. "Gray!" Accidentally bumping his head right against the other GM, he sank back on the ground, rubbing his forehead. "Ouch..."

Gray on the other hand was holding his nose, giving Ralis a long, displeased stare, the same he usually threw the man when he screwed up with something... but soon that expression faded entirely, his eyes turning warm as he suddenly had to laugh loudly. It was a sound of pure relief, leaning forward to rest his forehead against the other man's, still letting out all the built up tension and just laughing warmly.

"..." At first Ralis was rather confused at the sudden reaction... but then couldn't help but join into the heart warming laughter as well. It was the first time he had heard the other man laugh... in all the time they had worked more or less together, he had never even seen him chuckle or suppressing a snort, always staring into this emotionless mask that drove him crazy, but this? The view and sound seemed to manage to make his heart race, hammering against his rip cage as if trying to jump right out of it. "Glad you made it out alive."

"*You* are glad about it? / am glad you aren't watching the grass grow from below!" Gray's hands had come to rest at either side of Ralis' head, holding him closely while still simply leaning his forehead against the others'. "Rest... once you are fine again, we can head back to Prontera..." It felt so light inside the white horned man's chest at the moment, all fear and worry lifted from him.

"I *am* fine already, stupid..." Ralis tried to mimic a mocking tone, but was rendered unable to, his voice coming out in a dark honey like warm tone, his breath mingling with Gray's. He had almost lost the other... He still couldn't explain to himself how he had managed to get to his side so quickly, but he didn't care. Gray was safe and that was all that mattered to him. Suddenly, the angelic GM felt something on his cheek though... a small wet sensation as if rain had dripped on his face. The link was so hard to make though, between Gray and what had just dripped on his skin that it took Ralis a few long moments to realize what was going on. "...G... Gray?" He asked with clear worry in his voice, his own hands coming up to cup the others' cheek softly.

"I thought you were gone... I thought I'd lose you... It hurt so much inside. Seeing you

like that hurt so much..." Gray was unable to hold back any longer, all those suppressed emotions he usually kept hidden far beneath his cold stare and neutral face suddenly overwhelmed him, taking him over entirely. It was an unknown sensation to the young man, not being fully in control of himself, but all that had happened had built up so much within him that there was no way he could keep himself in check right now.

This unusual sight also didn't fail to overwhelm Ralis. It pained him seeing his rival like this. The man he despised so much, that was so completely different from him... They were like opposing poles of a magnet, completely different and unable to accept each others ways... and yet being drawn to each other by such an immense and unexplainable strong force, he couldn't stay away any longer. Leaning up, Ralis' lips suddenly brushed over Gray's cheek, kissing away the remaining traces of tears. This small gesture of comfort was enough to have Gray's heart jumping in his chest again, his head tilting slightly, as if to look at what the other was doing, but it caused their lips to meet for a moment.

Drawing back an inch as if expecting each other to start yelling and being insulting, their eyes met for a long moment... but when nothing happened and Gray felt Ralis' breath on his skin again, softly puffing against his face, he leaned forward slowly, his fingers brushing a strain of wet hair out of the way before carefully and tentatively meeting those soft and delicious lips beneath with his own, always weary as if afraid the other would pull out a nuke seal out of nowhere after all... but nothing of the sort happened. In contrary. Ralis' arms began circling around Gray, holding him close while their lips massaged against each other, slowly opening his mouth to invite the other in.

Tilting his head some, Gray leaned into the kiss, giving in full and entirely. The sensation was overwhelming... as if electric energy tickled from his lips and tongue through his entire body, pulling him closer to the man beneath in an almost addicting manner.

If anyone had told them they would ever be close to each other like this, they would have declared said adventurer mad and end its suffering with a nice and clean nuke... but despite how unreal it still appeared, they just couldn't stop... They couldn't get away from each other. At least not anymore.

Gray watched the flames for a long time, lying awake next to Ralis as the man still needed a bit of sleep to recover from his previous injury before they'd be able to travel back to Eden and from there with the warp to Prontera. In a way, he knew already that as soon as they'd be back, everything would be the same as it always had been... it would just not be normal anymore...

Biting his lower lip, the young GM couldn't help but wonder if he'd be able to simply go on again. They'd bicker again the entire day, nuking each other, fighting, arguing and being rivals, but deep inside, he'd always remember this day and how he had realized how thin the line between hatred and love could be... How the one didn't exclude the other. He hated Ralis, for his hot temper, his chaos and narcissism, his

arrogance and behavior,... and at the same time it made his heart race faster in his chest. He'd have to learn to cope with it... to stay professional at the outside. But... maybe when they were alone at least, they'd be able to be like this more often... hopefully.

Nuzzling into Ralis, neck, he kissed his collar bone, causing the man to slowly wake up from his nap.

"Mhm?" Drowsily, the blue haired man tilted his head, looking at Gray while his lips curled up to a smile.

"Rise and shine, Sleepign Beauty, the public awaits us~" Gray smirked jokingly, placing another soft kiss on Ralis nose before removing his robes from atop them, putting them back on. Once the other had stood up, he was also able to fetch his Rare Cape again, putting it over his shoulders. "Let's head back... Justin, Lorelei and Neimi will be worried already."

"Alright." Since his robes had been torn apart by the bugged MVP, Ralis had no choice but to get to Prontera shirtless, throwing his bloodstained top over their campfire to drowse it.

The way back to Prontera wasn't much of an issue anymore. Without the monsters around, they only had to leave the cavern and head south-west toward Eden before taking the Warper back to the capital.

As they arrived, a couple of adventurers as well as one of the GMs hurried toward them as soon as they saw them landing in town.

"Where have you guys been?!" Lorelei snapped before pulling both men into a firm hug. It was her way of saying she had been worried about them... "We were waiting for you. You should have been back hours ago!"

"Well, we came across some... smaller issues on our way." Ralis smirked while shrugging, not caring that some of the females around blushed and giggled at his bare chest.

"Do I even want to know?" Lorelei grinned a little wider, poking the still slightly irritated spot on the angel winged man's chest before going on to tuck on some of his usually smooth and silky hair that was now knotted and messy. "Don't tell me you forgot your seals again." But before Ralis had the chance to answer, she turned to Gray with her hands on her hips. "I know you two keep fighting but you could have at least given him one of your spare seals. I know he is a little kid that needs to learn to keep his room tidy still, but you could have chosen a better occasion to teach him a lesson." She chuckled warmly, before drawing both men into her arms again, holding them tightly while whispering. "We half believed something had happened to you... Never worry us like that again, okay?"

The two men gave a slow but serious nod. They both knew how close this call had

been and how easily they could have ended up dead for real...

"Good day, Casualites!" Neimi's voice echoed through town as she used a Broadcast seal somewhere. "The Heart of Ymir is back working! This means whenever you are killed now, you will rebirth without a problem, so go ahead and hunt some monsters!"

Loud cheers and laughter soon filled the streets of Prontera again as everyone got ready to resume their adventures. Gray and Ralis just remained at their position, watching how everything seemed to return back to normal... There were the ones sitting in town and chit chatting about the latest happenings, the adventurers that formed parties to defeat the dungeons and bosses, duelists that loved challenging each other to find out who was strongest, headhunters that chased one bounty after another,... and then there were the two GMs that were so different that they seemed to be like fire and ice together, fighting all the time. It just had to return to normal...

"Hm?" Suddenly, Gray saw something though... One of the adventurers had dropped a yggdrasil leaf in front of them. Having learned his lesson about sometimes being in need of such items too, he knelt down to pick it up. In the same moment though, Ralis seemed to have the exact same idea though, leaning forward as well and hitting his head right against the other man's.

"Ouch! Hey! Watch it!!" Ralis barked as his long and currently messy hair got tangled around Gray's horn, causing them to be stuck for a moment with each other. "Stupid idiot! Hold still!"

"Hold still yourself! You are making this way more complicated than it is! Stop trying to remo—ouch! Hey, don't just pull!"

"Just shut up and stop being a wimp! I almost had it!!" Ralis retorted before finally being able to free himself. "There!"

"Oh god, how I hate you!" Gray replied, his crimson eyes meeting the other man's blue orbs for a few long moments before the usual reply came.

"I hate you more." Ralis looked right back to Gray, shaking his head with a bit of bemusement as he turned away to head toward the GM base.

Gray watched the other man leave, remaining silent for a few long moments, before his own lips eventually curled up to a warm smile as he replied softly. "I hate you most."