Venturing: Burning Lilly

“So run it down again, Ling.” Natty responded, rolling her finger as she stared onto me. I nodded silently in response towards her. Never smiling but repeated to her what I had said before. My thoughts were an explanation of what had happened in the recent past. From us flying straight back home, finding out that our building was caught on fire and burned down. Leaving behind match sticks which we just found out that the Invane wolves had placed down in replace of the building that was once resurrected from there. As my voice died and my lips sealed upon itself, Natty smiled silently towards me and turned her head over to Yang. Kyro found himself nodding as he breaks from the group, motioning towards Zander as the two started heading to the burning site which was adjacent to us. “I get your point, Natty.” Yang responded after a while, keeping her eyes towards her as she spoke back to Yang. “See. We just need to find out if the invane wolves were the ones behind this burning.” “But get this, Natty.” Yang started, and raised her paw upward in front of her as she spoke “Invane Wolves just came here when the building had just burned down. Placing these sticks-”

“They spell out ‘HEN’!” Screamed Zander, interrupting the girl’s conversation as I started bursting out laughing and the girls scowled the black dragon. Zander stared at the two and frowned, maybe pouted in response to them. But nonetheless kept quiet for the duration of the conversation while the girls went back. They talked for a while and during that moment, I had decided to break away from it and walked forth towards Zander. My arms were crossed by the time I stopped, lining myself up with the black dragon adjacent to me while I spoke towards him. “What do you mean, the sticks spell ‘HEN’? Were you playing with evidence again like a hatchling?” I smirked to him at the end of my sentence. But he kept quiet and his eyes pulled away from me. Straight towards the burning square in front of us and the three letter word there. I turned my head away from him and stared onto the square. Eyeing upon the three letter word before us, I stepped with one foot into the square. Entering onto it.

Despite Zander growling at me from behind, my eyes lingered upon the three letters before me. I had no idea why. It had seemed that something had caught my eye when staring at them. Mainly it was the last two letters of the word which were burned off, making the sticks darker than usual. It was better than the first three sticks of the word itself too, surprisingly. “Hey Zander.” I muttered keeping my voice low as I lingered around the two letters before me. I heard a gulped and something else. But after them came the reply. “Yes?” “What is with the last two letters being burned off, suddenly?” I questioned, shifting my gaze towards him. He stepped to me and lowered his eyes down. Keeping straight upon the last two letters that I was talking about. “Huh. You are right. They are burned.” “So…” I questioned him again, repeating my previous question as Zander shook his head, “I do not know however. The burned sticks came just like that.” “I wonder if those sticks were the same shade of color before the wolves had came.” I muttered, bursting my thought out loud as Zander replied, “Honestly, Ling. I am not sure.” I just nodded.

My wings started spreading. I raised a claw towards the girls. Both of which nodded without hesitation as if knowing where I was going. But they completely ignored where exactly. As I frowned towards them but said nothing to them in response, I just turned towards Zander and Kyro. Speaking to them, “Come with me.” “Where are we going?” Zander questioned me while he and Kyro started spreading their wings too. “Towards the North East.” “What why?” Zander exclaimed suddenly, his face opened up brightly as he stared at me. “Why there?” “There is a hotel that I want to check out. It just opened yesterday and I was intrigued by it.” “You mean the ‘no snake hotel’, Ling?” Kyro smirked confidently, suddenly stepping into the conversation with me and Zander. I turned to the red dragon and nodded, a small smile drifted from my face as I slowly nodded. “Yeah there.” “Then lets go. We cannot wait for the girls to finish whatever they were talking about anyway.” “We can hear you two.” Ling growled at us, turning her attention to us. But we ignored her. We jumped into the air and flew into the desired direction. I felt the fresh crisp air of a morning. As the winds blew against our faces, I closed my eyes and smiled. I could never had a morning flight like this ever again. Cause most of the time we were always walking along the streets or patrolling the sidewalks. Never had we try to fly.

I guess it was because we were afraid of bumping into other dragons that were perhaps in a hurry to get somewhere? My head pondered about that thought. Trying to back it up with a couple of facts and theories that I had found just by experimenting with dragons I had encountered in the past few weeks ago. But just as a headache started to form upon the surface of my head, I shook my scales and returned to the reality of things. My eyes adjusted to the daylight hours where the sun was shining brightly below the horizon. The sunrays reflected against our scales, the grounds below us and any other building that it could touch. It was warm and refreshing. Sometimes I had wished to just take a morning flight just like this. As I breathed a slight sign and shook my head, we dive down upon the roads underneath of us. Landing upon the grounds in quick succession we were almost like packages falling. We hit the ground very quickly, creating cracks underneath of us. As the streets and sidewalks started vibration violently surrounding us and causing most pedestrians to either growl or scowl at us or both at the same time, we rose our eyes up toward the targeted building before us.

There we noticed a building. It was shaped like the rest surrounding it. Gray scaled building with few little windows upon it. It was perhaps hard to missed it without the bright colorful sign attached to its front. As Kyro and Zander smiled swiftly, we walked together as a unit towards the front of the pair doors. Thus, we grabbed onto the handle and pulled back. The door opened as result, allowing us in while we take in the fresh new air that blew against our heads and horns just as we entered in. The room we were in was large and empty. To our right was the booth. A yellow textbook was sitting openingly upon the surface of the booth. Behind the booth was a list of keys. All five hundred of them, which perhaps makes sense due to how tall the building was however. A silver beli was adjacent to the yellow textbook too it seems. Kyro walked to the booth, splitting away from the group momentarily as me and Zander went to check the rest of the room. Ahead of us was the stairs, leading into the second floor of the building. The stairs were gray; a red carpet was sitting at the center of it. Running upstairs. Adjacent to the stairs were two elevators. White signs emerged upon their surfaces with red markets settled upon their surfaces. Both signs say the same thing however. But it is hard to know without looking closer upon them.

With a frown. I turned away from the stairs and elevator. Towards the booth where Kyro was still hitting against the beli. Growling as he looked both ways wondering where the beli boy was. As I exhaled and said nothing in response, I tapped against the shoulder of Zander just as he turned towards me. I nudged my head towards the stairs, he nodded and we headed towards it together. We left behind the red dragon upon the booth whom still ringing against the beli for whatever time it was. I had lost count however. Up the stairs we started climbing its steps. Towards the second floor above us. Where we place our feet grounded upon the floor underneath was where we rose our eyes high to the horizon and looked ahead. A path opened up before our eyes. A row of silver doors were to our sides. Upon each of those silver doors were yellow oval markings upon them. Each of those had a black number written onto them. It did not start at ‘zero’ however. The first number we saw was ‘120’. Then counting down by one. That number ran down the halls. Towards the wall that was in front of us. We stared at it in silence while Kyro turned his attention towards the first number adjacent to us. He tapped onto my shoulder, I turned to his attention as he raised his claw towards the number and spoke whispering to me.

“Why did it start at this number? Was there any significant towards it?” “Well this is the first floor however.” I explained to him, pointing out the obvious. As the red dragon nodded silently, I kept stare onto the door in front of us. Noticing how a key was already inserted into the hole, I blinked surprise. I stepped forth towards the knob. Grabbing onto it, I tilted to the side. The door opened automatically which widened, allowing us inside. Quickly, I motioned to the others. Their attention was to the opened door and Zander started heading in first. Followed by me then Kyro. As we piled into the room, we scanned around the place. Unaware of what we were looking for. The room was small. Smaller than what we had expected. Two king size bedrooms were to our right. Above it was a blanket and a pair of pillows. Adjacent to that was an opened case. It seemed to be empty somehow when I noticed it. As me and the other two dragons exchanged places for a bit unknowingly, I crouched to level with the case and stared onto the white piece of paper that appeared before me. Written onto it were words. But it seems to be scribbles than actual words. Although hard to read, a double of digits made itself known however. I yelled for Kyro and Zander. The two reappeared to my side again, their eyes down upon the case before them. As they stared, I pointed to the double digits.

“60?” Responded Zander, his arms crossed as he stared in confusion wondering what the number meant. “Why that number?” “Maybe it was a simple number, Zander.” Kyro suggested, replying to his question. “I mean, 120 divided by 2 is 60 after all.” “That is a simple equation.” Zander pointed out, glancing to him as silence took over them and I got up onto my feet. “If what Kyro suggested was true and we were to head down towards room 60. Would it be still divided by two then? Making it thirty?” I questioned them without looking at them directly but just stared at the box before picking myself up as neither of them answered that. With a sigh, I pointed towards the door. “Lets just head out and find this number instead.” “Do you think Ling.” Kyro questioned me, turning his head to the direction of the door. “That the numbers do not go less than one hundred?” I turned my head towards him, tilting my head to one side before becoming silence which was Kyro’s answer as he was prompted to explain, “I mean think about it for a moment. We rose ourselves from the stairs. From the main floor below us. In between this and the first floor, there were no double digits. The first we had seen is triple digits. If we were to head down now. I think we would be seeing something else other than the main room.” “Something scary?” Zander suggested which Kyro nodded with response, “Yeah like that.”

I stared at the ground. Pondering over his words. Then nodded in silence before smiling back onto Kyro. Kyro reflected that smile back onto me as we started for the door and headed back to the hallway once again. Exiting out, silence was our first greeting as I turned to Kyro while Zander started for the railings that was in front of us. Leaning himself forward and hang his head, gazing at the grounds below us. “So. If there are no double digits then in between the first and main floor. Think the numbers just double from here on out? Raising higher and higher until it-” “I do believe so.” Kyro remarked with an acknowledge nod escaping from his still head. He blinked and then added again, “The next number would be two hundred forty something, which is the next floor above us.” “And forty across.” Zander pointed out as I nodded at them in silence. “Alright lets go then.” I responded as I lead them across the hallways. Bypassing the doors and numbers that were to our side. Straight towards the end which took no time at all, we found the stairs. We took it and rose ourselves towards the second floor. Or what we had assumed it to be when our attention was turned to the similarity looked of an hallway.

The hallway remained the same. The red carpet below our feet. The doors with their numbers attached upon their surfaces. Running across the halls towards the horizon where the numbers and the doors disappeared altogether now. Looking confused, I shifted my attention to the right side of the halls and towards the walls. I stepped forth, breaking from the two officers who continued muttering whispering to one another in silence, and stared at the first door I see. ‘120’. “Something is weird.” I blurted out. Kyro and Zander turned their attention to me, tilting their heads as I turned to meet their eyes. “The numbers remained in the hundreds.” “That is normal.” Responded Zander with his arms crossed once again, “But the numbers remained in one hundred.” “Just… one hundred?” Zander said with hesitation in his voice, glancing to me for clarification as I nodded to him. “On crud. This would be hard.” “And confusing.” I remarked with a frown, quietly shifting my attention to the doors again. “What number did you say it was?” Zander asked Kyro who responded to him, repeating the number again after doubling it. “Ah got it.” Zander nodded afterwards but his face looked worried.

Regardless, our attention was towards the doors and numbers. As I stared onto them in silence, I walked alongside of them. Keeping my eyes upon the numbers at all times. It rose steadily, counting off by two instead. So the odds would be behind me and the evens opposite of the odds since because it started with one hundred and twenty. The next would be one hundred and twenty two and so on. “Interesting…” I muttered in complete silence although my voice was loud enough for the other two dragons to hear me. Their ears caught onto my voice, heads shifting towards me while Zander wondered what took my interest. “Whats up?” “The numbers are divided into two. Odds on the right. Evens on the left. I guess this is the second floor because of this rule.” “So if we are looking for two hundred and forty? That would be even, right?” Zander suggested, informing and reminding us of the number we are looking for. I nodded and said nothing else, for my thoughts were to the doors again. I looked through the doors again, keeping my eyes upon the numbers itself as it steadily rise by two. We walked through the halls, stopping at the center or the middle of it all. Turned our attention towards the side, glancing at the pair of numbers that was between us. I smiled in response and poke the door in front of us. “This is our number. And look, the key was inserted into the lock!” “Looks like someone forgot about it again.” Kyro suggested as I nodded. Reaching for the knob, I tilted it again. The door responded with a moan and widened itself afterwards. Allowing us to entered in.

Once again, the room was small. However its scenery changed. A pair of windows were opened before our eyes. Allowing the winds to blow inside the room a bit. The two king size beds were replaced with three switches. Three for every wall it seems. At the center of the room was a piece of paper. Four ducktapes were place upon the corners of it. Forcing it to stand still upon the flooring of the room itself. All three of us entered in and walked towards the center. Finally stepping onto the paper that was underneath of us suddenly. We blinked in response and surprise as we stepped away from it and lowered our eyes upon the floor. On the paper, Zander read “CYA.” “What does that meant?” He added, looking really confuse for a moment. Me and Kyro tilted our heads suddenly as the room we were in became silent. All our eyes turned to the paper, but mines rose towards the six switches that surrounded us. “What is with the six switches?” “What does that have anything to do with…” I trailed off, something popped into my mind. However, I was not sure if this was the correct solution after all.

Quickly, I pipped up as Kyro and Zander turned their attention towards me. I pointed to their half of the room while I turned around towards the last three pairs of switches behind me. We splitted apart and grabbed onto our respective switches. Before pulling them down. We would picked alterative switches like the first and third for my side and Kyro would pull the second instead. Yet in response, nothing had happened. Everything inside the room remained the same as nothing had changed. Staring at the switches momentarily, I started pondering and suggesting switches that would be picked. This time, we would alternate with one another. Instead of the first and third, I picked the second while Zander and Kyro goes for the third and first. But after we flick the switch, a repeated result also happened. I growled and narrowed my eyes in ponderance, sharply turning my attention towards the six switches again before stomping my way towards the center of the room. I motioned Zander and Kyro as they went to join me instead.

“Why is not the switches working? Is there a problem with the cable here?” I questioned, red vision raged across my eyes as my face started becoming warm suddenly. While the other two stared upon me in silence, then turned their attention to one another before raising their shoulders and tilted their heads back, staring at the ceiling above me. One of them suddenly spoke upon the short pause of silence that was between us, “Hey guys look at this.” “Look at what exactly?” I questioned, raising my eyes towards the ceiling above. And there it was. The answer to our problem. I blinked and tilted my head to one side, gazing at the three pairs of lights that were above us. All shone red momentarily. As I pondered, something snapped in my mind. I suddenly facepalmed and growl lowly before answering their confuse gazes. “Guys. I think we are flickering the switches of televisions and lights on the further floors above us.” “Wait. Switches of lights and televisions?” Kyro blinked in respond and a surprise look upon his face. I nodded in answer towards Kyro. Red blush flushed upon my cheeks while I chucked my head towards the window which Zander responded with a nod. Our wings suddenly spreading out. We flew out the window one by one. Nothing chaotic had happened between us. Yet before we split from the hotel itself, we hanged around the edge of the window and listened to the rapid footsteps that became louder. “Oh.” Whispered Zander as he gaze at both me and Kyro for answer. Both of us nodded silently back towards him, a frown ran across our face as the door jolted our thoughts and brought us back onto reality.

With a scream that filled our ears instead, we hightailed out of there. Flying back towards the Police headquarters where we landed upon the roads and folded our wings. A few seconds of silence drifted between us. All three of us smiling suddenly. Thus it was Zander who broke the silence with his laugh. “I cannot believe we escaped from that.” He started, me and Kyro chuckled in response “Yeah. The hotel owner must be really confuse on what the customer was talking about however.” “Since he is yelling from the second floor of course.” Kyro added, I nodded without hesitation. We continued laughing for a few seconds more with silence suddenly looming over our heads. As I exhaled, Kyro straightened his uniform and Zander gazing away, we pondered as to where the dragonesses had went. It did not take them long to hear their voices in our ears. Shifting my attention behind me, I gaze onto Yang and Natty who were walking side by side. Frowns were upon them as their eyes met up with us. We gathered once again after a long split. SIlence looming over our heads as Kyro decided to break the ice and questioned them,

“What did you guys find?”

“Nothing. The lead was dead.” Responded Yang with a frown as deadness reappeared again. A nod escaped from the red dragon while Natty reflected the question to us. Yet neither of us shook our heads as I pipped up and informed them. Explaining everything that had happened so far, finally ending with my becoming silent afterwards. Natty and Yang stared onto me, thus lowered their heads towards the flooring below us before nodding slightly at that information. More silence fell before Zander grinded his fangs together and Kyro spoke up upon the silence. “We found nothing. Both our leads are dead. The culprit is unknown status. Yet Chaos is building something.””Wait.” I spoke out, turning my attention to Kyro, “How did you know about that?” He raised a claw towards the skies above us. We all looked at the same time and was surprise to see it dark. Black clouds hovered above us. Rumbles of thunder sounded in our ears. A rapid heavy rain pour down, wetting the streets, sidewalk and buildings. I grumbled. Yang pouted. Zander still grounded his fangs as Yang took back leadership and spoke to the rest of us. “Come on. Lets head back to Natty’s mansion. We should be safe there for the time being.” “What does dark clouds have anything to do with Chaos building something, Kyro?” We heard Zander yelling at the red dragon who shrugged as we ran. Street after street until we reached the mansion.

However just as we reached for the front door. A piece of paper was tapped to the surface of it. With our eyes staring onto it, I spoke aloud what it had to say. ‘Wanted. Dead. Kegan. No money offered.’ “Whose Kegan? Why no money offered?” Kyro questioned the strategy place as the rest of us shrugged in response before we all piled right into the door. Entering into the room afterwards. As we settled back onto the old routine, me and Yang could not help but wonder about the paper we saw at the front door. Our thoughts were to this so called ‘Kegan’. But all we got were canines. Receiving a headache from such a ponderous adventure, I had decided to stop and just lay down to sleep. My eyes closed suddenly as I felt my body relaxed upon the sofa that I was lying upon. Sleeping soundly, I did not hear someone walking in from the kitchen poised with a bucket of water ready to splash onto me.

‘Splash.’

I screamed, “Zander!”