

pretend that today is the first day of the rest of your life

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| Rating: | Teen And Up Audiences |
| Archive Warning: | Graphic Depictions Of Violence |
| Category: | Gen |
| Fandoms: | Minecraft (Video Game) , Video Blogging RPF , Dream SMP |
| Relationships: | Eret & Wilbur Soot , Eret & TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Eret & Toby Smith Tubbo , Eret & Floris Fundy , Clay Dream & Eret (Video Blogging RPF) , Eret & Phil Watson (Video Blogging RPF) , Eret & Technoblade (Video Blogging RPF) , Dream SMP Ensemble & Eret |
| Characters: | Eret (Video Blogging RPF) , Wilbur Soot , TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Toby Smith Tubbo , Floris Fundy , Clay Dream (Video Blogging RPF) , Sapnap (Video Blogging RPF) , GeorgeNotFound (Video Blogging RPF) , Phil Watson (Video Blogging RPF) , Technoblade (Video Blogging RPF) , Luke Punz , Dream SMP Ensemble , DreamXD (Dream SMP) |
| Additional Tags: | Angst , Hurt/Comfort , Alternate Universe , Dimension Travel , Eret-centric (Video Blogging RPF) , He/Him Pronouns for Eret (Video Blogging RPF) , Protective Eret (Video Blogging RPF) , Eret Needs A Hug (Video Blogging RPF) , Hurt Eret (Video Blogging RPF) , Temporary Character Death , Fix-It of Sorts , L'Manberg War of Independence on Dream Team SMP (Video Blogging RPF) , Eret Redemption (Video Blogging RPF) , Eret Angst (Video Blogging RPF) , Traumatized Eret (Video Blogging RPF) , idk if you've realised that i love angst yet, but dont worry , Eventual Happy Ending , Angst with a Happy Ending , 2020 L'Manberg Election on Dream SMP (Video Blogging RPF) , Panic Attacks , A lot of them - Freeform , Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence , no beta we simply die , Exile Arc on Dream Team SMP (Video Blogging RPF) , Exile Arc on Dream Team SMP Canon Divergence (Video Blogging RPF) , TommyInnit is Not Exiled (Video Blogging RPF) , Self-Harm , Prison Arc on Dream Team SMP (Video Blogging RPF) , Eret (Video Blogging RPF) and Herobrine (Minecraft) Are Related , he tells you that a lot , Watchers , Suicidal Thoughts |
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pretend that today is the first day of the rest of your life

by [Niramia](#)

Summary

"-ret? Y—ight?"

Huh? Why does that sound like Tommy? I wasn't on a call with him though... wait, what was I even doing?

He groaned and squeezed his eyes, the ringing noise in his ears becoming increasingly loud. He rubbed his temple futilely. The worried voice began to shout frantically, so he opened his eyes but began blinking at the blinding sunlight.

He was lying down on grass, with a tree overhead. A person peered over him and he stared at the figure in front of him speechless. It was a boy—a *familiar blonde-haired, blue-eyed teenager that should've been halfway across the globe from Eret.*

Or, streamer!Eret wakes up inside the Dream SMP right in the middle of the L'Manburg War of Independence. Confused and alone, he has to learn how to survive in a world full of dangers while trying to change the future. But is he truly alone as he thinks...?

//

Or or, I read and liked those fics where streamer!Tommy or Dream gets transported into the SMP, so I wrote my own version but it's Eret instead.

Notes

I got the fic title and all chapter titles from lyrics in Derivakat's song "New Year's Eve". The song isn't based on the SMP but I still think the lyrics fit with the story I'm trying to tell, so...

You can listen to it here: [New Year's Eve by Derivakat](#)

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

- Inspired by [Penitent's Rose](#) by [WhiteWolfCub](#) ([SilverWolfCub](#))
- Inspired by [Therapy Gone Right](#) by [Blanc_et_Noir](#), [Suga_BloomLili](#)
- Inspired by [The Real World](#) by [Cinammonzoa](#), [Fire_Fly464](#)

1. there will never be a chance to start again (pt. 1)

Chapter Notes

Couldn't stop myself from writing a new fic despite promising to finish my other series first...
oops.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"-ret? Y—ight?"

Huh? Why does that sound like Tommy? I wasn't on a call with him though... wait, what was I even doing?

He groaned and squeezed his eyes, the ringing noise in his ears becoming increasingly loud. He rubbed his temple futilely. The worried voice began to shout frantically, so he opened his eyes but began blinking at the blinding sunlight.

He was lying down on grass, with a tree overhead. A person peered over him and he stared at the figure in front of him speechless. It was a boy- a familiar blonde-haired, blue-eyed teenager that *should've been halfway across the globe from Eret.*

"Eret, what's wrong?! Did you get badly wounded? I can't see any injuries, can you lift up your shirt?" Tommy rambled quickly, pulling out bandages and bottles from somewhere.

"Why are you here...?" he mumbled, suddenly noticing what the boy was wearing. *L'Manburg's uniform? Wait- what?!*

He stared at the teenager who was fussing over him, talking to himself about how to fix concussions or other head injuries. He looked down at himself. He was also wearing the familiar blue uniform, and even had a sword on the ground beside him. He reached out for it gingerly, and pulled away after he felt the coolness of the blade.

Holy shi- Am I in the SMP?!

"What hurts?" Tommy continued asking, helping Eret lean against the tree. "You don't seem to have any physical injuries..."

"I've got a headache but it's getting better," Eret winced. "Where are we?"

Is this before the War for Independence? Or during it? It doesn't seem like I've betrayed them yet, seeing as how Tommy doesn't hate me.

"Close to L'Manburg, we have to get going now though. Those fuckers are probably looking for us."

"Who? Dream?"

"Who else?" Tommy said, handing a bottle to Eret. "They're chasing Wilbur and the others right now, but they might come back and look for us soon, so we better get going."

Eret stared at the contents of the glass bottle. It was pink and fizzed with bubbles- if his memory was right, in Minecraft, regeneration potions were pink. He pulled open the cork and downed it, grimacing at the taste. He had expected it to taste like strawberries- or at least some other fruit flavour, but it tasted horrible.

As they ran, he tried to catch up with what had happened.

First, he had somehow been transported into the Dream SMP. He couldn't remember what had happened just before he left the real world though, his memory was hazy and his head ached the more he tried to remember. Tommy didn't remember the real world at all though.

Second, the timeline was pretty close to the beginning. They were fighting in the War for Independence, though it had already lasted about a year according to Tommy? It made sense though, since a real war wouldn't have lasted a few days, like in their streams.

They had gotten ambushed and split up from the others apparently. Wilbur, Fundy, Tubbo- they were being chased by Dream and his group. Eret had collapsed while running with Tommy, and woke up with a headache. *And as a completely different person*, he thought to himself.

He had no idea where they were going (*the world seemed smaller when it was just a game, now he felt like he was running a marathon just to reach a safe place*), just following Tommy who was bringing them to a safe area where they'd meet up with the others again.

I wonder if anyone else remembers stuff, like me.

* * * * *

The bunker didn't seem familiar at all, but he supposed that it made sense that there were parts of the storyline that he didn't know. They had left a lot of the lore up to interpretation after all, so of course there were sections that they hadn't streamed or created.

He looked up at the strange group of familiar-yet-unfamiliar people. Fundy's appearance had changed the most- everyone else seemed more or less the same, if a bit younger. Wilbur looked much older though- *didn't he say he was about 30 when he joined the SMP?*

They were handing out bread and vegetables to each other, and Eret was startled when Tubbo shoved some potatoes into his hands.

"Rest up for tonight, we'll begin to fight back tomorrow," Wilbur announced. "We won't take this lying down."

Eret eyed everyone, but they all seemed familiar with this situation. They probably had practised what to do in emergencies after all. None of them seemed lost or out of place, like how he felt.

After that short meeting, they all began to set about their own goals. Tommy followed Wilbur everywhere doing who-knows-what, and Fundy began sorting the chests. Eret stared at the scene, slowly realising the story that they had created had caused all *this*.

The original L'Manburg members were Wilbur, Tommy, Tubbo, Fundy and I. Tommy, Tubbo and Fundy are children in this story though- we literally had child soldiers fight for the country!

"I-" he said, startling Wilbur who turned to look at him. "I'm going to go gather some more wood."

"You can do that tomorrow," Wilbur said, pointing at the bed. "Tommy told me that you had a concussion. You need rest-

"I'm fine," Eret said, standing up. "I drank a potion. I need some fresh air right now..."

Wilbur sighed but nodded. "Don't take too long, we don't know if they're still searching for us. Send a message if you need help."

"Alright," he nodded, despite having no idea how he was supposed to use chat.

* * * * *

He stepped into the clearing and stared at the sunset. There was no way he was going to take too long- he didn't want to wait around to see the hostile mobs spawn.

Once he was sure that he was far away enough that they wouldn't randomly stumble into him, he began experimenting.

How am I supposed to open the inventory?!?

Just thinking about it didn't seem to do anything, to his disappointment. He waved his arms around, but there was nothing floating in the air either. He searched his pockets, but they didn't have anything useful in them. He *did* notice that he had a strange machine though, and when he opened it he saw that it had a keyboard and a screen which showed the chat.

Ah. This is what they use to communicate with then?

He fiddled with it for a few minutes, before putting it back into his pocket. He could look at it in more detail later- he had things to do right now.

He didn't want to cut trees with his fists though (*would that even work here?*) so he continued trying to open his inventory. He was certain he had an axe with him after all-

Fwoop!

His eyes widened as an iron axe appeared out of thin air and his fingers were wrapped around it. He swung it and then realised how heavy it felt.

Well, now I know how to take things out. But how do I check what I even have in there and how do I put this back?!

He had no time to test anything else though, since he suddenly heard footsteps and rustling bushes. He spun around, on edge, and saw Dream appear.

"Dream?"

"Were you waiting for me?" Eret couldn't see Dream's face as he was wearing a mask, but he could imagine him grinning.

"What are you doing here?" he asked nervously. He had no idea how to fight- *holy shit, what will happen if I die?! Will I even respawn?!*

"You haven't forgotten our deal right?"

What deal? When did I-

Oh.

Oh.

He stared at the admin and gripped the axe tighter.

I guess it's time to test my acting skills...

"I haven't, but I can't just bring them *there* immediately," he muttered. "They still have some other bunkers right now, I need them to be *really* desperate so that they'd follow me somewhere without asking any questions."

The admin seemed satisfied with his answer. "You'll send me a message when you're about to get there, right?"

"Yeah," he said, his stomach churning. *I'm never messaging you.* "I know what I'm supposed to do."

"Just wanted to remind you," Dream said, glancing at his axe that he still hadn't put away. *That he didn't know how to put away.* "My offer stands, Eret- as long as you lead them there without telling them anything, you will be *King*. But the offer won't stay forever."

His jaw clenched. "...How long do I have?"

"I want this war over as soon as you guys do!" Dream laughed, but Eret stayed silent. "I'll give you a week," he said after thinking about it. He turned away to leave.

"Does that mean you guys will be attacking all week then? So that we'll use up the rest of our resources and bunkers?"

Dream waved his hand and laughed, so Eret took that as a 'yes'. His breathing hitched and his palms felt clammy, and once Dream was out of earshot and eyeshot, he collapsed and clutched his chest.

The Final Control Room. I can't let that happen again- I can't betray my friends, I can't let anyone die! I have to save them- I have to-

He breathed in and out, in and out, before eventually getting up and running back home before the mobs began to spawn. Then, he slumped onto a bed before anyone could ask him for the wood he 'gathered'.

* * * * *

When Eret finally woke up the next morning, he took a moment to realise where he was. He could hear some people moving around, trying to prepare for the day. They seemed to be trying to stay silent though, when he heard Tubbo hiss, "You're being way too loud! He's going to wake up-"

"Me?! You're the one who's talking-"

"I'm already awake guys," Eret mumbled groggily, sitting up. *I guess I'm here to stay then.*

Tubbo glared at Tommy but helped Eret up. "How's your headache now? Do you need another potion?"

"I think I'll be fine," Eret said, with a pang of remorse as he realised that the *children* were preparing for war. They handed him the axe he'd dropped by the entrance last night. He gulped, still unsure of how to make it disappear into his inventory.

Wilbur's head popped out from behind the doorway. "Are you guys ready? We're setting out soon!"

"Ready for what?" Eret frowned. "Why didn't you tell me about this?" Tubbo handed him 'breakfast'- a single bowl of mushroom stew and an apple. Their resources were already scarce after a year of war, it seemed. Eret's frown grew deeper- he needed more time, dammit!

"We wanted you to rest a bit more," Fundy spoke up. Wilbur nodded and turned to look at the boys.

"Did you two eat already?" he asked. They both nodded, but Eret felt terrible. They both looked so *small* and skinny compared to the teenagers he knew- there was no way they got enough food to grow up into the lanky size that their counterparts were though, not with the war going on.

"What are you planning to do?" Eret repeated.

"We're going to raid the Community House! There's got to be some useful items in there. And then we'll blow it up!" Tommy eagerly filled him in.

That didn't happen in our streams. Some more filler events, I guess. But that means I don't know if they'll be in danger or not...

"I-" Eret froze. *How much help can I even be? I don't even know how to open my inventory, much less fight.* "I see. Message me if you need help, alright?"

"We'll be fine," and with that, the other four left the bunker.

Chapter End Notes

This fic will have shorter chapters than my other fics (like SKYAL), because I want to post chapters more often... but that means I'll have to split some chapters into parts (because I only have so many chapter title ideas and to make the chapters relatively the same length).

1. there will never be a chance to start again (pt. 2)

Chapter Summary

He turned to look at Tommy, who'd woken up from the noise he'd made. "S-Sorry," he whispered, but the boy just shook his head and pointed at the chair for him to sit down. He sat.

"Five things that you can see?"

"W-What?"

"Name five things that you see," Tommy explained calmly, holding his hand.

Chapter Notes

TW: Graphic descriptions of violence, panic attacks, throwing up

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

What the hell am I supposed to do? How am I supposed to stop their deaths?! There's going to be so many deaths- and so many other wars- the Pet Wars, the Manburg versus Pogtopia war, Doomsday- Oh my god. The Doomsday War where everything gets destroyed- I can't let all that happen. And Wilbur! He'll get killed by Phil!

He paced around the room worriedly, getting more and more panicked as he remembered what would happen in the lore if he didn't do anything to change it.

The Egg, the Red Banquet, Dream's imprisonment and torture. I can't let any of that happen! But how will I change everyone else?!

He sighed and decided to push those worries out of the way for a while. "I've got to re-learn how to do all the basic things first..." he groaned.

Fortunately, this time he managed to figure it out. The 'communicator' seemed to be a lot more important than it looked- it wasn't simply used to chat. It had a button that when pressed, showed his inventory, much to his relief. Taking things out of the inventory was easy, and putting them back in seemed to be easy too- all he had to do was imagine it disappearing from his hand and it would, as long as there was space for it. (Earlier he couldn't put the axe in because the extra potatoes Tubbo had given him had automatically disappeared into his inventory.)

Next step was to figure out how to fight. Luckily, he'd found a notebook with coordinates for a zombie spawner in his inventory and after keying the numbers into the search function of the communicator, he eventually discovered the right place.

"Time to train, I guess..."

Unsheathing his sword, he removed the torches that disabled the spawner and waited for the mobs to appear. He felt sick, he must be *crazy* trying to fight monsters trying to kill him- but he knew he had to do this to survive in this world.

I was never great at PVP, but I need to make my skills passable at the very least. So they don't begin to think I'm different.

Gripping the weapon tightly, he heard the low growl of the monster before seeing it jump at him. He swung the sword at it immediately in self-defence, and flinched when he saw how easily the sword sliced through the skin and straight through the zombie's chest. It still groaned though, trying to inch closer to him. He pulled the sword out and swung it with all his strength again, lopping the head off. It rolled onto the floor and then disappeared, leaving a bundle of rotten flesh behind.

He panted heavily after the near-death experience, and then threw up. But hearing the growls again, he immediately forced himself up and continued to fight for his life, not wanting to test what would happen if he died.

* * * * *

There was no way he was going to become a master swordsman after a single day of training, but he felt satisfied enough that he could kill zombies without panicking *too* much anymore. On his way back to the bunker, he'd even taken down a few skeletons and spiders- they'd creeped him out a lot, but he imagined that they were the same as zombies. (He didn't dare go anywhere close to creepers or endermen though.)

The next day, he decided to go mining for resources. Since he wasn't going to betray L'Manburg, he *actually* had to fill the chests up with armour and weapons for each of them. He wasn't sure how long mining for diamonds would take in this world though- since it's *not* a game- but he soon found out.

After three days of mining, he'd only gathered enough diamonds for a single set of armour. *No wonder everyone prefers to steal them from anyone else...*

At least he'd found some mineshafts and dungeons too. He'd even gotten an enchanted golden apple! That was perhaps the most valuable thing he had now. He sighed, putting all the valuables (except the apple- for emergencies in case he's dying) into a hidden chest when he realised- *Oh! What's in my enderchest?!*

He couldn't find any enderchests anywhere nearby though, so in the end, he went to the Community House only to remember halfway there that the others had grieved it a few days ago.

So in the end, he put on a brave face and trapped a few endermen in some boats and killed them from a length away, gathered some buckets of water and dumped them on lava and mined the obsidian, and crafted himself an enderchest. He was still too scared to enter the Nether and trade with piglins.

He ended up hiding the enderchest somewhere underground, since he had no silk-touch pickaxe to break it yet. Opening it eagerly, he was ecstatic to find more diamonds and his set of tools that he hadn't upgraded with netherite yet.

It's nowhere near enough, but it's a good start. He only had a few more days left until the deadline though...

Suddenly, he heard a ping from his communicator. He pulled it out and saw Wilbur messaging him.

[WilburSoot whispers to you: HELP]

[WilburSoot whispers to you: ERET]

[You whisper to WilburSoot: What happened? Where are you?]

[WilburSoot whispers to you: At the bunker]

[WilburSoot whispers to you: Come quick]

[WilburSoot whispers to you: Dream's here]

[You whisper to WilburSoot: I'll be there in five minutes]

He ran towards the bunker they had stayed in the last few days, and found his friends surrounded by the Dream Team. Everyone noticed him arrive, since his footsteps had been really loud.

"Hey..." he panted, glancing at the younger boys. Thankfully they didn't seem injured anywhere. "What's going on here?"

"They blew up the Community House," Dream snapped, pointing his sword at Eret.

"It was only the floor!" Tubbo yelled. "The walls are all intact!"

"So what!" Sapnap gripped his weapon tightly and Eret hated the look in his eyes. They burned brightly and he flinched when he saw a flower close by burst into flames. It seemed like Sapnap really was a blaze-hybrid here.

"Gentlemen, we can talk this out now, can't we?" He tried to stop the conflict before it was too late. "What do you want Dream?" he asked wearily.

"Their lives," he replied. Wilbur folded his arms, glaring at the admin. "Or the discs."

"They're my fucking discs!" Tommy shouted angrily. "Why the fuck should I give them to you?!"

Eret stared at the argument happening right in front of him. He still couldn't fully believe that this was his life now- why couldn't they just talk it out instead of fighting each other?!

He sighed and pulled out the enchanted golden apple from his inventory and held it out to the admin. Everyone gaped at him in awe and shock- enchanted golden apples were *extremely* rare after all. "This, in exchange for peace until the end of the month," he bargained.

There were a little over three weeks left until July ended. He felt fairly confident that Dream would take his deal- since after all, from his memory, he could remember that he betrayed L'Manburg around the beginning of August.

Dream seemed to understand that he was talking about *their* deal. He held out his hand and Eret dropped the apple into his. "Deal," Dream said, to the shock of everyone. He motioned for George and Sapnap to follow him away. From a distance, he could hear the three bickering about the deal.

"Eret?!" Tommy said angrily after they'd left. "Why the *fuck* would you give that bastard *that*?!"

"To get them to leave us alone!" he said, checking the boys for any injuries that might've been hidden. They seemed fine though, just shaken up.

"We could've fought them!"

"We would've died! We weren't prepared at all!"

Wilbur blinked and opened his mouth. "Since when did you have an enchanted golden apple anyway?" he asked.

Oh fuck. Don't tell me he's already becoming paranoid of me...

"I... found it while I was mining today. I've got us some more resources too," he admitted. He quickly continued on. "Look! Now we've got almost an entire month of peace- we'll be ready for the next battle! We can prepare more potions and fix our tools and armour now... And then we'll hit them back harder than ever before! I can always go searching for apples later."

Wilbur seemed to finally understand his plan and grinned. "You thought that far ahead? That's awesome!" The boys seemed to calm down too and were excited, until Tubbo frowned.

"Doesn't that mean they'll also have time to stock up though?"

Eret grimaced. "Yeah, but don't worry. I have some more ideas."

* * * * *

Days passed, weeks passed, and Eret had gathered up a reasonable amount of diamonds for the group. He felt bad for lying to Wilbur and hiding most of the ones he'd found, but it *was* supposed to be a surprise backup plan after all.

He'd learnt that making potions was much more difficult in real life too. Although he *knew* which ingredients would create which potions, he had no idea how to handle the ingredients and how long he was supposed to wait in between each step.

Enchanting was just as terrible, the runes with squiggly lines making as little sense as they did in the game. Though at least the game had *some* spoilers for what the enchantment would be, now he had nothing.

But he knew that each rune was a different letter, so after *a lot* of trial and error, he was able to decipher what each enchantment was. Memorising came pretty easily to him, so he was able to read fairly well after some days of constant practising. The others seemed shocked to find out that he could read the enchantments before they were made- Wilbur told him later that pretty much *nobody* knows how to.

Maybe because nobody tried? he thought, but he said instead "I'm related to Herobrine." Wilbur nodded solemnly, though he had no idea what that meant to the others.

He had come up with a plan during the weeks of peace.

His *first* plan would have been to try to defuse the situation and get Wilbur to talk it out with Dream, but everyone here seemed too hot-headed to use words instead of weapons.

And really, what can a single person do? What the hell am I supposed to say or do that will make everyone agree with me?

So in the end, he decided that he *would* lead them to the Final Control Room (it was already made, button-mechanics and all) but he would tell them halfway there about the deal. Then, they'd take a detour (he prepared a hidden tunnel) and reach a room that *actually* had their items, and then they'd escape from the escape route he'd built. In case Dream figured out that Eret had betrayed them and caught up, he would stall the Dream Team long enough to get everyone else out.

After all, he'd grinded the game long enough to get full netherite and enough golden apples. (Unfortunately, he wasn't lucky enough to find any enchanted ones again though.) The first time he went to the Nether, he almost had a panic attack again. But now he'd gotten used to this world full of dangers everywhere, and he felt fairly confident in his survival skills.

Come to think of it, I died less than 30 times in the entire time I played on the server.

* * * * *

I have no idea how I'm supposed to get home.

He guessed that DreamXD would know something about it, but he wasn't even sure if DreamXD existed. Besides, DreamXD only began to appear in the lore *months* (in 'real' time) later- *who knows how long it'll take for him to appear here?! If he will appear?*

What if he's the same as Dream?

He pulled the bedsheet over his head and sighed. He could hear someone snoring and a couple of phantom screeches outside.

What if I'm the only person here?

He clenched his fists tightly, so much so that he broke skin. He knew that he should calm down and sleep, get enough rest for the next day, but he couldn't help but worry and panic at the idea that he would never see his family and friends again. He panicked, wondering what had happened to him in the real world.

What if I'm never able to go home?

He shuddered, breathing rapidly and sat up, rushing to grab a bottle of water. His hands shook as he twisted open the cork and chugged it down, but he still felt dizzy and sick. He closed his eyes and breathed in, and out, in, and out...

"Eret?"

He turned to look at Tommy, who'd woken up from the noise he'd made. "S-Sorry," he whispered, but the boy just shook his head and pointed at the chair for him to sit down. He sat.

"Five things that you can see?"

"W-What?"

"Name five things that you see," Tommy explained calmly, holding his hand.

"Y-You... the glass bottle, F-Fundy asleep... the beds and the chests," Eret named quietly, following Tommy's breathing.

"That's great. Four things you feel?"

"Your hand, t-the chair... the ground under my feet, the bottle..."

"Three things you hear?"

"Your voice, Tubbo's snores, the phantoms' screeching..."

"Two things you smell? One thing you taste?"

"I... can smell the mushroom stew we ate earlier. And..."

* * * * *

After a few minutes passed, he finally calmed down and looked up at Tommy. "Thanks," he whispered. Tommy nodded. "How did you know what to do?"

"I helped Wilbur a few times," he shrugged. "Are you ready to go back to sleep now? Or do you want to talk?"

"I..." he faltered. *Can I tell him that I'm not actually the Eret he knows? That I'm from another world where his world is just a game, just a story to me?*

"I'll tell you another time," he ended up saying. "I'm fine now, thanks to you."

"Alright then," Tommy said as he stood up and returned to his bed. "Night..."

Eret slipped back into his and stared up at the ceiling.

This is my chance to save these people's lives. It doesn't matter if I find a way to return home or not- even if I go back, I won't feel good knowing that they're living through this hell of a story we've created for them. This is my only chance to change their fates before it's too late.

"Goodnight Tommy," he whispered, and he let himself fall unconscious.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed the start of this fic! Kudos and comments are appreciated :D

2. the longer nights just blur through shorter days

Chapter Summary

"They're kids, you know?!" Eret burst out. He didn't know where he was getting this confidence from, but he couldn't stop himself. "Were you going to steal a child's toys- or their lives?! Over a floor that could easily be fixed?!"

"Oh please," Dream scoffed. "They should know the consequences of messing with me."

"They are *children*!" Eret said indignantly. "They don't know shit! All they think about is having fun and causing trouble! That's what kids do!"

Chapter Notes

TW: graphic descriptions of violence

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Since he'd bargained for a month of peace, they didn't need to worry about being attacked out of nowhere or their builds being grieved. Meaning that now they didn't need to hide every night, and that they could sleep in their actual homes.

Just in case though, Eret built secret bunkers all over the world while preparing for the inevitable battle. He'd seen members of the Greater Dream SMP a few times, but they ignored them since he'd made that deal. (Though they did argue back when Tommy tried to provoke them- Eret stopped the conflict at the last minute and told Tommy to not mess up the peace and time they'd earned.)

He didn't want to endanger the kids, but they insisted on helping them gather resources. Tubbo went hunting for blaze rods, Fundy and Tommy went mining and Wilbur gathered gunpowder and sand. Eret didn't like that, but said nothing about it (he promised to himself that he'd steal and hide all the TNT before the final battle began though.)

There were a few moments when he'd freeze and wonder if Tommy or anyone else noticed that he was acting differently than usual. He hoped that his canon self was similar to his personality right now.

* * * * *

"Whoa- how did you *make this*?!"

Eret grinned widely. The food they'd eaten in the last few days were simply cooked from the furnaces, campfires or crafting tables- and though they provided the necessary nutrition, they didn't taste good at all.

So he had begun experimenting with cauldrons and buckets, using them as cooking pots and managed to create some different kinds of stews and soups. He'd even somehow managed to get salt from

seawater (he thanked the science documentaries he'd watched on random survival methods), which changed the flavour *a lot*. After some more trial and error, he'd even been able to cook *other* meals.

He never cooked much back at home, but now it was enjoyable for him. It was a hobby that more or less stayed the same, and it reminded him of his old world. It was easier to cook back in the real world of course, but it was still fun here too.

This was the first time he'd shown the others his cooking though.

"Go on, take a bite," he said, watching them intently.

They all picked up their spoons and took a bite. Their eyes widened and began to shove mouthfuls of mash potato into their mouths.

"Is this potato?!" Tommy spluttered. "How does it taste so good?!"

"I added salt and other things to it," Eret laughed. "Try the fish too."

"How come nobody has ever made anything like this?!" Wilbur said after finishing his bowl.

"Nobody has time I guess," Eret shrugged. "It's easier to just use the furnaces, but if you take the time to cook it yourself, it turns out better."

After that, he regularly cooked meals for them. The first time he made chips, the kids had *cried* from joy. He made jam from sweet berries, which they enjoyed with bread for breakfast. Somehow, nobody even *thought* about sandwiches- so when Eret first introduced them, they thought he was a genius.

* * * * *

"Where are you going?"

Eret spun around to face Wilbur. "Going mining," he said apologetically. Why was he even feeling guilty? He wasn't doing anything bad.

"Again?" Wilbur said, raising an eyebrow. "Haven't you gone, like, every day for the past week?"

"I didn't get enough stuff," Eret said, shifting his weight onto the other leg. "It's not enough."

"Well, don't forget to get enough rest then."

He nodded and left, heading towards his zombie spawner.

* * * * *

It has been a few weeks since he'd woken up in this world, and he had become used to fighting hostile mobs. He'd been terrified of the Nether the first few times he went, but he hadn't run into any trouble at all while blowing up the floor to search for ancient debris.

Now, he gripped his netherite sword tightly and waited for the zombies to begin spawning and for his training to begin.

Hours later, he finally placed a couple of torches down and left the dungeon. Breathing in the fresh air, he sighed in relief that he hadn't gotten hurt once today. He checked his communicator for any

messages, saw none, and pulled out a map from his inventory. It was time for him to move onto bigger missions.

He'd never gone horse riding in real life, but he got used to it fairly easily too. *I probably shouldn't get attached to any items or creatures though*, he thought to himself.

When he arrived at the place he'd been searching for, he gazed at the building in awe. The woodland mansion was *massive* now that he was living it, and he felt a little nervous about raiding it.

But he knew that he needed the totems and the extra training. Zombies were becoming too easy to fight, but illagers such as vindicators and evokers would surely put up much more of a fight.

He set his spawn on a temporary bed and stored an extra set of weapons in a chest beside it just in case he died. He still had no idea if he'd even respawn, but...

Right, let's just get going before I get cold feet.

He entered the mansion cautiously, and lit up the entrance and a few rooms before he heard the first wave of monsters. Gripping his weapon and shield tightly, he jumped and attacked them, barely dodging a skeleton's arrow.

After he cleared the mansion, he would surely feel terrified after all the near-death experiences, but right now he was having the time of his life with adrenaline pumping through his blood. *This is just a game*, he chanted to himself, a mantra that he'd found made him more confident.

He swung his sword and it lodged itself in a vindicator's neck. It screamed, and then disappeared as if it never existed, dropping a pile of emeralds. *Just a game*, he thought firmly, his grip tightening, and he spun around and continued to slaughter the nonexistent creatures, the mobs that were created from 0s and 1s.

He'd almost gotten killed a few times, and he had a few nasty-looking wounds, but nothing that was fatal yet. The vexes were the worst to fight, but he'd somehow managed to survive and annihilate all living creatures in the mansion. After looting the place, he set fire to it and returned home without looking back.

* * * * *

He crashed onto his bed inside Tommy's base and looked back on the events that had happened in the last few hours. He'd raided a mansion *alone* and gotten five totems of undying.

He still couldn't *believe* that that had been him. Since when was he so strong and confident at fighting? *Maybe it's just muscle memory. Or maybe the original Eret is still in me somewhere?*

He clutched the pillow tightly but sat up after a minute or so. He downed a potion and after a short nap, he ran off to practise creating potions.

I have no time to waste, he thought bitterly. *I need to be ready for everything.*

* * * * *

"Holy shit Eret, since when did you learn to brew?" Tubbo exclaimed, his eyes gazing over all the potion bottles on the floor.

He waved a hand at him. "I've been practising," he said tiredly.

"Who'd you learn it from? Wilbur and Tommy haven't seen you in ages so it can't have been them."

He froze. *Oh right. I shouldn't know all the ingredients and steps for potion-making.*

"...I'm related to Herobrine."

Tubbo said, "Cool!" and then began inspecting the contents of some potions. Eret relaxed and watched him shake some, watching the bubbles fizzle. "You're so talented," Tubbo commented, surprising Eret.

"What? No I-"

"There's no need to be so humble," Tubbo laughed. "You are! Really! You know how to cook things that we've never *imagined of*, you know how to read the runes from enchanting tables and now you know how to brew! You're hard working too," he pointed at Eret's netherite armour, "-and you're always so kind to all of us."

Eret blushed and looked away. "I'm just trying my best to keep us alive," he mumbled.

"If you continue on like this, I wouldn't be surprised if Wilbur proposed to you!"

"Wha-What?!"

"He complimented you so many times behind your back, you know?! Said you were dependable and that us kids should become more like you," Tubbo grinned. "He said you were real husband material."

Eret began to splutter and Tubbo laughed at his embarrassment. He thought that Wilbur was *suspicious* of him, not *checking him out, dammit!*

He remembered that Wilbur had kept asking him what he was doing whenever they met. *He was worried I was overworking myself, is that it? And I thought that he was becoming paranoid already...* he groaned and shook his head. "Where are the others?" he asked, changing the subject.

* * * * *

Now that he'd heard about what Tubbo said, he could see that Wilbur really wasn't acting like how Eret thought at all.

"Eret!" Wilbur exclaimed, grinning at him when they stepped into the Camarvan. "You finished mining?"

"I also found a woodland mansion," he said, pulling out the totems. "There's enough for each of us." He grinned at how excited the boys looked, all holding onto the totem he gave them carefully. "Hold onto it at all times, alright? Especially when the month ends."

"Thanks so much Eret," Wilbur said quietly while the boys were cheerfully discussing how they would kill the Greater Dream SMP members now that they were so decked out. "You've done a lot for us."

"No worries," Eret said, looking at the boys as well. "They're just *children*, you know? We've got to keep them safe."

He hoped that maybe he could get his message through to Wilbur, to call off the war, to let the kids live like how kids *should*, but Wilbur just nodded after a moment.

"You're right," he whispered under his breath. "And L'Manburg will be where we will be emancipated from Dream's tyranny."

Eret didn't realise he was holding onto his breath until now. It didn't work.

* * * * *

He found that he couldn't fall asleep. Again.

He sighed and sat up. He felt exhausted, but he still couldn't stop his wandering and anxious mind. *I'll go for a walk, and maybe that'll make me fall asleep.*

The skies seemed so full of stars in this world. The stars never seemed so bright before, and he stared at them now while wondering if any of them were the same stars he'd seen from Earth.

"They're beautiful, aren't they?"

He spun around. "Why do you always appear when I want to be alone?" he grumbled.

Dream shrugged. "How's L'Man-child-burg?"

"Fine," Eret said quietly. "They're not far away, you know. They might hear us if someone comes looking for me."

"Then follow me," Dream replied, walking away, somehow confident that Eret wouldn't stab him in the back. Eret sighed, and followed anyway.

"Why did you want more time?" Dream asked when they were far away enough. He was watching Eret's expression carefully. "Why did you offer me that deal?"

"They're kids, you know?!" Eret burst out. He didn't know where he was getting this confidence from, but he couldn't stop himself. "Were you going to steal a child's toys- or their *lives*?! Over a floor that could easily be fixed?!"

"Oh please," Dream scoffed. "They should know the consequences of messing with me."

"They are *children*!" Eret said indignantly. "They don't know shit! All they think about is having fun and causing trouble! That's what kids do!"

"What about Wilbur?! He joined in too! And what the hell do you mean by all this?" Dream sounded almost like he was growling now. "Are you changing your mind then? You're siding with the *children*?"

"I-" Eret snapped. "I still think L'Manburg shouldn't exist, but are you really willing to kill *sixteen-year-old children* over this?! Or what if this was Drista?! What if this was your sister who was grieving your world?!"

"How the hell do you know Drista?!" Dream pulled out his axe. Eret unsheathed his sword too, glaring at the admin.

"I'm related to Herobrine!" he shouted. He was glad that he'd made that canon- it seemed like a great excuse for anything now. Dream stopped approaching him and put away his axe. He folded his arms.

"You know what our deal was though!" Dream said angrily.

"Well we're changing it!" Eret replied. "I'll lead them there, but you guys mustn't kill them! You can capture them, but no injuries at all!"

Dream seemed angry about it but said nothing until, "What about Wilbur then? The *adult* of their stupid group?"

"You can hold him accountable," Eret said, feeling slightly guilty. *I'm not going to let him be captured so it's fine. It'll all be fine.* "Since he's supposed to be the responsible adult."

"Fine," Dream scowled. "You can be sure we're executing him."

Not while I'm here, Eret thought to himself as he shook Dream's hand.

Chapter End Notes

I speedran an entire essay for my philosophy class today, yay

Don't expect new chapters to come out so quickly, I just have a few prepared beforehand and the comments from last chapter made me want to post more :D

3. paper's full with forgotten goals

Chapter Summary

"Eret," he snarled. "What the hell do you think you're doing?"

"Sorry Dream," he smiled. "I guess I've had a change of mind after all."

Chapter Notes

TW: a ceiling crashing down onto someone, graphic depictions of violence (can't have war without that), **major character death (but it's temporary since this is Minecraft)**

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Soon enough, the end of July rolled around and Eret was woken up by the sound of TNT exploding. He cursed, since he'd hoped that the month of peace would have lessened everyone's urge for violence, but it hadn't worked. They had all been camping inside Tommy's base when the fighting began.

He ran out of his bedroom just in time for the ceiling to collapse.

"Fundy!"

He jumped at the fox-hybrid and hunched over him as the wooden planks on the ceiling crashed down on them. Eret screamed, but didn't move away. When the TNT stopped, he slowly stood up, pushing the rubble off them. Thankfully it hadn't been too heavy. His back felt wrecked though.

Fundy fumbled with his inventory and pulled out a regeneration and healing potion. He quickly shoved them into Eret's hands, who gratefully chugged it down, feeling the skin reattach and fix itself. "T-Thanks for protecting me," Fundy stammered. Eret smiled and patted his head, remembering that Fundy was even younger than *Tommy and Tubbo* according to the lore they'd done.

"It's fine," Eret assured him. "You weren't hurt right?" The fox-hybrid shook his head, so they rushed out of the base. They stared at the scene in front of them.

Wilbur was fighting George, Tommy and Tubbo were shooting Dream who dodged their arrows easily. He couldn't see Punz or Sapnap anywhere, so he frowned.

He ran towards Wilbur and George. "Will!" he called. "Where's Sapnap?!"

"They blew up the base and disappeared! They might have drunk invisibility potions!"

Well shit. I don't really have anything to fight against that!

But then he heard an arrow whizz close by and spun around to see Punz aiming his bow at him. He raised his sword and exhaled, running towards his *friend*, not enemy.

The battle felt like a fever dream to Eret. He made sure that they'd fought at the embassy, and then at the towers. Just in case, he had already secretly dug out the TNT Dream wanted set underneath L'Manburg beforehand.

Now- it was his turn.

"Wilbur! Let's regroup at L'Manburg!"

Everyone followed his lead and ran back to their home. He swallowed. This was the moment he'd been dreading for weeks.

"I've been gathering resources for us," he announced. They looked up at him excitedly. "They're hidden in a secret room- follow me!"

He led them down the familiar corridor- though this time it won't end the same way.

"When did you even build this?" "Where are we going?" "Why didn't you place any torches?"

Eret didn't reply to any of their rambling questions and suddenly stopped in the middle of the corridor.

"Eret?" Wilbur asked.

It's now or never, he thought to himself.

"Just ahead is the Final Control Room," he swallowed. "But we're not going there."

He took out his pickaxe and placed his hand on the wall, feeling it for the dent he'd purposely left.

"What's going on?" Fundy asked from behind. Why did you stop?"

"Dream offered me a deal to betray you guys," he said. They tensed immediately, glancing at the exit behind them. He wouldn't blame them for running, but he found what he was looking for and broke the wall. "He doesn't know that I'm still on your side."

"You are?" Wilbur asked carefully. Eret nodded, but realised nobody could see him properly in the dark.

"Of course. I wouldn't betray my friends."

He found the lever he was looking for, and pulled it down which immediately turned on the lights. They stared at the chests in front of them, and were speechless at the tools and armour Eret had gathered for everyone.

"Look. We don't have long before Dream realises that I don't intend on selling you guys out. I've got an escape route here, which should lead us a good distance away."

"How far have you planned ahead?!" Wilbur exclaimed, causing Eret to flinch.

"Don't yell so loudly! They might hear us- they're not too far away. Look- if you've all got your armour on, let's get going."

"Well?" Even Wilbur hadn't argued about wearing armour this time.

"I've planned for the end of the war and beyond that."

* * * * *

He wasn't sure if it would work, but he could only pray. He'd found one of Wilbur's letters a while ago, and memorised the address with a glance. He sent an invitation and a letter, hopefully persuasive enough to get the Angel of Death to show up.

And one day, while Tommy slept, he snuck a peak at the boy's communicator and found Technoblade's contacts too. He copied the ID and sent an explanation on why they needed him to come to the SMP.

* * * * *

His communicator was being spammed with messages, but he ignored them. He pressed the mute button and continued running along the tunnel with the others, glancing behind him for a moment. Dream and the others hadn't discovered it yet, it seemed.

It'll be fine. I can save Dream before it's too late too- I just need to keep the ones who lose a life today safe for now. Then I'll save Dream from becoming too obsessed with control.

But as they ran, he heard some shouts and voices growing from behind.

"They're here already!" he hissed, and threw down a splash potion of speed and regeneration on the boys. "Hurry! There are some horses once we get out of the tunnel- take them and get back to the Camarvan!"

"What are you doing?" Fundy cried as Eret stopped and turned around.

"I'll be right behind! I've got some traps to set up quickly!"

They nodded and continued escaping without him.

That was a lie though. There's no way I'm killing them.

He gripped his sword tightly and willed it away into his inventory. He placed a few torches down to light up the area after blocking the escape route and opening the fake route he'd made for emergencies. He opened a hidden ender chest he'd placed inside the walls, and switched his tools and armour into his spare, less powerful set. Then, he covered it up and waited for the Greater Dream SMP members to catch up.

Dream arrived first.

"Eret," he snarled. "What the hell do you think you're doing?"

"Sorry Dream," he smiled. "I guess I've had a change of mind after all."

Dream charged at him, but he dodged and threw some rocks in Dream's way. "Wait- wait, wait!" he yelled, just as Sapnap and the others caught up too. They glared at him- Dream must've told them about what he was *supposed* to do.

"What?!" Dream said angrily.

Eret held his hands up and showed that they were empty. "Can't we talk this out?!"

"There's no point in *talking*, you betrayed us- end of story! Now you'll pay for it and die!" Dream said, as the others nodded and aimed their bows at Eret.

"I was never on your side in the first place!" Eret said indignantly, taking off his helmet. "Look- I know there's no way I'm escaping from all of you guys in this tiny corridor, so will you guys just hear me out?!"

"You're just giving them more time to escape!" George huffed, notching his arrow at Eret. "Why should we waste our time with you?!"

"I've already given them netherite weapons and armour and healed them! Do you really want to go and fight well-prepared people who have brand new equipment for *another* few hours without any rest?!" Eret pulled out his sword and the others tensed. He dropped it. "You can hold me hostage, that way you can threaten them to have a meeting and discuss what you want!"

"What makes you think that they'll drop their *country* for you?!"

"They probably won't, but they'll at least listen to some terms! You can make some rules for it, like that they have to allow anyone to enter and leave their lands or something-"

"There *are* no terms that I'd agree to," Dream yelled. "L'Manburg *cannot* exist at all! This is the *Dream SMP* if you've forgotten!"

"He's got a point though," Punz said, sighing and putting his hand on Dream's shoulder. "They're probably gone already by now anyway. Let's just take him with us and put him in prison. We'll rest up and then attack again the next day... they might have new equipment, but they're still weaker than us."

Dream glared at him, but turned around. "*Fine.*"

* * * * *

Eret stared at the ceiling in regret. *Well. I stalled long enough so that they won't die today, but what now?*

But before he could think of any plans, someone pushed open the door and he glanced at the visitor. "What's *wrong* with you?" Dream said, staring at him through the iron bars.

"There's nothing wrong with me," Eret answered. "Don't you get tired of all the fighting?"

"I'm trying to *end* the war! You're the one who's messing up my plans now!"

"You're trying to kill *children*," Eret stared up at him. He folded his arms. "How can you sleep at night?"

"Are you saying I'm wrong for protecting my world then?!"

"Yes!" Eret snapped. "What's more important, the world or your *friends*?!"

"Tommy-"

"He's a friend, isn't he?!" Eret stood up, facing Dream. "And if you don't see him as one, doesn't he see *you* as a friend?! Don't you remember what he was like when he first came here?! And what about *your* friends, George and Sapnap?!"

"What about them?!"

"Don't you see how tired they are from all the fighting and conflict?! What did you make this world for?!" Eret grabbed the bars and stared into the mask's eyes, but he couldn't see Dream's face at all. "You made this world to live happily with your friends, right?! Not to have wars over silly discs!"

Dream swallowed but didn't budge. "It's all Wilbur's fault then," he said. "Fine, I won't blame the kids. But Wilbur is fighting for their stupid country's independence! This is *my* world, not his!"

"Aren't you being more childish than the kids right now?!" Eret retorted. "*It's my world, not yours'*- aren't you treating the world like a toy that you won't share?!"

Dream glared at him. "It's *different*," he said. "You won't understand."

"I'm just trying to help!" Eret insisted. He hoped he could talk some sense into this Dream. "Nobody wants to fight each other, right?! Wouldn't it be more fun if we could all just live without worrying about being killed? We could go on adventures all together and play games- instead of fighting actual wars that just make all of us hate each other!"

"That's what I *want*!" Dream suddenly yelled. "If Wilbur creates his country, then others will be created too! Everyone will be split up and we *won't be able* to have fun together! What do you think-"

Oh.

Fuck.

So that's the route we're going with? That headcanon that Dream just wants everyone to be working together and he becomes a villain to unite the server against him? Or is it that he hasn't become a full villain yet?

"Just because we're on different sides doesn't mean we can't be teams," he said quietly after Dream finished ranting. "Like MCC! We always end up cheering for the other teams at the end, even though we were fighting against them just minutes ago."

"It's different," Dream repeated, turning away before Eret could reply.

* * * * *

The next day, he was woken up rudely by Sapnap who barged into the room and pulled him up. "Where are we going?" he muttered groggily, still half-asleep.

"Community House."

When Tommy and the other two kids saw him, they immediately tried to run up to him. But Dream drew his sword, blocking the way and they froze.

"Eret, did they hurt you?!" Fundy asked worriedly.

"No, I'm fine. They just put me in a cell," Eret assured them. Dream stepped closer to him and Sapnap moved away, switching places so that Dream's sword was at his neck and Sapnap's weapon was pointed at the others.

"Surrender, or else I'll kill Eret until he has no lives left."

The younger boys began to yell angrily, but then Wilbur opened his mouth to speak. Eret cut in before he could though- maybe a part of him was scared to hear Wilbur choose L'Manburg over his life.

"*Independence, or death*," Eret said, though he didn't look particularly enthusiastic at all. He seemed *resigned* somehow. "*If we get no revolution, then we want nothing. We would rather die than give in to you and join your SMP.*" That's what you'd say, isn't it?" He looked at Wilbur.

"What? No I-"

Some part of him felt terrified, but the other part had already accepted what would come. *There's no way I can get my point across to anyone if I don't sacrifice something.* Perhaps it was his canon self speaking right now, since if it were *actually* him, he would be scared out of his wits.

"Aren't you guys tired of all this? Don't you guys want to just relax and hang out with your friends without worrying about being attacked?" he spoke, causing everyone to freeze. "Why do we have to keep fighting with each other?"

Tommy began spluttering about discs, Wilbur about Dream's tyranny and the other side about stealing Dream's land. Eret yelled, surprising them all- he'd always been the calm one. "Will you guys ever use your *heads*? What good are discs if your friends are all dead?! What will you do in a country that's created from your children and brother's blood?! *Will you kill children to protect a small plot of land?!*"

He heard the stab before he felt it. He looked down at his chest, with a netherite sword straight through it with blood trickling down. *His* blood. He heard gasps and a scream, but he wasn't sure if it was even himself who screamed. It didn't sound like him.

He saw Tommy and Tubbo's horrified expressions. He saw Wilbur's eyes widen and he saw-

He crumpled to the floor.

"It's not that simple," Dream muttered.

* * * * *

Well. Now he got his answer.

Dying hurt *a lot*.

He wanted to scream, but his voice didn't work. He wasn't in his body after all. He was *floating* in the middle of nowhere- *the Void?!*- and he was being pulled apart and being put together again. He was freezing cold, and he was being burned alive. He wanted to move, but he wasn't even *in* a body. He felt *excruciating pain* while he felt his bones and skin reattach together, forming his second life.

He blinked, staring up at the familiar ceiling.

He was home.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed this chapter! Kudos and comments are very much appreciated! <3

Ps. someone overheard Eret & Dream's conversation last chapter, any guesses? :)
(Though it won't be brought up until a while later- and there's a reason why they didn't tell the others about Eret's potential betrayal)

4. my hopes and dreams were never far away

Chapter Summary

"Leave them alone," Phil warned, pointing a diamond sword at the Dream Team. "Or else you'll find out why I'm married to Death."

Chapter Notes

TW: trauma, panic attacks, mentioned broken bones

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

He blinked rapidly, taking deep breaths. He was alive.

He stared at the familiar ceiling. It was *his* ceiling. He sat up.

He was back in his bedroom.

What the hell am I doing back here?!

His body still ached slightly, but he felt otherwise fine. He pulled up his shirt quickly, but there was no scar. Looking around the room, he could see his PC and hear the cars zooming by outside.

He gingerly got out of the bed, feeling strangely dizzy. He almost tripped while making his way to the bathroom.

He stared at his reflection in the mirror. His eyes.

His familiar blue eyes stared back at him.

~~*Shouldn't they be white?*~~

A sharp pain rang through his head, and he clutched his head with one hand, the other hand keeping himself stable by using the sink. There was something wrong- he could tell, but he didn't know what.

I died and came back?

He looked like a mess. His eyes looked half-dead, and his body didn't *feel* like his. He felt like there was something heavy stuck in his chest, and began coughing uncontrollably.

I need to go back, he thought deliriously. *I haven't solved anything yet. I can't let them go through everything that happens in the future- I need to go back.*

The ache in his head was growing, and his legs felt weak. He dropped onto one knee, tears forming from the pain, and he tried to take some deep breaths.

How am I supposed to go back?

He pushed himself off the floor, hoping to find some pain relievers in his house somewhere- but with each step he felt like he was about to have a heart attack. His shoulders heaved as he panted, and he staggered across the room with much effort, before he finally dropped onto the couch before making it to the cupboard.

His eyes closed as he thought, *I can't sleep right now- I need to-*

* * * * *

Opening his eyes carefully, he squinted when he saw a *different* familiar ceiling.

He sprung up immediately, and pulled up his shirt. Right in the centre of his chest, was a long thin scar and he winced.

He jumped out of the bed, and ran to the mirror to check his appearance. The usual white eyes stared back at him.

I'm back?!

He had no time to think about what had just happened, and instead pulled on his L'Manburg uniform quickly. Eating a golden apple just in case, he rushed out of the house. He had spawned inside Tommy's base- but the others probably expected him to spawn in the cell.

He *had* slept in the cell, but he didn't lie down on the bed once, which the others didn't know. He'd sat on it, but they had left before making sure he set his spawn. After they left, he had slept on the floor.

He quickly put on his main set of armour and tools and ran towards the Community House, hoping they hadn't begun fighting already- though most likely that's what they'd be doing. At least nobody had died yet, he didn't see any other death messages on his communicator.

But as he ran, he heard it ping twice. He quickly pulled it out worriedly, but grinned when he saw the words.

[Technoblade has joined the game]

[PhilZa has joined the game]

If the others had been fighting while he'd died, they had surely stopped fighting now. The chat was filled with confusion, from Dream asking who invited them and from Tommy greeting them with full capitals.

Eret sprinted towards the spawn area, hoping that the others wouldn't get there before him. He was closer though, and soon found Technoblade and Phil chopping down trees and looting nearby chests.

"Phil! Techno!" he yelled, waving at them.

They noticed him immediately. Phil seemed glad to see him. He stared at the piglin for a moment. Technoblade was *huge*.

"We're not that close, are we?" Technoblade huffed. "I'm just here because you said Phil would be in danger here. I wasn't even going to come since I knew Phil was busy moping around his private server and not in the Dream SMP-"

"-but he checked up on me anyway while I was preparing to come here," Phil smiled. "So he came along."

"Thanks," Eret panted, placing down his enderchest and pulling out spare armour and tools. "Here, take these- we've got no time."

"Yoooo," Techno said while he pulled on the chestplate and boots. "I'm not giving these back, you know."

"Wasn't going to," Eret said, waiting to put potions into their hands. "Wilbur and the rest are in danger right now. We've got to get there quickly."

"Who's on Wilbur's side again?" the piglin asked.

"Tommy, his best friend Tubbo, and Fundy- Wilbur's son. You'll recognise them, don't worry- they're all wearing the same uniform as me."

The pair followed him towards the Community House and Eret eyed Phil's wings for a second. *I've got to make sure he doesn't break his wings from protecting Wilbur too...*

"Wilbur has a son?!"

"I'm a granddad?!"

"Yeah," Eret grinned despite his anxiety spiking each second. "He can tell you the story later- it includes a salmon and things I don't want to know."

* * * * *

"Eret!" Tommy yelled first, seeing him return. The two groups were facing each other, but nobody seemed badly injured. They had definitely fought though, Eret could see arrows stuck in the walls and shields. "Why are you-"

"You're gonna regret coming back here," Dream cut in, swinging his axe at Eret. He felt terrified but didn't back down.

"*You're* going to regret not listening to my advice," Eret said.

The admin laughed. "We're in between you and your friends right now, you're basically on your own- aren't *you* the one at a disadvantage right now?"

"Oh, but you see- " Eret grinned, feeling more alive than ever. *I'm just here to steal everyone's quotes I guess*, he thought giddily. "***I have the Blade.***"

"Hullo," the piglin greeted, making his appearance. He rested Eret's- now Technoblade's- netherite axe on his shoulder. "I heard there's a war going on? Because my chat *loves* blood."

Dream's side seemed to shrink a little bit. Dream unintentionally took a step back. "What are you doing here," he swallowed, glancing at Eret who just smiled. "How do you have full netherite already?!"

Phil stepped forward too, also geared up but in diamond armour. His dark wings spread and covered the light, making him look *much* more terrifying too. "I'm here too," he said, fixing his eyes on Tommy, then Wilbur.

"Leave them alone," Phil warned, pointing a diamond sword at the Dream Team. "Or else you'll find out why I'm married to Death."

* * * * *

Fortunately, the appearance of the two was enough for the Greater Dream SMP to back down for the day.

Wilbur left to give Technoblade a tour of the land, but Phil excused himself and said he had something urgent to deal with with Eret.

"You can give me a tour later," he assured his son. "I want to hear all about it in person- especially about Sally and Fundy."

Wilbur turned red while Eret and the others laughed with tears in their eyes.

But wait. Eret stopped. *I never told him Sally's name, did I?*

* * * * *

"Twitch?"

"Youtube?"

The two spoke at the same time. Phil grinned.

"You've got to pick something else," the older man said. "They're gonna think you're talking about Twitch Prime- Youtube is a better guess."

"So you actually-?!" Eret gasped. Phil nodded.

Eret threw himself at Phil, hugging him tightly, surprising both himself and the other. Phil froze for a second, but then hugged him back.

"Sorry-" Eret rambled, pulling away. "It's just that I thought I would be the only one and I was *terrified* and now you're here-"

"It's alright, I understand," Phil laughed quietly. "I know what you mean. So nobody else remembers?"

"None," he answered sadly. "Where did you wake up?"

Phil understood and replied, "In my hardcore world. You know it, right?"

"Yeah..."

"I was so confused when I woke up in the builds I created. I thought I was *dreaming* at first, until I accidentally crashed while flying and broke some bones."

"What?!"

"I was fine!" Phil laughed. "I figured out how to pull out my inventory items then, and drank some potions. And while I explored, your letter arrived."

"Wait..." Eret frowned. "Isn't your world a single player one though? Doesn't that mean..."

"Yeah, I was alone for a couple weeks," Phil said with a sad smile. "But the crows kept me company, and I'm here with you all now, so I guess it's fine."

"How did you switch servers then?!"

"That's actually why I'm here late- I had no idea how to! Eventually I figured out that this machine-" he pulled out his communicator, "-would have something to do with it, since it seems like it's the menu and chat, so I messed around with it and somehow ended up on Hypixel. Technoblade found me just as he was about to come look for *me*, and so we just travelled here together. I just copied what he did to get here."

"Does Techno-?"

Phil shook his head. "He thought I'd finally gone senile and insane when I talked about Mojang and other real life shit, but I had some quick thinking and said they were old gods similar to Twitch Primes that I'd recently rediscovered."

Eret looked at him in awe. "Wow."

"I know right?! So what's the situation here now?"

"Uhh..." He looked embarrassedly away. "I may have changed a lot..."

"Like...?"

"I woke up during the war. Like literally in the middle of a battle." Eret scratched his neck. "I ended up saving all of their lives by not... y'know, by not saying '*it was never meant to be*'... so they've all still got their three lives."

"...They?"

"Yeah," Eret confirmed. "I just lost my first canon life today."

"Holy fuckin- are you alright?!"

"It hurt a *lot* but now I'm-" he told Phil. However, his breathing suddenly hitched and he stared at his suddenly trembling hands. "I'm- I'm fine- I-"

*I actually **died** today*, he suddenly realised.

The adrenaline and excitement from Technoblade and Phil's arrival finally died down, and Eret suddenly remembered the pain in his chest, the glistening sword smeared with his blood, the empty, listless void-

Phil realised Eret was having a panic attack and held his hands, trying to comfort him. "It's alright, Eret- You respawned, you're still alive- you're going to be okay. I'm here now, you're not alone anymore-"

"I- I got stabbed by Dream while trying to persuade the others that p-people are more important than materials like d-discs or land," Eret stammered. He clutched a hand to his chest and felt his erratic heartbeat.

I died. I lost one of my canon lives today. I only have two left- I have to make them last- I have to make every second meaningful! I don't have any time to waste-

"I have so many things I still need to do," he said frantically, his eyes wide. "God- I- I have to stop the war- I have to make sure nobody dies-"

Something in Phil seemed to snap as he remembered all the lore they had created. "Oh my god. Is Dream-?"

"I don't think he's a complete villain yet," Eret said quickly. "I-I've talked to him a few times, but I guess he's still going on about control right now. I'm sure it's not *too* late for him y-yet though."

"What-" Phil clenched his fist and exhaled slowly. "What about Will?"

"He's fine for now. He becomes more paranoid after my betrayal and Schlatt- but I never betrayed them this time and Schlatt isn't even here yet." Eret hugged Phil again, trying to comfort him. "Don't worry Phil- I- I'll make sure that you won't have to kill him."

"I'm supposed to be comforting *you*," Phil laughed weakly. "*You're* the one who died today, you know?!"

Eret gave him a small smile. His hands still throbbed with adrenaline and panic, but his mind felt clearer. "But I'm still alive after all," his voice felt thick. "And I can't waste any more time, I- I have so many things to do."

* * * * *

"So do you have any idea why we're here? Or how we can go home?"

"Nope," Eret said, handing Phil more equipment from the bunkers he'd hidden around the world. "I didn't really have much time to think about that- I was too busy trying to get my combat skills passable and survive here." He frowned. "But when I died today, I woke up in the real world again for a few minutes."

"You did?!"

"It didn't last that long though, and I had a huge headache for some reason. I didn't have time to talk to anyone either- Not long later, I passed out and woke up here again."

"Do you think we'll return if we lose all our canon lives?" Phil asked.

He grimaced. "I don't really want to test that. But *if* that is the only way to return, I'll wait until I've changed the future for the people here."

He gave his totem to Phil. "You literally only have one life- you need to take care of yourself," he insisted. "Also, I can't even remember what was the last thing that happened back on Earth. I keep getting a headache when I try to remember."

"Same," Phil whispered. "I wonder if we're missing there."

"Probably," Eret sucked in a breath. "Until I fix all the problems here, I'm going to pretend that this is where I'll live for the rest of my life. After I save them from that angsty lore we created, I'll look for other ways to go home. I don't even know if XD exists yet, but if he appears later on I'll definitely ask him about it."

"That's a good idea," Phil nodded. "But wow. You're going to change everything?"

"I *can't* let all those wars happen, Phil. All those deaths and...limbo. I'll change everything so that nobody gets hurt, and Dream never gets tortured in prison."

Phil's eyes widened. "Oh shit- I forgot that happened."

"Yeah. We've also got the Egg to deal with..."

"I guess it makes sense why we're here then," Phil grinned. Eret looked at him confused, so Phil continued. "We're the responsible adults! Tommy and the others are too young and chaotic to deal with all this, and Dream would probably get sidetracked with wooing George after seeing him in person or somethin-"

Eret snorted and threw a cushion at Phil's head.

* * * * *

Eret had worried that Wilbur would be angry at him for getting Phil and Technoblade to come. He was pretty sure that Wilbur had lied in his letters to Phil according to their lore, but he forgot when he'd started that- so he was relieved that he seemed happy to see them.

"Now that you guys are here, we've got seven people! We outnumber those bitches!" Tommy cheered while they sat down for dinner in one of Eret's hidden bases.

"Who said I'll be on your side?" Technoblade grunted. "I hate the government, and that's what you guys are fighting for."

"All you have to do is protect Phil," Eret grinned, passing out the plates. "You don't have to fight if you don't want to."

"I don't?" he said, surprised.

"He doesn't?!" the others asked in shock.

"Of course not! I never said in my letter that I needed you to fight in the war, did I? I just asked you to protect Phil and those two. Just make sure they don't die," he nodded towards Tommy and Wilbur.

"I don't need to be protected!" Tommy screeched. "I'm a Big Man! I do the protecting, not the protected-ing!"

The others began laughing at Tommy's words. Wilbur sighed but ruffled Tommy's hair and smiled. "Yeah, yeah- we know, Toms."

Eret felt a sense of familiarity at the chaotic yet wholesome scene in front of him and joined in laughing.

* * * * *

Eret was getting some fresh air when he heard someone join him. He glanced and saw Technoblade staring at the stars above them.

"I thought that you only wanted me here because I'm the 'Blade'," he said quietly after a moment.

"Nah," Eret smiled, turning to face the piglin. "You're just a person, just like me or those idiots in there." He stretched his arms. "I meant it when I said I wanted you here to protect them. Though I guess it's a little hypocritical of me- I'm sure that you'll have to fight at some point or another to protect them... You can leave at any point though," he said apologetically.

Techno snorted. "There's no way I can leave now that I'm here. I'd be a terrible person if I didn't protect my family."

Eret felt hopeful for the first time in weeks.

Chapter End Notes

He's not alone :)

Hope you guys enjoyed this new chapter! I'm planning chapters ahead of time (bullet points lol) and wow, you guys should really get ready for the angst ride I'm about to bring you guys on. Really hope it won't disappoint :>
Kudos/comment if you enjoy it, thanks for reading <3

5. seasons come and go

Chapter Summary

They both turned to stare at the familiar scene they'd seen only in a blocky video-game and in beautifully drawn fan-made animatics- a masked man in a green hoodie and a scrawny teenager, both standing with bows drawn and ready, waiting for the signal to begin.

Wilbur raised his hand. Everyone fell silent.

Time *froze*.

Chapter Notes

TW: getting shot (by an arrow)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The next day, Dream and Wilbur called for a meeting between the two armies that would begin at noon. Eret paced around the room worriedly, unsure of how they would end the war without bloodshed or giving up the discs. He'd changed the past too much already- he had no clue what would happen now.

"You've done everything you can," Phil said, forcing Eret to take a seat. He handed him a cup of hot chocolate, and Eret gave a slight smile. "I'm sure it'll be fine. By the way, I forgot to tell you yesterday that I've missed all this so much."

Eret raised an eyebrow, confused, until he saw what Phil was pointing at. It was the cookbook Eret had created for Tubbo, left on the table. He laughed. "Yeah, I'm sure. Though there are still *a lot* of things I can't make, since Minecraft doesn't have the ingredients for it."

"You've still done a great job," Phil insisted, smiling. "I survived on golden apples and beef for a *month*, you know?! I'm so glad that I can eat actual meals now. I never thought about using cauldrons as *actual* cauldrons."

He laughed, sipped the drink. "Thanks. I'm feeling a bit better."

"You've done the best you can," Phil repeated, comforting him. "Now it's up to Will and Dream to fix the rest of this shit."

* * * * *

The Greater Dream SMP members arrived at the Community House first and were waiting for them. They eyed Technoblade and Phil warily but surprisingly didn't take out any weapons, probably because they saw that neither of them drew theirs.

Eret didn't realise he was holding in his breath until Dream spoke.

"I'm pretty sure you all know why we're gathered here today- to discuss a way to end this war. It has gone on for far too long- and I'm sure you guys are just as tired as us."

He couldn't see Dream's eyes at all, but it felt like his eyes were fixed on Eret's. He felt a chill on his neck but ignored the urge to shudder.

Tommy interrupted Dream's speech out of nowhere. "A one-on-one duel between you and me- if you win I'll give you my disc and we won't get independence. If *I* win, L'Manburg gets its independence!"

"Tommy! I told you not to-" Wilbur started, but Eret was already falling apart.

How?! How is it still ending like this?! Is there no way for me to stop Tommy's death?!

Dream paused, seemingly thinking about the conditions, as everyone's eyes were fixed on him. Eret already knew what he would answer though.

Dream nodded. "Alright, deal."

"Wait!" Eret yelled, shocking everyone. "You both start on full health. Whoever draws first blood wins- not to the death. Once you hit your shot, you *stop* and let me heal whoever loses."

Dream stared at him for a moment, but he shrugged. "Fine with me, I don't mind."

* * * * *

Phil put his hand on Eret's shoulder. He glanced at him as he bit his thumbnail. "Tommy won't die," Phil comforted him. "I'm sure of it. You've changed things so much, there's *no* way this will end the same way."

Eret gave a grateful weak smile to Phil, though he could tell Phil was filled with panic too. Phil tried to hide it by attempting to keep his hand still, but Eret could see the terror in his eyes.

They both turned to stare at the familiar scene they'd seen only in a blocky video-game and in beautifully drawn fan-made animatics- a masked man in a green hoodie and a scrawny teenager, both standing with bows drawn and ready, waiting for the signal to begin.

Wilbur raised his hand. Everyone fell silent.

Time *froze*.

"One, two, three..."

He held his breath, watching the two take steps away from each other slowly.

"...Four, five, six..."

Eret's hands were wrapped around the potions of regeneration and he *prayed* that nothing would go wrong.

"...Seven, eight nine-"

He could feel Phil tense at the same moment he did-

"Ten paces, fire!"

He watched in hopelessness as the two spun around and shot their arrows, both missing their first tries. But then a few seconds later-

Dream's next arrow whizzed through the air, cutting it like a sharp knife, and lodged itself straight in Tommy's shoulder, narrowly missing where his heart was.

"Tommy!" Eret hurled himself at the boy, pulling himself away from the crowd. He pulled the boy's head onto his lap and frantically twisted open the potion and fed it to Tommy.

"It's fine," Tommy mumbled and coughed. "I- I'll be fine. I've got my totem in my pocket, see? I won't die, Eret."

"Just let me fix you up," Eret insisted, ignoring everything else going on around them. Tommy and his wound were the only things on his mind right now- he carefully extracted the arrow (thankfully it didn't go in too deep) and cleaned the wound, wrapping it up after pouring some of the potion into the bandages. He exhaled shakily once he was finished and when he finally felt certain that Tommy wouldn't lose his canon life here.

The surrounding voices began to become coherent to his mind again. He glanced at their faces and tried to focus on what they were saying.

"-morrow morning, or else we'll continue this war and completely obliterate L'Manburg."

Eret saw Wilbur nod, and then the Greater Dream SMP members began to leave. Dream paused for a moment, staring at Eret, but then turned around and followed out with his friends who were cheering for their victory.

* * * * *

He thought he'd changed the future.

Sure, Tommy might've still had the duel with Dream, but nobody lost their canon lives in the war this time. This time, he never became a traitor.

So when Tommy returned at noon the next day after going to give Dream his disc, Eret felt despair when Tommy announced that L'Manburg had won independence after all- he'd given up *both* discs yet again.

He and Phil stood at the side of the room, as the others cheered excitedly, looking forward to the future with eyes full of hope.

"There's a lot more to come," he half-whispered, half-groaned.

Phil nodded. "Since L'Manburg has been emancipated, we'll have to watch the storyline closely after all. We'll have to stop Schlatt from exiling Wilbur if he wins the election. We'll have to stop Tubbo from getting executed in the festival. I..."

"We'll make sure Wilbur never goes mad," Eret muttered under his breath. "So you'll never have to kill him."

* * * * *

"You're moving to the north?"

"Yeah," Technoblade grunted. "I've said from the beginning that I dislike the government. I'm an anarchist after all. I'll stay in the SMP, but I'll live elsewhere."

"But you won't destroy L'Manburg? Even though it's a government?"

"No," he pinched his eyes. "Since Phil and Wilbur both asked me to let it be. Phil said to give them a chance. And Wilbur told me that if they ever become corrupt, I'm free to show up and fight then."

Eret smiled gratefully at Techno and held his hands. "Thank you, Techno," he said softly. "For coming here."

"I didn't even do anything," the piglin snorted.

"Just you being here cheered up the boys a lot," Eret said, "and you pretty much single-handedly ended our war! You scared Dream into finally ending the war."

Technoblade laughed and picked up his thick cloak, wrapped it around himself and waved a hand at Eret. "I'll see you around then, Eret. You're a pretty interesting person."

"See you," Eret smiled. "If you ever need anything, just call."

* * * * *

New members began to join the server. Familiar faces- Niki, Jack Manifold, Quackity, Karl Jacobs- but *nobody* had memories of the 'real' world like how he and Phil did.

He wasn't the King of the Greater Dream SMP in this timeline. Dream crowned George instead, who seemed quite happy with the arrangement. In *this* world, he had somehow been chosen as *Vice-President* of L'Manburg. He hadn't expected that one bit, but Tommy didn't seem to mind at all though, and actually looked very happy for Eret.

They built up their country, fixing up their buildings and roads. Eret built a cottage for himself, since it didn't really make sense for him to live in a castle anymore in this timeline. He'd built a small house for Phil too, for whenever Phil visited- since Phil had decided to leave to the north to keep Technoblade company.

* * * * *

Eret stared at the man standing in front of him. Dream fixed his mask, making sure it covered all parts of his face before turning around and facing him.

"Well?" Dream asked, folding his arms. "What did you call me here for?"

"I just wanted to let you know that even though we're on different sides, I still want to be friends."

"..." Dream sighed and waved his hand. "Sure, whatever."

"I *mean* it, Dream. Just because I didn't take your offer doesn't mean I'm choosing them over you guys-"

"It's fine, I'm already over it-" Dream insisted, turning away. "George is happy to be King anyway. If that's all you have to say-"

"If you ever need anything, I'll be happy to help. As long as it doesn't mean betraying or killing anyone, alright?"

"Got it," Dream muttered. "See you around, Eret."

As he watched the admin walk away, he heard a notification ping on his communicator. Pulling it out and glancing down at it, he sighed and walked back towards L'Manburg.

[jschlatt has joined the game]

Days passed, weeks passed, and the election had finally rolled around. The voting period would begin tonight, and the results would be announced tomorrow at noon.

"You good?" Phil asked, glancing at Eret who was fixing up his hair.

"Nervous, of course." He stared at himself in the mirror. Those clear, white pearl-like eyes in the reflection still creeped him out, even though it has been months. He still couldn't get used to it, still flinching whenever he accidentally saw them in mirrors or water. He put on his sunglasses when he was done and turned to look at Phil. "Though I know I've already done all I can do."

"Fundy and Niki aren't campaigning this time round, right?"

"Yeah, because they're rooting for us. Which is still pretty surprising to me..."

"Of course they'd support you two!" Phil smiled. "You convinced Wilbur to spend more time with Fundy, and you're like a big-brother to all of them. You're responsible and kind, of course they wouldn't mind if you and Will stayed as the vice president and president."

"Still... Schlatt and Quackity ended up running for it anyway. I couldn't stop Schlatt from drunkenly announcing his decision, and Quackity is still so ambitious."

"Hmm... Maybe we could stop them from teaming up together?"

"I don't remember when exactly they will meet though," Eret shook his head. "And I don't know *where* they meet either. Do you remember? But anyway- they might just message each other privately instead."

"Yeah, you're right..." Phil sighed.

"How's staying with Techno? Does he suspect anything?"

"It's pretty good, quiet and peaceful," Phil grinned. "It looks the exact same as the game- but I made a few improvements too. We don't really talk about the past much, so I don't think he suspects anything yet, but if he *does* say something someday, I think I know enough of my backstory to bullshit my way through it like you do with your 'Herobrine' excuse. Or I could also just say that I'm getting memory problems since I'm so old-"

Eret laughed. "That's fine then." He went quiet for a moment. "Do you think we should ever tell anyone that we're not actually...?"

Phil hummed. "Yeah, maybe one day. I might have to tell Technoblade eventually after all. Why?"

"I was wondering if I should tell Tommy or any of the other L'Manburg people."

"Did they suspect something?"

"I don't *think* so, but I'm not sure. Tommy was just worried that I kept having panic attacks and stuff..."

"It might be nice to tell the truth to someone else," Phil admitted. "But for now at least we've got each other. Later on, we should tell the others though. I don't mind waiting until you think we're ready though."

"Thanks," Eret said in relief.

"By the way..." Phil said, changing the subject. "You remember how Technoblade's cabin is close to the stronghold, right?"

"Yeah?"

"I was thinking we could go try and open the End Portal," Phil said quietly, after making sure nobody else could eavesdrop on them. "Maybe DreamXD will show up, to stop us like how he did when Technoblade found it in the game?"

Eret's eyes widened. He nodded and paced around. "That's a great idea! I actually found the first stronghold when this was a game, but that's in the future here and I don't remember the coordinates. When do you think we should go?"

"I'm free anytime," Phil shrugged. "After the election?"

"If we win, I'll be quite busy for the first few days," Eret grimaced. "and if we lose, we might be exiled. I'd have to keep an eye on Wilbur to make sure he doesn't go mad..."

"Oh, right..."

"Tonight?"

"Don't you need to be there to give a speech with Wilbur?" Phil frowned.

"Yeah, I meant after that. The speeches should end at about seven o'clock... and after you give your vote, we can be on our way. It takes about an hour to get there, right?"

"Don't worry about that," Phil grinned widely, flexing his wings. "I'll carry you, it'll be faster."

"Are you sure you can carry me the entire distance?" Eret paled at the thought. "You won't drop me, right?!"

"It'll be fine!" Phil laughed. "I've practised flying so much now, and luckily this body is *much* stronger than in real life. It'll be a fun experience for you too."

"Sure then," Eret hesitated. "Tonight, we'll force a god to show up by making him angry."

Chapter End Notes

Last chapter for a while, I'm gonna be too busy to write for a while T-T

This chapter moved things along quite a bit, kinda just skipped over the period after the war straight to the elections lmao. I'd imagine Eret spent the month or so attempting to befriend the new members (Niki, Jack, Quackity, Karl) while also fixing up L'Manburg and improving his relationship with Wilbur and the rest. And ofc grinding for materials to prepare for future events and people (his secondary goal in this life is to become rich /j)

Meanwhile, Phil moved to the north with Techno, though he's also got a place in L'Manburg that he'll use when he's visiting- maybe Techno will realise that Phil is *different* after living together for a while? 🧐🧐

Kudos/comments make my day and motivate me to write more :D (it's not my fault that life is a bitch and stops me from writing for a while ok?... ;-;) Hope you guys have enjoyed the story so far!

6. another year of promises weighing on my mind (pt. 1)

Chapter Summary

"Are you proud of me?" Wilbur had asked.

"You don't have to make me proud," Phil had replied. "I would love you all the same."

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The speeches went by just fine. Eret had noticed that Wilbur seemed more nervous and panicky than usual at the start of it, but everyone in L'Manburg had been so supportive and cheered for him louder than for any of the other candidates that Wilbur became much more confident and like his usual self again at the end.

Wilbur had grinned from ear to ear as he gazed over his fellow citizens clapping for him, and he had looked almost ready to burst into tears when he ran up to his father afterwards, asking what he thought of his speech.

Phil had hugged Wilbur, and said "It was an awesome speech son, I'm sure you'll win the election."

"Are you proud of me?" Wilbur had asked.

"You don't have to make me proud," Phil had replied. "I would love you all the same."

Eret laughed along with the others as Wilbur squirmed in Phil's hug, embarrassed but secretly happy. He felt certain that Wilbur wouldn't become paranoid in this timeline.

* * * * *

"Were you waiting long?" he panted, as he reached the meeting spot they'd picked earlier.

"Nah mate, I just got here a few minutes ago."

"So, how are we doing this?" Eret asked, watching Phil stretch and prepare his wings for the long-distance flight. "Do you need me to search the coords up? Or do you remember how to fly there directly?"

"Search it up just in case. I still haven't memorised the route entirely," Phil admitted. "I'm still more used to travelling through the Nether to get there. But in this world, the path I normally use isn't even built!"

Eret pulled out his communicator and recorded the coordinates to Technoblade and Phil's base down as Phil called them out. Phil couldn't search it up on his own communicator because he would need both arms to hold onto Eret.

"Got it," Eret informed him. "I'm ready whenever you are."

Phil nodded and stood behind Eret, hugging him from behind. He heard a loud gust of wind- the sound of wings flapping he realised- and then felt his feet leave the ground entirely.

"You alright?" Phil asked.

"Are *you*?! " Eret asked back, a little panicky. "You can't possibly carry me the entire way in one go, can you?"

"You barely weigh anything," Phil laughed. "I'm just this strong in canon, I guess. 'M not the Angel of Death for nothing."

"Just warn me if you're tired," Eret said hesitantly. He looked at the communicator in his hand. "Let's get going then."

* * * * *

After getting over the fear of being in the sky without being held up by anything except two arms, he started enjoying the flight a bit more. Phil had been right- flying was *amazing*- and he wasn't even *doing* the flying! They were speeding across the world, the lands below blurring and unintelligible to his eye.

"Oh! I recognise that cliff there- we're almost there," Phil yelled. They were quite high up, and the winds were surprisingly quite noisy, so they had to scream at each other to be heard.

"Great!" Eret yelled back. "You know how to get to the stronghold from here then?"

"More or less!"

A few more minutes of flying later, they'd arrived at the supposed site of the stronghold. Phil slowly landed- and as much as Eret enjoyed flying, he was incredibly glad to feel the floor beneath his feet again.

They began excavating the site together, until they'd found the first stone brick. "Over here!" Phil called and Eret made his way over quickly. Sure, he was glad to find the stronghold at last, but at the moment he was just glad to get indoors into the warmth. His fingers were freezing from mining out in the snow for a good half an hour.

Phil lit a torch and led the way to the portal room, where the Syndicate meeting room used to be. He found it relatively easily, and Eret stared at the End Portal frame in awe.

"It looks much cooler in person than in the game, huh," he said.

Phil laughed. "Do you have the eyes?"

Eret nodded and took them out of his inventory. He wondered how he was supposed to attach them to the frames, but in the end he didn't need to.

He felt somehow like the air had stilled- and he realised that he couldn't hear any noise at all anymore. He couldn't hear the sizzling lava, or the dripping water, or the mice and silverfish squeaking around behind the walls-

"***What do you think you're doing?!***" a voice said angrily. He and Phil both snapped their heads up at the sound.

"XD," Phil greeted. "It's good to see you."

"I don't know why you think that," the god replied. **"We've never met before, have we?"**

"What I meant is, it's good to know that you exist," Phil said. Eret stifled a laugh. "And you can calm yourself mate, we weren't actually going to go open the End."

"What?"

"We just wanted to summon you," Eret admitted. "This was the only way we knew how."

"Well, what do you want then?"

"Did you bring us here?"

"No, of course not!" the god scowled. The pair froze. **"It was probably a glitch in the code that brought you here-"**

"So you know who we actually are?!" Eret exclaimed. The god nodded.

"Of course I would notice an anomaly in my server. I knew from the moment you got here-"

"Can you send us back?" Phil asked.

"Probably." The awkward silence forced DreamXD to continue talking and to explain. **"Okay okay- yes. I can. But not yet."**

"Not yet?! Why?"

"You two know the future of my world, right? You know what happens to Dream."

Eret and Phil glanced at each other. "Pandora's Vault?"

I guess it makes sense he knows the future- he's the one who gave Karl his time powers, right?

"I can't let that happen to him. And you can help me stop it from happening."

Eret stared at the god. "When will you send us home then?! Sure, maybe we'll stop that exact future from happening, but what if he ends up imprisoned anyways in the future once we're gone? Are you going to bring us back if that happens?"

"I will send you home when I don't need you anymore," DreamXD answered vaguely. Eret frowned and clenched his fist tightly but didn't argue. **"When I think the future has changed enough, I'll let you go."**

"Alright..." Phil said after contemplating for a moment. But before the god could disappear, Eret yelled.

"Wait! I want something in return for helping you."

The god seemed too surprised to be angry. **"You want something in return for helping your friends?!"**

"Don't make it sound so bad," Eret said, a little embarrassed, but he was determined. "It's *for* them anyway- I want something that will help me change the future."

Phil's eyes widened as if to say, *"Wow, I didn't even think about that!"*. The god paused, but nodded.

"That's fair, I guess. But it depends on what it is. I can't open the End for you-" he said, gesturing at the portal. **"But what else were you thinking of?"**

Eret swallowed thickly and said loudly before he could hesitate any more: "If it's possible, I want you to make sure I don't lose my final life and Phil doesn't lose his. How will we change the future if we die?"

The god frowned. **"I cannot interfere too much with life or death. Choose something else. What about an elytra or a shulker box?"**

Eret squinted his eyes and ran his hand through his hair. "I'm not looking for material items though- they won't be so helpful. They'd just make me a bigger target to the others," he sighed.

What kind of non-material things can I ask from a god of a server though?

His eyes widened as he had what he'd call a 'genius' idea. His clenched fist hit the palm of his other hand.

That's it! I know exactly what to ask for!

"Make me an operator."

"What?!"

Both the god and Phil stared at him in shock.

"Do you *know* what you are asking me?!" DreamXD thundered. Eret didn't waver.

"You can do it, can't you? The 'slash op' command?" Eret said feverishly. "Use it on me! That way Dream won't be able to ban me from the SMP. And if he ever kicks out Phil, I'll be able to let him back! As well as that, it'll be much easier for me to keep watch on everyone and-"

"It's not that simple!" the god shouted, stunning Eret. He blinked as XD hollered on. **"This might just be some game to you, but it's not the same to me! It's an actual *world*- There are *rules* and restrictions to choosing admins! I can't just choose *anyone* to-"**

"What kind of rules? Can't you change them?"

"There are beings outside of servers that have more power than even me," DreamXD scowled. **"I can usually only make someone an operator if they're properly trained for it. If I were to make an exception, you'd have to be screened- and they *definitely* will check your code and realise you're an anomaly. And then they'd send you back- and I can't have that."**

Eret refrained from asking who 'they' were, and instead answered, "How long is the training then?"

"A year. That's ages away though- you might as well pick something else."

But as Eret thought about what other things he could ask for, the god suddenly had an epiphany.

"Wait... I've just remembered something."

"Yes?"

"I *could* make you an admin, but you would have lots of restrictions on the commands you can use. As you progress through your training though, they'll slowly be unlocked for you. But at the very least, you'd be protected from Dream from the very beginning- admins can't ban each other."

He thought about it. "Won't 'they' screen me though? And would the training stop me from spending time with the others?"

"Just a few hours a day would be enough," the god said. "I'll make it so that you can cut some corners. And no, they won't screen the admins-in-training."

Eret looked at Phil, who only nodded at him. He stared back at the floating god. "What kind of training is it? Would someone like me even be able to pass it?"

"It should be fine," XD said. "Though you might want to consider your decision a bit more. Becoming an admin bears a lot more weight than you think, you know. For one, you would become connected with the server and connected with *me*."

He gulped but didn't move away. "What do you mean by connected with you?"

"You would have to report to me more often, and I would be able to communicate with you no matter where you are."

"And what will happen to that once I'm gone back home?"

"I imagine the connection would break."

The influx of information swirled inside his mind and he subconsciously nodded, trying to make sense of everything. The god coughed, **"I will give you a few days to think about it. If you end up choosing something else, that would be fine too."**

"Alright," Eret nodded again. "Thank you."

* * * * *

"Holy shit, I feel like you've just been dealing with the devil."

Eret laughed. "I mean, you're correct except that it wasn't the devil but a *god*."

Phil shook his head and continued talking. "How'd you even think of asking for something like that? I thought you would just ask for an elytra or some OP enchanted items!"

"What am I going to use elytra for when it's only me flying? I can't carry someone like you do," Eret said. "And I can make my own tools and armour- I've gotten the hang of enchanting a while ago already. Besides, what good would weapons be when I make a peaceful era?"

"I guess that's true..." Phil hummed as he pulled out a spare bed from a chest and set it down. "Here- you can sleep on this. It's really late now, so I'm gonna head to bed."

"Thanks," Eret smiled, watching Phil climb the stairs. "Goodnight! I'll see you in the morning."

That night, lying in the cottage in the tundras, Eret dreamt of Foolish and his summer house.

Chapter End Notes

This fic should be part of a series by the time you're reading this chapter- check out part 2 which is just extra chapters in between this main story! (First chapter is in between 5 and 6- it's Phil reacting to Eret's IRL cooking in Minecraft!)

Thanks for reading! I'll be back with more soon hopefully :D

6. another year of promises weighing on my mind (pt. 2)

Chapter Summary

Eret was half-out of his seat waiting in anticipation. This would determine his next course of action, this would tell him whether he'd changed quite a lot or not enough—

"Without further ado, I want to go through the election results."

Chapter Notes

A bit of a shorter chapter today :)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"You're going back already?" Technoblade asked with a mug of tea in hand. "You only got here last night."

Eret nodded. "They're announcing the results at noon," he said apologetically. He had become friends-of-sorts with this Technoblade. "And technically I'm supposed to be there in the first place. Nobody knows I came here."

Phil walked into Techno's house with his coat and hat on. "You ready mate?" he asked after sneezing twice.

"Yeah." Eret stood up and looked at Techno again. "You should come visit the mainlands more often if you want to hang out more. I'm sure Tommy misses you too."

The piglin snorted. "Yeah right. I don't think it'd be a good idea for an anarchist to be close to your nation though."

"Just think about it, alright?" Eret said as he pulled on his cloak. "It'd be nice to hang out somewhere less cold."

* * * * *

They arrived back before anyone noticed they'd even left. Eret's stomach rumbled but he ignored the hunger, much too anxious to worry about food. He paced around the land, thinking about the *next* thing to do, the *next* step for fixing the future.

If I've succeeded in stopping Schlatt from winning, it'll be easier to stop Tubbo from getting killed. Wilbur will be less paranoid, will be less likely to die or blow up his own country. If Schlatt wins and exiles us, I'll have to stop Techno from coming to the festival, help Tubbo escape Manberg, and help Niki and the other citizens out too. Ah shit- and Fundy, I would have to make sure he's not all alone either. If Schlatt wins, I'll send Wilbur to Phil and Techno until I save the rest of the L'Manburgians. And Tommy... if he's also exiled, I'll send him with Wilbur too. If we really did win though, I could

skip all that and just make sure that no executions happen in any festivals and Wilbur never makes the room with the button-

He stopped suddenly in his tracks, snapping out of his thoughts. Tubbo was right in front of him, staring at him. The boy asked, "Hey, are you okay?"

"Uh- yeah, why wouldn't I be?" he answered, tilting his head slightly. *When did he get so close?*

"You weren't reacting to me shouting your name," Tubbo said. "I called you like five times."

"Oh."

"We're gathering now, it's almost noon. Are you sick? If you're sick we can go back and get some potio-"

"I'm fine," Eret assured him. "I was just thinking about something important."

"Well if you're sure..."

A few minutes later, they arrived at the base of the podium where everyone else was gathered. He caught sight of Wilbur and made his way over to him.

"Are you nervous?" he asked in lieu of greeting.

"Of the results?" Eret asked. "Of course I am! Why are you asking?"

"It's just- you almost always look calm, so I have no idea what you're thinking sometimes," Wilbur said quietly. "I don't *understand* you."

"Eret! You finally got here!" Tommy greeted loudly. "Was worried for a moment that you wouldn't show up."

"Of course I'd show up!" he huffed, ruffling the boy's golden hair.

Wilbur coughed and looked at his pocket watch. "It's about time we get started. Everyone's here already after all."

And so, the final speeches began. Afterwards, came the moment of truth. Wilbur stepped back onto the podium after the last speech, and began to announce the final results for the first election of L'Manburg.

Eret was half-out of his seat waiting in anticipation. This would determine his next course of action, this would tell him whether he'd changed quite a lot or not enough-

"Without further ado, I want to go through the election results."

Eret glanced over at Phil, who was watching more interested than any of the other citizens. Phil noticed him looking, and gave a reassuring smile.

"With 18% of the votes, coming in third..." Wilbur looked over at Schlatt. "is Schlatt2020!"

He was still holding onto his breath as the others commented on the result. He was still worrying about the next amount of votes. Even if Quackity came second, if he got over 33%, SchWAG2020

would still win. (He wasn't sure if Quackity and Schlatt had even made the deal, but he could only assume they did.)

"In second place, with 30% of the popular vote-" he paused, "led by the party leader Quackity, is Swag2020."

Eret's eyes widened. He couldn't help the grin forming on his face as he realised-

"Meaning, that the winner of the popular vote, by 52% is Pog2020!"

Wilbur beckoned him onto the stage and he felt dizzy as he walked through the crowds of cheering people. Tommy, Fundy, Tubbo and Niki were chanting Wilbur and Eret's names. Phil had a huge grin on his face, gave him thumbs up and mouthed, "I knew you could do it!"

Wilbur smiled at Eret as he climbed up to the spot beside him. Schlatt and Quackity scowled as they made their way to the seats below.

"Well!" Wilbur started. "I guess you're not getting rid of us just yet!"

Eret grinned. It felt like a fever dream- they had actually won. He had changed the future!

"As President of L'Manburg, I'd like to tell you all a story. It's a story I'm sure you all know very well- the origins of our great nation!"

Wilbur paused as the clapping and cheering died down. "It all began in a van..."

* * * * *

"...and that was when Eret, our newly-elected Vice-President, called for our battalion to regroup in L'Manburg!"

Wilbur had finally gotten to the part where Eret led them towards the Final Control Room.

"When I remember that moment, I think of all the other possibilities that could've happened that day," he said quietly, glancing at Eret. "Because you see, I'd heard something *interesting* the day before."

Eret froze. That was the day before he died. What happened that day? He couldn't remember anything significant happening that day.

"In the dead of night, I woke up and realised that someone was missing from our bunker. I slipped outside, wondering if they were getting some air or that they were too worried to sleep- but instead I heard voices *arguing*."

He suddenly realised what Wilbur was talking about. He clenched his fist tightly, unsure of where this was going.

"I watched from behind a tree, what appeared to be *Eret* making a deal with Dream!" Wilbur announced. Tommy and the others were too shocked to react. "I listened in to their argument, and heard that Eret was supposed to lead us somewhere and that the Greater Dream SMP members would capture us all by surprise. Dream planned to *execute me*, and Eret shook his hand in agreement."

Tommy interrupted the story then, yelling, "There's no way Eret would do that! You were probably just dreaming Will! This is *Eret* you're talking about!"

Tubbo also stood up. "Eret would never do such a thing!" The other L'Manburg citizens seemed angry too, and confused at Wilbur's story.

"No," Eret stood up and walked closer to the edge where Wilbur stood with the microphone. "I'm afraid he's telling the truth."

"What?!" He could feel everyone's eyes on him at that moment.

But Wilbur didn't look at him. "Let me continue the story guys," he said. "So I heard all about that deal the day before. When Eret told us to regroup in a secret room he'd built, I thought I knew what was going to happen. I'd *seen* him shake Dream's hand after all. But in the end as you all know..."

"He led us halfway there and told us the truth. He didn't betray us- he *never* betrayed us- he pretended to side with the enemy and betrayed *them*! When he gave us all brand new netherite equipment and an escape route back to safety, when he sacrificed his *life* for *us*, I knew that there was no reason to doubt him anymore!"

Everyone began clapping and cheering again. He smiled at Eret who stared at him stunned. "I feel ashamed that I ever doubted you, Eret. I can't think of a better person than you to be L'Manburg's vice president. I'd make you the President, but you're the one who told me that you're too busy for *more* responsibilities!"

Eret was speechless. A moment ago, he was on the verge of dashing away from the condemning stares and judging eyes. But now it seemed like everyone was staring at him with awe and more respect than ever.

"...Why," he strangled out eventually, his voice oddly hoarse. "Why did you decide to follow me then? I might've been leading you to your death. To *all* of your deaths, possibly. There was no guarantee that the boys would've been safe."

"I..." Wilbur suddenly became quiet. "I knew you would protect the boys, if nothing else. Sure, I believed you might betray *L'Manburg*, but I knew you would do everything to keep Fundy, Tommy and Tubbo safe."

"So you would've let yourself be executed?!"

"I thought it would be the only way to prove to the boys that you were a traitor. I knew that they would defend you- you were always so kind to them," his face was red. "Like I said, I'm ashamed I ever doubted you. I'm sorry, Eret."

Eret's head was spinning. *Have I made Wilbur paranoid after all? But Wilbur said he trusts me now, so is Wilbur fine again?* He took a step backwards.

"I-" he swallowed thickly. "I'm sorry too."

He surprised Wilbur by hugging him out of nowhere. Wilbur's voice was very muffled when he asked, "What are you talking about? What for?"

"For making you worry." *For betraying you in another life.*

* * * * *

Tommy insisted that Eret give a speech before they began their celebratory feast. He didn't want to, but the others were all looking at him expectantly.

"I'm not as amazing as Wilbur says I am," he said with a smile. He could hear Tommy scoffing. "I'm just trying my best, but I'm human too. I make mistakes too."

"I'll do my best this year too," he continued on. "And together with Wilbur, we'll continue protecting L'Manburg and improving it. This *special place* where men, and women," he coughed, making Niki laugh, "and anyone else, can go and be emancipated!"

He held up his glass high in the air and the others followed suit (they'd passed out drinks already). "Here's to a year of peace and prosperity to L'Manburg!"

"To L'Manburg!"

* * * * *

He walked up to Quackity, who was watching the festivities from the side of the room. "Big Q," he said as the man nodded at him.

"What's up? Nice speech by the way."

"Thanks," he said embarrassed. "I hope there's no hard feelings?"

"Nah, you guys won fair and square," he said. If Eret didn't know him any better, he would've said Quackity was bitter.

"You're welcome to come live in L'Manburg if you want," Eret offered quietly. "I'm sorry, but I didn't realise the others kicked you out for being American until they told me a while later... I had been away the day you arrived. And I never ran into you much afterwards. But anyway- I'm sure they'll let you in if I insist."

"It's alright, I already started setting up my own place somewhere else," Quackity said. "I appreciate the offer though."

"If you ever need anything, just message me, alright? I'll help with whatever you need- as long as it's reasonable, of course."

Quackity nodded slowly. "You really are as kind as the others said, huh."

"I try my best," Eret said with a wry smile. He offered his hand to Quackity. "I hope to see you around more often, then! It would be nice to get to know each other better."

"Sure," Quackity grinned for the first time since they began chatting and shook his hand. "That would be nice."

Chapter End Notes

Glad you guys liked the brief foreshadowing about Foolish last chapter lmao, but sadly there's still a while before he'll show up.

Also- in case you don't get it, this chapter is the one where Eret finally realises that Wilbur completely trusts him :D

Next chapter where Eret completes the deal with DreamXD will be out tomorrow! Thanks for the continued support <3

6. another year of promises weighing on my mind (pt. 3)

Chapter Summary

He ran back to the area where he had seen the god. In the blink of an eye, he felt himself suddenly freeze and tumble through what seemed like the void and then back into existence. He breathed shakily, blinking rapidly staring up at the god who was now right in front of him. They were on a nearby rooftop.

"Did you just- teleport me?" he asked, rubbing his eyes while forcing himself to take deep breaths.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Eret wasn't sure when DreamXD would show up again. He wondered a few times per day whether he should travel back to the stronghold or not. But a few days after his and Wilbur's inauguration, the god appeared out of thin air while Eret was extending the Prime Path with Tommy and Tubbo. He noticed the god out of the corner of his eye, and went to inform the boys that he was taking a break to go meet someone else and that they could rest too.

He ran back to the area where he had seen the god. In the blink of an eye, he felt himself suddenly freeze and tumble through what seemed like the void and then back into existence. He breathed shakily, blinking rapidly staring up at the god who was now right in front of him. They were on a nearby rooftop.

"Did you just- teleport me?" he asked, rubbing his eyes while forcing himself to take deep breaths.

"Yes. You'll have to get used to it if you're going to be an admin. But have you decided?" XD asked.

Eret sucked in a breath and nodded. "I'll take the training. But would Dream realise immediately that I've become an admin?"

"He might sense something different about you," the god said after giving it some thought. **"But unless he tries to kick or ban you, he wouldn't be certain that you've become an admin."**

"Alright." He felt strangely calm now, despite having been worrying about this whole situation for the past few days. "So what do I have to do now? What exactly is the training anyway?"

"You have to learn how to use the commands- you won't be able to use them all at once. After taking the final exam, you'll be a fully-fledged admin who can create your own server if you want to."

"Do I even need to take the exam then? Is there any other benefit to passing it?"

"You will have to try and pass the exam anyway, even if you don't necessarily want to create your own server. If you fail, I'll have to take admin powers away."

Eret grimaced but nodded. "Okay, I think I understand now."

And so, the god began the process of promoting Eret to apprentice-admin.

Eret watched at XD's mask in awe as it glowed bright, and the lime green aura around the god made its way to Eret. He stared at his hands which were engulfed in the strange light, and he clenched his fist.

"Close your eyes," DreamXD ordered, so Eret did. **"I'm changing the code inside you right now. Can you feel it? You, becoming connected to the server?"**

He scrunched his eyes together, unsure of what XD was talking about. But as time went on, he felt a strange warmth in his chest that grew and grew. When he concentrated, it felt like there was a rope, or chain- *or a line of code?*- that connected his heart to the world around him. He could feel the code all around him, the server made up of all the 1s and 0s, and he nodded.

"It's done," the god said finally. **"You can open your eyes now."**

He opened them hesitantly, but blinked in relief to see that nothing had changed. "That's it?"

"Yes. If you look at your communicator though, you'll notice the change."

Eret took it out quickly and opened it up. When he entered '/', he saw that there was now a long list of commands that he wasn't able to use before. Well, they were *still* greyed and crossed out right now, but he would be able to use them someday.

He smiled. "Thank you! So, what's first?"

The god pulled out a notebook from thin air and passed it to him. He stared at it, eyes wide, and eventually spluttered, "I have to learn how to *code*?!"

"Yes, that is an essential part of being an admin."

He sighed. Hadn't Dream, George, Sapnap, Sam- and all the other Dream SMP members (back in the real world) who knew how to code- spent a couple of *years* learning to code? How was he supposed to learn it in a year?!

"Are you sure I'll be able to learn it in a year?" he asked, a little resigned.

"Other admins have done it before, so I'm quite sure."

"Fine- I don't really have a choice anyway. Is there anything else I should do for now? Because the boys will be looking for me-"

"That's all you have to do for now. I'll come by every few weeks to check up on you."

Eret nodded and watched the god disappear. He looked at the textbook in his hand, and sighed again. He had *not* expected that he would start a coding course while living in a video game.

* * * * *

"Oh my god, you have to learn how to code?!"

Eret scowled as Phil howled with laughter. "I thought I'd just have to learn the commands! He never said anything about coding until he already made me an admin-"

Phil slapped his knee, tears forming in his eyes from laughing too much. "Good luck, mate. Sucks to be you, having to survive in a video game while studying for your finals!"

He rolled his eyes but smiled. "It's a bit ironic, isn't it? I can't believe I actually have to study *in a game*. It sounds so stupid like that- I'm supposed to be having *fun* here, and here I am, studying for an exam at the end of the year."

After the laughs died down, they moved onto what they'd do for their next course of action.

"Vikkstar and Lazar," Eret said, tapping his pen on the desk. "Can you keep an eye on them for me when they arrive in a few weeks? From what I remember, they disappear from the lore because Dream begins his experiments on them. Though I'm not even sure if Schlatt even has the book or if he would give Dream the book in this timeline anymore."

"Sure," Phil nodded. "I can also remind Tommy to go hang out with them a bit more- I'm sure Tommy wouldn't mind. It'd be better to have more eyes on them."

Eret stared at the new names in his book. Karl, Hbomb and Antfrost- the people who had joined the SMP recently. "Do you have any ideas about what we can do for Karl? He starts to lose his memories when he time travels more. How can we stop that...?"

"The first 'Tales of the SMP' was in December," Phil said after thinking about it. "We have some time until then. I don't have any ideas yet- I'll keep it in mind though. For Antfrost, we just have to deal with the Egg, right?"

"I believe so." He wrote the next few people who would join. "Connor and Puffy joined the day you did, right? And not long after, so does Ranboo."

"Yeah, and after that it's Foolish, Hannah, Charlie and Michael." Eret jotted them down as Phil listed the names. He paused, remembering Foolish.

I can't let the Red Banquet happen. I can't let Foolish be sacrificed for me.

"Connor... he ends up in the Prison at some point, right? The best method of avoiding that would just be not letting it be built- that would solve a lot of our other worries too."

Phil nodded. "The Egg seems to be the biggest problem in the end though," he said, pointing at some names. "Puffy, Foolish and Hannah all have parts in the Egg lore."

"What should we do about Ranboo though? I don't even know the details about the lore he planned with Dream- was it really Dream controlling his enderwalking?"

"Something like that, I think. There's no guarantee that Dream won't use Ranboo after finding out about it, so I guess we'll just have to keep an eye on Ranboo for a while- if he doesn't enderwalk, that'd be great. And if he does, I guess we'll just have to explain it to him early on so he can sleep in a locked room at night or something."

"Won't his enderwalking self know how to break blocks though? And teleport?"

Phil frowned, "Oh right- I almost forgot that Ranboo would actually be half-enderman..."

"I'll just have to make sure that Dream doesn't get obsessed with control," Eret sighed, circling Ranboo and Karl- the two people who he didn't know how to save just yet. "What about Charlie? He was found by Quackity in Las Nevadas. Should we even let Las Nevadas become a thing? *Would* Quackity even set up Las Nevadas?"

"No idea... But if anyone finds Charlie someday, we just have to make sure he doesn't die. It was planned for Purpled to push him into lava, right? I guess we have to make sure Quackity never blows up Purpled's UFO so he won't want revenge."

"What about Michael?" Eret asked. "I don't think I ever interacted with him in the lore."

"He hadn't done much so I'm not sure what his plans were behind his character," Phil shook his head. "He got a tour of the server and then went to build his own place, I think? But he doesn't show up until much later- around May?"

"Okay, let's focus on the others for now then. The Egg gets found by Bad sometime before December, right?"

"Yes, but I don't remember where or how. I just remember that the vines began to spread around then..."

"There's way too much going on," Eret groaned. "Let's just focus on the next two months for now- October and November. We've got to make sure no executions happen at any festivals, Wilbur stays sane, and we've also got to keep an eye on Vikk and Lazar. And we've got to think of some kind of solution to Ranboo's enderwalking, for when he shows up at the end of November..."

* * * * *

Eret was lying on his bed at night, staring up at the open notebook (with his plans on how to save everyone) in his hands. Rolling onto his side, he sighed when he caught sight of the giant textbook on the nightstand beside him. He'd read the first few sections already, and while it didn't seem *too* difficult, it still gave him anxiety whenever he caught sight of it.

After all, he had *way* too many things on his plate.

He'd read the table of contents a few times already. Most of the *useful* commands that he wanted (like teleporting) were near the end, meaning he wouldn't be able to use them until he'd learnt the basics and a couple other *easier* commands. Like controlling the weather.

That was the first thing he had to learn actually.

He didn't really understand why controlling the weather was that important, but he just went with it. There were eleven chapters about commands, and an introduction chapter that had the basics about coding and also told him about the history of servers and operators.

So, twelve chapters in total- the other admins must have studied a chapter per month then.

It was already near the end of September though, and if he didn't skip anything, he'd only get to the chapter about teleportation in May.

I don't even know if I'll be here in May.

He flipped the page in his notebook, staring at the long list of names of everyone who would become a member of the Dream SMP. A good bunch of them would be affected by the Egg- so that was

definitely one of things he should concentrate on.

However, he didn't have *any* ideas for how to fight back against it. He wasn't sure where Bad and the others wanted to go with the Egg lore after the Red Banquet- Sam had attempted to confine it, but nobody had found a way to completely destroy it. He didn't know *if* there even was a way to completely get rid of it.

There's still a few months until the Egg arc though- for now, I'll just focus on L'Manburg for Wilbur's sanity... and my own.

Chapter End Notes

Man, I feel like my own sanity is leaving me. I just died in a Minecraft realm, losing all my netherite armour, elytra and equipment (sword, axe, two pickaxes, shovel, bow, trident) and other things (everything was maxed out enchanted too...), and now I feel pissed and so frustrated with myself :((((

Since I was the only one on the realm for hours, I asked the owner to roll it back an hour but they haven't responded yet, my fingers are crossed!!!!

Anyways- I hope you guys are having a much better day than I am! If you read my rant, thanks lmao!

One last question: would you guys be interested if I made another fic where it's Phil's POV of this same world instead? I've been thinking about it for quite a while now, because there are scenes in the future where Phil will be doing things by himself and Eret won't know about what happens, except from what others tell him. I want to try writing 'unreliable narrators' so yeah :>

Hope you guys have a better day/night than me!

7. things aren't always as they seem (pt. 1)

Chapter Summary

"Who's invited?"

"Everyone," Wilbur said, pulling out a piece of paper to write down some notes. "Anyone who wants to come can come. Will you get Tubbo for me? I think he would enjoy decorating the place."

Chapter Notes

TW: getting shot by arrow, temporary character death

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"I want to hold a festival!"

Eret wanted to grimace, but just looked at Wilbur with a blank expression on his face. "A festival?"

"It'll be fun!" Wilbur announced. "A festival to celebrate democracy and L'Manburg!"

"Sure," Eret said, resigned. *I guess this damn festival is just fate.* "When do you want to hold it?"

"Next week, on the 16th. Can you prepare the invitations and send them out?"

"Who's invited?"

"Everyone," Wilbur said, pulling out a piece of paper to write down some notes. "Anyone who wants to come can come. Will you get Tubbo for me? I think he would enjoy decorating the place."

"If it's alright, could you leave that to me?"

Wilbur looked up at him in surprise. "Uhh, that's fine with me, but are you sure? I thought you said you were going to be really busy these days."

"Decorating won't take too much of my time," Eret waved his hand. He could feel a lump growing in his throat. "Let Tubbo make some games with the boys or something."

Just in case, something goes wrong- I can't have Tubbo decorating his own execution.

"That's a good idea! We can have party games and a feast," Wilbur nodded. "I want to make this a festival that nobody will ever forget!"

* * * * *

Eret felt like time was flying by. Every single day, he had a pile of things to do: studying, decorating, and socialising. And that was just when he didn't need to go mining or gathering other resources.

In the blink of an eye, the week passed and the festival day rolled around.

It didn't seem like anything would go wrong, but Eret was on edge the entire time. He wouldn't let down his guard until the day was over- not even until the festival was over, but until the clock ticked *past* midnight and became the 17th.

He let himself relax slightly, as he watched the citizens and guests of L'Manburg celebrate and enjoy the games together. They were all laughing and cheering- he couldn't help but ease up a little bit. But when the speeches began, he and Phil stood side-by-side taking everything in attentively, making sure nothing was going wrong. But-

Wilbur was standing on the podium, giving the concluding speech for the festival when all of a sudden, an arrow cut through the air and struck Wilbur right in his upper arm.

Phil screamed Wilbur's name, and flew immediately to his son. Eret spun around, desperately trying to see who would try to kill Wilbur and he saw-

"Techno?!"

The piglin had jumped out of his seat and used his riptide trident to fly up to the rooftops. Then, he noticed the cloaked figure who Techno had discovered. They were fighting, but then the guy took a step backwards. Technoblade was much better at close combat than the hitman, and stabbed the person in the chest before Eret could realise what was happening.

"No- wait! Don't kill-" he yelled, but it was too late.

Everyone's communicator dinged when the cloaked man disappeared.

[Quackity was slain by Technoblade using [Orphan Obliterator]]

Quackity?!

Everyone was on guard now, pulling out their weapons and watching each other warily. Eret ran towards the podium. "Everyone!" he yelled at the crowd. "Please don't do anything hasty! Go home and stay safe-"

Tommy and the other L'Manburg citizens tried to make their way towards Wilbur too, but Eret shook his head and told them to hide in a safe space until things died down. "I can't be in multiple places at once," he said hurriedly. "I'll go settle whatever's going on between them- but I don't have time to worry about all of you guys too, so please just go home and stay safe until I message you-"

Tubbo nodded and grabbed Tommy's hand while Niki grabbed Jack and Fundy's. "We'll be at Tommy's- come find us later, alright?"

"Yeah-" Eret waved goodbye while he began to climb the podium.

When he reached the top, he realised that Technoblade had made his way over to Phil and Wilbur too. He wondered what was going through the piglin's mind. He shook his head and focused on Wilbur's

wound. Phil had already removed the arrow, cleaned and bandaged it, but Wilbur still seemed out of it.

"I already gave him a regeneration potion-" Phil said hurriedly, as Eret sat down beside them and pulled out his communicator to check his inventory.

He shook his head and took out a bucket of milk. He tilted his head at the broken arrow on the floor. "He's probably poisoned," he muttered, pulling Wilbur up slightly and forced him to drink the milk. "I doubt he'll die now, but he probably feels like shit."

He glanced at Technoblade. "Why," he said in hushed tones, "did you kill him?! You could have captured him without taking his life."

Techno stared at the sword in his hand. "You should've heard what he said."

"What did he say?" he asked with a sinking feeling. *I didn't change Quackity's mind. He still feels bitter for getting kicked out of L'Manburg for being American?*

"He said that he'll build his own country and declare war on L'Manburg."

Fuck.

* * * * *

"What happened?!" "Is Wilbur going to live?!" "Where's Wilbur?!" The group ambushed Eret with a ton of questions the second he stepped into Tommy's house.

"He'll live, he'll be fine," Eret assured the group. "Phil's taking care of him right now, we've given him potions and milk so he should be fine when he wakes up. And Technoblade is protecting him, so you don't have to worry about them being attacked again."

They breathed in relief but then Tommy yelled angrily, "Fuck! Why the hell did Quackity shoot Will?!"

Eret grimaced. "He was bitter that you guys kicked him out of L'Manburg for being American."

"So he decided to assassinate Wilbur?!"

"Pretty much." Eret sighed. The boys moved out of his way and he sat down at the table. Niki poured him a drink and he took it gratefully.

"We have to fight back!" Tommy declared, with Tubbo and Fundy nodding enthusiastically.

"He already lost a canon life to Techno," Eret said, almost spitting out the drink. *No- I have to stop these guys from getting so focused on revenge all the damn time!*

"That's not enough," Tommy scowled. "He almost killed Wilbur!"

"He *died*. What more do you want to do to him?! Kill him until he has no lives left?!"

"...I'll grief his house and steal his stuff!"

"And then what?!" Eret clenched his fist tightly, trying his best to stop himself from slamming his fist on the table. "He'll be *more* angry with you guys! He'll try to get revenge on you- he might try to kill

you, he might blow up *your* base, he might release withers in L'Manburg! Revenge begets revenge- when will it ever end?! When will you guys learn to forgive each other and move on?!"

Niki seemed to understand a little. She looked down at her own cup in silence.

"So we're just supposed to leave him alone?!" Fundy yelled. "He almost killed my dad!"

"And he died for it! You don't need to make it worse!"

Tommy scowled and turned away. "I'll do what Wilbur tells me to do when he wakes up tomorrow. I thought you'd be on *our side* Eret, not that bastard's."

The other two younger boys followed Tommy to the bedroom, leaving Eret with Niki and Jack. He nursed his head and sighed.

I didn't mean to yell.

"I understand what you mean," Niki said quietly, "but he hurt *Will*- he hurt our friend. I still feel angry at him, even though I know he already suffered for it. I still can't forgive him."

Eret swallowed and nodded. "That's okay," he said. "It's okay if you feel angry at him. But he's already paid for it, there isn't any point in chasing after more revenge. Revenge will just make everyone more bitter in the end."

* * * * *

"Don't do anything," Wilbur said weakly. The boys began to splutter. Wilbur stared at Eret who stayed silent. "Technoblade already took one of his lives, right? You don't need to do anything else."

"But Will-!"

"I can trust Eret with my life," he said. "I trust his decision on this matter too."

* * * * *

"Hey."

"What the *fuck*?!" Quackity exclaimed, jumping up and glaring at Eret. He pulled out a weapon but when Eret made no move to take out his, he hesitantly put it away. "How the hell did you find me?"

"I'm just lucky I guess," Eret shrugged. "I've been searching for a while, it's about time I found you."

"You're not here to get revenge for Wilbur?" he scowled.

"You already lost a life," he said bitterly, to Quackity's surprise. "Why would I do anything else?"

"Why do *you* sound more upset than me for losing a life?" he said warily. "...We're not even *that* close."

"I know how much it hurts," Eret sat down beside Quackity. "I wouldn't want anyone to feel that pain."

"You're so fucking strange," Quackity muttered.

"So, what are you going to do now?"

"I don't know. I don't know what the hell I'm supposed to do now..."

"Can I ask... why you did it? I told you you could come live in L'Manburg if you wanted- you didn't *need* to attack him..."

"I wasn't exactly thinking straight," Quackity scowled, looking away. "I *know* it was irrational of me, attacking your president in the middle of your festival, surrounded by people who would drop everything for their leader. But I felt so angry- that you guys were all celebrating and having fun after not allowing me to live there."

Eret nodded in understanding. They watched the birds fly overhead in silence for a few minutes, until Quackity began talking again.

"I know I shouldn't have attacked him. I'm not saying that just because of Technoblade killing me."

"Are you going to get revenge on him?"

"On Technoblade?" Quackity snorted. "Like I could do anything against him. But no," he shook his head. "I think I'll just build my own country. I might get Karl and some others to join me."

Eret smiled. "I think that's a good idea, as long as you don't start wars against us."

I just need to make sure you don't sacrifice Karl's life...

"Nah, it would just be a suicide plan going against someone with Technoblade on their side," Quackity sighed. "The only problem is Dream," he frowned. "Didn't it take ages for you guys to gain independence?"

"You could probably convince George to give your country independence," Eret said after a moment. "If you get him and Sapnap on your side, I'm sure Dream won't do anything to you guys."

Quackity's eyes widened. "You're right! But *would* they even think about leaving Dream's side?"

"Maybe not yet," he hummed. "But in a few months, I think it'd be quite likely."

"How do you know?"

"I have a feeling that L'Manburg won't be the only country around- and I'm quite sure that even George and Sapnap will join other ones, or at least be allied with them."

"How can you be so sure of that though?" Quackity squinted his eyes.

"I'm related to Herobrine," Eret grinned. "I just have a feeling."

"Maybe that's why it's so different talking to you," Quackity mumbled.

* * * * *

Eret was feeling more glum than ever. He had overheard the boys planning to raid Quackity's base, despite Wilbur and Eret's orders, and he didn't know what to say to convince them otherwise.

"I've got an idea," Phil said at last. Eret stared up at his last hope.

"They said that they're ambushing at night, right?"

"Yeah, tonight," Eret nodded.

"Make it start raining," Phil grimaced.

"What?!"

"You know how to do that by now, right? How to control the weather? Change it so that it's lashing outside tonight... and you might as well add some lightning strikes too. That would force them to stay indoors tonight..."

"They'd just go *another* night then!"

"I'll tell them a story tonight to pass the time. I'll make sure they give up their plan by the end of it," Phil said with a determined look.

"Are you sure it will work?"

"If it doesn't, I'll just threaten to keep them locked up with Technoblade watching them."

Chapter End Notes

Just got home from work *past midnight* (after a 2hr trip instead of 30 mins), because of all the traffic by Ed Sheeran's concert today ;-;

I've been really busy these past few days, so I didn't have much time to write. (And cuz I've had a bit of a writer's block... I *know* what I want to write, but I somehow just don't feel like writing it??) Can't wait for the exams to be over so I'll have more time to write :D

Hope you guys are having a good day/night! Thanks for reading my fic <3

7. things aren't always as they seem (pt. 2)

Chapter Summary

The teenager's face crumpled. "When you say it like that..." he hesitated. "I- I'd choose my friends over my discs. Of *course* I wouldn't choose discs over Tubbo."

Eret smiled.

"Glad to hear you'd pick me," Tubbo grinned, smacking Tommy on the back. "I don't know what I would've done if you said you'd choose discs over your best friend. Or are you just saying that because I'm right here?"

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"A long, long time ago, before the Dream SMP..."

Eret, Niki, Wilbur and Jack Manifold were huddled around a coffee table, playing cards while Phil was in the other room telling an 'ancient tale' to the younger boys. He could still hear Phil's serious, 'lore-mode' voice when he concentrated past the chaos around their own table though.

From the bits and pieces of the story he eavesdropped on, he realised it was an edited version of the Dream SMP that the two of them knew. Phil had changed the names of people and countries, of course, but pretty much everything else was the same.

Phil told them pretty much everything about Quackity's backstory.

He told them about everything, from the beginning of his life on the SMP, his life throughout the Schlatt and Tubbo Administrations, the creation of El Rapids and Las Nevadas.

By now, Eret and the other three had long since finished their card games and were gathered with the others, listening in to Phil's story too. Eret couldn't help but smile when he realised where Phil was going with the tale- when Phil began telling them about Charlie.

"And then he interrupted, asking, '*Was it ever worth it?... One person lashes out and the other does until they're both gone. From what I've seen it feels like people won't stop taking that revenge. Is it ever worth it?'*..."

* * * * *

Somehow, Phil's story managed to get through to the three younger boys.

Just in case though, Eret had kept his eye on them anyway throughout the next few days. But none of them did anything to Quackity or his base, so Eret finally felt a bit relieved. By the time a month had passed, it felt like the festival had been just a distant memory.

It was November 16th, the day that both Eret and Phil couldn't wait to be over. Although they stopped the Final Pet War the day before without shedding any blood, although they had checked countless times that nobody set up TNT underneath L'Manburg, although Wilbur didn't seem *anything* like how his canon self should be by now, they were both still anxious to get the day over with.

They wanted to have someone watch over Wilbur the entire day, but Phil said that he probably shouldn't even *meet* Wilbur that day, in case something caused him to stab Wilbur. So instead, Phil kept an eye on Technoblade to make sure he didn't set off any withers.

Eret was on the way to Wilbur's house, when he found Tommy with Tubbo. They waved at him when they noticed him, and he waved back.

"Tommy! Perfect timing- I've got something for you that I keep forgetting to give you."

He opened his enderchest, and pulled out two new, shiny discs and passed it to the excited teenager. He'd somehow gotten both Cat and Mellohi while on a mining session.

"This is-?!"

"I found them while I was mining a week ago," Eret grinned, ruffling Tommy's hair.

"They're not my *original* discs, but this still means a lot to me," Tommy said, holding them lovingly. "Thanks for the gift, Eret."

"No problem," Eret said quietly. "So you're still hung up about giving Dream your discs?"

"Of course," he frowned. "They were *my* discs in the first place- I'm definitely going to take them back from the green bitch one day-"

"But you gave them to Dream for L'Manburg's independence. So aren't they *his* discs now? And what will you do if he begins another war once you take the discs back?"

Tommy kicked a pebble. "I... Look, it's the *meaning* behind those discs that matter to me. They're the symbol between our conflict-"

"But they're just *discs* in the end," Eret said. "Would you rather win *items* that you can always replace, but lose your home and friends forever; or lose the discs, but have a safe place for you and your friends? Would you choose the discs over Tubbo?"

The teenager's face crumpled. "When you say it like that..." he hesitated. "I- I'd choose my friends over my discs. Of *course* I wouldn't choose discs over Tubbo."

Eret smiled.

"Glad to hear you'd pick me," Tubbo grinned, smacking Tommy on the back. "I don't know what I would've done if you said you'd choose discs over your best friend. Or are you just saying that because I'm right here?"

"Ow! Of course not- what the fuck?" Tommy frowned at them, "Do you guys actually think I'd choose discs over you guys?! I wouldn't have given them away for L'Manburg's independence if I didn't care-"

"I'm just kidding!" Tubbo laughed. "It's great to hear you actually say that you care though!"

Tubbo and Eret laughed as Tommy turned beetroot red as he spluttered and started cursing every insult he could think of.

* * * * *

The dreaded 16th ended up going by peacefully, to both Eret and Phil's huge relief. Eret followed Wilbur around all day, and they'd given a short tour of L'Manburg to Connor and Puffy after they arrived in the afternoon.

In *this* world, Eret made sure to *not* kill Puffy, and he stopped Connor from fighting with her too. He helped them out quite a bit for their first few days on the SMP, helping them build their homes and giving them some equipment. And about a week after the two new members were settled in, he went and brought them to visit Schlatt. He hoped that Puffy could do her therapy thing on him, and that Connor would change Schlatt for the better too- since they had known each other in the past.

After Schlatt had lost the election, Eret heard that he set up a base a little further out. Eret had been worried that Schlatt would plan something to cause chaos, so he tried to visit every once in a while to try and befriend the guy. Schlatt's drinking problem was a huge issue though- but Eret had no solutions to save Schlatt from it until he finally decided to just pray that nothing wrong would happen until Puffy arrived in November.

After successfully persuading her (read: promised to pay her a diamond per session) to help Schlatt, and after Schlatt actually *agreed* to give the therapy a try (Connor somehow convinced him), Eret finally felt like Schlatt wasn't too far gone after all.

* * * * *

But a few days afterwards, Eret was thrown headfirst back into chaos.

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: MATE]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: HELP]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: EMERGENCY]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: COME TO VIKK AND LAZAR'S PLACE]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: ASAP, DREAM AND PUNZ ARE HERE]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: On my way!]

That means either Schlatt did give Dream the book, or Dream found it himself, Eret realised as he slipped on a coat and rushed out his house, running along the Prime Path. Why is Dream making his moves so much earlier though?!

He hoped that nothing bad had happened to Phil or the other two, but there were no further messages on his communicator. Either that meant they were fine, or it meant they were too busy fighting and couldn't message. He had a sinking feeling that it was the latter situation.

"Stop this, Dream!"

He heard Phil's voice, shouting in the distance, and he began running in its direction. Making his way through the dense forest, he finally arrived at the clearing where the two groups were facing each other.

Eret took in the scene for a moment.

Phil, gripping onto his netherite sword tightly, with both Vikkstar and Lazarbeam holding their weapons slightly behind him. Dream and Punz, standing relaxed with their axes and shields out.

"Y'know, I'm quite disappointed Phil," Dream said lazily. "I thought the Angel of Death would put up more of a fight."

Eret winced. Phil hadn't had as much combat experience as he did- he had been stuck in his single player world for a month after all. And Phil couldn't risk training anywhere close to Technoblade, in case the Blood God noticed and realised that Phil *wasn't* actually Phil. Eret and Phil had sparred a few times to train, but of *course* that wouldn't be enough training for a duel against Dream.

"I've been retired for a while, haven't you heard?" Phil shot back immediately. "I've been living in a single player server for years."

Eret sucked in a breath and decided to show himself then. Stepping out into the clearing, he waved his hand and greeted them. "Hey guys, how come I wasn't invited to your secret tea party?"

Phil immediately looked slightly more relieved. "Eret!"

"Eret," Dream scowled. "What are you doing here?"

"Heard a bit of a commotion," Eret shrugged. It was true enough, he could hear them arguing and fighting from a small distance away. "What are *you* doing here?"

Punz glanced at Dream, probably wondering what to do now that they'd been discovered. After all, their plan must have been to kidnap those two without any witnesses. And now that both Phil and Eret saw them trying to do something at Vikk and Lazar's place, Dream and Punz would both be suspected if something happened to the two new members.

The two groups stared at each other in silence for a moment since Dream didn't want to answer and tell them about the Revival Book. Dream nodded at Punz, who just sighed.

Dream began fighting Phil yet again, who yelled at Vikk and Lazar to run and find Tommy and Wilbur. Punz jumped at Eret, who blocked his attack with his shield.

"Do you realise what you're trying to do?" Eret yelled, gritting his teeth

Punz squinted his eyes and gripped his weapon tighter. "What are you talking about?"

"There are acts that are unforgivable," Eret said darkly, parrying Punz's attack. "I get that you're a mercenary and that Dream pays well, but are you really going to do *anything* for money?"

"Of course- that's what it means to be a mercenary!"

"And what if he told you to kill your friends? What if he would pay you well to kill Antfrost, Bad, Karl, Tubbo, Niki?"

Punz seemed to pause for half a second, but it was brief and Eret was lucky to catch the doubt in Punz's face. "I can always refuse the job, it's not like I *have* to take every job offer-"

"And you want to take *this* job?!"

"What do you know?!" Punz growled, his sword grazing Eret's cheek. "How do you know?!"

"I know enough- I'm related to Herobrine," Eret retorted, the adrenaline keeping him from fleeing from the battle just yet. He dodged the next swing and jumped back. "And I know that if you keep living this way, if you keep taking his job offers without thinking about it carefully- you'll be making a huge mistake."

"I-" Punz started, but at that moment another figure tumbled through the trees and swung a large broadsword at him, and Punz used all his effort to block the heavy attack.

"Techno!" Eret yelled. Dream and Phil suddenly stopped fighting too when they saw the piglin join them, and Techno eyed the masked admin.

"I don't care why you're fighting, but I won't forgive you if you hurt Phil," he growled menacingly. "I have no qualms with setting off a dozen withers and destroying your entire server if you hurt them."

Punz and Dream seemed to shrink back a little and glanced at each other. Dream sighed and put away his axe. "Sure, sure," he said as if he didn't just get threatened. "We'll be taking our leave now then."

The two of them left, and Eret sighed in relief and plopped onto the ground, his hands still shaking. He clenched his fist and watched Techno worry over Phil who just shook his head and waved his hand, assuring the piglin that *no*, he didn't need to come out of retirement.

"I'm fine, I've got a bunch of totems on me," Phil assured him. "I'm not gonna die this easily!"

"Fine," Techno frowned and turned around to look at Eret. "Are you injured anywhere?"

Eret shook his head and stood back up. "I should probably get going... I need to make sure that Vikk and Lazar got somewhere safe."

"Why was the homeless teletubby and Punz trying to kidnap them anyway?" Technoblade asked. "You didn't reply to my messages after telling me to get here as soon as possible."

"I'll explain it to you," Phil said, letting himself be pulled up by Techno. "Come by tonight?" he said to Eret who nodded and waved goodbye as he ran back to L'Manburg.

* * * * *

"Tommy! Did Vikk and Lazar come by?" Eret called and sighed in relief as Tommy nodded quickly, pulling him into his house.

"What the hell happened?" Tommy asked as they climbed underground to the basement that had been redecorated into a more comfortable living space. "They said something about Dream and Punz trying to kidnap them?!"

"It's a long story," Eret grimaced. He relaxed slightly when he saw the two sitting at the sofa with mugs of hot chocolate in their hands. "Are you guys injured anywhere?"

"No, they were only fighting with Phil," Lazar shook his head. "Is Phil-?"

"Phil's with Technoblade now, they'll be fine. Dream and Punz left by themselves."

"What's going on?" Tommy said nervously. "They were fighting Phil? Do I need to go get Wilbur or the others?"

"That's a good idea," Eret paused. "You know what? Yeah. Go call everyone in L'Manburg here, I need to talk to you guys."

* * * * *

"Dream tried to kidnap Vikkstar and Lazarbeam earlier today. Phil stopped them long enough for me and Technoblade to get there," Eret started. The crowd immediately began to bicker.

"Calm down, we're all relatively fine," Eret said as Vikk and Lazar nodded. They quietened down.

"Why would they kidnap people?!" someone asked.

"They wanted us for some kind of experiment," Vikk shuddered. "Something about testing a book?"

Eret took a deep breath. "Dream wanted to kill them-" The shouts began again, "-and bring them back to life."

"*What?! "That's impossible!" "How do you know that?!"*

"I know a little bit about the future," Eret announced suddenly, shocking everyone. "You all know that I'm related to Herobrine, right? I've got some weird powers and seeing glimpses of the future is part of it."

"Holy shit- are you serious?!" Tommy exclaimed, eyes wide. "That's *so* pog-"

"Not the point right now," Eret coughed, moving on. "Dream has a book that apparently lets him bring people back to life, even after losing their last canon life-"

"I gave him that," a voice said quietly.

"Schlatt?!" Wilbur said, horrified. "How the fuck did you have something like that?! Why would you give it away?!"

"No idea," he shrugged. "I think I just found it one day? I can't remember how I got it exactly. I gave it to him because he threatened to kill me, what else?"

"Anyway!" Eret said loudly, and their heads turned back to him. "He's not sure whether the Revival Book works yet or not, but I'm sure he will find out eventually. And yes- it does work."

"That's..."

"Fucked up," Eret grimaced. "It's too much power for a single person to have. We shouldn't *have* power over life and death."

The crowd nodded, agreeing with his words. "What the fuck are we supposed to do then?!" Jack muttered. "It's not like any of us can fight him."

"We can steal it from him," Fundy said suddenly. "Can't we?"

"We could," Eret thought about it. "But we'd have to steal it before he memorises it and makes copies, which I have a feeling he's already done. How long ago did you give it to him?" he asked Schlatt.

"Over a month," Schlatt admitted. "Sometime in October."

Eret winced but nodded. "It might be too late then. And besides, he probably keeps it in his enderchest."

"Do *you* have any copies of it?" Wilbur asked Schlatt, who shook his head.

"I never made any," he sighed.

Eret stood up and stretched his arms. "From now on, go everywhere in threes or fours. That way at least we'll outnumber those two. They're dangerous- avoid them at all costs. That includes *you* Tommy- don't go looking for trouble."

"Of course not," Tommy spluttered. "It sounds like Dream's gone *insane*- of course I'll stay away."

"Should we warn the others too then? Like the Greater Dream SMP members, like Bad, Antfrost, Sam, Quackity...?"

"I don't know if they'll listen to us," Eret admitted. "Dream's their leader after all. But I guess we can give it a try. Private message the ones who you're close to."

Chapter End Notes

Some notes (copied from my answer to a comment lol):

In my mind/fic, Herobrine is some kinda legend to the c!DSMP members- probably like a god (like XD) or something, so that's why everyone doesn't question it anything any further when Eret does questionable things and says he's related to Herobrine lmao.

(But the serious answer is that "I'm related to Herobrine" was basically just deus ex machina for me to move on without thinking too much about how to make scenes actually make sense- but now it's just funny to me and so I keep writing Eret saying it in every situation possible xDD)

And another thing- I kinda cut off everything that happened shortly after Michael joined the SMP. (Eret and Phil don't mention anyone else joining the DSMP after Michael when they were planning how to fix everything in Ch 9.)

So streamer!Eret basically got teleported to the SMP shortly after Michael joined- to be exact, he got transported at the end of June 2021 which is why he wakes up in June at the beginning of the fic hahah.

Hope that clarifies things a little bit :D

Thanks for reading! <3

NOTICE: new fic from phil's pov

sorry for the fake chapter-

i just wanted to let anyone subscribed/bookmarked know that i've posted a new fic (part 2 of this series) that has side stories from Phil's POV instead of Eret's.

it's not necessary to read it if you only want to read this main story, but you might **learn some things earlier if you read Phil's POV**- cuz Eret won't hear about some things until later (unless you read that fic after this one is finished lol). oh and you'll read about what Phil does when Eret isn't around :D

i've tried my best to skip parts where Eret has already mentioned, so most of the new fic should be new scenes. the new fic won't be updated that often, since i want to focus on Eret's POV more. oh and- the word count will probably be drastically different in between each chapter lol, i'm not bothered to split it up into different parts to make them equal hahah.

and sorry for the lack of chapters on this fic recently- i was just lazy and didn't feel motivated to write for a while lmao.

but yeah! happy reading, if you decide to read Phil's POV :D

8. a place i once called home is no longer mine (pt. 1)

Chapter Summary

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Sorry, won't be able to make it tonight. Or tomorrow, or the next few]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: What? Why?]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: While we were dealing with Dream and Punz, Tommy and Ranboo grieved George's house]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Dream wants me exiled]

Chapter Notes

No TW I think...

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Eret left Tommy's house with the others, leaving Tubbo, Niki and Fundy with Tommy. As they walked along the Prime Path, they dropped off the others in groups (they would be having sleepovers every day until it was safe to be alone) until it was just Eret, Wilbur and Ranboo.

"So whose place are we staying at?" Wilbur asked, glancing at the two.

"I told Phil that I'd visit him," Eret admitted. "But it's quite far and it's late-"

"I don't mind the trip, it'd probably be safer with them," Wilbur hummed, then looked at Ranboo.

"What do you think?"

"M-Me? I don't mind," the half-enderman mumbled. "Anywhere is fine with me."

"There's a Nether portal over there then," Eret pointed out. "Let's go."

* * * * *

However, on their way towards the portal, Eret suddenly felt like something bad was about to happen. He kept on guard, watching their surroundings but couldn't tell what felt *off* to him. He told the other two how he felt, and they nodded grimly and started carefully noting every small noise and movement.

As they walked, Eret realised what it was that he had forgotten about.

He stared at the base that they were passing by. Well, what *should* have been a base. It was now a ruined hobbit hole, a mere man-made cave inside a hill.

I forgot about Tommy and Ranboo grieving George's house?!

No, it wasn't that he forgot. It was that he forgot that it happened *today*. The 28th. They must have grieved the place while Eret went to save Phil.

He gritted his teeth. The other two stopped walking, turning around to stare at him. "What are you waiting for?" Wilbur asked, walking closer to Eret and the remains of the base.

"When did this happen?" he said quietly. Ranboo tilted his head slightly, but there was no sign of recognition in his face.

"Today?" Wilbur frowned as he peered at the burnt planks that were still smoking slightly. "There are still some embers left," he pointed. "Who even lives here?"

"George," Eret said, pulling some of the vines out of the way. "We need to fix this before we go."

"What? Why?!"

"I can see the future, remember?" Eret grimaced, as he put out the remaining flames. "We need to fix this before it causes more trouble."

"What kind of trouble can it bring?" Ranboo asked. "And how are we supposed to fix this? We don't even know what it looked like."

"I know," Eret said, pulling out his notebook of coordinates, and ripped out a page. He drew a house that looked more-or-less like George's house- a few changes here and there should be fine. "Something like that."

"We're going to be late to Phil's," Wilbur frowned, but he pulled out his communicator. "I'll send him a message. "It shouldn't take long with the three of us building it, right?"

"Yeah," the other two agreed, setting to work.

* * * * *

"What the fuck did you guys do?!" he heard a voice shout angrily. Spinning around, his heart beat increased as he noticed the white porcelain mask.

"We're fixing George's house," Eret said calmly, wiping his forehead. *Great... why'd you have to show up just before we finish?!* "We noticed that it got burnt down while we were passing by."

"Sure," Dream said sarcastically. "So who the hell set fire to it?!"

"We don't know," Wilbur muttered as he walked over. "It was already destroyed when we got here. We were going to leave it, but Eret insisted that we fix it for George."

Dream seemed to be glaring at Eret even more.

"How the fuck would you know what his house looked like if it was already destroyed?" he asked menacingly. "Just admit it- *you* burnt it down-"

Ah, shit- is he already too far gone?!

"I saw it when I walked by in the past-" Eret began but Dream interrupted him.

"-And you noticed all these details?!"

"I don't know the exact details," Eret said, staring at Dream's beady eyes on the mask. *I'm just basing it on fanart and mushrooms-* "I'm just using blocks that are similar to the ones that were left."

"Yeah right- this is fucking revenge, isn't it? For earlier today? I'm not stupid," Dream growled but then another voice joined in their argument.

"Hey! What's going on here?" Tommy yelled as he, Tubbo, Fundy and Niki walked over.

"Why are you guys here?" Wilbur frowned. "You weren't supposed to follow us-"

"We were going to go get Tubbo's cookbook and some other things from their houses," Tommy explained, squinting at Dream who was standing there silently. "Why are you guys arguing?"

"This could be a declaration of war," Dream said quietly but everyone froze at his intimidating voice. "You guys destroyed George's house- *King* George's house. This is a declaration of war against the Greater Dream SMP!"

"What?! No!" Wilbur yelled. "Are you even listening to us?! We didn't do this!"

"Don't lie to me," Dream growled, and pointed at Eret. "This is for fighting Phil, is it? I knew you'd be the same as everyone else- you're just pretending to be nice and friendly and all that, you *wanted* to hurt George because I hurt Phil!"

Immediately, the L'Manburg members began shouting and pulling out weapons. Eret pulled Tommy's shoulder back and held his arm out, stopping everyone from attacking Dream.

"It wasn't Eret!" Tommy blurted out angrily. "Eret wouldn't do something like this, it was-"

Eret spun around, alarmed, and covered Tommy's mouth. *You are **not** getting exiled today*, he thought but he felt helpless. *What the hell do I do to get out of this?!*

But Tommy wriggled away and yelled, "It was *me* who grieved George, you dumbass! Eret wouldn't hurt anyone!"

Eret's heart sank, but Dream didn't seem to care about what the teenager had just admitted. He was still staring at Eret for some reason. Suddenly, Eret had a fucking *awful* idea.

He took a deep breath.

"I'm sorry," he said, surprising everyone. He stared at his feet, feeling sick. "But I swear it was an accident, I didn't mean for it to be burnt so badly."

"What the fuck? Eret?!" Wilbur said, grabbing Eret's arm. "What the hell are you saying?! Me and Ranboo were literally with you- this place was already burnt down when we got here!"

"I knew it! You set fire to George's house, and then you regretted it and tried to cover up your mistakes before we found out!" Dream said triumphantly. "This is a declaration of war- L'Manburg's Vice President clearly attacked our King!"

While the others yelled angrily at Dream, Eret said tiredly, "What do you want? What will it take for you to let this go?"

Dream seemed to consider it for a moment, but Eret was already certain what he would ask for.

"I want you exiled."

"That's not going to fucking happen-" Tommy snarled, standing in front of Eret protectively. "It's not even Eret's fault-!"

"Shouldn't I get a trial before deciding what happens to me?" Eret said aloud, to nobody in particular. "Shouldn't *George* get a say in what happens?"

Dream froze for a second. "George is too kind," he scowled after a moment. "He'd probably forgive you if you just fixed his house. And why bother with a trial? You've already admitted that it's your fault."

"It's not Eret's fault!" Niki cried. "There's no way he'd do something like this-"

"Well then, it's *L'Manburg's* fault," Dream said angrily. "If you don't punish Eret, I'll take it as a declaration of war and I'll completely annihilate your land to bedrock."

"What about probation?" Wilbur swallowed, desperately trying to defuse the situation. "This is the first time Eret's committed a 'crime', so isn't probation enough? I'll take his title away too, Tommy will be Vice President."

"Why are you just going along with this?!" Fundy yelled at his dad. "Didn't you say you trust Eret?!"

"Probation is not enough," Dream glowered. "Eret's *a good actor*, he'll just pretend to be kind until it's over again."

"Give me a few days to think about it," Wilbur said finally. "We'll meet in a week."

"Sure," Dream said. "I want him locked up until then though, in case he tries to run."

Like I could leave these guys alone with you, Eret thought glumly.

* * * * *

He was wide awake even though it was the middle of night now. This time, Dream had made sure his head hit the pillow before leaving him inside the cell.

He scrolled through his communicator once again.

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Sorry, won't be able to make it tonight. Or tomorrow, or the next few]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: What? Why?]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: While we were dealing with Dream and Punz, Tommy and Ranboo grieved George's house]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Dream wants me exiled]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: ...Where are you right now?]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Don't bother coming, let this play out this way. At least I will know that I'm not actually alone, Tommy won't be able to handle it]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: I'm not letting you get fucking exiled, Eret]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: It'll be fine- I've got an idea]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Besides, I've got loads of spare equipment in my hidden bases. And I know where to find you, if something goes wrong]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: I'll have tons of free time while exiled- I'll be able to study all the time! Since I won't have to do anything else other than keep myself alive. And while Dream is visiting, I'll try to understand what he's thinking and see if I can change him]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: But what if he finds out what you're studying? He might get pissed if he finds out that you're trying to be an admin]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: I'll be careful, I'll keep random books with me at all times. In case I've got to burn it, I have tons of copies in my enderchest]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: He didn't let Tommy keep an enderchest though]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: I'll figure something out]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: Are you sure about this though?! This is crazy...]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: I don't really have any other ideas of how to get out of this. The original plan to stop those two from burning the house obviously failed since we were busy elsewhere while it happened...]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: It'll be fine. I'll just be on vacation for a few weeks- we've already made a plan for what to do with the Egg- so if you just follow the plan, you'll be fine]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: How will you get out of exile then? When will you get out?]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Hmmm, I don't think I can run to you guys or back home because Dream will just go ahead and destroy L'Manburg if I return. Hopefully I can change Dream's ideology and just be allowed to go home, but if not I think I'll go find Foolish, when he shows up]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: Alright then... we'll talk more about this later. I'll be expecting you to message me daily, alright? If not, I'll assume you're dead]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Of course. You can come visit me when he's not around too]

Well.

I guess that's the plan now, he thought as he yawned and finally let himself fall asleep.

* * * * *

The next morning, Tommy (along with Tubbo and Ranboo) arrived to speak to him.

"Eret, what the hell are you thinking?!" he said, half-angrily, half-worriedly. "Why are you taking the blame for me?"

"I'll be fine," Eret said as he stretched his arms (since he had just woken up a few minutes ago). "Like I said yesterday, Dream is *really* dangerous right now, and I can't let you be exiled and stuck alone-

"But what about *you*?!" Tubbo interrupted. "If you get exiled- who's going to protect *you*?!"

"I'm an adult," Eret smiled and ruffled their hair through the iron bars. "I can take care of myself just fine. Besides, it's not like there isn't anyone else out there. Phil and Technoblade live far away from the SMP, don't they? I can find them if things get difficult."

"It's still not fair," Tommy growled. "It's not even your fault- I don't understand why you're just letting him do this to you-

"Tommy..." Eret hesitated. "This is just like your duel with Dream. You would rather give him *your* disks, you would rather give up your *own* happiness, than watch your friends be unhappy, right? Well, I would rather be *exiled* than watch Dream build up our walls to build height- than watch Dream destroy our country until we can see bedrock- than watch Dream kill *my friends*."

"But this-

"I don't care if I'm exiled from my home as long as you guys are safe," Eret said, hoping his expression didn't betray how he truly felt, how terrified and worried he was about the future. "Surely I'll be allowed home some day, right? It's not goodbye forever. Besides, I can send you guys messages every day, and you guys can come visit me occasionally if you want."

"Why are you acting like you're definitely going to be exiled?!" Tubbo asked, and then frowned. "Did you see the future?"

He gave a small smile but didn't answer the question. "Just remember," he said. "Just remember the story Phil told you, and the things I've said about Dream alright? Keep out of trouble, stay alive, stay safe."

The boys nodded, and he sighed in relief. "How's Wilbur doing?"

"He's talking to Phil right now. Phil came over really early today," Tommy explained when he saw the look of shock on Eret's face.

I told him not to bother- why is he here?

"Wilbur had a panic attack last night," Tommy continued talking. "I helped him calm down. He's really worried about you and what to do now..."

Eret looked at his hands and clenched his fists tightly. "Tell him something for me, will you? I'm not sure if he'll come visit me before the next meeting. Tell him I trust that he'll make the right decision."

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading!

I've finished my exams and stuff which is great, but now my mom keeps pressuring me to find a job- which I'm *trying* to do, and I keep telling her it's not like I can force somebody to hire me literally a day after applying, but she's still mad at me ugh.

It might not make much sense why Eret is letting himself get exiled by Dream- *honestly, I just wanted that to happen because of the potential angst lmao*- but I hope the reasons I made up will make a little sense.

Eret's just agreeing to go with it because he thinks this way he'll protect Tommy, but also so he can spend more time with Dream and hopefully 'save' him somehow.

And you'll find out in time why Dream hates Eret so much and why he's being irrational and a dick rn haha!

I was stuck on this for ages because I didn't know what to do and how to make it *kinda* make sense. But I think this is good enough... and I'm too tired to rewrite anymore so I'm just going with this plotline lol

Next chapter will be out soon, I promise! It's mostly written already- just need a tiny bit more :D

8. a place i once called home is no longer mine (pt. 2)

Chapter Summary

"I know," Eret said softly, his hand on Wilbur's. "I would rather be exiled than have another war, okay? So don't feel bad for me."

"What if- what if we get married?"

Chapter Notes

TW: Dream starts his manipulating stuff from here on :D yum angst

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

A few days later.

"Eret..."

"Oh. Hey Will," he looked up, surprised. He hadn't expected him to visit before the trial (he expected Dream would try to keep him away so that the two of them couldn't plan anything together). He smiled at him, even though there was nothing worth being happy about in this situation. "How've you been?"

"I don't- know what I'm supposed to do," Wilbur said in despair, his hand grasping the iron bars tightly, looking as if he wanted to rip it apart and pull Eret out. "I don't *want* to exile you, but-"

"But Dream," Eret finished, nodding glumly. "It's alright Wilbur, I won't blame you at all."

"It's *not* alright!" Wilbur was looking anywhere but Eret now. "How can you be perfectly fine with this?! He wants to kick you out of your own home- for something that isn't even your fault! And besides- *George* is King, not him, so why is he still calling the shots?! George literally said that it's fine since you were trying to fix the house, but Dream is still threatening to attack us unless you get exiled! He's crazy- but I- I can't risk another war against them-"

"I know," Eret said softly, his hand on Wilbur's. "I would rather be exiled than have another war, okay? So don't feel bad for me."

"What if- what if we get married?"

Eret stared at Wilbur, stunned, not trusting his own ears. "What?"

Wilbur flushed and was staring at his feet. "What if we get married? Platonically is fine! I don't mind- if we get married, maybe he'll become more lenient since it'd be cruel to separate us! Or- or maybe I can pass on the presidency to someone else, and I'll come with you! So that you're not alone! We could set up *another* new country, and, and it'll all be fine-

Eret felt shocked, but also felt warmed by how much Wilbur cared about him.

But I can't. I'm not the real Eret.

"Thanks," he said quietly, "but we can't. You have to take care of your son and everyone else, Wilbur, they *need* you here."

I might be gone someday. It'd be even crueller to marry you and then disappear.

"...I thought you'd say something like that," Wilbur mumbled. "I- I'll come visit as much as possible, okay?"

"Sure," Eret said, feeling slightly relieved that Wilbur dropped the sudden proposal idea. "I'll message you guys daily, I'll be fine! It's just a little vacation for me!"

Wilbur nodded, and gave a small smile. "We're all going to miss you, Eret. I'll do everything I can to shorten the exile, alright?"

"Yeah," he swallowed, a lump in his throat. *Why does this feel like a final goodbye?* "See you tomorrow, Will."

Wilbur looked back one last time, opened his mouth as if he wanted to say something, shook his head and walked out.

* * * * *

Eret squinted his eyes to adjust to the sunlight when he was finally allowed out of the cell, and he followed Sapnap to the Community House.

The trial was a farce, with both sides already knowing what the result would be. The only thing they had to decide was *how long* Eret would be exiled for.

Eret sat there in silence, lost in his own thoughts about what his plans would be depending on what the result would be. *If it's a few weeks, I'll just wait it out. If it's longer than a few months, I'll go find Foolish when he gets here. If-*

"A *year*?! Just for burning a house?!" Tommy screeched, snapping Eret out of his thoughts. "What about all the other griefs people have done then?!"

"That's too much," George said, looking at Dream. "They tried to fix it anyway- it was almost fully fixed by the time you found them- what about a month?"

"That's not the point," Dream scowled. "He's the vice-president of L'Manburg, and *you're* the King-

"Yes, *I'm* the King," George huffed. "I don't need you to make all my decisions for me-

"I'm trying to *protect* you-" Dream cut in.

"And I'm saying you don't *need* to go overboard with it!" George snapped, truly angry. Everyone froze, listening to him rant. It was the first time anyone had seen George get *really* mad. "I can take care of myself perfectly fine, Dream! Do you think you know what's best for me better than *I* do?"

Before Dream could cut in again, George quickly continued ranting. "Can't *you* guys just stop fighting for one moment? Why can't we all just be one big happy family? Weren't *you*-" he glared at Dream, "the one who said this world was for us to have fun in from the beginning?! Why does there have to be conflicts and wars all the damn time?!"

Eret stared at him, eyes wide.

Oh right.

George never liked roleplaying and participating in all the conflicts- he just wanted to goof around on Minecraft with his friends.

That's why my words got to him easier than everyone else, right?

"It's L'Manburg's fault for splitting everyone up onto different sides then," Dream muttered after a moment, breaking the silence. "But since they've won their *independence*, they've got to pay for their actions against the Greater Dream SMP's *King*- or else I'll wall them in to build height."

"Three months, then," George declared, glaring at Dream to shut him up. "*I didn't even lose that much valuables in the fire*- but anyways." He looked at the President of L'Manburg. "Three months is fair, right?"

"It's not even Eret's fault-" Tommy finally began speaking up again, but nobody was really paying attention since he was mumbling. "*I should be the one getting exiled, not him*."

"That's fair," Wilbur nodded, swallowing. "Please escort Eret out of L'Manburg."

Eret exhaled the breath he'd been holding.

* * * * *

He looked back at his friends one last time before turning away and meekly followed the impatient Dream. Wilbur wasn't there to send him off.

Just before he left, he'd secretly given most of his valuable tools to Phil for safe-keeping and swapped to some diamond items. Not that he was particularly attached to any of his equipment anyways- over the few months, he'd gathered up a nice amount of loot and had quite a lot of hidden bases throughout the SMP. Though none of his safe rooms were going to be *this* far out- the furthest one was about a thousand blocks out from (0, 0)... and they had already travelled much further than that.

He *knew* that nobody actually wanted him to be exiled- he *knew* what to expect in exile and he *knew* that he wouldn't be truly alone, not with Phil and everyone else backing him up secretly.

...But he still felt terrified as he got further and further away from safety and the place he once called home.

Home? he suddenly realised with a pang in his chest. *Since when did I start seeing L'Manburg as my actual 'home'?*

Eret glanced out of the corner of his eye at Dream. Dream had threatened to kill him if he didn't follow him at the beginning, but other than that, the journey had been quite silent. After all, Eret wasn't sure exactly what Tommy said or did in exile and so, had no clue what actions would change the lore and what wouldn't. He wondered if Dream was going to try to manipulate him while he was in exile, as if he were Tommy in the lore.

What if he tries to experiment the Revival Book on me?!

He gulped. Before he could think about it anymore though, Dream suddenly stopped in his tracks.

"I think we're far enough now, don't you?"

"I... guess?" Eret said. He had no idea where he was, since he'd never travelled to Logstedshire in Minecraft before. He *kind of* recognised the beach though, and sighed in relief internally that that part of the lore hadn't changed. *I'll be able to find Technoblade and Phil if things go south.*

"Here-" Dream started to place down some mounds of dirt that formed a small hut.

Yeah no, I'm not living in that.

Dream placed down a bed though, and Eret understood. He set his spawn and got back up. He wondered if Dream was going to leave now.

"Hm, give me all your things," Dream hummed. Eret stared at him blankly.

So you're really doing this?

"What? No," he said, as if repeating words out of a script. He tried to imagine how Tommy would react, and refused adamantly. "Why should I? I'm already exiled, why do you have to make it worse-"

"Drop them down," Dream dug a small hole. Eret's palms felt sweaty.

"Or what?" he said weakly.

"Or I will kill you," Dream replied simply.

Eret sighed and dropped his food, his building blocks, his armour and tools into the hole. While on the way, he'd wondered what stopped Tommy from hiding some items. Surely he could just lie about it?

"Is that everything?" Dream asked him.

Something about the way Dream spoke suddenly made him extremely uncomfortable, but he nodded and answered with a lie, "Yeah, that's all I've got."

He watched painfully as Dream ignited the TNT and exploded his items. He suddenly realised how cold it was, despite being so close to the beach and shivered.

"You can have this," Dream said quite cheerfully, as if he didn't just threaten Eret's life. He passed him some steak which Eret took quietly. He wasn't going to throw *food* away (not when he had none himself) because of pride, unlike what he'd imagined Tommy would do.

"Alright! Well, um," Dream turned away, satisfied, "I'll see you never!"

"Bye Dream," Eret muttered. *If you think you can manipulate me, Dream, you've got another thing coming. I'm going to be the one changing you-*

And with that, the admin left Eret completely alone in the middle of nowhere.

* * * * *

The next morning, Eret set off to cut down some nearby logs- He had hidden an iron axe and his textbook in his inventory. He *had* been worried about the 'slash clear' command, but it seemed like it wasn't a command that admins could use (he checked the textbook thoroughly after Dream left), which relieved him a lot.

After gathering the logs and some string, he went fishing to get some more food. A few hours later, he noticed a figure approaching in his direction and he panicked, thinking it was Dream.

It *was* a man in green, but it wasn't the admin after all. It was Sam.

"Sam!" he said, easing up. "Why are you here?"

"This is an important message for you, Eret. I know you're..." Sam paused, "you're sent away, but when you need someone, you know where to find me." He pressed a page with coordinates and a bundle of pumpkin pies into Eret's arms. "My house is far from all of them, you can- you can come hide with me if you need a place to stay, Eret."

"Thank you so much," Eret said softly, smiling at him and almost tearing up. "But I'm fine right now."

"I'm so sad to see this server tearing itself apart," Sam sighed, shaking his head. "See you around, Eret. Take care."

"See you around, Sam."

He waved at the man, as he slowly disappeared into the distance, and he turned towards a cave and sighed. Swinging his stone pickaxe onto his shoulder, he began mining for coal and other items while wondering what the point of all this work would be if it would just be blown up again soon.

* * * * *

A few days later, a message notification dinged on his communicator. He jumped, the noise surprising him since he hadn't heard much sound other than nature and himself talking out loud sometimes...

[TommyInnit whispers to you: where are you right now? i want to come visit]

[You whisper to TommyInnit: 624, 70, -2055]

"Eret!" Tommy yelled as he waved excitedly.

"Hey Tommy, Ranboo, Jack!" he greeted, rolling up his sleeves. Despite the cold weather, he'd been grinding materials non-stop the entire day and felt quite warm now.

"Where's your diamond armour? And tools?!" Jack exclaimed.

Oh right. Of course people will notice that-

"Uhm-" He couldn't find it in himself to lie about this. "Dream took it and blew it up."

"*What?!* That's fucked up! He has no right to do that!" Tommy yelled angrily. "What the fuck- did he try to experiment that weird book on you?!"

"No," Eret shook his head. "I don't think he dares to kill me since everyone keeps coming by and talking to me. But anyways," Eret sighed. "Is everyone else doing okay?"

Tommy scowled but moved on. "They're alright, I suppose. Fundy's still mad at Wilbur, but he told me that he understands. He still feels mad though- At the whole situation. But anyways! You're not distracting me from the other topic- what the fuck is wrong with Dream?! He's acting so different now- he even hired Sam to build a massive fucking prison!"

"What?" Eret said, alarmed.

"We passed by it earlier," Ranboo nodded. "It was only beginning to be built, but the perimeter of it was huge. Why would he even need a prison that large? *Who* is he planning to imprison?"

I'll have to message Sam and try to convince him not to build the damn prison, Eret mentally noted. *I'll tell Phil to go see him in person too-*

"Take care of yourself and everyone else, alright?" Eret urged them. "Promise me that you'll all stay out of Dream's way."

"I promise," Tommy nodded. "That's something I came to tell you about too- I've been doing a lot of thinking these few days- shocking, I know-" They all laughed. "-and I think I agree with everything you've said. Dream's dangerous right now- I've no idea why he's suddenly changed into like a fucking different person, but I'll stay out of trouble and all that." He paused. "So- yeah. I'm not going to be chasing after Dream for my discs anymore."

Eret couldn't help his wide smile and ruffled his golden hair. Tommy smiled back. "That's-" Eret swallowed, utterly speechless.

"Weird, innit?" Tommy grinned. "For once in my life, I'm not trying to get revenge or trying to steal my discs back. It feels freeing in a way."

"You're really-?"

"Yup, it's not worth it." Tommy said with a sigh. "They *are just discs* in the end- and you've given me new Cat and Mellohi discs anyway."

"Which he won't stop playing on repeat," Jack groaned, faking a headache. "But yeah, of course I'll stay away from Dream. He creeps me out.."

"Same for me," Ranboo said awkwardly. "Although I don't like choosing sides, even I can see that Dream needs some serious help."

"Enough of all this depressing talk- what do you need help with Eret?" Tommy announced, clapping his hands together. "Do you need more food or building blocks? We can help you gather shit!"

"Some more food would be great," Eret smiled. *Anything more valuable would just be wasted when Dream comes back to blow it up.* "You three can help me set up a better home too!"

"*This* is where you slept last night?!" Jack gaped at the dirt hut. "It's even worse than sleeping in a cave-"

"I didn't build that abomination," Eret rolled his eyes. "It was all Dream."

"No wonder Dream hasn't gotten a proper house on the SMP-" Tommy grinned. "He can't build for his life!"

* * * * *

Eret stared up at the countless stars in the sky and felt sick, desperately longing to go home.

It hasn't even been a week yet, he thought tiredly. Loneliness was a bigger problem than he imagined it would be.

He repeatedly told himself that it was all just a game and that he was just acting, but he still felt terrified of the hostile mobs that he could only protect himself from with iron armour- he still felt incredibly alone and wanted to go and see his friends again- and he couldn't help but feel miserable whenever his visitors left him to go back to his home.

L'Manburg's not my home anymore, Eret reminded himself, staring at the settlement Tommy and the others had helped him build.

I'll be here in Logstedshire for about a month. After that, if Dream still hasn't changed his ways, I'll go find Foolish when he joins.

Chapter End Notes

Welp, I got told I'll have a job interview at McDonald's tomorrow earlier today. Yay. Anxiety and stress go brrrrrrrrrrrr

What better way to push my worries away than focusing on fanfic lmao?

Thanks for all the comments last chapter hahah! It made my day a lot :D
Have a good day/night, see ya!

9. it feels like every opportunity has come and passed

Chapter Summary

"We're also here to give you this," Phil suddenly remembered, pulling out a compass from his inventory and handing it to Eret.

He stared at its name: *Your Phil*.

Chapter Notes

TW: uh, it's implied that someone got mortally wounded?

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Eret wondered how long it would take for Dream to show up again. So far, Phil or someone else had visited almost every single day- or at least messaged him anyway.

It was Badboyhalo's turn to visit him apparently. He felt a little worried seeing Bad, since it was December and he wasn't sure if Bad had been affected by the Egg yet- but Phil hadn't said anything about Bad finding the Egg yet. And Bad greeted him happily, gifting him some diamonds and an enderchest (which he quickly left the diamonds inside- it would be pointless to keep them on him).

They had been chatting about what Eret had been up to so far in exile, and Eret had been talking about who'd visited him- when Dream suddenly showed up. Eret froze, and Bad seemed worried too. Dream eyed the enderchest for a moment in silence. He pulled out a pickaxe and broke it, staring at Eret as if he dared him to say anything.

"Eret, do you have uh... something you want to drop on the ground?" Dream asked, quietly but menacingly. Eret stopped the urge to shudder.

"Uhm, no? Why?" he tried to refuse, but he *knew* what would happen already. He already expected all this after all.

"What about your armour?"

"Why should I drop my stuff?" Eret said finally, deciding that he'll try to make Dream see reason- he would push him as much as he could but back down before it was too much and Dream kills him. "I'm *exiled* already, there was nothing about destroying my progress or not allowing me certain items, was there?"

"George and Wilbur discussed it after you were already escorted away," Dream said almost smugly, though Eret could tell it was a lie immediately. "*They* thought you deserved a worse punishment. So drop your items now- I'm not going to ask again." Eret could almost see his reflection in Dream's netherite axe.

He resigned himself to Dream's threats and dropped his iron armour, tools, some blocks and some food onto the small hole in the ground. He flinched at the hiss of TNT and the explosion. He'd kept some food though- *surely* Dream had no way of finding out about it.

"So uhh... are you two just going to stay with me?" he asked after a moment. Neither had made any moves to leave yet. Bad looked apologetically at Eret and said he had to go back to Skeppy (he privately messaged Eret afterwards that he was honestly a bit scared of Dream).

"I came all this way," Dream said, switching immediately into a cheerful tone, "I might as well hang out with you for a while! Eret, we're still friends okay? Like you told me after the war, we can still be friends! Just because I exiled you, doesn't mean we're not friends!"

"Right," Eret mumbled, his voice thick. "I'm, uh, going to go collect some more iron."

Dream followed behind him, closer than he'd like. He noticed Dream killing a creeper and other hostile mobs out of the corner of his eye and he swallowed, feeling sick. *He's trying to get me to depend on him, isn't he?*

"So uh, what have you been up to these days?" Eret asked, trying to start a conversation as he searched for iron inside the cave.

"Nothing much," Dream hummed, shooting a skeleton that emerged from the dark. "Just hanging around the SMP I guess. I'm not really working on any big projects lately."

"Huh." *Another lie. You've already gotten Sam to start building Pandora's Vault.* "Do you have some obsidian? Or could you mine some for me?" Eret asked, dumping his bucket of water into lava.

"How many do you need?"

"Ten, I'm making a Nether Portal."

Surely he'll let me go to the Nether, right? I'm pretty sure he let Tommy go at the start of exile.

"You're not allowed to step into the portal to L'Manburg or anywhere close by, alright? Don't forget that." Dream warned, but Eret just sighed in relief,

"Yeah, yeah, I know. Or else you'll kill me, right?"

"Mhm," Dream agreed easily. "Though I'm sure that even if I'm not there, if anyone *else* sees you there, they'd also kill you."

Yup, totally. The people who message me daily reminding me that they miss me would kill me.

* * * * *

After creating the Nether Portal and spawn-proofing the area around it, they had returned to the Overworld and Dream left. They hadn't talked much about the things Eret really wanted to talk about, but he thought *I guess it'll take some time to get him to open up about whatever he's thinking. Of course I can't fix everything in a single day...*

Now, Eret lay in the tent underneath the stars and was using the light from his lantern to read the textbook from DreamXD. If there was one good thing about exile, it was that he had a *lot* more time to study. He made sure he had enough food, enough 'fake items' for Dream to blow up whenever he comes, but other than that he had no reason to even leave Logstedshire.

Suddenly, he received a private message from his communicator.

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: You still up mate?]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Yeah, what's up?]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: I talked to Sam today. He won't give up on building the prison since Dream paid him a lot, but he promised he'd make the place more... ethical.]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: We'll just have to stop Dream from getting thrown in there in the first place, and keep an eye on Connor too. We could also keep the Egg trapped in there if our original plan fails]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Damn. But yeah, I guess that's all we can do now...]

He sighed, shut his eyes tightly together and pinched the bridge of his nose.

What am I supposed to do now?!

* * * * *

"Eret? You there?"

He blinked slowly and heard the loud knocks on his door.

"Mate, if you don't answer I'm breaking the door down!"

Eret wiped his saliva from his mouth with his sleeve groggily and mumbled, "Gimme five more minutes..."

"Eret! Thank god. Can you open the door for us?! It's raining really heavily!"

He rolled off the bed and yelped. Phil yelled worriedly, "You okay mate?"

"Just fell off the bed," he groaned, rubbing his temple. He stumbled to the door and fumbled with the lock, trying to open the door quickly. He opened it swiftly, pulled the two guests inside the house and slammed the door shut. He grabbed two towels from a chest and threw it at their heads- Phil just let it land on him but Technoblade caught it in mid-air.

"Why didn't you just use the button?" Eret asked when he felt slightly more awake. He suddenly realised he wasn't wearing his sunglasses and grabbed them from his bed stand.

"I tried," Techno replied. "It didn't work- I don't think you connected it correctly."

"Oh. Great... It probably broke somehow after that time my house caught fire. I'll have to go fix it later then."

"Take your time," Phil laughed. "I'll go make some breakfast for you first."

"Why are you two even here so early?" Eret mumbled, brushing his hair out of his face.

"Just wanted to tell you before we left to go deal with the Egg..."

That woke Eret up immediately. He blinked, his mind clearing and he stared open-mouthed at them. "You- What?! Bad found it?"

"Yeah," Phil nodded. "We're going to try to destroy it today. I've already warned everyone else around the SMP to stay away from the vines, and what to do if they find any... so they should be okay. Technoblade helped me, uhm..."

"Trap Bad elsewhere until he snapped out of it. Told everyone to stay away from Bad's Trophy Room for the moment, and blocked all doorways with obsidian," Techno hummed. "We're going back there today to get rid of it. Sam and uhh... Dream said that they'll come with us."

"Dream?" Eret said, surprised. He glanced at Phil who was grimacing. *Dream didn't interact much with the Egg lore much once things started getting really serious because he was stuck in Pandora's Vault, but I guess it'd make sense that he wants to get rid of any threats to his own power...*

"Yeah," Techno huffed. "Don't really want to see him all that much after what he did to you, but we'll need all the help we can get if this Egg is as terrible as Phil told me."

Phil walked back over to give Eret a jam sandwich and some slices of melon. He patted Techno's shoulder and asked him to go grab some wood for kindling. Eret was about to say that he had spare logs inside a chest but Technoblade just nodded and went back outside before he could say a word.

"We're also here to give you this," Phil suddenly remembered, pulling out a compass from his inventory and handing it to Eret.

He stared at its name: *Your Phil*.

He *laughed*. "Thanks Phil, did you make one for yourself too?"

"I actually did," Phil joined in, pulling his one out and showing Eret the carved words: *Your Eret*. "I set it up a few minutes before it started raining heavily and we knocked on the door."

He then smiled slightly and muttered so quietly that Eret could barely hear him, "I'm 'your Phil', as in- I'm the Phil from *your* world. We're the only two from the same world."

Eret gave him a small smile back and clenched his fist around the metal compass tighter. "Thank you," he said again.

"Well!" Phil grinned. "It's also so that you'll *definitely* find our cabins if you need it! Since I'm pretty sure Tommy just found Techno's place by pure luck."

"Yeah," Eret said quietly, staring down at the compass again. "Thanks," he repeated.

After Technoblade set up a fire for Eret and after Phil and Eret went over the plan one more time, making arrangements for what to do if things went wrong, the two visitors said that it was about time for them to leave if they were going to meet Sam and Dream on time. Eret used commands to clear the skies and waved goodbye as Phil held Techno's arms tightly and zoomed into the air and soared away.

* * * * *

The first command he had learned in exile was how to enchant items in his hands. He spent about a *week* learning it instead of a month- reading and rereading the specifics behind the code at nighttime, and practising the command on his tools in the daytime.

He thought that Dream might get suspicious of him if he had a grindstone (to disenchant tools whenever he came around) when he didn't have any need for one- Dream hadn't liked him having an enchanting table after all- so in the end he used a grindstone to design a wheelbarrow. He hoped that Dream wouldn't think any more of it since it was just decoration. And so, he practised enchanting through commands, then erased them whenever Dream arrived, watched Dream explode the tools, and then repeated it.

He glanced at his communicator for the fifth time that hour. Phil and Technoblade should've met up with Dream and Sam a while ago, and there hadn't been any death messages or anything in the chat, but he still felt worried and wondered when Phil would send an update.

Eret sighed, stood up and decided to go get some more materials. He already had enough diamonds and netherite stored up in his enderchest (he didn't need them currently anyway), and he had enough fake iron and leather equipment for whenever Dream showed up. He even had enough food from all the pies and stews that visitors such as Niki, Tommy, Sam etc. had given him every time they came to see him.

He grabbed a couple iron shovels and pickaxes and headed off towards a nearby desert to collect sandstone.

Foolish will be here in a few weeks, and he'll need a bunch of sandstone in his builds, Eret remembered. I should probably gather some lapis lazuli too later.

He got lost in his work, his mind almost turning off from the simple repetitive work of mining sandstone. After a few hours, he finally heard a message on his communicator.

[PhilLzA has reached the goal [Postmortal]]

Eret froze and stared at his communicator, reading and rereading those six words over and over. He blinked, the meaning still not reaching his head. Worried messages from Wilbur, Tommy and others flooded the chat.

And suddenly, he understood. He gasped, sent some private messages to Phil and Techno, and watched the screen even more intensely, hoping that he wouldn't see the words bringing news about Phil's death. A few seconds passed, one minute passed, then five. Phil wasn't in any more danger it seemed, but they hadn't replied to anything yet.

Eret half-wanted to rush back to the Greater Dream SMP to help them, but he knew that the second Dream saw him there, he'd lose another life. Besides, it would take him way too long to get there. He returned to his temporary base and flopped onto the sofa, deciding to just read for the rest of the day- though he kept getting distracted by checking the communicator.

Eventually, a few hours later when the sun was setting down, he finally received a reply. He jumped at the noise and almost dropped the communicator onto the ground when he pulled it out.

[Technoblade whispers to you: We're fine. Phil just passed out, we're staying at his house in L'Manburg for now. The Egg should be gone, we didn't find any remains]

[Technoblade whispers to you: I mean, he didn't pass out- he's just exhausted. He's fine, other than when he almost died earlier today]

[You whisper to Technoblade: What even happened? How did he get mortally wounded??]

[Technoblade whispers to you: Bad was still getting controlled. Not anymore now though- he's also resting now.]

[Technoblade whispers to you: I can tell you more tomorrow if you'd like, I'm also exhausted]

[You whisper to Technoblade: Sure- don't worry about it. Goodnight]

Eret switched the communicator off and rolled onto his side, almost falling off the sofa. He sat up and sighed.

At least that's one more thing dealt with...

Chapter End Notes

You can bet that I'm gonna release Phil's POV of what happened before Eret gets to find out lol! IDK how long it'll take though, might be a few days. >_<

(Also, if you haven't seen it yet, I released two extra chapters that take place in between 14 and 15- it's in the third fic of this series- it's Eret's housewarming party, and him and Phil reminiscing about the real world)

10. just float along, wait it out

Chapter Summary

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: Eret? You good?]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: If you don't send any reply in five more minutes, I'm coming to find you]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: ...I'm coming over]

Chapter Notes

TW: mentions of getting stabbed, explosions, injuries, self-harm...

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The next day, Phil told Eret all about what happened. He explained how they found the doorways unblocked and the vines spreading around the room a lot- how they'd begun setting up TNT all around the room after quarantining the entire area around the trophy room in obsidian, but how Bad suddenly showed up and stabbed the person closest to the door- Phil.

Sam had jumped towards him and began fighting against Bad, pushing him further away from the Egg while Technoblade took care of Phil at the side of the room- and then Dream set off the TNT. Phil and Techno had still been *inside* the trophy room when the admin struck the flint with iron- but Phil was lucky that his instincts told him to grab Techno and dash out the door by flying as fast as he could.

His wings had still been slightly damaged by the explosion though- Eret was horrified to hear that- but they were mostly shallow injuries and Technoblade said that they'd heal in less than a week. Technoblade had been furious at Dream after that, but Dream just laughed it off and said that he knew they'd be fine. Techno had almost attacked Dream then, but Phil had somehow calmed him and convinced him to just leave after they got rid of the Egg with End Crystals.

* * * * *

A while had passed since then, but Eret had only gotten more worried despite the Egg being dealt with. *How the hell am I supposed to fix the rest of this now? Dream's already like this- will anything I say even get through to him? Dream is already too obsessed with control*, Eret thought in despair, scratching his head. He closed his eyes and exhaled..

I don't know how to fix this- I can't stop Sam from building the prison, I don't know what to do to help Ranboo's enderwalking, I don't have any clue how to fix Karl's time travelling memory issues... he inhaled deeply, feeling sick. I don't know if Quackity still wants revenge either- he said that he wouldn't, but can I trust that? If- if something happens, I won't be able to stop them since I can't go anywhere close to them-

He hugged his arms, his head down and curled in on himself. He shivered and gripped his arms tighter- his fingernails digging into his arms through the fabric and his eyes still shut tightly.

"Eret? Eret!"

His head snapped up and he saw that Dream had flung open the door and was pulling his hands away from his arms. *When did he even get here?* He stared at the marks on his arms almost in disbelief. *Did I do that?*

"What the hell were you doing?" Dream asked, *worriedly* almost.

"I, uh..." Eret started, but he had no idea what to say. "I don't feel too good."

"I think I can see that," Dream huffed.

"You're- you're here to take my stuff again, right?" Eret muttered. "Here-"

"No, no, we can do that later," Dream said, shaking his head and shoving the items back into Eret's hands along with a healing potion. He sighed. "I'm your *friend* Eret, I'm worried about you-"

"You're the one who put me in exile," Eret stopped himself from rolling his eyes. He opened the healing potion with shaking hands.

Dream frowned. "What are you talking about? *Wilbur and George* decided to exile you, not me!"

"Yeah, they decided on exile after your interference," Eret said after he drank the potion. "You're part of the reason why I'm here-"

"Well you're the one who blew up George's house!" Dream said angrily. "You deserve to be here-"

"I'm not saying I don't *deserve* to be here," Eret retorted, standing up and staring at Dream's mask, wondering what he was thinking behind it. "Just stop saying you're my friend when you clearly have some kind of grudge against me- stop trying to *manipulate* me, it's not going to work. Why do you hate me so much? What did I *do*?"

"You-" Dream was shaking with anger.

Oh- Did I take it too far? Eret thought worriedly, taking a step back. *Is he going to kill me?*

"I just gave you a healing potion after you hurt yourself! You didn't even thank me for that- I'm worried about you because I *am* your friend, Eret! Why else would I care? And I've helped you out so much- I gave you food and items! I don't *hate* you- Do you want me to stop visiting you? I mean- I *have* to come to take your stuff because Wilbur and George both said they don't want to bother coming all the way out here- but do you want me to stop chatting with you and spending time here? If that's what you want, I'll just come here and take your stuff, then leave you alone for weeks, like you want-"

"Sorry," Eret swallowed. Dream sounded like he was a step away from killing Eret. "I'm- sorry. And you're right- you did help me. Thank you-"

"No, no- you clearly hate me for some reason," Dream hissed, turning away. "I'm leaving-"

"I'm sorry, Dream!" Eret said, panicking. *Calm down, I've got to calm him down-* "I really don't *hate* you! Calm down-"

"You said that *I* exiled you, right?" Dream said quietly. "Do you even know *why*?"

"...Why?" Eret asked quietly.

"Because listen-" Dream said menacingly. "*You are like a little annoying bug in my room and it pisses me off so I take you and I put you outside.* Eret- you get in the way of *everything* I do! You betrayed me after we made a *deal* in that war- you invited *Technoblade and Philza* here and used them against *me*- you interrupted my plans with Punz- you're the reason that everything is going wrong for me! It's *your fault* that L'Man-child-burg exists, it's *your fault* that the SMP members are splitting into different sides, it's *your fault* that everything is going wrong! So I exiled you, sent you far away from everyone- but it seems like that's not enough!"

Eret took a step backwards instinctively. Dream took a step forward.

"If you don't start *listening* to me, I'll kill you!" Dream snarled. "I'll kill you, and *I'll bring you back again.* I'll kill you over and over until you decide to listen-"

"I-" Eret stammered. Dream hadn't shown this much emotion *ever* before. He gulped. "I'm *sorry* Dream-"

"Don't try to apologise if you don't mean it! I can't believe I thought I could trust you and be friends again after everything you did-" Dream shouted, pulling out flint and steel. Eret took another step backwards.

"We can still fix this-" Eret repeated over and over, trying to convince *himself* as well as Dream. "We can still be friends, Dream! You don't have to do this- I'm sorry! I'll listen-!"

"Drop your items now!" Dream ordered and Eret flinched, quickly dropping everything except his book, compass and some food onto the ground.

Dream ignored his rambling apologies and struck the flint. Eret ran outside of the house and watched the fire spread everywhere rapidly, destroying everything he'd created in the last few weeks.

"Start over," Dream said angrily, but still calming down a bit and fixing his mask over his face again. "It's time for you to start over, Eret."

"But Dream-"

"I really thought we could be friends," Dream snapped.

"We are! We are friends-! We can still-"

"No Eret- you're lying to me! You just said that you hate me, that I'm the one who exiled you! You're lying to me-"

Eret grabbed Dream's arm and cried, "I'm not lying- Look, I'm really sorry! I'll start over- so can't we start over too?"

"Sorry doesn't cut it," Dream said quietly but still freezing Eret with his threatening words. "Eret, you can't go to the Nether. No one- *no one* can come and visit you, until you learn to listen."

He pulled his arm away and headed towards the Nether Portal. He destroyed it and then turned back around to look at Eret. "Get new stuff, build a new place," he sighed. "Just don't make the same mistake and piss me off again, alright?"

"Yeah, yeah okay-" Eret said, nodding quickly, his adrenaline dying down. He shivered in the cold air. "I- I'm sorry."

With that, the admin left him alone in the middle of nowhere once again.

* * * * *

He was still in shock, but a few minutes later, he suddenly realised that he needed to make a safe spot before the sun went down. He found a tree with a torch on it and dug underneath and sighed in relief when he found the chest he'd hid beforehand. It had some extra food and materials that he'd prepared.

Over the past few weeks, he'd also learnt to summon mobs (mobs from the Nether or End gave him headaches though) and cloning/filling small areas with blocks. But one of the more important commands he'd learnt- was how to summon *items*.

At first, just summoning an apple from the air took everything out of him. But after forcing himself to practise 24/7, he could now handle summoning some iron tools, some logs and maybe some simpler potions before the now-familiar sharp pain rang through his head. He'd discovered that if he rested for a few days, he could handle summoning more though.

But anyway- now that he could take things as if straight from creative mode, it was easier to keep himself alive. Eret had a stable supply of food (he had to ration it of course though- he can't summon *too much* at once or in a short timeframe), and also didn't need to spend all his time on collecting things pointlessly for Dream. After learning that command, he could spend even *more* time studying.

He now stared at the ruins of the burnt settlement and clenched his fist tightly.

It's just an act, he comforted himself. It's just a game. Just a play. I'm just acting out the lore- It's just roleplay. I'm not actually alone. Eret took out his compass and looked in the direction of Phil's place. *I have Phil with me here- I have Techno too. Wilbur isn't dead, Tommy and Tubbo are both living happily, Schlatt's getting therapy, the Egg's gone-*

He shook his head and frowned. *It's not enough- it's still not enough! The others are safe now, but what about Dream? What do I do now?!*

He slapped his cheeks and set off to work, creating a simple box of wooden planks using commands. He added a door, some windows, tool benches and a bed, then set his spawn. Eret's face was down, in the pillow and he took a deep breath.

It- it'll be okay if I rest a bit, right? I know I said that I can't rest- I've still got so much more I need to do- but can't I rest for just a day?

His lip trembled slightly, and he clutched the pillow tightly in his arms. His shoulders shook as he sobbed, as quietly as he could despite being miles away from anyone else. His tears soaked through the pillowcase but he continued to cry, continuing to let all his worries and stress from the past few months out. And after crying his eyes out, he felt *exhausted* and simply fell asleep despite the sun not even setting yet.

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: Hey mate, I've got some good news :D]

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: El Rapids officially got its independence from George- and even Dream. Quackity seems to be a lot happier now. They've just been building recently, and even made an

alliance with L'Manburg]

[PhilLzA whispers to you: Dream didn't seem too happy about it at first though, but eventually just left them to it since Sapnap and George were happy]

A few minutes later.

[PhilLzA whispers to you: Eret? You good?]

[PhilLzA whispers to you: If you don't send any reply in five more minutes, I'm coming to find you]

[PhilLzA whispers to you: ...I'm coming over]

"Eret!" he heard Phil yell as loudly as he could. He rubbed his eyes and quickly threw on a coat and ran out the door.

"...Over here!" he called tiredly, and Phil sighed in relief when he ran into view and saw Eret still alive.

"What happened, mate?! Your old house is completely gone-"

"Dream happened," Eret said, yawning as he closed the door behind him. "He ranted to me about how I ruined all his plans and then burnt everything down. I fell asleep because I felt really tired..."

"Damn, I'm glad at least you seem physically okay..." Phil sucked in a breath. "Are you really alright though? He didn't try to kill you, did he? I thought something happened to you when you didn't reply! I think- I think you should come move in with us. It'd still be an exile, right? You'd still be far away from the Dream SMP-!"

"It's fine, I'm fine," Eret shook his head. "And no, I don't think he'll kill me- sometimes I see him staring at me strangely- I think he suspects I'm an admin or something, since he doesn't ever actually dare to hurt me. And anyways I know it's not real- it's just roleplay. I'm just acting in front of him-"

"That-" Phil frowned. "It might be a game, a play to us- but it's also still *real* to us right now, you know? There have been days where you haven't seen or talked to anyone, right? No- texting doesn't count- and you've been living in fear for your life for *weeks* now, right? Dream's been threatening you every time he comes- that's *real*- even if you know what Dream's trying to do, even if Dream doesn't *actually* hurt you- it doesn't mean it's okay!"

"Yeah but-"

"Seriously, Eret!" Phil interrupted him while placing his hands on Eret's shoulders. He suddenly hugged Eret and Eret's eyes widened in surprise. "It's not good to just push everything out of your mind- it's *not good* to pretend like everything is fine- because *it's not*! It's not okay!"

"I'll-" Eret swallowed, burying his face into Phil's shoulder. "It'll be over soon anyway," he said weakly. "You should probably go. Dream said that nobody can come visit now- if he finds out you're still coming, he might *actively* try to kill you or permanently maim your wings..."

Phil sighed, but squeezed him one more time before nodding and moving towards the door. "I'll... get going then. But remember Eret- you *don't have to do this alone*. If you're in a helpless situation- pretty much *anyone* would come to your aid! Especially Techno and I! Don't forget it, alright?"

"Yeah," Eret's voice felt thick. He nodded and gave a half-wave. "I know."

But I should at least try one last time.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for reading :)

Kudos and comments are appreciated, as always!

11. until i find the ground beneath my feet

Chapter Summary

[FoolishG has joined the game]

Chapter Notes

TW: self-harm (tho there's a reason for it?)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Eret blinked up at the much too bright sky and then sat up. He sighed at the god who hovered slightly over him. He'd been teleported onto the roof again.

"DreamXD," he said tiredly.

"How has your studying been going?"

"Fine, I've made a lot of progress," Eret said, glancing around. It always felt so *quiet* whenever XD showed up- XD's presence could repel all the creatures, whether passive or hostile, from approaching them. "But I'm a bit stuck with how to change Dream from the original story..."

"I saw what happened-" the god frowned. **"Although you've made many changes, this world will still end the same way with how things are going."**

Eret swallowed. "...If I can't change the future, what are you going to do?"

"...I have other ways to fix it."

"Like what?"

"The time traveller."

Eret clenched his fist. "So you're going to force Karl to time travel after all?"

He had asked DreamXD when he visited a while ago if he could leave Karl alone in this world, but it seemed like the god would make him a time traveller after all.

"Yes, because if somehow *you* fail, I'll still be able to rely on *him*. I need to keep my options open-"

Eret gritted his teeth together but refrained from saying anything to the god until he calmed down again. "But if I save Dream from his fate, what about Karl? What will you do about his memory loss? Or do you not care about him- you only care about your admin?"

"Karl's memory loss would be a necessary sacrifice. An admin is more useful to me-"

"Karl shouldn't have to sacrifice his life at all! He has nothing to do with all this- he'd a *good* person-"

"If you want me to stop him from time travelling, then fix up this mess quicker," XD huffed, before putting up a hand to stop Eret from replying. **"There's not much time until Dream will be imprisoned, I think. I don't really understand time- but anyway, you better do something fast to change it."**

With that, he flickered out of existence, leaving Eret alone, angry and panicking about what to do to change the future.

* * * * *

When Dream showed up five days later, he pretended like nothing had happened again. The admin complimented Eret's new base and after messing around for a while, asked for Eret's equipment. He dropped it without a word.

"So," Dream said, pausing for a second. "Have you missed me?"

"Yeah," Eret nodded quickly, lying with a straight face. "I'm- I'm really sorry, Dream. I'm really glad you're back."

"Did anyone come visit you?"

"...No," Eret said softly. "They probably don't know how to come here without the route from the Nether anyway."

"Hmmm," Dream hummed. "Wilbur and George have agreed to ban your visitors though- they decided that a few days ago. And besides, everyone's moving on with their lives now- they've been busy with other things recently."

"Oh."

I'm the one who keeps reminding everyone through DMs not to come though.

"I'll still come visit though, of course."

"There's a little less than two months left, right?" Eret asked after a moment, trying to think of a way to change the topic to what he wanted to say.

"Huh? What are you talking about?" Dream answered, confused. "There's still five months left. Your sentence was six months, you know?"

"Six?"

...It's too late for me to help him, isn't it? He's seriously trying to mess up my head now.

"I'm sure it was three months..."

"No, no, no-" Dream shook his head. "Do you think I'd *lie* to my friends? Besides, haven't you always sort of had- you know- uhm.. memory issues? Didn't you say that when you first came to the SMP? I remember that."

"I- Uh.. yeah. I do have some memory issues," Eret frowned. "I... I guess you're right, Dream. I don't know what I was thinking of."

"It's fine, that's what friends are for!" Dream grinned. "To help each other!"

"Yeah," Eret said, trying to sound convincing. "Can I- Can I ever visit though? Maybe for some special occasion- my birthday? Just for a day?"

"When's your birthday?"

"January 9th..."

"Isn't that in four days?" Dream was surprised. He thought about it for a moment. But then he shook his head. "No, I don't think Wilbur or George would let you back, even if it's just for a short visit. But what if you hold a birthday party instead? You can invite whoever you want to come- and I'll send out the invites- and you can have the party here- at the beach!"

You're not going to let anyone come, aren't you? Eret thought, but he nodded quickly. "That'd be great. Thank you so much, Dream! I'll start making the cards now- and then I'll decorate the place up a bit. It'll be really fun!"

"Yeah, it will be," Dream smiled.

[Fundy whispers to you: Happy birthday, Eret! :D]

[Fundy whispers to you: I wish I could visit you today, but you know...]

[You whisper to Fundy: Aww, thank you Fundy! But don't worry, we can always celebrate when I'm back :)]

[You whisper to Fundy: I'm doing okay right now, how about you?]

* * * * *

[TommyInnit whispers to you: HAPPY BIRTHDAY ERET! how old are you again?]

[You whisper to TommyInnit: Thanks Tommy! And I've got no idea!]

[TommyInnit whispers to you: wait what?? how do you not know your own age??]

[You whisper to TommyInnit: I'm immortal, kinda like Phil. And I've got memory problems. I don't know how long I've been alive now lol]

[TommyInnit whispers to you: damn. you must be really old then]

* * * * *

[Ph1LzA whispers to you: Happy birthday mate! If Dream isn't visiting, could I come over for a short while at night? I've got something for you!]

[You whisper to Ph1LzA: Thank you! But Dream's definitely going to be showing up today, and I don't know how long he'll stay around. I'll message you as soon as he leaves]

Eret replied to the other private messages on his communicator and when he was finished, he turned it off and went back to decorating the place. In a few hours, Dream would arrive and most likely pretend to be shocked that nobody else was at the party.

He sighed.

*Is there even any point staying any longer? **Nothing** I say gets through to him.*

* * * * *

"Hey Eret! Sorry I'm late to the party-" Dream greeted, waving at him. Eret pushed his sunglasses up a little higher.

"Dream! ... You're finally here."

"Where's everyone else?" Dream frowned.

"I... I don't know," Eret answered. "Nobody- nobody showed up for some reason. Are you sure you sent all the invitations?"

"Of course I did!" Dream said as he folded his arms together and tapped the ground with his foot impatiently. "I personally handed them out to everyone. Tommy and Niki had been really excited- though Wilbur threw his invitation away immediately. I'm surprised the others aren't here though- maybe they got delayed?"

"Nobody sent any messages though! And it's already hours late- I don't... I don't think they're coming," Eret teared up slightly, then wiped them in shock at his own acting. But Dream seemed to think he was shocked that the others weren't *there*. "None of my friends are bothered to come to my birthday party-"

"What are you talking about? *I'm* your friend! And I'm here!"

"Yeah- I know you are Dream," Eret sniffed. "But why aren't the rest of them coming?! Or even leaving a message?"

"Maybe they're caught up in something else more important," Dream shrugged.

"More important than my birthday?" Eret whispered. He looked down at the cake he'd prepared. He picked it up and was about to throw it when Dream quickly stopped him.

"Eret- stop, calm down! *I'm* here to celebrate with you, aren't I? We can still have lots of fun today- look, I even brought you a gift!" Dream took out a trident from his inventory and passed it to Eret, who stared at the admin up in surprise. "It's got Riptide on it," he grinned.

"That... That's awesome." Eret clenched it tightly in his hand. *I could use this to run away right now...* "Thanks..."

"You'll have to give it back to me for safekeeping though," Dream said as if reading his mind, "because otherwise I'd have to burn it when I come again, right?"

"...Yeah."

"But you can play with it for now! Let's go play some party games!"

* * * * *

Eret was slightly worried that Dream might stick around close by to keep an eye on him to *make sure* that *nobody* visited, and he told Phil that, but Phil visited with Technoblade anyway.

And despite the initial worry Eret felt, their presence brought him happiness and warmth- and he was glad to be with people who loved him at the end of his birthday.

* * * * *

Eret was certain it was time to leave. It didn't seem like staying any longer would be useful- he *could* speed through the rest of the commands and coding he was supposed to learn of course, but he decided that he was far enough in that part of his goals.

The most pressing problem on the SMP right now is Dream's obsession with control- but he won't listen to me at all. So it's pointless to stay here any longer- that'd just be a waste of time and I'd be risking my life every time he comes. He might be planning to experiment the Revive Book on someone too- and I wouldn't be able to change anything here.

It's time to leave I guess.

For the last few days, he prepared to leave while making changes to the area to try and buy more time. He wasn't sure if Dream would come by before the 16th though, so he only began redecorating Logstedshire the night before he left.

On the evening of January 15th, Eret blew up his own house and set fire to some nearby trees, leaving the charred remains all over the area. He cut bits of his shirt and trousers off, leaving the pieces of fabric trapped under rocks but still visible to anyone who stood close enough. After making a mess of the place he'd lived in for weeks, he built a huge tower as Tommy had done, and jumped off it, landing safely in the ocean.

He looked at the place again and prayed desperately that it would fool Dream- at least for a short while.

Eret pulled out a knife from his inventory and grimaced, holding it just inches away from his own skin. He inhaled deeply, and without hesitating any longer, cut his palm and watched as his blood flowed onto bits of rotten flesh and bones he'd collected days earlier. After scattering it around the area, he wrapped his hand up with a piece of fabric and took one last look at the area.

He headed towards the Greater Dream SMP.

* * * * *

The first thing Eret did was find the closest hidden base he'd built months ago. The closest one was about a thousand blocks away from (0, 0), but he was still worried that someone might be adventuring nearby or something and see him. He entered the saved coordinates onto his communicator and quickly began making his way towards the base since the sun was already setting.

He only got a few hundred blocks out before he dug into a cave to stay for the night. The next morning, he put out all the torches and completed his journey. When he found the entrance of his hidden base and pulled the lever to open the door, he sighed in relief and rushed inside.

Pulling on the netherite armour and equipping himself with all his hard-earned equipment quickly, Eret felt much safer than he had for the first time in weeks. He opened his enderchest and sorted out

his inventory for a bit.

His shoulders relaxed when he found a potion of healing. Fumbling to open it with his slightly shaking fingers, he pulled open the cork and downed half of it, wincing at the taste again. Then, he unwrapped his bandage and poured the rest of the liquid onto his hand, watching the skin reattach itself together and the scar disappear as if it'd never been cut.

When he headed back out of the base, he only took a few steps before suddenly getting a notification on his communicator.

[FoolishG has joined the game]

Eret could *feel* his heartbeat increase and was about to send a message to Foolish when he suddenly heard rustling in the trees. He quickly unsheathed his netherite sword and quietened his actions, glancing all around him.

And then, he caught sight of the figure to his left.

"Eret?" A familiar head popped into view. Eret took a step back instinctively.

"Karl?! What are you-"

"It's been so long!" Karl jumped at him and hugged him. "How have you been?"

"Alright, I guess-" Eret said, surprised, but hugged him back.

"Are you coming back to the SMP now?"

"No, I'm pretty sure there's still about a month and a half left," Eret said and then suddenly froze. *Right- he's started time travelling! He probably doesn't know how long has passed every time he comes back?*

"Karl- I uh, I know your secret..."

Karl pulled away a bit and stared at him confused. "Uhh, what?"

"You've begun time travelling, haven't you?"

Karl's eyes widened and his mouth hung open. "How- How do you know that? I haven't told anyone at all-"

"I'm related to Herobrine, remember?" Eret gave a small smile. "I know a lot of things. And one thing I know is that you'll start losing your memories in the future because of time travel."

"How- never mind, it's not important. Do you know how I can keep my memories then?" Karl asked, frowning.

"I'm not completely sure yet," Eret sighed. "But I'm still searching for a way. But for now- I've made his plan for keeping your memories." He pulled out a notebook from his inventory and passed it to Karl. "This is a copy of my notebook that includes most events that happened in the SMP so far. I've added some extra sections for yours- they list the people who are close to you and some memories you guys have shared. You can add more if you want- just in case you forget them."

Karl stared at it surprised but nodded gratefully. "Thanks- can I make a couple of copies? I think it'll be useful if I have them in multiple places, in case I lose them somehow. I can have some in my place in El Rapids and also in my bamboo house..."

"Of course. I'm searching for another solution, but for now this will have to do..."

"It's a good idea though," Karl smiled. "It's better than nothing, so thanks a lot Eret."

"Yeah," Eret scratched his head. "I'll- uhm, I'll see you around then, yeah? Please don't tell anyone you saw me."

"Sure," Karl said, tilting his head slightly, confused. "See you later!"

* * * * *

Eret sat underneath a tree on the outskirts of the Greater Dream SMP, watching his surroundings on guard while he waited. He'd sent Foolish his coordinates after greeting him, and Foolish said he'd come find him as soon as possible. About twenty minutes later, Eret noticed the tall figure of his friend.

"Foolish!" he said, relieved, standing up and brushing the grass out of his clothes. "It's so great to see you!" He could hear his own heartbeat thumping loudly.

"Long time no see," Foolish grinned as he approached Eret. "How have you been?"

"I don't know if anyone's told you yet, but I'm exiled from the Greater Dream SMP right now," Eret said, leading Foolish towards the desert where he'd built his summer house in game. "But anyway- Do you know anything about Youtube?"

He looked at his friend's face hopefully, but Foolish had a blank expression. "Uhh, what? I don't think I've ever heard of that."

"Never mind then," his shoulders slumped a bit but he continued on quickly. "Foolish- there's something else I've got to tell you. You see- I remember that we're *friends*, but I can't remember anything else about my past... I've got amnesia for some reason-"

"Really?!" Foolish stared at him. "Nothing at all? The Wither Cult, that party where-"

"No, I don't remember any of that," Eret sighed, shaking his head. "I might remember it in the future, but who knows. It's been a few months since I arrived at the Dream SMP and I've never gotten any flashes or feelings of *deja vu* or anything..."

"Oh..." Foolish kicked the sand and Eret brightened up a little.

"You need a house, right? I've got a lot of materials prepared that you can use."

"That would be great!" Foolish nodded, jumping around and marking some spots in the sand with rocks. "You know- I think this place would be perfect for my builds!"

I haven't been writing much since I keep getting distracted by games and sleep- so I might upload less regularly or something, IDK. But no matter how long it takes for new chapters to come out, I'll definitely finish writing this fic :>

But anyway, Foolish is finally here! And Eret's finally run off from exile to move in with him...

12. through all the fears and all the doubts, i've learned to taste the sour with the sweet

Chapter Summary

"So," he coughed. "Any questions?"

Everyone (other than the ones who already knew) was speechless and unmoving, until Tommy suddenly spluttered, "What the fuck."

"Language!" Bad yelled immediately.

Chapter Notes

No TWs I think?

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Two days had passed since Eret ran off and moved in with Foolish. They had built a temporary house at the side of the site where Foolish was planning his summer house, and Eret had spent some time telling Foolish everything that had happened on the server so far. Eret had messaged Phil that he was with Foolish too. But his time was up, and he woke up on the 18th with a message from Dream to everyone on the server.

[<Dream> If anyone finds Eret on the Greater Dream SMP lands, kill him on sight]

* * * * *

[Dream whispers to you: Meet me on the 20th at these coordinates. Don't bring anyone else or else I'll burn Tommy's discs. We need to talk]

He sighed, but wondered what Dream would even do with him. It wasn't like Eret was attached to the discs like Tommy had been. And in the first place, Tommy didn't *care* about his discs anymore- so Eret *could* bring anyone he wanted, and Dream wouldn't expect it.

He swallowed a lump in his throat and sent a message to Phil.

* * * * *

"He wants to meet on the 20th. Alone," Eret said bitterly. Phil's eyes widened and he sat down.

"Wha- Why?? You don't even have anything to do with the Disc Conflict-"

"Yeah, I don't know what he's planning. He might just want to kill me, like he said in the chat..." Eret sighed, rubbing his eyes tiredly. "At least the Doomsday War didn't happen, and at least the Egg is gone- but *now* what? What do we do now?"

He bit his lip and avoided Phil's eye contact. "Phil, I- Can I be real with you for a second?"

"Yeah, of course you can," Phil said quietly.

"I- I don't know what to do anymore," Eret said frustrated. "I'm anxious and scared almost all the time now- I can't even fall asleep at night unless Foolish is right beside me, since I keep thinking about imaginary situations and how to stop Dream- *I want to save everyone*, but I'm running out of ideas for what to do! I- I'm so tired of *everything*- I just want to go home and see Elaina again, I just want to relax and not worry about my life every day!"

Phil held out his arms and Eret hugged him gratefully while he cried quietly. "I'm so tired- I feel like I could just sleep for an entire year or something..."

"Eret," Phil whispered. "You don't have to do everything by yourself, you know? It's alright to leave things to other people sometimes- like the Egg! It's not your responsibility to do *everything*, you need to slow down and relax sometimes too. You're just human- you need breaks and you need someone to rely on- and that's okay! You've already done enough for everyone."

Phil's warm and quiet voice calmed Eret down a bit, and he focused on Phil's heavy hand that was patting his head slowly, grounding him. "I think it's time you relied on others a bit more," Phil said softly. "Don't you want to tell anyone the truth?"

"I..." Eret hesitated. "Yeah, I guess... but how are they going to react? What if they're mad that *we* created this terrible story for them?"

"Uhhh," Phil coughed awkwardly. "You see... I actually already told two people everything."

"Wait, what?! Really? Who?!"

"Technoblade and Wilbur," Phil admitted. "I told them around the end of November... when Dream first wanted you exiled. I'm pretty sure that's why- That's why Wilbur's been avoiding you. He feels terrible for exiling you, even though he knows the truth and is trying to protect Tommy... He agreed to exile you so that Tommy wouldn't be."

Eret was still frozen, in shock. "And Technoblade? He- he just believed you and he's not mad?"

"No, he's the one who noticed I was acting differently actually..." Phil laughed. "He said my sparring skills are shit."

Eret cracked a smile at that and thought about it in silence for a moment. "I... Okay, I know you're right. I should probably rely on you and the others a bit more," Eret sighed, pulling away. "I'll- I'll tell *some* people- not everyone yet, is that okay?"

"Of course," Phil nodded. "Do you want to tell them now?"

"No time better than the present," Eret smiled tiredly, reaching for his communicator in his pocket. "Do you mind if I call them here?"

"I don't mind at all," Phil said, standing up. "I should probably get some more chairs or something then- how many people do you want to tell?"

* * * * *

As their friends arrived at Phil's house one-by-one, they all asked Eret what was going on but he insisted on telling them once they were all together. When Niki arrived last with Wilbur, everyone sat down and Eret clenched his fist tightly, feeling his fingernails digging in his skin.

He looked at Tommy, Tubbo, Ranboo and Fundy who were squeezed on the sofa, Niki and Wilbur who were sitting on wooden chairs and Foolish, Sam, Bad and Karl who were sitting on the floor. Phil and Technoblade were leaning against the wall.

"Okay- you guys will most likely have *a lot* of questions, but please keep them for the end," Eret started. Wilbur seemed to realise what Eret was going to do. He took a deep breath.

* * * * *

"So," he coughed. "Any questions?"

Everyone (other than the ones who already knew) was speechless and unmoving, until Tommy suddenly spluttered, "What the fuck."

"Language!" Bad yelled immediately, shifting the atmosphere in the room and everyone started laughing again.

"No but seriously," Tommy stared at Eret, then glanced at Phil and back again. "You're from *a world where there's only one life?! How do you even live like that?!*"

"Like Eret said," Phil explained, "It's illegal to kill people in our world and there aren't any hostile mobs there either. Our lives are pretty peaceful- a lot more compared to here anyways."

"Why is that what you're focused on anyway?" Ranboo frowned. "Didn't you hear what Eret said? That the '*us*' in Eret and Phil's world basically created us here! The '*me*' in their world gave me memory problems because he thought it'd be cool! That's so messed up-"

"Yeah, well 'I' gave myself a bunch of voices in my head for some reason," Techno snorted. The others winced at that.

"Is it possible though?" Sam said wistfully. "A world where everyone here is friends, a world where everyone lives peacefully and happily..?"

"It is," Eret said determinedly. "And I want to make this place like that too."

"But what are we supposed to do about Dream?" Niki frowned. "And didn't you say DreamXD said that things are still going to end the same way with how things are going?"

"Yeah," Eret sighed. "That's uh- that's why I'm telling you guys all this. I'm out of ideas, and I really need some help right now."

"Can't we put him in the prison then?" Sam mumbled. "I'll just make sure to keep Quackity out. And of course make it more humane..."

"That doesn't *help* Dream though..." Phil muttered. "Hm, what if you hire some other people?"

"What? Why would that help?"

"You could get Puffy to talk to Dream," Phil explained. Some of the others nodded. "And uhm, so that you can get some rest from guarding the prison all the time. You have a life outside of it too, you know."

"I could work there," Niki said, raising a hand. Sam looked surprised. "I don't think Dream hates me that much- maybe I can help him too."

"What about my memory loss though?" Karl mumbled. "I don't want to forget everything-"

"I'm still looking for ways to help that," Eret grimaced. "But for now, that's also something I have no idea how to help with..."

"You've already done so much for us," Bad said gratefully as everyone nodded. "You saved me from the Egg, you stopped all those wars! Now it's our turn to fix the rest of this mess. You can rely on us, Eret- you don't have to do everything yourself."

* * * * *

After discussing plans and answering a few more questions from everyone, they agreed to gather equipment and meet up on the 20th to confront and apprehend Dream.

The L'Manburg people were the last to leave, and Tubbo looked like he wanted to say something, but kept changing minds about it. Suddenly he burst out, saying "I think I want to create my own country."

"What?" Tommy exclaimed first. "Why?! L'Manburg still exists!"

"Yeah, but I've been thinking about it for a while now," Tubbo admitted. "I don't particularly *want* to leave you guys, but I just think it'd be nice to build my own place... and now that Eret's told me about Snowchester- I really want to see what I can do by myself."

The others were stunned, and Phil glanced at Wilbur worriedly, but Wilbur just smiled and patted Tubbo's head. "Sure," he said, surprising everyone including Tubbo. "You want to be independent, don't you? I don't mind that at all."

Eret exhaled. "You can get dual-citizenships in my world," he said as they turned their heads to look at him. "Why not do that here too? So you can be a citizen of both L'Manburg and Snowchester."

Tubbo looked at Wilbur hopefully, who just nodded enthusiastically. "That sounds good to me, would you like that Tubbo? Or do you just want to be part of Snowchester?"

"Dual-citizenship sounds pog! Tubbo grinned. "Thanks, Wilbur!"

* * * * *

The next day, Eret was surprised to see Wilbur all the way out from L'Manburg at his and Foolish's place.

"Eret!" Foolish yelled from the ground. "Wilbur's here to see you!"

"I'll be down in a moment!" he called back. He looked back at the wall he'd been working on for a few hours (he'd already prepared enough stuff and he basically had creative mode anyway) and then enderpearled down.

"Hey Will," he greeted with a wave. "What are you doing all the way out here?"

"I didn't get a chance to talk to you alone yesterday," Wilbur admitted. "I... Look, I'm really sorry for exiling you-"

"It's not your fault," Eret cut in shaking his head. "You don't need to apologise for that. And Phil made me promise to go talk to Puffy after tomorrow- so I'll be fine, I swear."

"Yeah but- I didn't even visit you in exile! I just avoided you because I felt so ashamed!"

"But you kept asking about me whenever you talked to Tommy or Phil, right? I know you care about me a lot," Eret smiled. "And I don't hate you at all or anything. You did what you had to to keep Tommy safe."

"When Dream gets imprisoned, you're coming home right?"

"I think so," Eret shrugged. "George doesn't have anything against me. And if they all show up to confront Dream, that's pretty much proof that they're on my side..."

"We're having a huge party the second you come back," Wilbur muttered under his breath. "And though I feel bad for pushing all the work on you when the party's in *your* honour, could you please do the cooking? I've missed it so much, you have no idea..."

"Of course," Eret grinned. "Leave that to me!"

* * * * *

And when Fundy showed up an hour after Wilbur left, Eret just hopped down the wall unsurprised. "Fundy!" he waved.

"Eret!" Fundy ran up to him and hugged him, almost knocking him down into the sand. "I'm so glad you can come home soon."

"Same. It'll be nice to be home," Eret agreed.

"I thought about everything you said yesterday," Fundy said quietly. "Is it really true that Dad died permanently?"

"It was," Eret said. "But not anymore. Not in this world. He's not going to die no matter what."

"I still can't forgive him completely for exiling you," Fundy admitted. "I- I think I hated him. For doing that to you."

"But you don't hate him anymore?"

"No... He was just trying to protect us and Tommy. I'm- I'm not happy that *you* were exiled, but I'm glad Tommy didn't have to go through all that..."

"Yeah, I'm glad too." He brushed off some sand that had been blown onto Fundy's hair. "Everything's going to change tomorrow..." he sighed.

"I'm glad that I have a lot of friends on my side though," Eret smiled.

Chapter End Notes

Alright, I know I didn't show much of Foolish and Eret interacting in this chapter, but I hope Eret saying this implies enough about what their relationship is like- *"I can't even fall asleep at night unless Foolish is right beside me"*

He feels safe around Foolish 🧐🧐🧐

I might write more about their first two days together in the one-shot extras, but no promises cuz I'm just so unmotivated these days lmao.

But for now, I'm just gonna focus on finishing the main plot of this story since the end is almost in sight! (For me at least)

Y'know how I rename the chapters but the numbers don't correspond to AO3's since some chapters are split into parts? So yeah, according to 'my' number of chapters, there'll be 18 in total, and this one you just read is 12. There might be some more chapters that are split into parts, so I'm not gonna just say there's 6 chapters left, but anyway, the main plot of this story is almost over!

Thank you guys for reading and commenting, they make my day :>

13. people change with time

Chapter Summary

"It'll all be over soon," Wilbur said worriedly, his hand on Eret's shoulder. "Hurry up and come home, alright?"

"Yeah," Eret nodded. "I'll be home soon."

Chapter Notes

TW: graphic descriptions of violence, TEMPORARY MAJOR CHARACTER DEATH, panic attacks, heavy thoughts etc.

Angst :)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Eret woke up feeling far more awake than he'd ever felt. He jumped up and rushed around, grabbing the potions he'd prepared the day before and stocked up his inventory full with totems of undying.

He had planned to rush through the Prime Path early that morning, before anyone who didn't know caught him and tried to kill him, but it seemed like everyone had gathered to see him off. They stood on both sides of the path, cheering and giving some gifts to him.

And as he walked with everyone right behind him, he suddenly felt the world *freeze* as everyone suddenly became silent and as the wind stilled and the view had become slightly greyer than usual.

"XD?" he asked. He slowly turned around. The god was floating in the air, like he always was.

"You're still going to imprison Dream," the god scowled. **" Why are you-"**

"He'll be allowed to spend time in the courtyard; he'll have a bed, various kinds of food, visitors; and he won't be tortured," Eret said. "Puffy will talk to him, Niki will keep an eye on him, and I'm sure Sapnap and George will forgive Dream eventually too."

"And if this fails?! What if he kills visitors or something, what if he gets worse?"

"I..." Eret swallowed. "I'm out of ideas, okay? Everyone else seems to think this is a good way- and I'll trust them, I'll rely on their ideas for once. If Dream somehow ends up worse, I guess *it was just meant to be* then."

The god glared at him and folded his arms together. **"You better keep him safe- don't let Quackity or Sam torture him."**

"Of course not," Eret sighed as he felt time return and as the wind began blowing in his face again. The god disappeared.

Technoblade approached him and frowned. "Are you sure you don't want us to come with you immediately? I know he said to go alone, but there's literally no reason why you should agree with that- even Tommy said that he doesn't care if the discs get burnt."

"Yeah, but he might run away if he sees some thirty people all on his front lawn," Eret answered with a small smile. "I'll go there, ask what he wants, and then you guys can show up. And if a fight ends up happening, *I'd be okay with losing my second life*. There's something I've actually got to test," he said, surprising Techno. "As long as you guys come inside before I lose my third life, it'll be fine."

"Something you have to test from dying?" Techno asked dryly.

Eret simply nodded and took out his communicator. He filled in the coordinates Dream had sent him a few days ago, and then looked back at everyone else. "I'll... I'll see you all soon."

"It'll all be over soon," Wilbur said worriedly, his hand on Eret's shoulder. "Hurry up and come home, alright?"

"Yeah," Eret nodded. "I'll be home soon."

* * * * *

He found Dream on the top of a hill not too far away. After making his way up there, he stared at Dream who clapped his hands together.

"You came alone!" he said eerily happily, "I'm glad you listened to that."

"What do you want?" Eret said, gripping the weapon in his hand. He'd drunk strength, speed and regeneration potions beforehand, but he still felt nervous about potentially fighting Dream in a duel.

"I can't believe you tried to fool me into thinking you died," Dream shook his head. "You *know* about the Revival Book, don't you? When it didn't work on your 'corpse', of course I'd realise you were alive!"

"So?" Eret answered. "It got me some time- I escaped to somewhere safe-"

"And yet you're back here, alone with me again!" Dream grinned. "I've only realised this recently, but isn't it very easy to manipulate you? I shouldn't have threatened *your* life- I should've just threatened anything to do with Tommy's! And then you'd do anything to stop that!"

Eret's palms felt sweaty. He stayed quiet as Dream continued on.

"I'm so grateful to Tommy, you know? He brought *attachments* to this server- and now I can use it against you! I can use it to control everyone, to control the whole server again!" He opened up a hidden entrance and Eret followed him silently. "And now that I've cut off all of my *own* attachments, I'm invincible!"

"I hated you so much- since you kept interrupting *all* my plans- but it was so easy to control you after all! Since *you've* got the most attachments out of everyone here." Dream said triumphantly as the elevator dropped down into the bottom of the world.

"So what are you going to do now?" he said quietly. The elevator hit the bottom with a thud and they stepped into the massive hall. "You said you cut off all your attachments- even *George*? And *Sapnap*?"

Dream faltered for half a second but continued on. He placed down a bed and set his spawn, and then told Eret to set his. "Of course- I have to cut off *all attachments* so that nobody will be able to control me. Because you see- when you're attached to people and things like you and Tommy are- it's so easy for me to control you guys!"

He dug a hole in the ground with a pickaxe and turned to look at Eret. "Go on, I know you have stuff to drop."

Eret just gripped his sword tighter. Dream frowned and unsheathed his own weapon. "If you don't drop it, I'll have to kill you to get it," he warned.

But Eret just swung his sword up at Dream's neck and the admin jumped back immediately, dodging the strike.

"So we're fighting after all?" Dream said, amused. Eret didn't reply, simply gritted his teeth and ran at him again.

The sword still felt heavy to him, and each one of Dream's blows felt like they would shatter his bones- but Eret felt slightly more confident in his skills. He wasn't doing *terribly* against Dream. He threw a potion of regeneration on himself when he backed away a bit, and switched to a bow and aimed at Dream, shooting two or three arrows.

Switching back to his sword, he swung it with all his strength and cracked the blackstone floor when Dream rolled to the side and back flipped back up. Dream suddenly threw something at him-

And Eret saw the totem flash in front of his eyes. The trident Dream had thrown had lodged directly in his chest, but the totem had pushed it out immediately and regenerated the wound-

But then he felt a gush of *wind* blowing at his face and he realised that the world was spinning.

* * * * *

He gasped for air, shuddering and shivering while staring up at the familiar ceiling. He sat up and immediately threw up onto the floor beside his bed. His hand reached for his neck, but it felt perfectly normal.

I'm on my bed again?! Didn't I fall asleep on the sofa or something?

He quickly stumbled out of bed and rummaged his desk for a piece of paper and a pen. The headache was returning and quickly getting worse. He finally found one and scribbled on it:

[To whoever finds this: tell everyone in the DSMP that I'm with Phil in a parallel world where the DSMP is real- Eret]

And before he could do anything else, his exhaustion took over and he fell back into unconsciousness.

* * * * *

He sprung up the second he woke up and glanced around the room, jumping away from Dream who had picked up all his stuff. He glared at the admin, who was guarding the side with the Nether Portal while checking out all of Eret's stuff.

"You're awake," the admin hummed. "It's strange. You don't respawn immediately like people normally do."

Eret said nothing. He hoped that the others would be there soon- they must've seen his death message on the communicator, right?

If he tries to kill me again, I'll use commands to teleport out of here, he decided as he entered the command behind his back. All he had to do was press enter and he'd be gone.

Dream seemed to think he was calling for help though, and just laughed. "It's pointless to send messages to anyone," he said. "Nobody will be able to find us- I blocked the entrance when we came in!"

"There's always the Nether Portal," Eret said, as he noticed the swirls and particles shine brighter. Someone was coming through-

"Oh come on, how would they find the correct portal or make one connected to this one?" Dream replied. "They'd have to know the coordinates again-"

"Step away from him, Dream."

Dream spun around alarmed, and stared at the group of people who'd just arrived.

Phil ran to Eret's side immediately, and pulled him behind the others while Technoblade pointed his axe at the admin.

Eret stared at the group of people who'd shown up- it seemed like *everyone* was there, even the ones who hadn't been there in the original story. Punz was there too- though Eret wasn't completely sure if he was acting as a spy or not. He decided to not think about it for the moment- as Niki and Hbomb passed him spare equipment and potions and as Sapnap and Technoblade continued to back Dream into a corner.

"I know you guys planned to imprison him, but can't we take at least one of his lives?" Techno said. Eret took a deep breath and stepped forward with the others right behind him. Dream looked slightly confused.

Eret sighed. He dug a hole in the floor. "Dream- drop your items."

"No- why should I?!"

"If you don't listen we're just going to kill you," Sapnap said angrily.

"You don't *need* to kill me-"

"It's over for you, Dream," Eret said tiredly. "You're already surrounded- just drop your items."

Dream glared at him but then reluctantly dropped his items in the hole as the younger boys cheered and laughed at Dream. Just before Eret was about to tell Sam to take Dream away, Dream muttered something.

"What? Did you say something?" Eret asked.

"I know your secret," he said. "You're just *like me*, aren't you Eret? You've been pretending to be nice to everyone, but you're just as bad as me-"

"What are you talking about?" Tommy interrupted angrily. "Eret is *nothing* like you, you green bitch-"

"I knew ever since you interrupted my plans that day in November-" Dream continued, staring at Eret. "You're an *admin* aren't you? I tried to ban you afterwards- but it didn't work. So you must be an admin!"

"So what?" Eret asked, confused.

"What are you doing on *my server* then? What happened to your own one? You're just as bad as me, aren't you-" he said loudly, looking around at everyone. "You guys probably don't know since it doesn't happen much, but *admins* that live on other people's servers are *failures* who either destroyed their own worlds, or are so bad that they're being punished by getting exiled from their own servers-"

Eret just snorted and pulled out his inventory. He took out a book and flung it at Dream's head, who flinched despite catching it. "Wha-"

"I'm sure you know what that is," Eret said as he tapped his foot impatiently. "I'm sorry to inform you but your theory has been wrong the whole time. I haven't even taken the exam yet."

"You're trying to become an admin?!" Quackity yelled in surprise. "Holy shit, that's awesome!"

Dream just held the book in his hands, speechless. Then he stepped closer to Eret.

Everyone immediately reached for their weapons, but Dream just whispered in Eret's ear.

"I know your other secret."

"...What?"

"I know you're not from this world- and I don't mean 'server'." Eret froze. "I knew from the beginning- after you betrayed me for no reason, I checked over your code and found a glitch in it- and then found a similar bug in Phil's when he joined. If you imprison me, I'll never send you or him back home."

He stared at the eyes on Dream's porcelain mask in shock and hissed, *"You knew from the beginning?! You knew how to send us home? Why didn't you send us back immediately then?!"*

"I wanted to see what you'd do here!" Dream laughed. "I was toying with you the whole time- the only reason why I didn't kill you in exile was because you somehow got XD on your side, and you're protected by both him *and* Herobrine! But anyway- **if you imprison me, you'll never get to go home!**"

He knew the entire time.

The other people shifted around uncomfortably, unsure what they had been talking about. Tubbo spoke up though, and said angrily, "Why wouldn't he be able to go home? You don't get to decide

anything anymore- Eret's coming home with us whether you like it or not!"

He knew the entire time and he didn't tell us how to go home? He was just interested in what people from another world were like, he just toyed with us, just watched us as if we were lab rats?!

Eret felt himself heating up, his grip on the sword impossibly tight, and suddenly something inside him broke.

He forced me and Phil to stay here for months for his own entertainment.

Before anyone could say anything more, he swung the sword diagonally- cutting straight into Dream's chest and splitting him in half. Dream made a wrangled sound of shock and he heard Phil gasp behind him too. The blood splattered onto his fingers curled around the weapon, and dripped onto the floor.

Eret looked up in horror, realising what he'd just done. Dream's mask had fallen off, and his expression was one of fear and shock. Eret watched those bright green eyes widen slowly, and then as the light inside them faded and died like a flickering flame in the wind.

And suddenly, Dream disintegrated.

Eret immediately turned to look at the bed, and saw that Dream had respawned immediately. The admin was staring at him but Eret avoided his eye contact.

"Take-" he swallowed the lump down his throat. "Take him to the prison."

* * * * *

Holy shit- oh my fucking god-

"Breathe, Eret, breathe!" Phil yelled, and Eret just shuddered, clutching his head in his hands.

"I killed him, Phil!" Eret cried, the smell of blood still in his mind. "I killed a person-"

"It's Minecraft," Phil tried to comfort him, though he looked pretty shaken himself. "He's still got two lives- he *deserved* it after everything anyway-"

"But still-" Eret gasped, unable to make sense of what just happened. "I'm a *murderer* now- I just *killed* someone! I took his life- I made him bleed with a sword! I- I just got *so angry* when he told me he knew the entire time, you know? He *knew* from the beginning how to send us home, but he did nothing! He just kept us here for his own entertainment! But still- that's no reason for me to kill-"

"You did your best," Phil interrupted, but he also had a faraway look in his eyes. "You did your best to save him, Eret- it's not your fault. He was messed up from the beginning- he was already too far gone- nobody blames you for killing him-"

"But how am *I* supposed to live with it?! Knowing that I killed someone?!"

"I... I don't know!" Phil said frustrated. "I- have honestly no idea what I can do to help you right now, Eret- but just know that I don't blame or hate you for it at all! I feel really angry at Dream too- he didn't let us return home, but most importantly, he kept me away from Kristin! And you from Elaina! For no reason other than his entertainment, like you said! It's- it's not *your* fault-"

"I wish I could take it back," Eret cried as Phil held him tightly. "I wish I didn't do that- I should've controlled myself-"

"I know, I know..." Phil bit his lip. "Let's... I think you should go talk to Puffy now."

* * * * *

The first few days were the hardest- but everyone (as in Foolish, Phil, Puffy and Wilbur) told him that he'd get better with time. Though it felt like an utter lie- a week later, Eret was having even *more* nightmares about that moment when he'd cut Dream in half- he'd smell the thick blood on his hands and he'd see those emerald eyes become dark and muddy-

And he'd wake up screaming, drowning in guilt and grief.

During the day, he'd simply find things to do to distract himself. Eret would go hang out with the boys in L'Manburg (fishing was a no though- he couldn't stand those moments of quiet where he was alone with his thoughts) or he'd go and help Foolish with his builds. He'd seen Foolish's worried looks, but he continued working and pushing his thoughts away.

He was on a walk along the Prime Path when he bumped into Quackity for the first time in a few days. "Hey Eret!" Quackity greeted immediately when he noticed him. "How've you been? I feel like I haven't seen you since that day."

"Yeah, I felt a bit sick after that," Eret said tiredly. "What about you?"

"I started building another country- Las Nevadas!" he said excitedly. "How about you come and take a look?"

"You- what? But why?" Eret said, extremely surprised. He stared at the man- he had no scar on his face and he wasn't half-blind since he'd never been killed with a pickaxe. "Don't you already have El Rapids?"

"Well yeah, but El Rapids is honestly a bit too small for my liking," Quackity said as he led the way. "We built too close to L'Manburg and the other buildings- there's no space for us to grow! And you see- I'm quite ambitious. So I'm building an entire new country a bit further out where we'll be able to earn lots- it'll be great, you'll see."

"Why didn't you guys just move El Rapids then?"

"Mexican Dream refused to," Quackity shrugged. "He'll be taking care of El Rapids from now on, I guess."

"I... see?" Eret frowned. "Just- just don't forget to spend time with Karl and Sapnap, alright? Have you told them about Las Nevadas yet?"

"It'll be a surprise for them," he answered. "But yeah! I'll remember to take breaks."

Chapter End Notes

So uh, if you didn't get it, the reason why his head was spinning and why he checked his neck when he woke up was that his head got chopped off and was flying through the air?? and then he woke up IRL for a short while

And sorry, I'm not a therapist- so I have no clue how to write anything about what Eret and Puffy discuss so I kinda skipped it.

I still really hope you guys enjoyed this chapter :>> This marks the end of the exile arc! Eret's finally allowed home now that Dream's gone, tho he still can only sleep if Foolish is around lol

Thanks for reading >_< I'm gonna go sleep cuz I'm exhausted now lmao

14. for every broken promise there's a friend who's at my side (pt. 1)

Chapter Summary

"Do you think-" Phil paused for a second. "Would this be kind of like the situation with the Egg?"

"What? Why would you think that?"

"The End is somehow special- we know that from how the Egg reacted to the end crystals versus the TNT. Blowing up the end crystals got rid of the Egg. If we get rid of all the end crystals and the dragon in the End, maybe something about this world will also improve or change?"

Chapter Notes

TW: uhhh... murdering someone's pet/friend? ~~The ender dragon?~~

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Weeks passed, and Eret felt like he hadn't made any progress- some days it felt like he'd finally taken a step forward, and then he'd be back three steps again.

He had finally felt a bit better after distracting himself with building and socialising, but when he remembered that *XD already agreed to send him home after fixing the future*, he had one of the worst panic attacks he'd ever had. Eret was overwhelmed by guilt- he'd killed Dream for practically no reason! But Foolish, Phil and Wilbur were by his side through it all, and they insisted that it wasn't his fault.

Hanging out with Tubbo, Ranboo and Michael helped a lot too- and Puffy seemed to realise that. She encouraged him to spend time with the boys more- and they didn't seem to mind his presence either, so Eret spent more and more time over at Snowchester.

The problem was that Eret somehow couldn't even fall asleep unless Foolish was nearby. At first, Eret would just make the trip back home every evening, but eventually Foolish decided to just build another house in Snowchester so that they could sleep there.

Tubbo had been quite happy to have more citizens in his country- and Eret was happy that he could spend more time with both Foolish and the boys- so it was a win-win for them all.

* * * * *

"Foolish, do you mind coming along with me to Karl's?" Eret asked, as he spread jam onto a slice of bread.

"Hm? No, of course not!" he answered, looking up. "Why are you visiting him though?"

"I have something to discuss with him about his time travelling," Eret admitted after chewing and swallowing the food. "I think I might have an idea for how to help..."

"That's great," Foolish grinned. "We can go as soon as you're done with breakfast."

About fifteen minutes later, the two of them headed towards the coordinates Karl had sent them. As Eret had planned, Karl and Foolish hit it off after a few minutes of chatting and Karl asked Foolish for help in building Kinoko Kingdom, similar to the way they became friends in the lore.

"If you need me for anything, I'll just be out here building," Foolish promised as Eret nodded and followed Karl into his library.

"How've you been?" Karl asked, starting their conversation. "I heard from Tubbo that you're still shaken up because of the events from that day. That you occasionally zone out and disassociate?"

"Yeah, he's not exaggerating it," Eret shrugged, sighing. "I- It's just difficult for me to accept it. But that's not why I'm here today- I think I have an idea for trying to fix your memory issues!"

"Really?!" Karl asked excitedly. He pulled a chair open for Eret and sat down opposite him. "How?"

"I talked to DreamXD a bit about how your time travelling powers even work- At first I thought it might be a similar situation to me and Phil- how our bodies are still in the old place but our souls are somewhere else- Your *body* might still be here, but your *soul* gets transported into the past. But that isn't it at all, since your body disappears as well. You entirely get thrown into the past..." Eret paused, and then quickly continued on. Karl looked at him worriedly. "XD... honestly wasn't even *that* helpful- he kept saying that time travel is something admins have nothing to do with, so that there's nothing I can do to help- but I think there's still something I can try."

"And?"

"I... need to take a look at your code," Eret said. "I know that it's something usually kept private, and that I'm not even a full admin yet, but..."

"I trust you," Karl smiled, placing his hand on Eret's. "Go ahead."

"Alright," Eret exhaled in relief. He took out his textbook and flipped to the relevant page and gave an apologetic nod at Karl. "Sorry about this- I don't have this part memorised completely yet."

"No worries." Karl leaned back in his chair a bit to relax. "Take your time!"

He glanced over the instructions again, and then started copying the command from the book onto his communicator, replacing Karl's game ID in the right spot. He hit enter with a deep breath, and to his relief, the information all popped up.

He'd been worried that since he was still in training or that since Dream was meant to be this world's admin he wouldn't be able to access other people's codes, but it seemed to work just fine. He scrolled down, trying to find what he was looking for.

[IGN: KarlJacobs]

[Lives: 3/3]

[...]

[...]

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"Well uh..." Eret sighed. "The good news is that I wasn't wrong. There's definitely something wrong with your code. It seems like every time you go back in time, part of your memories gets stuck there for some reason. So when you return, things get lost."

"Then can you change it? So nothing disappears?"

"I can try," Eret said, frowning. "I'll see if I can make some lines of code to revert these bugged lines or something. I... really wish Sam or the Fundy from my world were here- they'd be much better at this than me."

Karl moved over and stared at his own code in Eret's communicator. "Oh wow, it's really messed up," he laughed. Then he squinted and pointed at the start of the bugged code. "Doesn't...that say your name there?"

"What?" Eret stared at it too. "That's probably a coincidence, right?"

"Phil's name is here too," Karl frowned, "though it's also cut off in the middle. Wait- here's a page. Write out the lowercase letters together just in case- then we'll know."

Eret wrote it down and stared at the sentence stitched together.

[eret and phil you need to hurry to the end]

"What the hell?" he said weakly. "Is this some weird joke or coincidence?"

"...You better try with the capital letters too," Karl grimaced.

[TIME IS RUNNING OUT ASK SAP FOR HELP]

The two of them stared at the two sentences in shock, and Eret then looked up at Karl. "Is this your subconscious trying to tell us something?"

"I... wouldn't know," Karl exhaled. "But this can't be a coincidence, right? Why would you need to go to the End though?"

"I don't know..." Eret said, getting up and taking his communicator with him. "But Sap means Sappnap, right? I'll go see him first I guess. Though I'm not even sure what I'm supposed to ask him for help..."

"I'll tell Foolish what we just found out," Karl nodded. "See you later."

* * * * *

"So... do you have any ideas?"

But unfortunately, Sapnap just shook his head. "I don't know how I can help you," he said.

Eret scratched his chin. "Would you be against coming to the End with me and Phil?"

"The End?! Isn't that place banned?!"

"Yeah, but Dream's stuck in Pandora's Vault right now... he wouldn't know, right?"

Sapnap thought about it for a moment. "What about XD though? He'll definitely know when we're at the End."

"I'll... persuade him," Eret sighed.

"Well then... I guess I'd be okay with going there," Sapnap nodded. "I've been there before after all- during the Manhunt days."

"Oh right! Then maybe that's how you can help? With killing the dragon?"

"I was on the side that *stopped* the dragon from dying though," Sapnap reminded him. Eret shrugged.

"You're still good at PVP either way- I'm sure it'll be helpful to have you with us."

"So you're definitely going to go there?"

"I kind of have to, if I'm going to fix Karl's memory issues," Eret murmured. "I'll send you a message as soon as we're ready to leave, alright? I've got to find Phil first."

"Sure," he nodded. "Thank you though- I really appreciate you doing this for Karl."

"No problem," Eret smiled, waving goodbye. "Karl's my friend too."

* * * * *

Word spread around much faster in the SMP now that everyone was still friends with each other and communicated a lot more than they had in the lore. By the time Eret had reached Phil's home in L'Manburg, the people who knew Eret and Phil's secret had already heard about their plan to go to the End.

"Eret! You're finally here!" Wilbur said in relief, and pulled him inside his dad's house.

"What's going on? Why's everyone here?" he asked, confused.

"We heard from Karl and Foolish," Tubbo said, folding his arms together. "We want to go with you."

"And I'm trying to convince them to stay here," Phil sighed. "It's too risky if *all* of us go- I have wings so it makes sense for me to go- I can catch people if they fall off ledges or something! But even then, I can't keep watch on all of you at once, much less carry you all!"

"We can take care of ourselves, we're not going to walk off the islands *that* easily-" Tommy protested.

"I can teleport anyway!" Ranboo argued, joining in. "The End is kind of my homeland anyway- it'd make sense for me to go too!"

"We don't know how the endermen will treat you though," Sam told him. "And you have no memories of them either. We can't risk it- what if they turn against you because you're only half-enderman?"

"That-"

"Guys! We don't have time to argue!" Eret interrupted. "That's the whole point of this cryptic message in Karl's subconsciousness or code- or perhaps it's *purposefully* left like that? I don't know- but either way, it said that both *Phil* and I have to go there. And to ask Sapnap for help- which I did just before coming here. I get that you guys want to help too, but it'll take too long to organise everyone's stuff."

"Can't I come along?" Techno huffed. "I've got weapons and potions on me all the time anyway."

Eret hesitated but shook his head. "Can you stay here and watch over these guys?" he asked instead, the others immediately beginning to protest again.

"C'mon Eret- didn't we tell you to rely on us a bit more?" Wilbur complained, the boys nodding quickly.

"...Fine," he relented. "Bad and Sam can come with us three. Because they've already got experience in the End." He stood up and glared at the others to shut them up. "And that's final. I'll see you all later."

* * * * *

"How are we getting to the End? XD destroyed the one near Techno's place," Phil asked as the four walked towards Sapnap's home. "You can get things from creative mode, right? Are you going to use commands to get the End portal frames?"

"Nah, we'll teleport," Eret answered grimly. "I can't use /give to get too many items from the End without passing out. I think I can use /execute to teleport us four to the End though- I've only used it to go to the Nether before, but it should be the same more or less..."

"What are we even going to do there?" Bad asked.

"No idea- kill the dragon I guess? What else are we meant to do there? I don't see how getting any of the blocks there will help us- and I wouldn't need to go to the End just to get them either. So I'm guessing it's to do with the dragon."

"Do you think-" Phil paused for a second. "Would this be kind of like the situation with the Egg?"

"What? Why would you think that?"

"The End is somehow special- we know that from how the Egg reacted to the end crystals versus the TNT. Blowing up the end crystals got rid of the Egg. If we get rid of all the end crystals and the dragon in the End, maybe something about this world will also improve or change?"

"That... makes some sense."

When they arrived at Kinoko Kingdom, they found all three (Sapnap, Karl and Foolish) ready and waiting for them. Eret hadn't planned to bring Karl and Foolish along too- he was worried that he wouldn't be able to teleport them all to the End- but in the end Foolish convinced him ("I've got my lightning powers, remember? I can help!") and luckily the teleporting went smoothly.

But the second Eret popped into the End, he found the group all facing in the same direction- towards the god floating in the sky above them.

"XD," he greeted. The masked god seemed to be shaking in anger.

"What the fuck do you think you're doing, Eret?! Why did you bring them all here??!"

"Language," Eret couldn't help but hear Bad mutter under his breath quietly. He stifled a laugh.

There was something strange about the way the god looked. He stared at the thin transparent line that began from DreamXD's heart and connected itself to *the ender dragon*.

So that's why we had to come here.

"What are *you* doing here-" he asked first.

"I live in the End! This is *my* dimension-" XD said furiously. **"This place is banned so tell me, why shouldn't I *kill you all right now?*"**

Eret took a step closer. " *Because you can't interfere with our lives and deaths.* "

"**YOU-**" The god shook angrily, but Eret knew he had no answer to that. He hoped the god wouldn't risk his godhood and fight against them. From the things he'd learnt in the past few months, he knew that if XD tried to interfere *too* much with human lives and deaths, he could be punished and demoted- perhaps even eliminated.

He faced the crowd. "You guys go ahead and take down the dragon- I'll deal with him."

"I'm not just going to let you kill her-" XD roared, but Eret just nodded at the others to continue on.

"DreamXD, can't you *see* that the dragon's using you?!" Eret argued, getting closer to him. "Don't you see that she's recharging herself using you- she's probably stealing *your* life- or your powers more likely!"

"Of course I see it," the god said bitterly, looking like it was taking him a lot of effort to stop himself from killing Sapnap (who was shooting the End Crystals one by one) and Phil (who was flying in air and attacking the ender dragon). **"I *know* that she's corrupting my powers and causing bugs in my coding- but the dragon is *my friend!* I can't just let you all *kill her-*"**

Oh.

Oh.

Eret winced but continued walking closer. "XD-"

"Can't you understand how I feel?" the god cried, his head in his hands. **"Dream had his reasons to ban you guys from the End, but I agreed with it because I wanted to protect my friend- She's kept me company for so long! I've been alone for so long- Gods have no friends or- We *have* family, but it's different, it's not the same as human families! *I don't have anyone but her-* So *please*, Eret- call your friends off!"**

Eret clenched his fist tightly together, but shook his head. "I can't, XD. And you know why. *The End must be freed-* you *know* that!"

"I know, I know- I shouldn't have gotten attached to an ender dragon," DreamXD flinched when the ender dragon roared in pain. He shuddered as he felt more of his power get taken- Eret could see the thin line becoming brighter. **"But isn't there any other way to solve this? Can't you try to find a solution for me without killing her?"** he begged, and Eret swallowed, feeling strange at the fact a

god was *begging* him. The god's long green cloak was spread on the floor, and Dream XD sobbed on the ground.

Eret knelt down on the end stone in front of XD and put a hand on his shoulder.

"I'm truly sorry, XD..." he said as he glanced at the others. The battle was close to finishing- it was much easier than he'd expected since Phil could fly and the others were well experienced in battle.

"But this has to be done."

"Wait-!" DreamXD screamed, as he turned around and saw the same scene as Eret. Sappnap jumped on Bad's hands, boosting himself up and stabbed his sword straight into the dragon's eye, and it flailed in pain, thrashing around wildly. **"No no no-"**

He ran towards her and the others glanced at Eret, asking with their eyes if they needed to get the god away from the dragon (he seemed to be functioning like an end crystal to her after all) but Eret shook his head. The line was fainter than it had been earlier- and he could tell she was taking her last breaths.

"I'm so sorry," the god rambled on and on, and Eret realised with a pang in his chest that DreamXD had far more emotions and a *human* side that he never expected. But he knew as well as the god that this had to happen. **"I'm so sorry I broke my promise! I couldn't protect you- I'm so pathetic! I can't get revenge for you because otherwise I'd lose my godhood; I'm so selfish! I can't even risk my life for you- I didn't deserve you-!"**

The others seemed to understand the god's pain a little bit from his words, and they looked away feeling guilty and because of pity for XD. The dragon huffed a bit, and Eret realised that XD could *understand* the ender dragon.

"What are you talking about- it's not my fault?! Of course it is-"

The two friends conversed one final time and Eret let go of a breath he didn't realise he'd been holding when the dragon finally began to glow.

"Don't- don't leave me!" DreamXD wailed, trying to grab onto her as she slowly disintegrated. **"Don't leave me alone here-"**

The ender dragon looked at Eret and he froze. She stared at him for a moment that felt like an eternity, and then looked back at her friend and seemed to have an expression much like a smile on her face before disappearing completely.

DreamXD howled, and everyone else just stood at the sides, unsure of what to do or say. They all gazed at Eret, who took a deep breath.

"I'm sorry DreamXD," he said softly, kneeling onto the ground and bringing the god into a hug. To his surprise, the god did not fight him and just sobbed into his arms.

"I hate you," XD murmured as he calmed down, but without any real anger in his voice. **"If it weren't because of you..."**

"You can hate me," Eret said quietly. "You don't have to forgive me at all. But I swear before I return home, I'll save you too."

Chapter End Notes

Aannnnnd thanks for reading!

This chapter I made up a bunch of bullshit lore so that there'd be a reason for XD's buggy code problems with Karl's time-travelling memory loss and freeing the End.

Basically I wrote that: gods have like, no friends, but XD somehow made friends with the ender dragon offscreen. And so, that's why XD agreed when Dream said that one of the rules on the SMP is that the End is banned- so that nobody would hurt his pet/friend. But the dragon started stealing his powers or whatever, and that caused bugs and glitches in XD's commands- which led to Karl's memory loss from time-travelling??

Yeah, XD acts quite out of character in this chapter but he's still rational enough to not fight back against the players because if he did, he would lose his godhood.

It's really just a bunch of bs I made up lol...

It took a while for this chapter to come out because I had to think about how to solve Karl's memory loss hahah. Next chapter will be out on Saturday!

14. for every broken promise there's a friend who's at my side (pt. 2)

Chapter Summary

"*George and Sapnap*-" he continued quickly, seeing that Dream was about to retort again, "*loved you*."

Chapter Notes

No TWs I think?

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"You guys killed the ender dragon," Techno sighed, pinching his nose. "Which happens to be DreamXD's 'friend'... because of a *hidden message* the *server* sent you through Karl's *code*, telling you to free the End- and now you've brought the dragon egg home with you?!"

"I mean, we didn't know what else to do with it," Sam said tiredly. "DreamXD didn't seem like he wanted it. It would probably hurt him too much every time he sees it."

"The egg won't hatch anyway, right?" Phil asked. "It never hatched in ga- in my world," he quickly fixed, since Sapnap was still with them.

"I don't think so," Techno shrugged. "But anyway- did you guys at least get some loot from that trip? Any shulkers, elytras?"

"No, we just teleported back after," Foolish said, stretching his arms. "Where's everyone else? I'm surprised they're not all here bothering us immediately-"

"They fell asleep waiting for you all." They followed him towards the group. "It's been almost a day since you've left- they stayed up all night only to fall asleep in the morning. But seriously. I can't believe you guys didn't even bring some shulkers back-"

"It's been a day?!"

"Time works differently in the End I guess... That's kinda weird," Phil said, yawning. "Mm, I do feel a lot more tired now we're back here."

"Eret, are you alright? You've been so quiet since coming back," Techno said worriedly after everyone else had entered first. He nodded at the piglin-hybrid.

"I'm fine, I didn't even take part in the fight," he admitted. "I'm just... wondering how I can help DreamXD."

"You want to help the *god*? With what?!"

"He's got *no one* now, Techno- can you imagine that? If Phil died? How would you feel?"

"I'd probably want to destroy everything that I can see," Techno said quietly. "But how will you help a god? Be friends with him? You'll be *gone* soon, it'd just hurt him even more."

"What about you then?" he countered and the piglin-hybrid snorted.

"*Me*? Friends with a god? I'm having enough trouble dealing with the Blood God, I don't think I want to bother with another one."

"I'm sure there'll be *someone* who wouldn't mind being friends with him though," Eret said.

"And if there isn't?"

"There definitely are a few I know were friends with him in the original story," Eret assured him. "So don't worry about it. I'll make it work out one way or another..."

* * * * *

"How've you been?"

Eret didn't need to look behind him to know who it was. Wilbur plopped down onto Tommy's bench beside him, and they stared at the birds overhead. A few days had passed since they returned from the End, and nothing much had happened, to their surprise.

"I'm... as good as I can be, I guess," Eret sighed. "Still have nightmares and all that occasionally... But anyway. What did you want to talk to me about?"

"It's been a while since you've returned from exile," Wilbur coughed. "Do you want to be vice president again? Tommy wouldn't mind- he knows it was just temporary..."

"Oh..." Eret thought about it but shook his head. He clasped his hands together. "I don't think I'd be the best choice right now. I've got other things going on that I need to fix first, and I sometimes... zone out, remember? I don't think I'd be able to handle all the responsibilities right now- besides, Tommy's been doing a good job."

"Right. It's alright- I was just wondering if you wanted your title back or not. You don't have to do it if you don't want to, of course- I'm not pressuring you. And you're right, Tommy's a good right-hand man too."

"Titles don't really matter to me anymore," Eret smiled, remembering how the original story was meant to go.

"There's... actually one more thing I wanted to tell you," Wilbur admitted after a moment of silence. He shifted awkwardly on the bench and seemed nervous. He scratched the back of his neck.

"I- I think I love you, Eret."

He froze and then slowly turned his neck to look at his friend, who was completely red.

"Will..."

"I know, I know! You're going to go home someday-" he stammered, squeezing his hands together. "I just- wanted you to know. I admire you a lot, Eret. You're everything I wish I was- but I don't feel

jealous or anything bad against you!- You motivate *me* to be a better version of myself..."

He glanced at Eret and gave a small smile. "You're so smart, and so, so kind to everyone- no, you really are! You don't know how amazing you truly are- You've saved so many of us from what was supposed to happen. It's thanks to you that everyone is living happily and that I'm- that I'm still alive. It's all thanks to you, Eret." He swallowed.

"It's because of you that I didn't go insane, didn't neglect Fundy, didn't cause so much pain to everyone I love on this server," Wilbur whispered. "And I'm so grateful for that. I love you so much that it hurt me incredibly to exile you- I love you so much that I dream every night that you would choose *me* and *choose to stay here*, but-"

He looked straight into Eret's eyes with tears in his own. "I love you too much, so I'll let you go."

Eret didn't know what to say.

He swallowed a lump in his throat and stood up, still looking at Wilbur. "I... I'm sorry. I don't feel the same way towards you Will- You're a great friend, but I've already got a girlfriend back in my world. And like you said... I'll probably be gone someday."

"Yeah," Wilbur sniffed, wiping his tears away. "I know, I know. I'll be happy if you're happy- so don't worry about me! I'm sorry for burdening you with all this- but I really wanted you to know that even when you go home, there's someone in another world who loves you."

"...Thank you," Eret said quietly.

* * * * *

"Are you alright?" Foolish said worriedly when Eret returned to Snowchester with red eyes.

"Yeah, I'm fine," Eret nodded, taking off his coat. "How's the mansion coming along?"

Although it was slightly earlier than in the original story, Foolish had begun constructing a mansion on the west side of Snowchester for Michael once again.

He relaxed a bit and smiled. "It's going great! I got a good bit done so far, I'm actually taking a break right now. Michael made these cookies with Niki when she visited earlier today- they're playing in the snow right now. I don't know where Tubbo and Ranboo are right now though."

"Yeah, I saw Michael and Niki as I came inside," Eret replied. "But anyway- I was looking for you."

"For me?"

"Yeah. I was wondering..." he said awkwardly, "if you'd mind making friends with another god?"

Foolish stared at him. "With DreamXD?"

"Yeah..."

"I mean, I wouldn't be *against* making friends with him..." Foolish replied slowly. "But would he even want to be friends with me? I had a part in killing the ender dragon..."

"I know, but could you at least try? I'm trying to get XD to interact with more people so he won't feel so lonely anymore, and you're one of the ones in the original story who talked to him the most."

"I was? Well okay then," he nodded.

"You know..." Eret said after a moment. "I've been wondering about this for a long time, but you've still been treating me really well despite me not being... well, the Eret *you* knew. Why...?"

Foolish put down his mug. "I... I miss the old Eret, but you've done a lot for me too, you know? Like helping me build the temple, introducing me to new friends... We've only known each other for a little bit over a month, but I just *know* you're a good person."

Suddenly, Foolish asked something that caused the atmosphere to tense. "And besides, even if I kill you or something, that's not going to bring the Eret I know back, is it?"

"I don't think so?" Eret said, unsure. He suppressed the urge to shudder from his friend's sudden menacing words.

"I wouldn't kill you anyway," Foolish said, reverting to his usual cheerful tone. "I've moved on from my violent ways- I'm happy to spend my days building and living peacefully. And like I said, I *like* this version of you too! We're friends, even if we haven't known each other that long."

"...Thank you," Eret smiled tiredly. "I'll see you later then- I'm going to see Tommy. I should be back before midnight."

"Oh, okay. Bye Eret!"

* * * * *

"Are you sure you want to go? You don't have to-"

"Yeah, but it's about time I went to see him," Eret sighed. "I've been avoiding this- but I really need to talk to him."

"I don't understand, but alright," Phil shook his head. "It'll be safe, right?"

"I think so, since Ranboo hasn't been enderwalking lately- and Sam knows not to let Ranboo visit. There aren't any TNT explosions near the prison either. And I'll be visiting at the same time as Tommy, so we won't be alone with Dream."

"Okay... that's alright then, I suppose. When are you two going?"

"Today actually," Eret replied. "Sam agreed to it a few days ago."

"Oh! Well then you better get going- it's already past noon. You won't be able to talk to him long if you wait even longer-"

"I'm going, I'm going! Just wanted to tell you. See you later Phil-"

"See you, Eret." Phil waved, watching him run off into the distance.

* * * * *

"Eret! I thought you weren't going to come."

"Of course I would- why wouldn't I?" Eret's shoulders heaved as he took deep breaths. He'd just run all the way from Phil's home through the Nether.

"I'd totally understand if you never want to see Dream again," Tommy said, shaking his head. "You don't have to force yourself for me-"

"That's only part of the reason why I'm going there," Eret sighed. "I need to talk to him anyway- even if you weren't going to visit him. What are *you* even going there for?"

"I'm going to tell him off-" Tommy grinned, his hands on his hips. "I've matured- First, I'm going to tell him that I already let go of my obsession with the discs. And then that people are more important than items. I'm going to get him to understand that George and Sapnap were hurt by him, and that he needs to make up for it."

"That's..." Eret clenched his fist tightly and smiled. "I'm proud of you. Let's go."

And so, they entered the Nether Portal to the inside of the prison, and Sam greeted them at the entrance.

"Before we go in, I need you both to read and sign these waivers," Sam said, passing the two separate books.

When they were finished and done answering Sam's questions, they followed him to put their items in the storage chests. Eret hesitated to put everything in- since if Dream didn't find out about the items he'd kept in his inventory during exile, how would Sam find out? But then he remembered the security checks, so he resignedly put everything away.

Eret was mostly silent as he followed Sam throughout the prison, while Tommy chatted away like usual. *I'm glad Tommy's here too*, Eret smiled. *I'd be too nervous to see him again on my own.*

"This is the last one," Sam said, stopping in front of a lava curtain that Eret recognised. He'd never visited Dream in the game, but he remembered watching other people's streams and recognised the view. They waited as the curtain slowly fell, revealing the ugly black box in the centre.

Eret sighed in relief when he saw that it wasn't *exactly* the same as it had been originally. The lectern, chest and cauldron were in there as usual, but there was also a bed shoved in the corner of the cell with a couple bookshelves filled with books, a table and chair and even a potted plant inside. To Eret's relief, there was also a clock inside.

Dream stood up in surprise when he noticed the lava curtain falling.

Sam motioned at the two to get onto the bridge, and after making sure they were both on it, he pulled the lever to bring them across to Dream. "Call me as soon as you want to leave," he told them, and they nodded.

"Hey Big D!" Tommy greeted first, stepping off the bridge.

"What- what the hell are you doing here?" the admin glared at the two of them. His voice sounded hoarse, as if he hadn't talked in a while- even though Eret had heard from Sam that a good few people had visited.

Eret looked at Tommy. "Uhh, do you want to go first?"

"Sure," Tommy shrugged. He plopped down onto the chair without a care. "I came here to tell you that I've moved on."

"You remember how you threatened Eret to go meet you on the 20th because otherwise you'd destroy my discs? Well, I've long since given up my 'attachment' to them- since as early as the end of November, when you first exiled Eret," Tommy paused. "I learned from Eret that *people* are more important than items."

Dream was shocked, speechless, and didn't even move. Eret wondered if he was breathing.

"I came here to tell you that *you fucked up big time*, Dream," Tommy said, standing up. "I don't care if you believe you're in the right- because you're *not*. How could you hurt your *friends*? Did George and Sapnap mean nothing to you-?"

"Shut up!" Dream interrupted, snarling. "If you're just here to tell me that I fucked up, there's no point in you visiting. I don't have to tell you anything-"

"Then you just *listen* to me-" Tommy half-grinned. "You don't have to answer, just think about it yourself. *George and Sapnap*-" he continued quickly, seeing that Dream was about to retort again, "*loved you*. But because of the things you did and things you said, you hurt them a lot! That's where you fucked up Dream."

"Is that all you have to say?" Dream asked after a beat. His voice sounded thicker than usual.

Tommy looked at Eret and then shrugged. "Just wanted to let you know that I've moved on from our conflicts and all that- and I'm living happily with my friends now. But what do *you* want? Even if you managed to control everyone's attachments, what did you want to do?"

"..." Dream didn't answer for a few minutes. The seconds ticked almost too loudly on the clock. "I want you two to leave."

He called for Sam, but Tommy protested, saying that Eret didn't even say anything yet. In the end, Eret just sighed and said he could go talk to Dream another day.

He looked back at the cell one last time before the lava curtain encased Dream once again, keeping him sealed away from everyone else.

Chapter End Notes

👁👁👁 Did anyone expect Wilbur to confess to Eret?

I didn't particularly want to write romance or ships into this fic lol but with the way Wilbur's acting up until now, I realised that this Wilbur really looks like he likes Eret more than platonically. Unfortunately I've already decided that Eret's going home one way or another.

15. for every time I've laughed and for every time I've cried (pt. 1)

Chapter Summary

Eret sighed, and to Dream's surprise, just nodded. "I'll come visit every day. You don't have to answer my questions if you don't want to, but we can do some other stuff too. See you."

And without waiting for the admin's reply, he left Pandora's Vault.

Chapter Notes

TW: None, I think?

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

He took a deep breath, attempting to calm his nerves before the lava curtain parted to reveal the admin inside the main cell. Sam placed a hand on Eret's shoulder to try and comfort him, and Eret smiled gratefully at him.

I'll be fine. Sam will be right behind me.

He clenched his fists together and exhaled, stepping onto the bridge, then nodding at Sam to pull the lever. He heard the machine whirr to life and the pistons begin to push and pull-

Before he knew it, he was facing the admin once again.

"Here to laugh at me? That you've finally won?"

"No," Eret replied quickly, sucking in a breath. *I'm okay- I'm okay. He can't do anything to me here.* "I'm... actually here to apologise."

"You? Apologise to me?" the admin laughed. "For what?"

"Killing you," Eret said quietly. "I really regret losing my temper and taking your life, even if what you did made me furious. I get nightmares at night seeing the light in your eyes fade, and I wish I could turn back time so that it never happened."

Dream just shook his head and waved a hand. "That's nothing. I've still got two lives anyways- you don't even need to apologise for that-"

"Of course I do," Eret interrupted, with a pained expression on his face. "I *know* that you've got another two lives, but still, *I know* how painful dying is. And I know how painful respawning is too- you didn't deserve death. Nobody does."

"Sure, whatever then," Dream scoffed. "Is that it then?"

"I also wanted to ask you some questions," Eret admitted. "Why? Why didn't you tell us, why did you just leave us here?"

Dream froze and looked away. "I don't have to answer anything."

Eret sighed, and to Dream's surprise, just nodded. "I'll come visit every day. You don't have to answer my questions if you don't want to, but we can do some other stuff too. See you."

And without waiting for the admin's reply, he left Pandora's Vault.

If Sam noticed how relieved Eret was when he had all his netherite equipment back on again, he didn't mention it.

* * * * *

"Eret, Foolish! It's good to see you two," Quackity greeted, slapping Eret on the back.

"Good to see you too," Eret responded, wincing slightly. He smiled and greeted the other guests who'd come to Las Nevadas's opening day.

"The SMP is getting so lively, with all these new countries," Wilbur said with a smile. "It's going to get so confusing with all the different sides."

"You're the one who started it," Tommy grinned. "But anyway, even with all these sides, I'm choosing *people*, not sides from now on!"

They hushed as Quackity stood on the stage, and addressed the crowd. After the speeches, Eret noticed Phil standing at the other side, with Ranboo and Niki, and he waved at them to come over.

"Foolish! I feel like it's been ages since I've seen you," Niki greeted Foolish who was standing beside Eret. "I was meaning to find you- I was wondering if I could hire you to build something for me?"

"Sure, sure!" he beamed, following after her. Ranboo followed them too.

"You alright mate?" Phil asked, handing him a drink.

"Yeah," Eret nodded. "Just- glad."

Phil understood and nodded too. "Yeah, I get you. Quackity and the others at Kinoko Kingdom still get along, completely unlike how it's meant to go. And they've all got dual-citizenships too- it's relieving. That things are so different now, that we're bringing a better future to them all."

"I... was thinking," Eret started, taking a sip of the drink. "About telling everyone the truth. About us."

"...About time," Phil laughed. "Sure, I don't mind. Should we call a server meeting then?"

"Give me *a bit* more time," Eret said finally. "I still need to do one more thing- we can't have a server meeting without *everyone* after all."

* * * * *

"You're here, *again*?!"

"I told you I'd visit every day," Eret shrugged. Dream just glared at him.

A bit more than a week had passed and so far, Eret had been true to his word, visiting every single day. He was terrified of being around Dream, but he put on a brave face and continued doing what he did best around the admin- act. Eret *acted* like he wasn't scared, acted like he didn't want to get as far away as possible from the prison and the prisoner.

But anyway, Dream didn't speak much to him, only listening to Eret anxiously ramble about the things going on in the SMP. Although Dream never answered a single question, he seemed to appreciate Eret coming and talking about random things.

"And I told you it'd be a waste of time. I'm not going to answer your questions about how to go home or anything," he grumbled.

"I'm not here to ask about that today. I was wondering if you're up to play chess?"

Dream just stared at the board game that Eret had snuck in. "How the hell did you get that past Sam?"

"He's not working here today," Eret shrugged. He pinched the back of his hand with his fingers on the other. "Niki's kind- she'll let some things slide. She mentioned that you're probably bored to death here. So? You up for a game?"

He could see that Dream was struggling to refuse and scoff that he didn't need pity, but in the end the admin just nodded and said "Whatever, I've got nothing else to do anyway."

Eret smiled and set up the board, letting Dream choose which colour he wanted to take. "Here's the thing, Dream-" he said, breaking the silence again. "I'm here to make a deal with you."

"What?"

"I won't ask about how to go home, but here's the deal: you answer my *other* questions while we play the game, and I'll answer yours. And if *you* win, I'll get you out of here. If *I* win, you tell me how I can go home."

Dream stared at him for a moment, thinking it through. He seemed like he wanted to protest again, but eventually he muttered "Fine. I start. I'll be white."

"Okay," Eret nodded, relieved.

"Why are you here?" Dream asked first, moving his pawn forward.

"No idea, I just woke up here one day in June 2020," Eret admitted, moving his. "I had no idea where I was at first, and no idea what to do of course. I still don't know what I'm doing here, so I'm just trying to change things so that it won't end how it's supposed to."

Dream frowned since he wasn't sure what the original story was supposed to be. "What-"

"No, it's my turn," Eret laughed. "What's your favourite memory?"

"What?"

"Your favourite memory," Eret repeated. "Anything at all- whether it's a moment with your friends, or when you ate some kind of delicious food, or anything-"

"That's all you want to ask?"

"Relax, I've got more questions coming, after all!"

"Uh.. well then I guess it was when we first came to this server," Dream admitted quietly. "That time when we built the Community House- those were my favourite moments I guess. Before all the wars."

"That makes sense," Eret nodded, crossing his legs. "Your turn."

"...How did you get XD on your side?"

"What?"

"I spoke to him after I failed to revive you in Logstedshire," Dream scowled. "He kept talking about you in a proud and friendly way- what did you do to him? Why does he like you more than-" he stopped himself, and then repeated the question. "Why does he like you? You even got him to train you as an admin. A year ago, the thought of XD having another admin wouldn't have ever crossed my mind."

"He talks about me in a proud way?!" Eret spluttered, completely surprised. "I- did not know that at all. But uh, to answer your question, I didn't do anything to him. In fact, I think he might hate me a bit right now. But anyway- XD's a god, right? He knows the future that I know of too- and we met because we wanted to use each other. I just wanted to ask him for a way to go home, and he just needed me to change the future. And then I just asked to become an admin- and that's it."

"That just leaves me with more questions," Dream scowled.

"That's fine, you can ask them all," Eret grinned. "Next- do you know anything about my world?"

Dream didn't answer for a moment, but eventually muttered, "Yes." His knight took Eret's bishop, and he continued on. "All I know is that you come from a world where there's no mobs and where 'we' all live peacefully. XD told me that. Other than that, I know nothing."

That's surprisingly not as much as I expected then...

"So-" Dream started, moving his rook to protect his King. "What *is* the future you and XD know?"

"That's... a really long story," Eret said, taking his time, eyeing the board. "Be more specific?"

"Why can't you just tell me the whole story- no," Dream frowned, "...Don't answer that. Fine- *why* do you two want to change it then?"

"It's a terrible future for everyone," swallowed Eret. "You end up getting tortured for months without a single day to rest, and you only have one life left. You spend your days locked up in an obsidian cell without a bed, and you only get raw potatoes to eat. Meanwhile, everyone else is supposed to lose many canonical lives- Wilbur is meant to be dead by now, but luckily the future changed for him. Lots of bad things happen- and I want to change that. You guys don't deserve all the horrible events that happen."

"I'm still locked up though," Dream scowled, but Eret just huffed, crossing his arms.

"At least you've got better circumstances! And you're allowed out into the courtyard every day, aren't you? In the 'original timeline', you were never allowed out of this box at all." Eret scratched the back of his neck and continued on. "My turn- Why do you want control so much?"

Dream's chess piece took another one of Eret's. "Who wouldn't want control? Who wouldn't want power? ...But don't get me wrong, even though I say that, I *used* to have the right reasons. I just wanted a peaceful server, and I thought if I could properly rule everyone, then no conflicts would happen. But then I suppose I flew too close to the sun and became obsessed with control- and got myself stuck here," he ended, murmuring.

"...Your turn," said Eret after a pause.

"What changes are you going to make from now on then?" Dream asked, looking up. "I guess you have something to do with getting rid of the Egg, even though you weren't there, since Phil was the one who got us four to take care of it."

"Yeah," Eret admitted. "I suggested to Phil to use end crystals if TNT didn't work on the Egg. But anyway- From now on, I'm going to focus on saving *you* and XD."

"Me?!"

"Everyone else's future is pretty much secured," Eret nodded, using his bishop to take one of Dream's pawns. "Wilbur and Schlatt are still alive- Schlatt's also getting better. Tommy and the boys haven't died once. Karl isn't losing his memories anymore, the Egg's gone and Bad and Skeppy are fine. Ranboo hasn't enderwalked ever since the End's been freed. Vikk and Lazar are still safe, Technoblade isn't everyone's enemy- everything is much better now." He crossed his legs the other way around. "...All except for you, your friends, and XD."

"...Why does XD need saving?"

"You know how you banned us from going to the End? Well it turns out that XD had his own reasons for agreeing with that rule- he wanted to protect the ender dragon, *his friend*. But the dragon was pretty much stealing his powers, and messing things up whenever he tried to use commands- basically causing bugs. So a group went and killed the dragon- and now XD is all alone again. I need to help him make friends..."

"Good luck with that," Dream muttered under his breath. "And how are you going to save *me*?"

"I'll try to get you to reconcile with your friends."

Dream stayed silent for half a minute before gesturing for Eret to continue with his questions.

"I have to ask... what do you think of George and Sapnap now?"

"..." Dream stayed silent for a moment again, and Eret exhaled in relief when he moved a chess piece and finally answered. "I miss the old days when it was just us."

"But what do you think of them *now*?" Eret pressed.

"What do you want me to say- that I still care about them? That I regret cutting them off, that I wish I picked our friendship over power?" Dream scowled, his voice rising angrily. But Eret didn't flinch or feel worried- the crack in his voice gave him away and Dream knew it. "Look- if it weren't because of *your* meddling, things would've been fine!"

"No," Eret shook his head. "If it weren't because of me, things would've been *worse*." He raised a hand when Dream was about to protest. "George would've gone on to fall asleep for *months* at a time, unable to cope with living in this friendless world you supposedly created for *your friends*. Sapnap

would still believe that there is some good in you, despite all the hurt you caused them- but he would have sworn to *take your last life* if you ever escaped-"

"So it's all my fault then, is that what you want me to admit?" Dream yelled, standing up angrily and his leg bumping the table- causing the pieces to all clatter on the floor. "It's not fair- it's so fucking unfair! That you come from a world where everyone loves you, where everyone is friends, and now you come to *my* world and get them all on *your* side again! I'm so fucking *jealous of you*-"

What?

Eret sat there, frozen, listening to Dream rant his true feelings for the first time since... ages. Perhaps since exile, when Dream angrily said that Eret got in the way of everything. It felt like the mask on Dream's face was finally slipping off, and Eret was finally looking at the admin's true self-

A jealous, scared young man who simply wanted everyone to like him, for everyone to get along.

The mask had fallen off his face, but Dream didn't seem to notice that. Instead, he stayed standing, shaking angrily, his shoulders heaving.

"I'm so fucking jealous of you," he spat, "that everyone loves you, that everyone is always there for you, even while you were exiled, *even while you are in another world*. I'm so jealous that everyone trusts you, everyone listens to you, everyone looks up to you. That you're so smart, that you're so selfless, that *you're so perfect*-"

"I'm not," Eret said automatically, and Dream literally rolled his eyes. "No really- I had to put in so much hard work to get where I am today. I was completely terrified and powerless when I first woke up here, you know? I had to learn everything that comes second nature to you guys- I didn't even know how to open my inventory! I was homesick- despite being surrounded by 'friends', *nobody* knew what I was really feeling! I make mistakes too- If everything went my way, *you wouldn't be here right now*."

Eret stood up and picked up the scattered chess pieces, storing them in his inventory. "You would be with your friends, and I would be back home with my lover. I'm quite selfish actually- I'm doing all this (changing the future)- partly because I'd feel *guilty* if I didn't, but also because I *have* to do this so that XD will send me home. *I'm just doing this for myself, so I won't feel bad anymore- and so I can go home*."

He took out his communicator and turned it on.

"It took me quite a few months, but everyone's relationships seem more or less good now, right? I did my best throughout my time here to stop conflicts and encourage friendships- and now it's *your turn* Dream. If you really want to live happily with everyone, then you're going to have to put in the effort to fix the broken trust between you guys." Eret glanced at Dream. "If you want, I can get you out of here for a day in April."

Dream looked up at him in surprise, his eyes widened. "What? Why? I didn't even win the game-"

"My plan was *always* to get you out of here Dream," Eret sighed. "And to be honest, I was lying about your part in the deal. I don't need your help to get home- XD already promised to send me home after saving *you* guys, did you know? I just... wanted to get some answers from you. But anyway. It's Tommy's birthday soon- and he wants to officially open his hotel on the same day. You're invited if you agree to stay with me the whole day- he said so himself."

"Do you guys think *you're* enough to stop me from escaping?" Dream scoffed. "You're taking me too lightly-"

"If you run you'd just have some thirty people hunting for you," Eret said with a huff. "I doubt you'd want to risk that, even with all your manhunt experience, not when I've got commands and XD on my side."

Dream shut up again and just glared at him.

"Part two of my offer is this: I'll get you out of the prison *for good* if you actually talk to Puffy (I know you just sit in silence until she leaves Dream!), *try* to reconcile with George and Sapnap... and change the respawn limits of this server to infinite."

"That's-"

"Don't tell me it's impossible, because I know it's not," Eret said, cutting in. "And I'm talking about all three conditions. But if the last one is too much, I'll use *my* admin powers to help you too. But anyway- take some time to think about it. You can agree to my offer any time."

He sent a message to Niki that he was ready to leave.

"...Why?" Dream murmured after Eret had disappeared and he was left in the cell by himself once again. "Why can't I keep hating you?"

Chapter End Notes

Got distracted with playing MC after Java and Bedrock were bundled together oops... but I'm back! Finally! Another reason why I haven't been writing is because this fic is ending soon and I don't want it to end so I keep delaying writing it lmao...

Thanks for reading!! Next part will be out in a day or two! :D

15. for every time I've laughed and for every time I've cried (pt. 2)

Chapter Summary

"You saved us all," Wilbur smiled, raising a toast to Eret and Phil. "...It's time to finish this symphony."

Chapter Notes

TW: uh nosebleed?

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Are you really sure about this, Eret?" Bad asked doubtfully, but Eret just nodded confidently as they walked towards the main cell.

"Yeah, I'm sure. Besides, everyone agreed to this."

"I'm not saying we should keep him locked up in prison forever like in the original timeline," Bad said slowly, "but isn't it still a bit early to let him out? He only started talking to Puffy like two weeks ago and we still don't know if we can trust him-"

"He's been in there for more than two months now- he deserves to spend some time with everyone else too," Eret sighed. "I know he gets visitors, but didn't you guys say he hardly spoke to them at first too? And yeah, he gets to go to the courtyard, but he's probably bored out of his mind. Everyone will keep watch over him, so it'll be fine I'm sure."

"Fine, fine," Bad nodded, pulling the final lever and dropping the lava curtain.

Dream had agreed to go to Tommy's birthday a few days ago, which was why Eret was standing in front of his cell just a few hours after the sun rose. The admin noticed them and nervously scratched his wrist.

"You can stand on the bridge now Dream," Bad called, and Dream nodded, stepping onto it.

"Here," Eret said when he reached their side. "I brought you a change of clothes."

"...What's the point? I'll be back here at the end of the day," Dream muttered, but he took the clothes anyway.

After getting changed, the four of them (along with Puffy who had been waiting at the entrance) travelled to Tommy's hotel. Dream stared at the tall building in shock, only quickly following after then when Eret stopped and turned to wait for him.

I wonder what he's thinking, Eret thought.

* * * * *

"Eret! You're finally here," Tommy grinned, greeting him with a hug. "Is that my gift?!"

"It is," Eret smiled, handing him a wrapped present. The teenager unwrapped it excitedly and laughed delightedly when he saw that it was two more discs and a stack of golden apples.

"Thanks Eret, these are perfect! The only ones I didn't have for my collection," Tommy grinned. "Now I've got every music disc!"

"Happy birthday Tommy," Eret said, ruffling his hair. Then Tommy noticed the guy standing awkwardly behind Eret.

"Dream! You came too," he said loudly. "How've you been?"

"Fine," Dream answered automatically. "...Happy birthday Tommy."

"I didn't really expect you to actually come," Tommy admitted. "But anyway- George and Sapnap are right over there if you want to see them!"

"Yeah, thanks," Dream muttered. "Here-"

Dream still had his communicator in prison since it was impossible to keep it away from its owner (it would magically reappear in the owner's hand even if it was thrown away, locked somewhere, or destroyed completely), but he hadn't been able to use his commands after Eret, Sam and Callahan had changed the coding a bit.

But for today, he was allowed to use *some* commands and one of which was /give.

Eret's eyes widened as did Tommy's when the thing that manifested in Dream's hands finally took form and became solid, landing softly in the admin's hands. He held it out to the birthday boy and said, "Here's my gift."

"You- Are you serious?!" Tommy spluttered. "That's an *elytra* Dream-"

"Yeah, I know- Take it before I change my mind."

Tommy quickly snatched it from his hands and his eyes were sparkling with surprise. "Thank you so much," he grinned.

"I'm going to go find the others now," Dream said simply, nodding and taking his leave.

"Wait- *why* would you give this- to *me* of all people?!" Tommy asked but Dream was already gone. He looked at Eret who was just as shocked as him. Eret shrugged and just congratulated Tommy again, before following after the admin.

* * * * *

"Are you alright?"

"So you're really going to follow me everywhere then?" Dream just huffed, splashing water on his face. He moved his mask over his face again and turned to look at Eret. "Even to the bathroom?"

"I know what the others don't know," Eret said quietly, biting his lip. "It hurts, doesn't it? Taking things from the End- and even more so since you haven't been using commands for a while now."

"I'm not the same as *you*," Dream answered, but not as aggressive as he probably would have said in the past. "I'm a full admin, not one in training like you. It's just a headache, it'll be gone soon."

"...Your nose is bleeding."

He raised his hand to his chin and saw that there was really blood, and immediately grabbed tissues and wiped it off. He cursed. Eret threw him a healing potion which he caught with one hand.

"Why did you give him an elytra?" Eret asked while he waited for Dream to take care of himself. "I thought-"

"There's no reason for me to keep the End banned now," Dream muttered. "I wouldn't be able to stop you guys if you went anyway- and you guys already have. XD probably doesn't care enough to keep watch over the portals now that he's gone off grieving for the dragon- so I might as well just open the End. But anyway- why are you still here? I'm not going anywhere- you can go hang out with *your* friends-"

"I was just worried that using a command for the first time in months would take too much of a toll on you," Eret replied, shaking his head.

"Well you've seen me now- I'm fine-"

"I'll go back in a moment," Eret said, leaning against the door. "I just thought of this but, why *did* you want the End to be banned?"

"I was..." Dream paused, then continued on, "worried that if everyone has wings, they'd all leave. There wouldn't be any need to live close by when we can just fly."

Eret was silent for a second. "...So you wanted us to stay closer together?"

"Yeah," Dream admitted, his voice thick. "And also because stuff from the End is overpowered of course. Though probably not anymore, with all the equipment you've created and enchanted."

"Right," Eret said softly. "Are you ready to go back now?"

Dream nodded and so, the two of them returned to the party.

After Tommy cut the ribbon in front of the Big Innit Hotel and after they'd all eaten cake and various dishes that Eret (with Tubbo, Niki and Wilbur's help) made, Tommy nudged Eret and gave him a thumbs up. Eret swallowed, knowing what he meant.

It's time to tell them.

His eyes gazed over the huge room that was filled with all his friends, everyone in smaller groups chatting and laughing. He could see Bad, Skeppy and Callahan at one corner, and Vikkstar, Lazarbeam, Tubbo, Ranboo and Michael in another.

Even George had a slight smile on his face, standing beside Dream, Punz and Fundy. *That's a strange group*, he thought, but they seemed to be happy.

He stood up and noticed Tommy weaving around the room, pushing people to seats and tables. "Guys- Eret's got something to tell you all!" the teenager yelled, immediately quieting the room. They all stared up at Eret.

"Some of you guys already know this- but I'm ready to tell the rest of you now," Eret started, smiling slightly when he saw Tommy flash another thumbs up at him and then sit down beside Wilbur.

"I'm from another world," he coughed, the atmosphere in the room immediately tensing and becoming serious as the people who didn't know stared at him in shock. "And I don't mean server. Maybe it'd be better to say another universe? I don't know. But anyway- I'm from somewhere where there are *only* humans and animals, no hybrids or admins or mobs, and everyone only has one life."

"What the fuck?!" Quackity spluttered, and everyone quietly laughed when Bad muttered a tiny 'Language!' "No seriously," he stood up, looking around. "...Is this a huge joke you guys prepared or something?"

"No," Dream said, and everyone's heads turned to him in shock. "He's telling the truth."

"...Who knew already then?" he asked.

Others looked around curiously too, until Eret continued speaking. "A couple... Wilbur, Tommy, Tubbo, Fundy, Foolish, Techno, Karl, Bad, Sam and Niki."

"You knew?!" Quackity said in shock, staring at Karl. "Why didn't you tell Sapnap or me?!"

"I told them not to tell anyone else until I was ready..." Eret admitted. "And there's one more thing. Phil's from my world too."

He wondered what Dream's face expression was right now. The admin was simply sitting there quietly, not moving a muscle.

"Did you know immediately?" Connor asked, nudging Techno who shook his head to everyone's surprise.

"This Phil is quite similar to the Phil I knew," Techno laughed. "I didn't suspect anything really, until I saw him spar."

"Yeah, our world is much more peaceful than here so nobody really knows how to fight," Eret said. "So anyway- I 'woke up' here around the end of June 2020, a couple of months ago. I had no idea where I was at first, until later I realised when Tommy showed up right in front of my face. Because you see- in *my* world, Tommy lives halfway across the world from me."

He could see the confusion in their eyes- right, they probably don't have that expression when their world is infinite. "I live on a planet called Earth and it's round- not infinite. Imagine an ender pearl- I'm on one side while Tommy's on the other- it'd take *hours* by flying to meet each other usually. So I was shocked to see Tommy right in my face- and it wasn't even *my* Tommy."

"A round world?" Jack said, confused. "How can a world be round? You'd be falling off it-"

"That's a story for another time," Eret laughed. "But anyway, I realised soon that I was in the Dream SMP- in my world, the Dream SMP is just a *story* you see. That's why I knew the future- not because of my Herobrine powers."

"The SMP is a... story?"

"In my world," Eret nodded. "*Everyone here* is friends with each other. We are all 'streamers' who play games for an audience- kind of like how Technoblade shows his chat the world through his eyes. So we played a game called *Minecraft*, and started acting out a story on Dream's survival multiplayer world, the Dream SMP."

"...We're all friends?" Punz said, surprised. "That's... kind of unbelievable."

"I can confirm what Eret says is true," XD declared, shocking the daylighters out of everyone when he suddenly appeared out of nowhere beside Eret. **"He is from a world where the story they created aligns with your lives."**

"XD?!"

The moment the god appeared, confirming Eret's words, the people who still looked slightly doubtful finally shook off their doubts. They gaped at both him and Phil.

"Tell them the original story, Eret," XD said, looking at Eret, though not exactly meeting his eyes. He was still angry about losing the ender dragon. Before Eret could respond, the god had disappeared again.

"Right... Then if I start from the start..."

* * * * *

"... I can't believe you didn't tell me this in your therapy session."

Puffy was the first to break the silence, but as soon as she spoke, the others joined in.

"I'm surprised that Tommy and the other boys were able to keep it a secret for this long!" Quackity yelled, and almost everyone nodded.

"Why didn't you tell us from the very beginning?" George asked, frowning slightly. "Wouldn't it have been better if we'd all known from the start, as soon as you arrived here on the SMP?"

"I don't think anything I said would have gotten through to you guys," Eret admitted. "Don't you remember when I tried to persuade you guys to stop the war? At that time, Wilbur was in his 'Independence or death' mode, and Dream was obsessing over his land and Tommy's discs. Nobody really listened when I said 'Don't you guys want to relax and have fun instead of fighting all the time', remember? I lost my first life trying to change your minds."

The ones who were there in August and remembered the argument in the Community House winced at the memory. But the ones who weren't there knew the story too- *everyone* knew that Eret had been first to lose a canon life on the SMP (as well as being the first to lose their second life).

"But anyway," Eret continued on. "I think at some point, I gave up on the idea of going home. I thought I'd be stuck here forever- so I started focusing on trying to change things in this world." He paused for a moment. "But now that everything is wrapping up and everyone is coming together... I want to begin preparing to return home."

The others were dead silent, stunned, but eventually Niki began talking. "What will happen when you leave though? What happened to the original Eret? Will he return when you're gone?"

"I'm not sure... maybe?" he said, thinking about it. "Sometimes I feel like he's still in me somewhere, especially when I first came to this world. I was far more reckless and brave in some situations- and I

remember I thought that maybe the canon Eret was taking control in those moments where I'd be too scared to actually do anything."

"Or maybe XD will bring the original Eret and Phil back once he sends us home," Phil added in. The others nodded slowly, processing all the information they'd learnt in the last hour or so.

"I'll miss you both when you're gone," Puffy said, "But I understand why you want to go home. Thank you both for helping us this entire time though."

"Yeah," Skeppy agreed, swallowing. "You guys saved me and Bad from getting controlled by the Egg. I'm really grateful for that."

"You saved us all," Wilbur smiled, raising a toast to Eret and Phil. "...It's time to finish this symphony."

Chapter End Notes

Ehehehehehe I've always wanted to include this line somewhere, anywhere- *"It's time to finish this symphony"*

Welp, this was more than 'an hour or two' like I said in Phil's POV, but I still got it out today! There'll be one more chapter of Phil's POV that comes out not long after this one :D (ps: it's angsty)

Thanks for reading!! <33

16. the passing of time (pt. 1)

Chapter Summary

Wilbur spun around to face Phil and demanded with a grin on his face, "Teach me to fly, Phil!"

"Sure, mate!" Phil laughed. "As soon as we get you an elytra."

Chapter Notes

We're near the end :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Hey."

"Hey," Eret smiled, at Dream greeting him first. "How've you been?"

After Tommy's birthday, Eret had stopped visiting Dream every single day. Instead, he only went once or twice a week- the other days, other people on the SMP would visit the admin.

"I'm doing alright," he said, and Eret trusted that he meant it. He took a seat and Eret followed suit. "George, Sapnap, Karl and Quackity visited me yesterday and we played Monopoly."

"That sounds fun! I didn't bring anything to do today though- I can't stay long. Just came to catch you up with a bit of what happened recently and then I've got to go," he said apologetically. Dream just nodded in understanding.

"You have your admin exam coming up soon, right? You're taking the one at the start of June even though you only started studying like 8 or 9 months ago."

Eret nodded. "I just need to go over the last few pages and then revise- Can't wait to get it all over with..."

"I heard from Quackity that the slime guy showed up, right?" Dream continued. "Even though it's a bit earlier than he was supposed to."

"Yeah, a few of us went to excavate the area he was meant to be in and found him there last week. He's been hanging out around Las Nevadas mostly but we're slowly introducing him to the rest of the server," Eret confirmed. "But as well as that, Michaelmcchill arrived yesterday. Phil, Wilbur, Schlatt and Connor are showing him around and helping him set up for now."

"So now everyone is here..."

Eret shook his head. "You never know- there could be *new* people coming here in the future," he smiled. "Who knows what will happen from here on? Even I have no idea."

"Oh- I wanted to ask you this earlier too. Do you think that the events in your world will still affect what happens here? Since you've changed things so much here." Dream asked, leaning back in his chair slightly.

Eret thought about it for a moment. "You're right... It's way too different now. I don't really think our worlds- or my world's '*story*' and your world's '*reality*' are connected any more. It probably stopped being related to each other the moment I woke up here and changed things..."

"Yeah, I guess."

"I also wanted to tell you that XD has been interacting with people more now!" Eret told him. "Mostly with Foolish and George, but also with Niki, Fundy, Karl and more. Since we're connected, he still has to check in on me sometimes... but he still doesn't really speak much to me."

"I guess he really liked the dragon then..." Dream mumbled. "Have you talked to Drista recently?"

"Oh- I actually have." He leaned back in his chair a bit. "She's good friends with Tommy- as I expected- but she's also become friends with quite a lot of the others by now- like Purpled and Fundy. She's better at making friends than XD, despite them both being gods."

"Drista's always been more 'human' between the two," Dream shrugged. "It's good to know that she's doing alright though."

"I was actually curious about all this- what kind of relationship do the three of you have?"

"As you know, the two of them are gods and I'm an admin. I'm the one who technically 'created' this world- or server- but XD is the god of this server. Drista on the other hand, isn't tied to any server officially," Dream paused and drank some water. "You don't know much about the 'lore' behind gods and admins, right? I'd be surprised if you did- even if you weren't from *your* world. Usually only admins know the history behind it after all."

"Yeah, we didn't really write or plan anything behind them. But why do only admins know about it and not all players?"

"*Most* gods don't come bothering us players," Dream said. "The ones who are well-known are usually the ones who *want* to be worshipped- like Twitch. The others don't particularly care... so their names are usually lost to history. And admins don't tell the players about the history behind the gods because the gods prefer to keep their history a secret and will get angry if you tell too much to a normal player."

"Why?"

"No idea, that's just how they are."

Eret frowned. "Then why are you telling me all this? I'm not a proper admin yet- what if I fail the exam?"

"Then XD will probably just remove your memories of what I told you," Dream shrugged. "But anyway- I have full faith that you'll pass- so I'll just continue on. You know that *admins* are just people who used to be players. They get selected by gods and form connections with them- then study for usually a year, sometimes longer, and take an exam to complete their training. And as you know- the final exam, or what qualifies someone as an admin- is *being able to create your own server*."

"Wouldn't everyone in single-player worlds be one then?"

"No, because single-player worlds are actually created and overlooked by the oldest god- Mojang," Dream explained, surprising Eret.

Holy shit- Phil guessed right? That Mojang is an actual ancient god-!

"But anyway, after creating a world, the god you are contracted with becomes the god over your world."

"So gods *can* have multiple admins and worlds?"

"Exactly," Dream nodded. "Though some gods prefer having no admins, some only want one, and some have multiple. Like I told you before, I didn't expect XD to ever choose another admin. And uh- " He turned away, slightly embarrassed, "remember the day I was brought here? I said that admins who live on other admins' servers are failures that either destroyed their own worlds, or have been exiled from their own servers. Those admins are still connected to their gods, but they usually are on bad terms."

"Yeah, I remember you saying that. But admins can *only* create one world?"

"Yeah," Dream nodded glumly. "No idea why that's the case, but it's how it is. You only have one world and if it's gone- it's gone forever."

"Then how did you guys do manhunt?"

"Oh- we used single-player worlds for those. They're *called* single-player- but actually up to eight people can join as long as they have the invite."

"Oh... I guess that makes sense," Eret nodded.

"But anyway, while admins are still human, and can die, and used to be players- gods are *born* gods. And they cannot die. While they might have 'families', they don't particularly care or love each other like humans do. Gods grow up quickly too- and despite their physical appearances, they could be mentally much older- so they quickly learn to understand after they're born that they can't rely on other gods- and to trust nobody but themselves. That's why most gods have no friends," Dream finished, letting Eret take in all the information.

"...What about demi-gods?" he asked.

"Like Foolish?" Dream hummed. "They're usually the offspring of gods and players, whether admins or not. They've got *some* powers, and are somehow connected to the gods too, but not in the same way as admins. And they're still able to die..."

"Anyway- *Drista* found me first, while we were actually on one of the manhunt worlds. She's the goddess of chaos- and she really liked our games and stuck around for a while. Later, XD came by and took a liking to me- so he chose me to become an admin. And then I created the Dream SMP."

Eret didn't say anything so Dream continued on. "Since Drista likes chaos, she hangs around the players more often than other gods- like XD. That's why she knows more about our culture and how to act more human and all that."

"I see..."

Just as Eret was about to leave, he suddenly remembered something that XD had mentioned many months ago. He looked at Dream again and asked, "Do you know anything about the beings that have

more powers than gods? XD mentioned them before, saying 'they' would send me home if they found out about my situation."

Dream seemed to freeze the moment Eret explained, and gave a short nod after realising he'd just been staring at Eret for a few seconds without replying. He leaned closer to Eret and whispered, "I don't know much about them- *almost nobody* does- the only thing I know is that they're called '*The Watchers*'."

That sounds unnecessarily eerie, he thought. *I've never heard of them while in the real world though...*

Eret sighed internally, stood up and gave a smile to Dream. "...Thanks for explaining all that. I'll see you tomorrow, alright?"

"Tomorrow? What's happening tomorrow?" the admin asked, surprised.

"...Did you forget already?" Eret stared at him. "You're getting released tomorrow!"

Dream stared back, speechless. "That's *tomorrow*?! I forgot-"

"Well now you know," Eret laughed. "I really have to go now though. You also have to prepare for *your* side of the deal, don't forget!"

* * * * *

The next day, everyone on the SMP was gathered at the front of the Prison. Sam, Bad, Niki and George went inside to get Dream while everyone else waited in the sun. Eret could see Sapnap with an uncontrollable grin on his face as he waited in anticipation to see his friend out as a free man again.

"They're here!" Tommy yelled, and everyone turned to face the portal where Dream and the rest were exiting from.

Dream seemed shocked to see that everyone was there, but then Eret caught a glimpse of a smile under his mask. "Everyone," he said thickly, "I'm so sorry for trying to control everything. I'm sorry for a lot of things- but I'm going to do better from now on- and to start, I officially announce that the End is no longer off-limits."

Wilbur spun around to face Phil and demanded with a grin on his face, "Teach me to fly, Phil!"

"Sure, mate!" Phil laughed. "As soon as we get you an elytra."

"We can race!" Tommy said excitedly to Wilbur, who just rolled his eyes fondly.

"Building is going to be so much easier," Foolish grinned, just as excited. Eret nodded.

"Hey- calm down! I still have more news," Dream spoke up, quieting the crowd. "As well as that, from today on, this server's respawn function will be changed to infinite- meaning there is no such thing as 'canon deaths' anymore," he finished, stunning the entire crowd.

Tommy was first to break the silence, by muttering: "...I'm going to commit so much murder."

"Tommy!" Phil said aghast as everyone else burst out laughing.

* * * * *

"Eret."

Eret froze and looked up at the god who was floating in the air. "XD..."

"..." DreamXD hesitated with his words for a few moments, so Eret decided to speak first.

"Are you... okay with this ending?"

XD stared at him for another few seconds before finally nodding. **"As much as I... miss my friend... this is the best possible ending for everyone,"** he sighed. **"I have to admit that you did a far better job than I expected you to... You even got Drista to get along with the people here..."**

Eret smiled slightly and the god continued on. **"Are you ready for the exam tomorrow? Well, technically I guess you don't *need* to pass anymore, since you don't need admin powers that much anymore- you've already saved them and changed their lives enough..."**

"I'll be fine," Eret laughed. "But yeah, I guess it wouldn't matter if I failed and lost my powers anymore- since I don't think I'm at risk of getting banned by Dream or anything anymore. Though I still hope I'll pass- I spent all that time in exile studying! It'd be such a waste if I end up failing-"

"After the exam," XD interrupted, suddenly sounding really serious. **"I'll send you home, like I promised at the very beginning. But when exactly do you want to leave?"**

Eret paused and then clenched his fists as he thought about it. The idea of going *home*- no- the idea of *returning to a world without his friends from here*-...somehow scared him. He opened his mouth but nothing came out, so he closed it again.

I can finally go home and see Elaina and Goose again, he thought, confused. *Why am I hesitating and not telling XD that I want to go back immediately?*

I'll finally be able to relax and not have to worry about creepers blowing up, zombies sneaking up on me, phantoms attacking me- I won't have to mine for hours straight and worry about falling into lava- I'll finally stop panicking about raids and wither skeletons and endermen and-

I'll finally go back to living in comfort and living a normal life.

He covered his mouth with a hand as he suddenly realised queasily, *A normal life.*

When I go back, I'll go back to being a normal human, back to having dyslexia, back to having one life. Everything I've learnt in the past year- potion-making, enchanting, Ender, all the coding and commands I have studied- All of it would be meaningless back on Earth. All my hard work here, gone.

It wasn't pointless, he reminded himself, clenching his fists even tighter. *In the first place, I did all this to save everyone. And I succeeded.*

...But I'll never see my friends from here again. Everyone from L'Manburg, Wilbur, Foolish, Techno, Karl, Bad- I have to say goodbye to them all.

He took a deep, shaky breath. "Yeah," he tried to smile. "I'll... tell you when to send me and Phil back after the exam, is that alright? I still have some things to do before I go."

Eret kinda just realised that he'll probably never see these guys again and that hurts him more than he expected (he got more attached to them than he would have liked lol ;-;)

IDK if any of you guys watch Grian (his videos include Hermitcraft, the Life series and more...) but basically I'm using 'the Watchers' from his Evolution SMP (or EVO) lore.

They are described (on the fandom wiki) as a "*group of powerful unseen forces who seem to run and orchestrate the series behind the scenes*"- and Grian later revealed that **the Watchers represent the actual viewers of the series**, which I think is really cool.

So that's kinda why the Watchers have more power over the gods in the 'Minecraft' universe- because IRL, DreamXD and Drista and all the other 'gods' are still just characters in a story.

There are still people (the actual streamers) who can change things (like their lore or anything else idk) about the 'gods'- so I thought it just makes sense that the gods *aren't* the highest beings in the 'Minecraft' universe.

IDK if I explained that well enough but whatever for now.

Oh and, before anyone comes up with some theory that they're still affecting the DSMP (since Phil potentially spoke ancient god Mojang into existence)- nope. That was just pure coincidence okay. I just thought it would be funny lmao

Thank you all for reading my story :>

16. the passing of time (pt. 2)

Chapter Summary

"Thank you for all the memories," Eret swallowed, tears slowly forming in the corners of his eyes too. "I'm going to be going home, but I'll never forget about you guys- I'll be thinking of you all often. And I'm certain that you guys will be able to live happily from here on- even without our help."

"I'm so glad we were able to spend this past year together," Phil continued on, giving a small smile. "And I'm glad that- it seems all of this *was meant to be* after all."

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Eret followed the set of coordinates that Fundy had sent him earlier that day and eventually found the fox-hybrid sitting on a log waiting for him. He plopped down beside Fundy and stretched a bit, yawning.

"I..." Fundy started, "called you here today because I wanted to say goodbye to you."

Eret turned his head to stare at him. "...I'm not going home *yet* ..."

"But you will *soon*, right?" Fundy mumbled, playing with his fingers. "Not long after you finish your exam."

"...Yeah. I don't know the exact date yet though," Eret replied.

"I'm going to miss you a lot. And Phil. Even though he's not my actual grandpa, he's pretty awesome..."

"I'll miss you all too," Eret gave a small, pensive smile.

Fundy leaned sideways so his head was leaning on Eret's arm. "I'm... I..." he said frustratedly, unable to find the words he wanted to say. "I don't *want* to say goodbye to you... Can't you stay, Eret?"

Eret clasped his hands together and looked down at his hands. "I... still have people I love in my world. I have to go back- I didn't even get to say goodbye to them! I'm sorry- but I really can't stay-"

"I know," Fundy said sadly. "I just... had to ask. I'm... going to be really sad when you go. And I'm a bit scared..." he admitted. "If the 'original' Eret comes back- what if he isn't nice, like you?"

"I don't think he'd be *too* bad," Eret said after a while. "Not to you at least. He always liked you more than the others- you two often pulled pranks on each other." Fundy grinned at that, his fox ears perking up slightly. "In fact, he was supposed to adopt you after Wilbur... dies."

"Supposed to?" Fundy asked.

"The 'you' in my world forgot to tell me what time you wanted Phil, you and I to meet. So when you and Phil got together in game to sign the adoption certificate, I wasn't able to show up since I was busy with family stuff...and so the other you played it off as if I forgot to show up. And you started thinking nobody cared about you..." Eret explained, ending quietly.

"Oh."

"But anyway. I'm sure nothing terrible will happen as long as nobody purposely offends Eret- just be nice to him and I'm sure he'll be fine too."

"I sure hope so..." Fundy murmured. He stood up and turned around to look at Eret. "...Good luck on your exam tomorrow Eret."

* * * * *

"Congratulations on becoming an admin," Eret suddenly heard from out of nowhere, mere seconds after completing the exam. He flinched involuntarily and then turned his head around to look at the god while sitting on a boulder in the new server he'd created. **"...I still can't believe you really passed the exam after studying for less than a year."**

Eret grinned at DreamXD. "It's nothing much, really. If other people also had tons of time like I did in exile, then more people would definitely get it done quicker."

"Don't sell yourself short," the god said seriously instead, to Eret's surprise. And as if that wasn't enough, XD *sat down beside him*. **"This is a feat nobody else has achieved in aeons- you should be proud of yourself. You might not think it's that significant- but let me tell you right now that it is. I'm quite certain that both you and I will be the main topic among the gods for quite some time."**

Eret opened his mouth in shock but then closed it again. He nodded.

"Now that you've finished the exam, have you decided on a date to return home?"

"Yeah," Eret answered quietly. "The 16th."

XD didn't ask why. He nodded and Eret then brought up the courage to finally ask something he'd been wondering for months.

"Did you find out why or how Phil and I were brought here?"

"...I did," he answered truthfully. **"But it's not really my story to tell."**

"What do you mean by *that*?"

"You'll know when you go home," the god said, frustratingly. Eret sighed. Since XD didn't seem like he would tell him about it, he changed subjects.

"So what will happen when I go home? Will the connection between us really break- and I won't be an admin anymore?"

"I'm still not completely certain what will happen," DreamXD admitted. **"Since this has never happened before in history either..."**

"I wonder if the original Eret would become the admin of this server then..." Eret murmured.

"...Perhaps."

The god stood up and reached his hand out to Eret, who looked at him confused. He took XD's hand and felt the world around him shift- and he blinked, and was back in the Dream SMP.

"I'll see you around. Enjoy your last two weeks here."

And with that, the god disappeared once more.

* * * * *

"Tom-"

"Why- why does he have to leave?!"

Eret stopped in his tracks- he'd been on the way home after getting teleported back to Dream's server, but he suddenly heard two voices arguing from the forest on the outskirts of the Greater Dream SMP areas.

"Imagine if you were in *his* shoes Tommy! He was forced away from everyone and everything he knows for a year- thrown headfirst into a warzone-"

"Yeah but- isn't everything okay now? Can't he stay? I... I really don't want him to go."

"Look, I don't want him to go either!" Wilbur said frustratedly. "I'm going to miss him so much once he's gone- I wish he'd stay here too. But he has to go home- We knew from the moment he told us that he'd be going home someday-"

"It came far quicker than I thought it would," Tommy muttered, and Eret silently agreed.

"We'll just have to... make the most of our time left together. Before he goes," Wilbur ended softly as Tommy quietly sobbed into his chest.

Eret walked on.

* * * * *

"Congratulations on becoming an admin."

"...Thanks." Eret stepped back to let the other admin into his house.

"Do you know when you're going home then?" Dream asked after they'd both sat down.

"Yeah. I told XD that we'd leave on the 16th."

"I see..." Dream clasped his hands together and looked directly at Eret. "I came here to apologise to you."

"...Oh."

"I realised that I never apologised specifically to *you* for anything- even after everything you've done for me..." Dream murmured. "And I wanted to before you go. So yeah... I'm sorry Eret. For killing you and exiling you- for everything I did."

"...I forgive you." Dream seemed to be stunned. "I don't hate you or anything, y'know? Just... just take care of everyone without going crazy from now on, okay?"

He held out his pinkie to Dream, who looked at it confused. "Pinkie promise," he explained, laughing slightly. "If you break the promise, you have to cut off your finger."

"Yeah," Dream swallowed, smiling. He nodded and linked fingers with Eret. "I promise I'll take care of everyone."

* * * * *

"Eret, do you have some time right now?"

"Uh, yeah?" Eret answered Sapnap, a bit surprised. "What's up?"

"I wanted to talk to you before you go," the other shrugged. Eret nodded and followed him.

"...Thank you for saving Dream," Sapnap said after a while. "I'm- so, so glad that you helped him."

"Of course I would," Eret said quietly. "Don't worry about it."

"I just wanted to tell you. That you truly saved us all. When I heard about everything he did in your exile and with that 'Revival Book'..." Sapnap shook his head. "I thought he was too far gone. I thought that not even *you* would be able to change him anymore. So I'm so glad that you still helped Dream- and even got him out of that prison."

He looked up at Eret and smiled. "Thank you for bringing peace to our world."

* * * * *

"We're having a party on the 15th."

Eret glanced at Ranboo who'd just teleported beside him. "Yeah, Sam told me about it a bit earlier today."

"Did he tell you to cook?"

"Uhm, no? Do you guys want me to?"

"...Yeah," Ranboo said awkwardly. "It's our uhm... last chance to eat your cooking after all."

Eret laughed and nodded. "Sure. I was planning on making something anyway."

"Michael's... going to miss you a lot when you go home. If you're not busy, do you want to come over to ours and have dinner together?"

"...Sure," Eret said quietly.

* * * * *

"To Eret, the quickest person to ever pass the admin exam!" Foolish announced, raising a glass as everyone else followed.

"To Eret!" they all cheered with grins on their faces as Eret stood awkwardly at the centre of attention unsure of what to do.

"Thanks guys," he said, flushing red.

Everyone started splitting off into their separate groups and Phil approached Eret first.

"Congratulations again, mate! All that hard work pulled off!" Phil grinned, slapping him on his back. "I can't believe you're really a proper admin!"

Not that it'll matter much when we're just about to leave this place, Eret thought, but he just smiled.

"Still can't believe I actually studied and passed an exam while living in a video game," he laughed while shaking his head.

"Oh my fucking god- this is why you've all been telling me that I should've come here earlier?!" Michael yelled, with a plate in his hand. Eret had done most of the cooking with help from a few people for the party, and it was Michael's first time trying it despite him being on the server for a few weeks now.

"I told you it was better than mine!" Tubbo laughed. "Even though I learnt from him, it's still not the same!"

Phil patted Eret's shoulder and then headed off to find Techno and Wilbur.

Suddenly, Eret felt his hand being tugged and he followed Foolish towards a corner of the room, where it was further from everyone's attention.

"What's up, Foolish?"

"You'll... be going home tomorrow," Foolish said quietly. Eret nodded without saying anything. They all knew deep down that this was a farewell party for Eret and Phil as much as a late-ish celebration for Eret passing the exam.

"I'm going to miss you, even though we've only known each other for about five or so months," he said, with a small smile. "I kind of wish I could see what *your* world is like."

"I'll miss you all too," Eret answered, squeezing Foolish's hand. "I don't think I'll ever be able to forget all this."

"I just- want you to know that I hope everything will go well for you in your world too. I'll always be thinking of you."

"... Thank you," Eret said softly, giving his friend a hug.

When they were finally finished with their food and games, Tommy said that he wanted to have a speech to Eret's surprise.

"Isn't it really fucking strange-" he started, "how a year ago, we'd been fighting each other day and night? All we cared about was surviving, and ourselves. The discs- man, the discs were all that mattered to me back then."

The people who had been on the server since the beginning all nodded, quietly agreeing with Tommy and reminiscing those days.

"But now," Tommy smiled, "those days are nothing but distant memories. Now, a year later- because of *Eret and Phil*- we've all learnt to use our words instead of weapons. We've learnt to care for each

other instead of materials. *We've learnt to choose people, not sides.* We've learnt that it *is* possible for a group of thirty or so people to be friends- especially since all of us *already are friends* in another world!"

He paused, staring directly at the two from the real world. "These past twelve months have been really eventful for everyone on the Dream SMP," he said. "And I don't think any one of us are going to forget about it for a long time. I think... I think I speak for everyone when I say *thank you*. Thank you both for changing our futures and saving everyone here," he ended, his voice thick with emotion.

Eret glanced at Phil who looked just as awkward as he felt, and then glanced around the room. Wilbur was properly bawling his eyes out while clinging to Techno- *who also seemed to be holding back tears?*- and the others were nodding and wiping their tears.

Eret nudged Phil and the two of them stood up, facing the friends they'd made in this world.

"Thank you for all the memories," Eret swallowed, tears slowly forming in the corners of his eyes too. "I'm going to be going home, but I'll never forget about you guys- I'll be thinking of you all often. And I'm certain that you guys will be able to live happily from here on- even without our help."

"I'm so glad we were able to spend this past year together," Phil continued on, giving a small smile. "And I'm glad that- it seems all of this *was meant to be* after all."

* * * * *

"...This is it."

Eret stared at everyone in the server who had gathered at the Community House to say goodbye to the two of them. Both he and Phil had said their goodbyes to everyone- there was nothing left for them to do here anymore.

"I'm going to miss you both so much," Niki blurted out, and immediately after, everyone else's masks began to fall too. Most started tearing up and some started wiping their eyes frantically.

They had one final group hug, before DreamXD showed up and everyone reluctantly pulled away.

"So how are you going to send us back?" Phil asked quietly.

"By cutting the link between your soul and this body," XD explained. "Souls are usually linked to only one body- but both of you are linked to *two*- your original one and this one." He paused for a moment before continuing. "Someone coded it so that your souls would be dragged to this one- imagine a train track that splits off into two lines. The lever to switch lines is stuck so your soul stays in *this* one- but when you die, the lever malfunctions *slightly* and you drift back to your old world for a bit. But then the lever is pushed one way again and your soul is dragged back again."

"That... okay," Eret said, shaking his head, not completely understanding. "Can't you just 'push the lever' the other way then? Why do you have to cut off one line completely- it sounds like we'd be able to come visit if we just switched bodies each time?" he ended hopefully.

"The lever is *stuck* first of all," XD said. "And besides, all of this is risky. Nobody's ever done this before- who knows what will happen if you keep switching bodies or universes- or what if *they* find out? And get angry at all of us?"

Right... the 'Watchers'.

"Fine," Eret muttered. "Is this going to hurt?"

"I don't think it should... I'm just releasing- changing the code like when you became an admin."

"Okay," he sucked in a breath. He and Phil sat down, just in case they fell or something while XD worked on whatever he had to do.

"I'll begin then," DreamXD murmured. "Close your eyes- and find your souls by following the lines of code."

Eret and Phil glanced at each other, and then at everyone else one last time. "Goodbye," they both said, and the others nodded with tears in their eyes. Eret could see Foolish holding onto Wilbur, Tommy squeezing Fundy's hand, Ranboo's face steaming with tears-

Eret took a deep breath as he tried to remember what he'd seen that time when he first became an admin. He closed his eyes.

The faint 0s and 1s were surrounding him in the darkness and he looked at his chest, he saw a glowing orb that was connected to the lines of code. Then he felt a warmth as his vision turned green, and felt a sudden, silent snap as his soul was separated from the canonical Eret's body- and XD was the final thing he saw before his vision faded to black.

Chapter End Notes

...I miss Technoblade.

I contemplated posting a small note on this fic the day the news came out, but in the end I didn't because I couldn't even gather my thoughts together to write something coherent.

When I first watched the video, I was stunned. I hoped it was a joke, hoped I was still dreaming, hoped I would wake up from this nightmare. I still sometimes feel like I'm dreaming. Tears

started flowing from my eyes as I thought, "*Oh, so this is what grief is.*"

I couldn't stop crying- so I went to my parents, hoping to find some comfort, but they couldn't understand why I care so much about 'a stranger's death' than my own family (even started ranting at me)- and maybe that's why it hurts even more. I hope you all have someone who can comfort you in these times.

Techno said that if he has 100 more lives, he'd choose to be Techno every single time. Well- I'm just one of the millions of voices in his head but- I hope he hears me when I say this:

"In my next life, and all lives that follow- I, along with my fellow voices, will surely love you again and again- until the end of time."

I will definitely continue writing someday- Technoblade was a writer himself, and I think he'd want us to keep him alive through any way we can- but right now it still hurts a bit too much. I had this chapter saved, but didn't know whether I should post it or not earlier. In the end I found it didn't really matter what I felt, because I physically couldn't bring myself to open my laptop and do anything. I still don't feel hungry, not even after a good few skipped meals (Dw, I forced myself to eat eventually). I still can't sleep well.

But anyway. It still hurts to do anything, really, but someday I'll finish this story. I know this story isn't even centred on Techno, but I just... don't feel well enough to do any of my hobbies at all? I need time to grieve I guess.

I still feel like I'm rambling.

Anyway. This story is really close to being complete. It's a bit disappointing that I need a break right when the fic is about to end, but I truly can't help it- sorry.

I hope all of you are coping alright. Take care of yourselves. (Now I see why people remind others to drink water and eat.. I just felt numb for ages after the video and didn't even feel like doing basic stuff... still don't, but it'll get better someday hopefully)

Sorry for ending on such a sad note after the chapter (if you read all that lmao).

Also, I swear the stuff XD said at the end made sense while in my head lol.

17. i couldn't tell you where i've been (pt. 1)

Chapter Summary

"Thank you for everything Eret," Eret said with a huge smile when he finally stopped right in front of him. **"...Or should I say, *Alistair*?"**

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

XD was the final thing Eret saw before his vision faded black.

But then, there was a sudden blinding light that engulfed him entirely- and he squinted, opening his eyes slowly with his hands over his face, attempting to block out the light. When he opened them completely, he stared at the vast, endless white that surrounded him and another figure in the distance who was approaching him.

It seemed like the exact opposite of the pitch black void he'd experienced whenever he died.

He began walking towards the other person, wondering if it was XD- and as they came into sight, he realised it was *himself*.

Or more accurately, his *canonical* self.

"Thank you for everything Eret," Eret said with a huge smile when he finally stopped right in front of him. **"...Or should I say, *Alistair*?"**

The man looked like an exact replica of himself- though he wasn't wearing the same shirt or jacket Eret had worn while saying his goodbyes to everyone. *This* Eret was wearing a large red cape that draped around his shoulders, falling loosely on the ground (not that there really *was* a floor in this strange space- it looked more like they were floating above clouds)- and most noticeably, a shiny golden crown was on his head.

He immediately recognised the clothes on his Minecraft skin.

"-" He tried to reply, but no sounds came out of his voice. "-?!"

"It's okay- I can still understand what you're trying to say. You can't make any noise right now because you're just a soul with a body currently- I'm taking control over my body again." Eret explained calmly. **"You're on your way back to your original body- we don't have much time together here."**

His shoulders dropped in relief and he nodded to show that he understood Eret's words too. *"Thank you,"* he mouthed.

"No- thank *you*," Eret shook his head. **"For saving everyone, for saving *me* too- from betraying my friends in L'Manburg and from the terrible future we would've had. I'm eternally grateful to you and your friend Phil for saving us."**

His doppelganger suddenly jumped at him and hugged him tightly- and though he was surprised, he squeezed him back, trying to assure him and trying to convey his message- that *"Everything will be okay from here on."*

"You don't have long to stay- but I just need to let you know a few things before you go back. Time didn't flow the same way while you were in the SMP- though you've spent a year there, only two weeks have passed in your world."

He was quite surprised to hear that, but felt incredibly relieved too. *That means Elaina and Goose and everyone could still be looking for us,* he realised.

"Sorry about that," Eret apologised, to his surprise.

"Huh? For what?"

"If my powers were a bit stronger- like Herobrine's- I'd be able to send you back as if no time had passed."

He stared at Eret in shock. Eret smiled.

"I'm the one who brought you and your Phil to my universe."

"You? But why?!"

"We don't have much time- so I'll only say this once," Eret said quickly. ***"Because I'm related to Herobrine."***

He gaped at the other version of himself who was laughing so much that he was tearing up.

"Sorry, sorry- I just found it hilarious how you kept saying that throughout your time here," Eret laughed as he wiped his eyes. **"But it's kinda true anyways. I can see glimpses of the future with the powers I inherited from Herobrine you see- and I knew from... a while ago about some of the bad things that would happen on the Dream SMP."**

He paused. **"I don't know the exact dates or anything else other than the scenes I see though- so I couldn't trust myself completely to change the future. What if something I did ended up messing things up further? I had thought about stopping Dream from creating the server altogether, but I felt bad because I'd surely be getting rid of the *good* things that would happen as well as the bad things..."**

"How did you find out about us then?"

"Herobrine can warp reality," Eret explained. **"And so can I- even if it's not as strong as him. I searched through alternate universes to find solutions to mine- and eventually found one that seemed perfect- one where all of us in the Dream SMP were friends. And then I realised some of the glimpses of the future I'd seen seemed very familiar in the story you guys had created..."**

"Sorry about that..."

"Nah, I'm not angry or anything about it," Eret grinned. **"But anyway, I decided to bring you over to my world... and somehow teach everyone else to be friends? I needed you to know everything that would happen though- so I brought you from a year in the future to June 2020."**

"Why did you pick Phil to come along too then?"

"He was closest to you when I brought you over..."

"He was closest to me? Why would he-" He suddenly froze, as memories that had been hidden from him were flowing back into his head as if a dam was suddenly broken. *"We were at the airport together."* He frowned.

"Yeah. You were visiting England- and he went to collect you."

"Then how come whenever I died, I saw my bedroom?"

"Despite being able to warp reality, I can't duplicate souls or anything," Eret told him. **"So both you and Phil's original bodies would be... soulless while you're here. I left your bodies in the void while your souls are in my universe- but as soon as your soul returns to your universe, your body gets teleported back. So when you died, your soul automatically returned to your original world and body- where your 'respawn' point was your bedroom. But then the code I created would grab onto your souls again and drag you back into my universe."**

"Right..."

"Anyway," Eret continued on. **"I needed myself to be natural until you showed up though- so that the 'story' would be exactly the same as what you know. So you wouldn't be confused or anything. That's why I wiped my memories after telling Herobrine my plans."**

"You wiped your own memories?!"

"Yeah. I remembered everything as soon as you took over my body though- When you showed up, my soul just took a backseat and I watched everything you did from inside here. I was able to take over for brief moments sometimes- mostly at the beginning when you were still getting used to this world."

"So I was right about the 'canon Eret' taking control whenever I would have felt terrified. And I guess DreamXD found out about all this by talking to Herobrine? That's why he told me I'd know everything once I went home I guess..."

Eret nodded- and at that moment, the white space that surrounded them suddenly began to change. Swirls of colours splashed all over the skies above and the ground beneath them, painting over the places they could see-

"It seems this is where we'll have to part ways then," Eret said, suddenly breaking the silence.

"Wait- I still have some questions! Who the heck are 'the Watchers'?! And will we ever see each other again or anything-?"

"Unfortunately, even I don't have an answer for that..." his other self frowned. **"They're very secretive and mysterious- not even the gods know much about them. The only thing we really know about them is that they're far more powerful than the gods and admins combined- but they rarely intervene... usually only for something really serious."**

He nodded quickly, taking in all the information, as Eret continued on. **"But anyway, as you know- our universes are partly connected... so maybe you'll find out more about the Watchers from your side? You might be able to find something that I can't over here-"**

"You're right! There are a lot more Minecraft youtubers back home- and if your universe's history is connected to the lore we've made- then the people in my world who make up the other servers in your

universe, probably made some lore that I haven't heard about yet!"

"As for your other question- I cannot really give you an answer to that either," Eret said, looking up at the streaks of colour filling the vast space, slowly becoming different scenes for the both of them. **"I don't know if I'll ever bring you back over to my universe again- We've already been lucky enough that the Watchers didn't interfere this whole time... it may be too risky to attempt it a second time. But on the other hand, some part of me believes that this won't be the last time we'll see each other."**

"Some part of me thinks that they *already* know about everything that we've done- *surely* they've already found out, when they're supposedly stronger than the gods? But if they know and haven't interfered, then maybe they will allow us to continue," Eret said, holding a hand out to him. **"Maybe they *like* these changes we've made. So maybe this isn't farewell- maybe they'll let us continue to meet. But for now, so long."**

He looked at Eret's hand and then took a deep breath- not that he really needed to breathe when he didn't even have a body- and looked up at *what had been* his *white eyes for the past year* through Eret's sunglasses before mouthing, *"Promise you'll take care of everyone for me?"*

"Of course," Eret promised without hesitation.

He shook his hand.

* * * * *

His chest was burning yet again- and he felt the urge to cough incessantly. The ache in his head that appeared whenever he tried to remember what had happened before he found himself in the Dream SMP had returned yet again- but all of a sudden, a coolness washed over him and the pain was gone.

Eret opened his eyes and blinked- he was *back on Earth*.

"Mate, you alright?"

He turned his head immediately and stared at Phil who was standing right next to him. He nodded slowly. "We're really back," he said, quietly. They were standing in the middle of a corridor in an airport- he could hear the crowds of people not too far away. He looked down at the suitcase in his hand.

"Did you see yourself?" Phil asked, and Eret nodded again. They began heading towards the exit.

"You too?"

"...Yeah."

"I'll... tell you about what the other 'me' told me later. It's stuff about why we were taken there in the first place," Eret said, yawning. "... I'm just... so tired right now."

"Sure," Phil agreed. He seemed to suddenly remember that they were back on Earth- since he quickly pulled out his phone. "Fuck- it's out of battery!"

Eret quickly looked for his, and switched it on, which fortunately still had 20% left. He sighed in relief. "Who should I call first?" he asked Phil, who after a moment, grinned and pressed the Discord button.

"Why not all of them at once?"

Eret

Hey guys

Less than ten seconds had passed before Eret's screen was suddenly met with a request for a call- and he pressed 'accept' immediately.

"Hello?" he started, only to immediately move the phone away from his ear.

"FUCKIN- IT'S REALLY YOU?!" Tommy yelled in his ear, before suddenly ending the call to Eret's confusion. Then he got a message to join the voice channel- which he saw was already full with their friends.

"Better hurry up, otherwise you'll run out of battery too," Phil said, grimacing. Eret nodded and joined the call.

"Eret, is that really you?!" someone said first. "Where the fuck have you been this whole time?!" he heard out from the incoherent mess too. They also heard someone mutter "Of course the first thing he says to us after being missing for *two whole weeks* is simply '*Hey guys*'-"

"Guys, guys- shut up! I can't talk if you're all yelling over me-" Eret started, and everyone else immediately quietened down.

"Where are you right now?" Wilbur asked first.

"Gatwick Airport," Phil said, which caused the shouts to instantly start again.

"Is that Phil?!" "Phil's with you?!" "PHIL-"

"Yeah, it's me," Phil laughed. "Will, can you call Kristin for me and tell her to come collect us? My phone ran out of battery-"

"Of course," Wilbur said quickly before leaving the call.

"I'm gonna leave the call for now- I need to save some battery just in case-" Eret started, but people started bickering again.

"NO- Don't you dare leave the call Eret, not after all this time-"

"Sorry guys," Eret winced, seeing the 5% left on his phone. "I've really gotta go. I'll call you all back after Kristin collects us-"

With that, he left the call.

"Mate, they're going to kill us," Phil grinned, amused.

"Yeah, I know," Eret sighed. He sent a few messages to Elaina, before the battery finally ran out. "Let's just get going- how long do you think it'll take Kristin to get here?"

Chapter End Notes

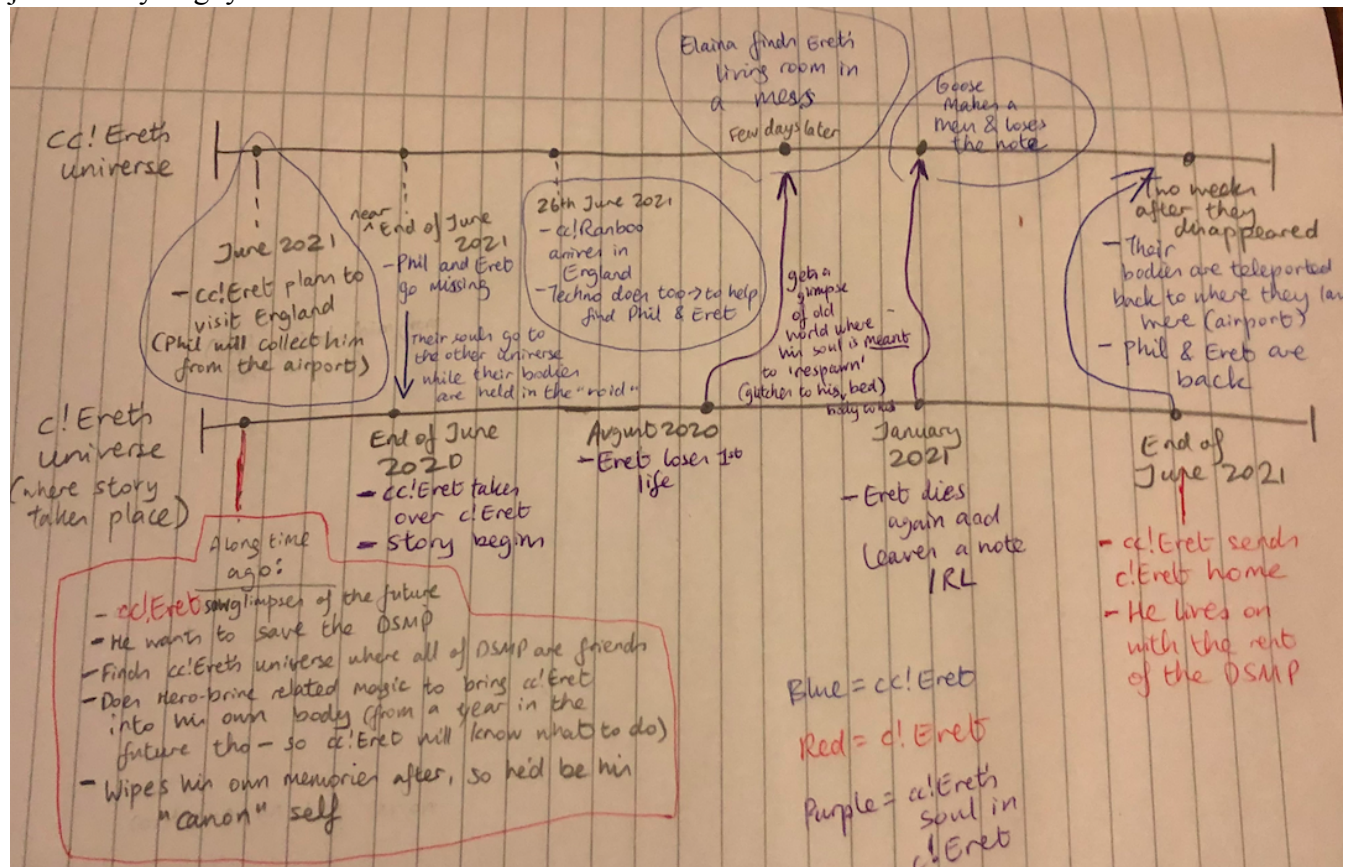
A bit of a shorter chapter, but I just felt like posting it so that I'd maybe get into the mood to write some more :)

Although I said that the story will be over soon, there's definitely going to be a few more chapters to go than I expected a month or so ago lol. From my drafts, I've already got enough for at least three more chapters... and that's not even everything I want to write haha. Haven't edited them yet though, so don't expect them to be out *that* soon, I want to at least make sure there's as little spelling mistakes as possible!

IDK if the random plot I made up makes sense, but it does in my head so it'll have to do for all of you lmao. If you guys have any questions, I'll try to answer them as best as I can...

In fact, I even made this weird af timeline to try and explain my what's going on in my head?

Sorry for the ugly handwriting lmao! And I honestly have no idea if this is even helpful- or if it'll just make you guys more confused xD



Anyway! I hope you all are doing well! Thank you all so much for the continued support and lovely comments :>

See you next time!

17. i couldn't tell you where i've been (pt. 2)

Chapter Summary

"Y'know, we're getting a lot of stares right now," Techno said in a low voice. "Why don't we continue this reunion somewhere else?"

"Sure," Phil agreed. "We should probably go before someone recognises us."

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Eret and Phil stood at the side of the road silently- both lost in their thoughts- waiting for a familiar face amongst the crowd for a good while, until they finally heard a loud yell- "PHIL!"

They both turned their heads in the voice's direction immediately, and Eret smiled in relief when he saw Kristin tackle Phil into a hug. The couple burst into tears, and Eret just stood there awkwardly, wishing that he had Elaina by his side too. But she was on the other side of the world- so it'd take at *least* a few hours before he could see her in person again- and that was only if she trusted him without hesitation and bought a ticket to England immediately after reading the text messages.

"I'm so sorry Kristin-" Phil was saying, while Kristin was squeezing him so tightly, as if she would never let him go again.

When they'd calmed down a bit, Kristin told them that Wilbur would be here soon too. Then they'd go get some food and talk. "I'd ask you both what happened- but it'll probably be better if you tell us all at once, right?" she said, wiping an eye. "I've waited two weeks- I suppose I can wait a few hours longer."

"Thanks," Eret said, with a tired smile.

"ERET! PHIL!" The trio turned around to see a large group of people running in their direction. He wasn't surprised to see Wilbur, Tommy or Tubbo- but he couldn't believe his eyes when he saw Ranboo and Technoblade just shortly behind them.

"You're both really here," Tubbo sighed in relief, as Tommy jumped on Phil and Wilbur on Eret.

"Why are *you two* here?" Eret replied, still staring at Ranboo and Techno.

"I was planning on visiting the UK to meet Tubbo, remember?" Ranboo said. "I arrived on the 26th. I was supposed to arrive after you, but two weeks have passed since you've been missing."

"Oh. I completely forgot about that..."

"And Techno came as soon as he could to help us search for you both," Wilbur continued, squeezing Phil's shoulder. "I'm so glad you're both safe..."

"Y'know, we're getting a lot of stares right now," Techno said in a low voice. "Why don't we continue this reunion somewhere else?"

"Sure," Phil agreed. "We should probably go before someone recognises us."

* * * * *

After bickering for another ten minutes about who should get to sit beside Phil and Eret, the group finally hit the road. Kristin was driving one car with Phil, Tubbo and Ranboo, while Wilbur was driving the other with Eret, Techno and Tommy. They'd agreed to meet up at Phil's place- but almost ten minutes away from their destination, Tommy began asking for McDonald's.

"Tommy- you can order the food online and get it delivered-"

"I want the food *now*-" he insisted, clutching his stomach dramatically. "I'm going to starve! Do you want me to starve, Wilbur?!"

Eret couldn't stop laughing as Wilbur groaned, muttering about kicking the child off the car. Eventually he said, "I'm sure the others won't mind- can't one of you guys call them? We can get some food for them too-"

"...Fine, I guess you're right," Wilbur sighed, giving in.

"Why the hell do you listen to Eret and not me?!" Tommy yelled, kicking the back of Wilbur's seat.

"TOMMY STOP- I'M DRIVING YOU FUC-"

* * * * *

After the group *finally* made it to their destination, they found the other four already lounging in the living room waiting for them. Wilbur distributed the meals out to everyone, and then they sat at the dining table, squeezing in a few stools so that everyone could sit around it.

Out of the corner of Eret's eye, he could see a strange expression on Phil's face (that he was certain was on his own too). He eventually picked up the burger and took a massive bite out of it- and suddenly out of nowhere, Tubbo exclaimed, "Eret?! You alright?!"

He realised that he was crying.

"I'm fine," he laughed, wiping his eyes immediately with his sleeve. "It's just- it's been a while since I've eaten McDonalds..." He *had* been able to make and eat burgers while in Minecraft, but from the limited ingredients, he couldn't really make any complicated sauces or anything to achieve the exact same flavours.

"Yeah," Phil murmured, putting down his drink. The rest of the meal was eaten in awkward silence (though most of the others were on their phones calming the group chat anyway), but both Eret and Phil could see the others trying not to burst out with questions for them.

When they finished, Phil said "Let's tell them all at once, yeah?" and Eret nodded. He checked his phone that had been charging since they'd arrived. Elaina had replied immediately when he messaged her an hour or so ago- and by now, she was probably already at an airport.

"I'll tell Elaina myself as soon as she gets here," Eret said, watching Phil turn on his computer. "Let's tell the others now."

As soon as Phil was ready, he hopped into a voice channel and pinged the rest of the server. They joined immediately, and all turned on their cameras when they saw Phil had turned on his (which was pointed at the guys on his sofa).

"So- I guess we should tell our story of where we've been first, right? And then if you guys have any more questions, we'll answer them at the end," Phil hummed as everyone else nodded. "Why don't you start with your side first?" he said, looking at Eret.

"Sure," Eret nodded. "One day, I woke up lying on the grass, underneath a tree-"

"Wait, wait, wait- what?!"

"Y'know what, it might just be easier to be straightforward," Eret sighed. "We were inside the Dream SMP, inside an alternate universe- however you want to call it. It's a long story."

"What the fuck?!" Tommy spluttered, along with many others.

"Actually- It might just be easier to show them first mate, then tell them what happened!" Phil said, before standing up and heading to another room. He returned with two brooms, and threw one at Eret, who caught it easily.

He suddenly understood what Phil meant. "Shouldn't we do this outside?"

"What the hell are you two doing?"

"You'll see in a moment-" they both answered, and they motioned for the others to follow. Wilbur took out his phone and joined the call, to show the people online what was going on in the garden. Eret and Phil stood opposite each other with their brooms pointed at each other.

Eret took a deep breath.

With the knowledge and muscle memory he'd learnt over the past year, the two of them began their duel. It was *definitely* not the first time they'd sparred- though in this world, it was. They ran towards each other, and their brooms connected, neither getting pushed back. Eventually Eret jumped backwards, easily dodging Phil's swing and then cutting his weapon diagonally. Phil parried it, and struck again from the other side- and the two continued to spar, all while grinning maniacally.

From the corner of his eye, he could see the group staring at them with shocked expressions. He felt like laughing- he wondered what they were thinking. He rolled to the side when Phil slammed his weapon down with a lot of force, and then jumped back up immediately, before swinging at Phil's neck (knowing that Phil would be able to stop it). Phil blocked it easily as expected- but at that moment, Wilbur yelled "Alright- alright- we get it! Stop it-"

"Aww we haven't shown you guys anything yet!" Phil pouted, but lowered the broom in his hand.

"I guess I could show them something else-" Eret said, as they returned to the living room. He took a pen and found a piece of paper, and began writing the enchantments he'd learnt- writing the standard

galactic alphabet from memory.

Tubbo checked it online, and said, "Uh... yeah. He got it right- it says 'unbreaking'."

"What?! You're joking, right?!"

"Nope," Eret laughed. "I can write some more, if you'd like."

But then Phil suddenly remembered something, and nudged Eret's side. "Mate- just show them what Ranboo taught you."

"What?" The group turned to look at Ranboo, who looked just as confused.

"Not you- the other Ranboo- the one on the Dream SMP-" Phil explained, laughing.

"Alright then-" Eret said, scratching the back of his neck. "I'm not sure if it'll even work here- this might just be embarrassing but anyway- here goes-" He coughed and cleared his throat, before making a strangely hoarse but instantly recognisable sound that shocked everyone.

"What the fuck-" Tommy immediately spluttered, "What was that?!"

Eret grinned, and then repeated, "△≡△⊕' } ∩∕?"

The group on Discord were going mental, but he heard "How the fuck are you doing that?!" clearly amongst the noise.

"Like I said- Ranboo taught me that. I know a few other words too-"

And so, after all those demonstrations, the group had no choice but to believe what Eret and Phil were saying.

"So- what happened while you were there?" Fundy asked, resigned.

"Yeah! Which era did you go to?" Bad asked.

"Oh fuck- I was a villain, wasn't I?" Dream suddenly said, paling. "Did I do something to you guys?!"

"...We'll get there," Eret said, feeling a bit more calm now. "I'll start from the start, okay? So- as I said earlier, I woke up in the middle of a field underneath a tree. And when the first face I saw- was Tommy."

He took a deep breath. "I had a huge headache, but I instantly recognised him and the L'Manburg uniform. And after a short while, I figured out that I was near the start of the L'Manburg Independence War, and that there was something stopping me from remembering exactly what happened before I ended up there. Every time I tried to remember, the headache would return and get worse."

"I spent some time trying to find out how the inventory worked," Eret laughed. "I waved my hands around like a mad man, but nothing worked. Eventually I started thinking about an axe or something, and it immediately appeared out of thin air and dropped into my hands. But anyway- not long after, I heard someone approaching and Dream showed up. He reminded me about our 'deal'..."

"The Final Control Room?" Tubbo asked, paling slightly.

"Yeah. He told me I had a week," Eret nodded. "By the way- there *were* some things about the other world that we hadn't 'written in'. Like this part- the war had lasted about a year already- and that was *after* I showed up there. So there were already a bunch of battles that had taken place, bunkers that had been built, that I had no idea about- since we didn't create them. Anyway- the next day, Wilbur and the rest decided to raid the Community House- and while there, they blew up the floor of the building..."

He sucked in a breath. "As you guys can probably guess, Dream wasn't happy about that. Wilbur messaged me for help, and when I arrived, Dream was threatening to either take their lives or Tommy's discs... I offered him an enchanted golden apple for an armistice until the end of July- about three weeks- which he thankfully accepted-"

"Wait, how long were you two there?!" Wilbur suddenly asked, leaning slightly forward.

"Ah- about a year," Phil replied, immediately causing everyone to panic.

"Everyone! Quieten down, there's a lot to get through," Eret laughed. "Like I said earlier- it's a really long story- and I want to get the main parts of it said by the end of today. So- during that period with no war, I trained using a zombie spawner and gathered a ton of resources, and even learnt how to enchant- which is a lot more difficult than how you do it in game. Apparently *nobody* in that universe knows how to read the galactic standard alphabet! So they were shocked when I said that I memorised it (oh right- I didn't have dyslexia there!), but I told them that it was because I was related to Herobrine."

"I learnt horse-riding, learnt how to brew potions, cleared a woodland mansion for totems, and built a few other secret bases for myself too," Eret said, listing them off on his fingers. "Then I met Dream in the middle of the night again. I tried to talk him out of it, but he was still dead set on taking their lives- or Wilbur's at the very least. I kind of got him to agree to not killing the kids?- though I'm not sure if he would've kept that promise or not. I also sent a message to Phil and Techno, in the hopes that they would show up earlier than they were meant to- and help us."

"Soon enough, the end of July rolled around and the war immediately restarted right back where we left off. I brought them to the tunnel to the Final Control Room- but before we arrived, I found the *other* tunnel I'd created beforehand, and led them to the real room while telling them about the deal Dream and I had made. I assured them that I wouldn't betray them, and then got them all to escape fully healed and geared up again while I waited to hold back Dream and the others..."

"What- why didn't you run with them?!" Dream immediately cut in, startled and worried. "I didn't *kill* you, did I?!"

"I managed to stall them for a while," Eret smiled weakly, looking anywhere but his friends. "They put me in a prison cell for the night- Dream visited me and asked what was wrong with me. I tried to change Dream's mind about things again, but still to no avail... and the next day, Dream's team started threatening for L'Manburg to surrender- or they'd take my life. Everyone began to bicker again- and I... suddenly realised that nothing would get across to them if I didn't sacrifice anything. And right after talking some sense into their heads- the other Dream stabbed me. Right here," he said, placing a hand on his chest, taking a deep breath.

Everyone other than Phil gasped, horrified. "You... died?" Puffy asked, looking incredibly pale. He nodded, and everyone fell silent, speechless.

"When I opened my eyes after dying... I found myself at home. Back on Earth," Eret continued. "But then I suddenly got a headache again. I looked around for painkillers, but eventually blacked out and

woke up again in the SMP-"

"Wait, isn't that why your living room was a wreck?!" Jack said, causing the others to suddenly realise and agree. "A day or two after you disappeared, Elaina found your living room messed up with furniture pushed around- but nothing was missing apparently..."

"Yeah, that's probably why," Eret nodded. "But anyway- I almost instantly returned to the SMP- and Phil and Techno joined right then, as if it were perfectly timed-"

"Wait, so where did you 'wake' up then?" Tubbo suddenly asked, turning to look at Phil. "Was it only once you showed up at the SMP? Or were you somewhere else?"

"I woke up in my private hardcore world," Phil said quietly. "And was completely alone for about a month? After I got the letter, I realised that Eret was like *me*- since the 'canon' Eret wouldn't have sent me a letter. I started trying to find ways to switch servers- the communicators didn't have any obvious buttons for that- and eventually ended up on Hypixel by accident. Where I bumped into Techno, who was finishing up the Potato War. We then left for the Dream SMP together- and from there, most of what Eret and I have been through is the same..."

Chapter End Notes

So first of all, $\triangle \sqsubseteq \triangle \oplus \overline{\oplus}' \{ \} \cap \neq$ = what's up ([YT link for endermen noises -> listen to 'idle3' \[about 25 seconds in\]](#))

Secondly, IK this was mostly me summarising the stuff that happened in this entire fic lmao. Next chapter will also be similar... but at least you guys can see the other guys' reactions! And since I've already got these chapters complete, I'll just post them a chapter a day or something :P

Also, I wanted to properly clarify that although the main characters in this fic are streamers and living in a modern world like ours, it's not exactly the same- they're still in an alternate universe to ours. So I thought it'd be nice to have something in the story that was clearly different- which was Technoblade going to the UK, about the same time that Ranboo did.

Mmmm I think that's all the notes I had to say for this chapter. Thanks for reading and making my day :DD

17. i couldn't tell you where i've been (pt. 3)

Chapter Summary

"Mate, don't lie to yourself," Phil cut in, grinning. "They chose him 'cause they loved him a lot- because he didn't betray them, gave them all totems of undying, cooked almost all their meals- and later on Wilbur even co-"

"ANYWAY-" Eret said loudly, his face turning red and ignoring the curious looks from his friends. "The day before the election, Phil and I went to the stronghold near Techno's house. Because we thought that maybe DreamXD would have some way to send us home."

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"So yeah- We rushed to the Community House again, and managed to scare the other side away for the night," Eret continued. "Phil and I talked for a good while- realising that we were both in the same situation- and started planning to change everything we'd created for the lore."

"Yeah- like the election, November 16th, the Egg, the exile arc, Ranboo's enderwalking, Karl's memory issues..." Phil listed off his fingers, nodding. "Man, that entire period was probably the worst- from about the end of November until January."

"What happened?" Almost everyone had grim expressions, knowing that that period was filled with horrifying and depressing events that they'd written for the watchers' entertainment.

"Well firstly, L'Manburg got their independence after all. Tommy and Dream *did* duel- and Tommy lost his discs- but he didn't lose his life because of Eret's interference," Phil explained. "Techno immediately moved to the North, but promised he'd give L'Manburg a chance. George was crowned king, while Eret became the vice-president."

"Holy shit, you became the vice-president?!" Tommy screeched, the others looking surprised too.

"Uh... yeah," Eret confirmed sheepishly. "I was the only adult after all? Tommy, Tubbo and Fundy were all kids there-"

"Mate, don't lie to yourself," Phil cut in, grinning. "They chose him 'cause they loved him a lot- because he didn't betray them, gave them all totems of undying, cooked almost all their meals (and even introduced new food they didn't know about-)- and later on Wilbur even co-"

"ANYWAY-" Eret said loudly, his face turning red and ignoring the curious looks from his friends. "The day before the election, Phil and I went to the stronghold near Techno's house. Because we thought that maybe DreamXD would have some way to send us home."

Dream's eyes widened as he suddenly realised, "The different characters I played were actually separate entities?"

"Yeah... and XD was a literal god. But maybe Eret should explain all the lore behind the other universe," Phil finished, looking at Eret.

"Right- well you know how everyone here is 'human'?" Eret started. The others nodded slowly, confused. "In that universe, instead of being referred to as a 'human', you'd be called a 'player'. Of course there are *human* players, but there would also be hybrids- like Phil! Phil was an avian, but he was still a player. Does that make sense?"

"Yeah, I guess so," a few murmured, and so Eret continued.

"Well- amongst the players, there are a few that go on to become admins. Above 'the players'... are 'the gods'. Some gods we created from our stories are DreamXD and Drista. The gods choose players they like to become admins- or operators. Same thing. But it turns out that even *the gods* aren't the highest beings in that universe. There are these beings called 'the Watchers'- who are even more powerful than the gods."

"But anyway- players can travel across many 'worlds', also known as 'servers' in their terms. Admins are able to create their own world- but technically their patron god takes care of it? It's only one world per admin though- but a god can have multiple worlds if they have multiple admins- I'm uh, getting side-tracked," Eret muttered. "It doesn't really matter- I'll write down the lore for the other universe and send it in the group chat later if you guys want to hear more about it. So yeah- We met a god, and I asked him to make me an admin."

He paused to catch some of his breath. "There are rules to becoming an admin though, and I wasn't qualified for it- and XD didn't want to risk breaking the rules since the Watchers might see and intervene (he needed us there to change the story and help Dream). So instead, I became an admin-in-training. The perks I got immediately were stuff like protection from getting banned from the server- but I wouldn't be able to use most commands until I finished studying for a year. I even had to take an exam at the end."

"You had to *study*?!" Tubbo exclaimed, his eyes widening in surprise.

"Yeah," Eret groaned while Phil quipped with a huge grin on his face, "*He had to study coding in a video game world!*"

The others all began to laugh and when it died down, Eret continued on. "So anyway, in the end POG2020 won! Wilbur wanted to hold a festival though-" Everyone winced at 'festival'. "-but I got Tubbo to make the games with Tommy instead of decorations. At the very least, I didn't want him decorating his own death."

"Did I die...?" Tubbo murmured, but both Eret and Phil shook their heads.

"No- but there was one canon death on that day," Phil answered. "It was Quackity's."

"Mine?!" Quackity said, his eyes widening in shock. "What'd I do?!"

"You uh- attacked Wilbur because you were still angry that they kicked you out for being American. So Techno stabbed you," Phil said.

"I wasn't there when they did that-" Eret added quickly, "And I did convince the others to let you in if you wanted to not long after the election finished. But Quackity already started planning his own country. And from what Techno told me after, he was planning to start a new war against L'Manburg someday."

"Damn," Quackity cursed, sucking in a breath.

"Don't worry," Eret smiled slightly. "It never happened. Phil convinced the kids not to get any more revenge, while I convinced Niki and Jack. Wilbur... surprisingly didn't need to be convinced. He said he would trust my decision on that matter."

"Nothing happened for a while after that," Phil continued on. "Nothing even happened on the 16th of November- though I spent the entire day in Techno's home while Eret kept an eye on Wilbur. I didn't want to risk anything."

"Yeah," Eret laughed. "But it went by fine. Connor and Puffy arrived- and I paid Puffy a ton of diamonds to uh... get Schlatt some therapy? After the elections, he kinda just moved further out- but he still had his drinking problem. I hoped Puffy would help him, and that Connor would get him back to his old self a bit- and it eventually worked."

"You really went all out, huh," George said, and some others nodded.

"But not long after that- everything fell apart," Phil said grimly. "I was keeping an eye on Vikkstar and Lazar as Eret and I had agreed a while ago- when Dream and Punz suddenly showed up one day. I messaged Eret for help immediately, but they chased us down and we started fighting for a while. I told those two to go find Tommy and Wilbur- while I fought Dream and Eret fought Punz-"

They could both see the grim expressions on Dream and Punz's faces, so they quickly hurried on. "Nothing too bad happened! Techno showed up just in time, and before that, I was trying to shove some morals into Punz's head," Eret said, holding back a laugh. "No offence Punz- but your character would literally do anything if he got paid. So I asked him if he would harm his friends for money-"

"None taken," Punz sighed in relief when he heard that he hadn't killed Eret.

"So uh- yeah. At that point, I *had* to tell the others *something*... so I said that I could see the future. Because of my powers from being related to Herobrine."

"Is that your excuse for everything?" Jack asked, laughing while throwing his head back.

"What? It's a good get-out-of-jail-free card!" Eret protested. "Anyway- I told them about the Revival Book. Oh but- Techno and Phil weren't there. They went back to their houses in the north after the fight. I convinced the others to stick together in groups of three or fours- so we'd always outnumber Dream and Punz. Wilbur and Ranboo were with me- and we decided to go to Phil's place because I had said I'd talk to him earlier. However..."

He took a deep breath, unconsciously clenching his fist tightly. "On the way to the portal, we passed by a burnt house." The others froze, as everyone slowly realised what the big deal was. "I convinced the other two with me to fix George's house before we went- I think I said something like it would cause a lot of trouble if we left it like that- but in the end, we were too late."

Phil, who had been sitting beside him the whole time, squeezed his hand under the table in an attempt to comfort him. Eret smiled weakly and said with a lot of difficulty, "Dream- as you guys can probably expect- was pissed. He caught us fixing the house, but instead started blaming me for destroying it in the first place. And when Tommy, Tubbo and Niki passed by, he started the whole spiel about how that was a declaration of war from L'Manburg. He continued to blame me- even when Tommy yelled that it was *him* not me that did it- and then I had an... awful idea."

"...Tell me you didn't," Dream said horrified, breaking the silence. Tommy looked like he was about to cry. They both seemed to realise what Eret's idea had been.

"I did," Eret mumbled. "...I took the blame and was exiled. For a little over a month? I think? From the start of December to January sometime."

"And while all that was going on, I had no idea- and was still with Techno all the way in the north," Phil said after a moment. "And that was when I told Techno everything- and not long afterwards, while Eret was still waiting for the trial- I told Wilbur everything too. He agreed to exile Eret to keep Tommy safe."

"Oh my god. I didn't try to experiment the Revival Book on you, did I?" Dream asked, horrified, when he realised that he would be alone with Eret for a long time- especially after *just* failing to kidnap two test subjects.

"Fortunately, no. I didn't know at the time, but Dream had already found out about me being an admin-in-training... though he thought I was a full-fledged one," Eret tried to explain. "He tried to ban me earlier that day, after ruining his plans one too many times, but yeah- he couldn't ban me so that's how he came to that conclusion. He couldn't risk doing anything *too* bad to another admin- in case my 'patron god' would get angry at him. So uh, as you guys can expect, he tried doing the manipulating stuff on me. Though everyone kept visiting and messaging me behind his back..."

He coughed into his fist. "Anyway! I had nothing to do during exile other than gather some gear for Dream to blow up-" Both Dream and Tommy looked incredibly grim. "-so I studied a lot. Eventually I could use commands like '/give' which made getting food and items *much* easier, leaving me with even *more* time to study."

"And meanwhile, I was back in L'Manburg dealing with the Egg," Phil said, placing down a rubber band he'd been fiddling with while listening to Eret recount their story. "Techno, Sam, Dream and I went to blow up the Egg while encased in obsidian- but then Bad showed up still slightly infected. He stabbed me in the chest, but I didn't die because of my totem of undying. Sam started fighting and making Bad back out of the obsidian room- but then Dream lit the TNT while Techno and I were still inside." Everyone gasped, while Dream looked stricken with guilt. "My instincts told me to grab Techno and fly though- so we managed to get out before too much damage was done to my wings. It wasn't too bad- they healed after a week or so."

"And the Egg was defeated? Just like that?" Bad asked quietly.

"No, the TNT only managed to clear the vines. Dream left after I persuaded Techno to not kill him- and then I used end crystals to blow the Egg up again. And this time it worked."

For the first time since Eret and Phil had started their story, the rest of the group sighed in relief.

"Why would the Egg be weak to end crystals though?" Skeppy asked, looking quite confused.

"Mmm... I actually don't know," Phil hummed. "We just hoped that since they're related to the End, that they'd be somehow stronger or different to TNT?"

"Wait- are we just moving on from how Dream tried to blow up Phil and Techno?!" Fundy suddenly said.

"I mean, there's nothing much to say about it mate," Phil said, glancing at Eret and then back at the others. "He failed- that's all that matters."

"So what happened next?" Sapnap asked.

"Well- first of all, Tommy told me that he'd officially given up on the discs-" Tommy stared wide-eyed at Eret, his mouth hanging open but speechless- "Because he finally agreed with me that people were more important than items. And also because I gave him new discs anyways. But anyway- I eventually ditched exile and moved in with Foolish, and everything was fine until Dream suddenly wanted me to meet him. Alone, on January 20th."

"What? But if Tommy gave up on the discs-"

"Dream realised that it was very easy to control me- since I had the most attachments on the server," Eret explained. "Which was pretty much everyone on the server. He realised that if he threatened to do something to anyone I cared about, I'd do anything to stop it. Of course I realised it was a trap- so I told a couple people everything the day before. Like the guys in L'Manburg, Karl, Sam, Bad and a few others. I got everyone to wait while I confronted Dream and fought him. I wanted to test something by dying- and as I expected, I woke up here again. I wrote a note down on paper, but I'm assuming nobody found it?"

"No but- are you just skipping over the fact that you went to meet Dream expecting to die?!"

"Well... yeah," Eret muttered. "But it's fine- everyone else showed up afterwards and-"

He suddenly paused as he realised that he'd have to tell everyone what he did next.

*I killed Dream. I **murdered** someone. What if they- what if they hate me? What if they're disappointed-disgusted- with me?*

What the fuck am I supposed to say?!

Chapter End Notes

Mmm Dream is gonna feel incredibly guilty by the end of Eret's story.

Also, the daily update thing is not lasting that long lmao, it's gonna end tomorrow. But I'm almost done the next chapter after that, so it probably won't be too long until the next chapter anyway :D

17. i couldn't tell you where i've been (pt. 4)

Chapter Summary

"You know..." Eret started, looking lost in thought, "...what the hell are we actually supposed to tell the police?"

...

"Oh right- fuck!" Wilbur exclaimed. "You've both been reported as missing for almost two weeks now!"

...

Phil grimaced and tensed up. He looked directly at Eret. "...What if we say we got amnesia and forgot everything from the last two weeks?"

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Phil said he is over it, that he doesn't blame me for what happened- but what will the others think?

Eret shut his eyes tightly together, trying to find the 'right' words to say- but found none.

Will they be able to understand? Will they be scared of me? How much do I tell them?!

He swallowed, suddenly noticing how quiet it was, how everyone must have been focusing on him, how clammy his hands felt, how hard his heart was thumping in his chest- and then, Phil's hand squeezed his, grounding him and he took a deep breath trying to calm himself. He looked back up.

"Dream- I..." he strangled out, unsure of what would be the right thing to say. "I- everyone showed up to save me, and then I- killed Dream."

Everyone was stunned. It was dead silent in both the room and the discord call, until Dream finally said with a strange expression and tone, "...He probably deserved it." A few of the others looked like they wanted to say something to Eret, but none of them spoke up. They all looked conflicted, also unsure of what to say. "And besides," Dream said quickly after a moment, probably trying to convince himself and everyone else- "It was in *Minecraft*... he respawned in the end, didn't he? So it's fine. And I have a feeling he must've provoked you or something- there's just no way *you* would kill him without a reason, right? So yeah. I don't blame you at all, Eret."

"If I met my canonical self, I would want to kill him too," he added on, muttering it as an afterthought.

"There's a huge gap between just saying 'I want to kill someone' and actually doing it though," Eret said quietly.

"Mate, we've talked about this so many times- Don't you remember what Puffy- the other Puffy- said?" Phil said softly. "Stop with this self-sabotaging stuff- we're not going to turn on you just because of something you were practically manipulated into doing. So stop trying to make us hate you- there's no way that's happening."

"Manipulated?" someone asked quietly, even more horrified.

"Yeah," Phil nodded grimly. "Eret skimmed over exile- and I'm pretty sure he hasn't told me everything that happened in it either- but from what I *do* know, it was... pretty shit."

"I still don't think it was *that* bad," Eret muttered, but Phil just shushed him.

"You've got to keep this in mind- he met up with Dream just four days after leaving exile! He barely had any time to heal- He was still shaken up and stressed all the time, after living in the middle of nowhere surrounded by hostile mobs, and being on edge watching out for an enemy that could show up at any moment. And add on the fact that he was hiding the admin-studying stuff from Dream too- Eret was *a lot* more jumpy the first few months after exile," Phil explained darkly. "He was alone for days at a time, his only human contact being text messages- and of course there's the 'throw-your-stuff-in-the-hole' shtick we're all familiar with. Dream blew up his house too. No matter what he says, he was *not* in a good headspace. And- I still have a feeling that there's more that Eret isn't telling me."

"Why didn't you *leave*?" Dream said weakly, asking the question on everyone's face. "You could have- you *should* have gone to Techno and Phil's place-"

"I... thought exile would be a good way to spend time with Dream?" Eret laughed humourlessly. "Like come on, I *had* to try and change Dream's mindset about everything. Though in the end I guess I still got affected by it all... I thought I'd be fine- since I knew it was all roleplay anyway. And that I wasn't *actually* all alone in exile, that Phil and everyone else was still on my side. But I... kind of exploded when Dream revealed that he knew about our... situation... and said that he kept us in their universe simply for his entertainment- and that he wouldn't let us ever return. In the heat of that moment, I forgot I already had a deal with XD and that the stuff Dream said didn't even matter," he finished quietly.

"It wasn't your fault," Dream affirmed. "It wasn't- I just want you to know that I don't hate you, or think differently of you at all for killing Dream," he said to Eret, almost aggressively. "I'm on your side, no matter what Eret."

The others agreed with Dream, and eventually, Tommy stood up and hugged Eret.

* * * * *

After a while, Phil continued on. "After Dream was imprisoned- in much better conditions of course- a few more countries were made," he reminisced. "Tubbo created Snowchester, but got dual citizenship so he was still part of L'Manburg. Mexican Dream took over taking care of El Rapids, while Quackity established Las Nevadas and as Karl and Sapnap created Kinoko Kingdom. They never fell out though, and also got dual citizenship in each other's countries. Since most of the lore events had died down by then, we started focusing on Karl's memory problems."

"I looked into Karl's player code- and found a weird message in it telling us to go to the End, and to bring Sapnap along with us. I had no idea why we'd need to go there- but assumed it'd have to do with

killing the dragon. After all, there was no real reason to go to that realm when I could just summon whatever item I might need from there, other than to kill the dragon," Eret said. "Phil's theory was that the End is somehow special- since the end crystals were able to get rid of the Egg. If we got rid of the other end crystals and the dragon- *maybe* something would change about the world too."

Phil nodded. "But the moment we teleported to the End, we found XD floating there. It turns out that uh... he'd somehow become friends with the dragon? And he didn't want us to kill her."

"But being friends with the dragon was corrupting XD's powers," Eret continued. "There was a thin transparent line connecting XD's heart with the dragon- much like how the end crystals are connected to her too. It was causing the bugs in XD's coding, and he knew it, but he still didn't want us to kill his only friend."

"... We had to free the End," Phil said, "but thankfully DreamXD didn't hate us for too long. He didn't speak to Eret much for a while, but since Eret helped him become friends with Foolish and a lot more people, eventually he forgave us. So yeah- that solved the bug causing Karl's memory loss, and freeing the End had somehow solved Ranboo's enderwalking too."

"Huh. That's good I guess," Ranboo said, surprised at how things turned out for him.

"That was around the end of February, or early March? I started visiting Dream daily around that time anyway," Eret said, trying to remember the dates. "I'd heard that other people had visited him too- but he apparently never talked much. He never talked much to me either at the start- so I mostly went to tell him about whatever was going on in the server. Eventually I got him to play chess with me, while we took turns to ask and answer questions. He kind of... blew up at the end, and told me he was jealous of me- how I come from a world where everyone's friends, how I managed to become loved by everyone even in *his* world... and I pretty much told him that he needed to put in more effort to fixing the broken trust between him and everyone- as well as actually talk to Puffy when she visited," he paused, taking a sip of water. "I told him I'd get him out of the prison for good if he spoke to Puffy, if he *tried* to reconcile with George and Sapnap, and if he changed the respawn limits to infinite."

"And on Tommy's birthday, we allowed Dream out for a day. He actually gave Tommy a gift unprompted- a pair of *elytra wings* of all things," Phil said, smiling back at the memory. "That was also the day we told the rest of the server about the whole other universe thing."

"I started visiting Dream less and less, since the others wanted to spend more time with Dream too," Eret nodded. "We found Charlie earlier than the original timeline- and soon Michael showed up too. And when Dream was finally released from prison, he announced that the End was no longer off limits and that 'canon' deaths were no longer a thing- he changed it to infinite respawns. I took the exam- after studying for about 8 or 9 months- and passed. It was apparently a huge deal in their universe- since most people take at least a year to finish studying. But anyway- I decided that we'd go home on the 16th of June- roughly a year after we'd first woken up there."

"We finished up a few things, then had a goodbye party the day before we were meant to leave. There was nothing left for us to do there- so we all gathered into the Community House, and XD appeared. And after saying our goodbyes, we made our way back home," Phil finished.

"Just before waking up though, I saw another version of me," Eret said, glancing at Phil for a second. "...It turns out that this entire thing happened because of the canonical Eret. He... actually saw glimpses of the future since he was related to Herobrine. He wanted to stop the bad things from happening on the Dream SMP, but he wasn't sure if he'd only make things worse- because he didn't have the *entire* picture, just parts of it. He also had the ability to warp reality or something- and started searching through alternate universes for a solution. Eventually he found *our* universe- where

everyone is friends. He brought me over to his world so that I could 'hopefully teach everyone to be friends'. Phil was closest to me- so he came along," Eret said apologetically to Phil and Kristin.

"Then the canon Eret wiped his own memories after setting up the code- so he would act natural until I showed up. I asked him if we'd ever see each other again, but he wasn't sure. He said '*Just because the Watchers didn't interfere this time, doesn't mean they'll allow it a second time*'... or something. And the rest is... well y'know."

After a moment of awkward silence, Bad muttered, "Give those two muffins a hug from us."

With that, the group of friends tackled Phil and Eret into a warm, tight hug.

"Welcome home," some laughed, some cried and everything in between.

"It's good to be back," Eret smiled. "I've missed you all."

* * * * *

"You know..." Eret started, looking lost in thought, "...what the hell are we actually supposed to tell the police?"

The adrenaline and excitement had died down and now they were simply catching up with the others' side of things. Tommy *had* asked them if they were still able to use their inventories or anything else, but they explained how it was only their souls that got transported into the canon bodies. And that now they were back in their original bodies- so they had no special powers or anything. It *was* slightly disappointing, as Eret had explained everything he'd learnt was pretty much useless now that he's in the real world, but it was expected.

After the two never returned from the airport, the others had started panicking, especially after they never replied to any phone calls and the 'find my phone' wasn't working somehow. Kristin reported them as missing to the police, and the other content creators had helped spread the news so that hopefully the two would eventually be found. Elaina had searched Eret's room multiple times, but never found anything out of the ordinary or suspicious, until one day she suddenly found that the living room was a mess- even though nobody should've been there since the last time she went in there.

"Oh right- fuck!" Wilbur exclaimed. "You've both been reported as missing for almost two weeks now!"

"There's no way you guys can tell them the truth about where you've been either, they'd think you've gone insane!" Fundy said, panicked, while the others nodded in agreement.

They all began to panic and worry- even more so when Niki added in, "You're both trending on Twitter! Someone took a photo of you guys at the airport-"

"Wait, *what*?!"

"It's true, it's already got more than a hundred thousand likes," Jack said, horrified. "They've even got the car's plate in the picture. What if the police track the car to your house?!"

Phil grimaced and tensed up. He looked directly at Eret. "...What if we say we got amnesia and forgot everything from the last two weeks?"

"*What*?!?"

"Oh c'mon, Eret and I have done more than enough lore to act this out!"

Eret couldn't help himself and laughed despite the growing anxiety in his stomach, and then nodded slowly. "I mean, I guess-? We could go with that if there's no other ideas-"

"Surely you guys are joking??" Tommy spluttered.

"What, are we supposed to admit that we were in another world and got these awesome combat skills after fighting in a war and training against zombies?" Eret said dryly. "There's no way we can tell the truth- what better ideas do you guys have?"

"C'mon guys- take this seriously! What are we actually meant to do-" Wilbur started, before suddenly being cut off by Dream who had started coughing really loudly. They looked at him worriedly, before his head suddenly sprung up and stared into the camera directly.

His eyes were *glowing* unnaturally green.

"-~~What is this?~~ Dream cleared his throat, and then suddenly glanced around his surroundings. He seemed to be staring at the screen in surprise, before saying clearly, "Eret! It's me- Dream from the SMP!"

"What-"

The door behind Dream suddenly burst open as Sapnap rushed into the room and shook Dream by his collar. "Where the hell is my Dream? What did you do?!"

"Sapnap, is that you?" the canon Dream said instead, pointing at the computer screen, "You were in this box just a minute ago- how'd you get here?"

"What are you doing here Dream?" Eret said after a moment. "*How* are you here?"

"Eret- the other Eret- helped me along with XD and Drista," he said quickly, and Sapnap finally let go of him in surprise. "Your Dream should be on my side getting a tour of the SMP right now. Anyway- the Watchers did some coding so that I could come over here- it turns out that the Watchers don't mind what you've done after all! After you and Phil went home, XD and Eret were summoned by the Watchers. Apparently they found the entire story *interesting*- and wanted to 'keep watching' *your* story as well as ours."

"I'm here for a few reasons," he explained, his face far too close to the camera than necessary- though Sapnap still seemed to be in shock and didn't explain to him how cameras worked- "One of which was to give you guys their gift. They've already coded everything- me being here is just to explain things before you guys are taken by surprise. Anyway- the other is to tell you that XD and Eret have done some stuff to your world's code- as well as most of the population- so there should be no records of

you two going missing. And as far as everyone knows (other than the people here), you two were never gone."

"Wait- what about Elaina?!" Eret panicked. "Does she know I went missing?"

"Yeah, she does," Dream nodded. "The other Eret told XD to leave her out of the memory loss thing."

"Okay... but what's the gift from the Watchers?" Phil asked, confused.

"You'll see soon enough," Dream grinned, before his eyes seemed to glow even brighter before slowly returning to their original colour again. "Thanks again for saving our world, Eret, Phil. But this isn't goodbye- we'll be able to see each other again soon!"

"How?!" Eret's eyes widened, and he suddenly stood up, desperate. *I'll be able to see everyone again?*

But the canon Dream was gone, and Dream blinked, before saying "Wha- I'm back already?"

"Are you okay?" Sapnap asked worriedly, handing him a bottle of water.

"Ah, yeah- I'm fine," he said. "What time is it? I was in the SMP for almost two hours-"

"Two *hours*?! It's barely been a few minutes!" Tubbo said, checking his watch.

"...Well, at least we don't have to deal with the police or the fans anymore..." Wilbur said, looking at Eret, who was still in shock, and then Phil, who nodded before sighing.

Chapter End Notes

Had fun writing that first part :D

The ending of this story is gonna be kinda unrealistic, but it makes me happy so I'm gonna write what I want lmao. I hope you guys will like it somewhat! You can guess what the 'Watchers' gifts' are, since I'm kinda curious to see what you guys think it'd be, but I'm not gonna confirm or spoil anything if anyone gets it right hahaha

I'm quite sure that there is only two chapters left- unless I end up writing too much and have to split something up again xD

So yeah! See you guys later <33

18. life keeps moving on (pt. 1)

Chapter Summary

He closed his eyes. He could feel the sudden panic attack coming, but before it happened- he gulped and the rapid pounding in his chest was gone.

Instead, he felt a strange, but familiar warmth that grew and grew and grew and *grew*-

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"Eret?! What the *fuck* are you doing up there?!" Tommy shouted suddenly, flustered- snapping Eret out of his daydream. He stared down at the blonde-haired boy from up above on the tall oak tree.

"Nothing? I'm just hanging out with Phil," he answered, confused.

* * * * *

He had explained the entire story to Elaina after she arrived in the UK- and the others had confirmed to her that the canon Dream also showed up in real life in Dream's body. They decided to stay in the UK for a while longer, and spent most of the time either with Phil and the others, or on dates together.

The group of friends had gone to a park to have a picnic that day. Eret had mentioned at some point that he missed all the nature and vast fields of nothing but grass that he'd grown used to in the other universe- and the others took it as a challenge to get him to the closest park as quickly as possible. That was why that morning, Elaina woke him up telling him to hurry up and eat breakfast before setting off with everyone else (It had been a *year* since he'd eaten proper toast- can you *imagine*?!)

After walking and talking with his friends for a good while, they had their picnic and continued to spend the day simply hanging out and enjoying each others' presence. The younger boys had brought a football which they kicked around for a while- and after some time, Phil and Eret decided they wanted to walk some more. The others seemed exhausted after having followed along the entire morning, so they slipped off quietly so that the others could take a rest.

It didn't take long for them to fall into old habits and challenge each other to see who could climb the tallest tree they found in the park. They climbed it with relative ease, and Eret never felt more alive at that moment. Feeling the rush of adrenaline, the refreshing summer wind, the two of them could not help grinning from ear to ear while bickering and trying to one-up each other. Eventually they stopped climbing further and sat on the branches, reminiscing about the other world, wondering how things were going over there.

And that was when Tommy ran past, barely noticing them until he caught sight of Eret's leg from the corner of his eye.

* * * * *

"What- *Phil's* up there too?!"

Phil poked his head from behind the trunk and nodded at Tommy, who looked like he was about to pass out. Instead he pulled out his phone and called someone, grumbling about how he'd found "the two idiots up a tree" and some terrible directions on where they were.

He turned back to look at them two. "Can you two come down already? What the fuck were you guys thinking?!"

"Mate, relax! Why are you so serious right now?" Phil called from up above, getting up from the branch he'd been sitting on. "We're just climbing a tree!"

"Maybe because the two of you are *literally more than five metres off the ground?!'*" the teenager yelled, getting increasingly loud. "It's fucking dangerous-"

"Nah, we do this all the time!" Eret answered, though he also followed suit and climbed down, before jumping to the ground from the lowest branch. He could see a group of people running in their direction not too far away. "And besides, I've got Phil-"

"How does that help?!"

"He'd catch me if I actually fell!" Eret said, stopping himself from rolling his eyes. The group caught up to them at that point, and Kristin gasped when she saw Phil so high up from the ground.

"How would he catch you when you're both up there?!" Tommy continued to yell, worried and clearly confused.

"Oh c'mon- you know he's got w-" Eret started, as everyone watched Phil jump down from the tree. However, the way he landed was *all wrong*.

"Phil!"

They ran over to him, though Phil just brushed their worries off despite him being slightly surprised. "I'm fine guys- it's just a sprained ankle-"

"Just a sprained ankle?! You should be glad that's all- what if it were worse?!" Wilbur panicked, while Kristin and Technoblade tried to help him up from the grass.

"Were you about to say Phil's got wings?" Tommy said weakly, turning to look at Eret who simply blinked.

"I uh- wait," he frowned. "I- I forgot. I thought it'd be fine-"

"Well you definitely weren't thinking straight! How could've you thought it'd be okay to climb so high-"

"Phil had wings over there! And there's no way we would die from fall damage so easily when we had potions, golden apples or totems- or even Phil around. He'd always catch us before we got hurt!"

"And why did you guys leave in the first place?!" Elaina joined in, "Do you have any idea how worried and scared all of us were when you both suddenly disappeared?! For the *second time?!'*"

Phil and Eret exchanged guilty looks and then looked back at their friends. "Sorry," Phil breathed, a little shaken up after the fall. "You guys looked tired so we continued our walk by ourselves-"

"Well after today, I don't think we're going to leave you two alone for quite some time," Kristin said quietly, though everyone hummed and nodded in agreement.

"I think that's enough chaos for today, how about we head home now?" Wilbur sighed, and everyone agreed.

"Shit- who's got our stuff?!" Tommy suddenly realised, glancing at everyone's hands. "We left our stuff at our spot!"

"I'll go back and grab them," Tubbo sighed, turning away and yelling "Meet you guys at the car park!" before running off.

"...Fuck, I forgot how much a sprained ankle sucks," Phil muttered under his breath after a moment.

"What? How do you even-"

"Having healing and regeneration potions tends to make you lose your inhibitions," Phil said, with a wry expression. "Even if we got injured, it'd be fixed in an instant most of the time. So risky things had less consequences- just the disgusting taste that comes with potions-" he paused, grinning at Eret, "though Eret managed to change even that before leaving the other universe."

"Bruhhh. You guys seriously need to relearn what things are considered safe and dangerous in our world," Techno muttered. "Now do you think you can walk if I support you, or do you need me to carry you on my back?"

"I can walk!" Phil spluttered, and then protested even more when the others started calling him old and fragile.

* * * * *

"Hello?"

"Hey-" Eret hadn't even looked at the caller ID and was surprised to hear Dream's voice. "Are you busy right now Eret?"

"Nah, not really. What's up? Why're you calling me?"

"I just..." Dream hesitated. "I'm so sorry. For everything that happened in exile, and everything else-"

"Wha- Dream, what are you *talking* about? That literally wasn't you! You shouldn't apologise for something someone else did-"

"Yeah but I *wrote* him, didn't I?" he said desperately. "I made him like that. It's partly my fault for all the fucked up shit, for exile, for killing you twice-"

"No. Listen to me Dream- That was *definitely* not your fault. Why are you even- Look! If you're going to say that me killing Dream wasn't *my* fault, then *that* Dream killing *me* wasn't *your* fault!"

"It's not the same-"

"I'm not even going to listen to your reasoning," Eret sighed. "It wasn't *your* fault, alright? Why are you guys even *like* this?! Bad told me he felt guilty for creating the Egg- Tommy, for creating exile and that 'disc confrontation' event- Wilbur even tried to apologise for making lore on the server in the

first place! it's literally none of your fault, okay- how were we meant to know something like this would happen? *Could* happen?!"

"But still-" Dream started again.

"No," Eret huffed. "You don't need to feel guilty or anything for making your character that way. It wasn't your fault. I'll say it a million times Dream- I'm gonna send a message to everyone in the group chat after this since you guys clearly need to be told this- what happened *was not anyone's fault*. And besides, me and Phil are home. We're safe. That's what matters."

He paused, and didn't hear any response from Dream- though he could hear the other man's breathing so he assumed he was still listening. "I know that it's hard not to feel bad after hearing the shit we've gone through over there- but trust me when I say it isn't your fault. There's no way I would blame any of you for writing your characters, your storylines! And I know that Phil feels the same way. He said so when Wilbur tried to apologise."

He waited to see if Dream would reply. "...Fine," Dream said eventually, sounding like he'd been crying. "I'll... try to believe that."

"I'll keep telling you so if you forget," Eret said. "I swear- you're all idiots."

"Says the one who stayed in exile for a month when you could've gone to Techno's-" Dream said. Eret could imagine Dream rolling his eyes.

"HEY! I *said* that that was part of my plan-"

* * * * *

A few days had passed since Eret and Phil had returned from the other universe. So far, they hadn't gotten anything resembling a gift from the Watchers- and he sometimes wondered if the canon Dream appearing in the *real world* had just been a dream. But no police had come up to question him in the past few days while he was outside either- so it *must* have been real? Unless he'd dreamt the *entire trip* to the Dream SMP-

However, that doubt was quickly washed away with all his friends *constantly* checking up on him and asking if he needed help with getting used to living in this world again. More than a few contemplated flying to the UK. Also, Phil seemed to be on edge a lot of the time too. The two of them were always wondering when the so-called 'gift' would appear- and what it could possibly be.

But when Eret first noticed the slight shade of white in his irises, he assumed it was light reflecting off them and thought nothing of it.

So one night, almost a week after Phil and Eret returned, the group of friends were huddled on a couch and on the floor as Tubbo was flicking through Netflix looking for something to watch. That was when out of nowhere, Phil began to yelp about sudden back pain.

"What even happened?" Ranboo asked, as the others moved out of the way to give Phil some more space on the sofa. Kristin told Phil to lie down on his stomach.

Eret stood at the side, also panicking- when he squinted his eyes at the black smudge on the ground and bent down, thinking it was either an insect or a piece of rubbish. But instead, he picked up the object shakily, before asking Kristin to roll up Phil's shirt.

"What? Why-"

"I... have a feeling I know what the gift is now," Eret said weakly.

She rolled up Phil's shirt in confusion- and *everyone* gasped in shock when they saw the two small limbs sprouting out of his back.

"What the fu-" Tommy gasped, before tripping on the carpet and falling onto the floor.

"Are those actual *wings*?!" Tubbo choked, causing Phil to panic.

"What- am I *growing wings*?! What the fuck's happening?!" he said, alarmed, trying to glance over his shoulders. "How am I supposed to go outside now?! How will I work?!?"

"You work from home!" Kristin stammered, though she was still in shock.

As everyone fussed over Phil, panicking at the sight of bloody wings sprouting from his back, Eret stood at the back in silence. He took out his phone, and pressed on the camera, before staring at his own reflection on the screen.

The familiar *white eyes* he'd grown used to stared back at him.

He closed his eyes. He could feel the sudden panic attack coming, but before it happened- he gulped and the rapid pounding in his chest was gone.

Instead, he felt a strange, but *familiar* warmth that grew and grew and grew and *grew*-

Until he felt a tug from somewhere- pulling his heart, his chest, his *entire self*- and he let himself go, let himself be pulled forward into a connection to the universe, and he saw the twinkling familiar 1s and 0s that resembled the stars.

He opened his eyes and looked up from his phone in his hand.

DreamXD was floating mere inches off the coffee table in Phil's living room.

Chapter End Notes

Welp, it's official! I'll have two more chapters to release until I'm completed: a part two of 'chapter 18' and then an epilogue :D

Also, I GOT FANART OF MY FIC!!! [Fanart by @angelau20021122 on Twitter!](#) Go check it out and leave a like, their art is actually so awesome <333

I loved it so much that it's now my phone's wallpaper for the foreseeable future lol!

And now, I just need to say some stuff about Wilbur's final stream- if you haven't seen it yet and don't want to be spoiled, don't read the next chunk!! Just keep scrolling haha.

The finale was very surprising haha- and I feel very conflicting thoughts towards it. But anyway, the reason I want to bring it up is that it seems like my ending won't be too unrealistic to canon after all lmao! Since the c!DSMP members are somehow able to move from the game to the real life world with how Wilbur went to Utah xDD

So yeah! The gift from the Watchers will have them be able to move across universes- and more.
You'll find out the rest next chapter :)

Thanks for reading everyone! I hope you will all enjoy the ending of this fic :)

18. life keeps moving on (pt. 2)

Chapter Summary

"How can you trust me that much?!"

Without hesitation, XD said, **"Because it's you."**

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"It's good to finally see you again, Eret," XD greeted.

"What the- what are you doing here?!" Eret gasped, catching his breath as he glanced around. The others were *frozen* and greyed out, like the times when XD would visit him back in the SMP at the start.

"It turns out, the connection between an admin and a god won't break that easily," XD said, and Eret could hear the smile behind his mask. **"Not anymore, anyway. I'll be able to communicate with you wherever you are- even if it's in *another universe*."**

"Is this-" he gestured vaguely, "all of this- the 'gift' from the Watchers then?"

"Yeah," the god nodded. **"And there's more. First- here."**

The god held up a hand, and all of a sudden, a communicator appeared in his hand. He handed it to Eret, who stared at it in surprise. **"A new button has been added to it- see this? That lets you- not just your soul, it's your entire body this time- teleport into our universe. It's already set to the server you created for the exam. You know the port for Dream's world, right?"** Eret gaped at the god, until he realised he needed to respond, and nodded. **"So yeah- you'll be able to come visit if you want. As well as that, you can go explore single-player worlds if you'd like-"**

"Wait, then I'd be able to use my inventory in my world too?" Eret asked, his jaw dropping as he realised just exactly what he could do with the communicator in the real world. *And I can bring the things from Minecraft to my world?*

"Yes," DreamXD nodded. **"That's their gift to you."**

"Holy shit- then what about Phil? Is he also getting one?"

"Yes he is- as well as the rest of your friends from 'the Dream SMP'. They'll all be able to visit our universe too- but only *you* can 'whitelist' people to come to our universe," the god explained while watching the increasingly stunned expression on Eret's face. **"Of course, the Watchers would have to approve anyone you whitelist- but anyone you trust and whitelist will then receive a communicator too. And you can un-whitelist at any time."**

Am I dreaming?! Eret thought to himself, still speechless and unmoving. This is insane- how the fuck can this be real?

"**Congratulations Eret,**" XD said, when Eret didn't react. He leant closer towards Eret's face. "**You've become the *first admin of your universe.***"

"Wait, no- you guys are actually serious?! This is a terrible idea- *how* can *I* have power over 'whitelisting' people and such? It's not something anyone should have!" Eret protested, suddenly snapping out of it. "And it'll probably bring more trouble than it's worth- if other people find out about all this stuff, they'll go crazy! Not everyone is like me, y'know?! Someone might- I don't know, attempt to kidnap me or something to force me to whitelist someone! And these bad people might try to take over your universe or something- or what if I go insane with these powers?!"

But to Eret's surprise, the god simply snorted and replied, "**The Watchers can force anyone back to your universe, or take away the communicator from them at any time- so you don't need to worry too much about that. And it's fine- you won't become obsessed with control or power or anything like Dream had.**"

"How can you trust me that much?!"

Without hesitation, XD said, "**Because it's you.**"

"That doesn't answer anything," Eret said frustratedly, pinching the bridge between his nose. "Fine. What will happen if other people from my world become admins? Will they also be able to whitelist people?"

"**No, that part of the gift is specific to you,**" DreamXD said, shaking his head. "**But you'll be able to pass it on to someone else eventually. The Watchers would have to approve of your successor though, so you don't need to worry about picking someone who becomes corrupt or something like that either.**"

"You realise that this is going to change *everything* in my world, right?!" Eret said, still in disbelief. "I can't even believe this is happening- what on earth are the Watchers thinking?! How can I trust them- I thought you barely knew anything about them!"

"**I'm talked about a lot amongst the gods right now because of this whole situation and because I'm the only god that the Watchers have interacted with *positively* for a long time- but that doesn't mean I know *everything* that they're thinking or have planned,**" XD frowned. "**It's too late for us to do anything about it anyway- the Watchers have already started to watch your universe. It'll be fine anyways- or I hope so at least.**"

"I hope so too," Eret muttered while looking at the communicator in his hands, before looking back up at the god.

"**As well as whitelisting people from your universe to come to ours, you can whitelist people from *our* universe to go to yours,**" XD added, and Eret looked back up immediately. "**But the process is slightly different- you need to be in the other universe to whitelist them- and see them in person.**"

He grinned slightly. "That'll be fun." *I can already see their reactions to everything over here.*

"**There's one last thing I need to tell you about,**" XD said. "**It's been a few days since Dream told you about the gifts, right? It took some time because the Watchers had to fix something about the time dilation first. So you know how the other Eret made it so that two weeks in your universe is about a year in our universe? Well now the Watchers have changed it so that the**

time spent in either world is the same. If you spend a day there and then come back, the exact same amount of time will have passed."

"I see... I guess that's good?" *Since it means that if I visit the SMP in the future, they won't have suddenly aged a lot of years.*

"Oh and- I'll be able to come to you whenever I want, but if *you* need me, you can send me a message on the communicator," DreamXD told him. **"That's... everything I had to let you know, I think. If you don't have any other questions, I'll be heading back- so you can tell the news to your friends yourself."**

"Uhm... no, not right now anyway," Eret sighed. "I'll ask you if I think of something later."

"I'll see you around then, Eret."

"Yeah... see you later, XD," Eret gave him a small smile before the god suddenly disappeared and as he felt time begin to flow again.

"Wait, what am I supposed to do if I ever get badly injured?! I won't be able to go to a hospital- they'll get scientists to cut me up or something-" Eret heard Phil panic, as everyone began to move again, after being frozen.

He took a deep breath before typing something into his communicator and stepping into Phil's view. He had no idea if this was going to work- it would be really awkward if it didn't- but he pressed enter, and the next moment, a couple small and round glass bottles filled with a pink-ish bubbly liquid popped into existence from thin air. He caught them as they fell into his arms.

Eret gave Phil a tired, weak grin as Phil stared at him stunned, while the others began to splutter and gasp.

"I don't think we'll need doctors when we've got these," Eret laughed dizzily, almost slipping onto the floor before someone caught him.

"What just happened?! How did you do that-" Wilbur demanded.

"Apparently I just became the first admin to our universe," Eret said, promptly before passing out.

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He woke up about an hour or so later. By then, the others had already called everyone on their Discord server again and told them what had happened. It didn't take much convincing this time- not when *everyone* found a strange device close by.

Some found them in their pockets, some on their desktops- but no matter where they found them, they all realised that it was identical to the image of a communicator that Eret had drawn and posted on their server a day or so after returning (Eret and Phil had spent some time writing down everything that they thought was worth mentioning about their trip and posted it into their server just in case).

Phil was still lying on the sofa face down with the other guys around him- the remote control and Netflix left to the side, forgotten- but the wings on his back seemed to have grown exponentially since the last time Eret saw him. Eret was shocked to see how large they'd grown already when he walked into the room.

"You're awake! How're you feeling mate?" Phil asked, perking up slightly when he noticed Eret enter the living room. "Why'd you pass out?..."

"I'm alright," Eret answered. "I think I fainted because my powers were unavailable for a while- and then I used too much of it too soon. Like how Dream couldn't use too many commands for a while after having them blocked for so long in the prison? I'll probably be fine after some rest though." He noticed at that moment that Tommy was calling their friends across the world on Discord with his phone.

"So what happened?" Techno asked him. "After you fainted, Phil noticed one of these 'communicator' things in Wilbur's pocket- and then all of us found one too. With Phil's instructions, we managed to use the chat and inventory functions- but how is this even possible? And explain that last thing you said before passing out!"

"Ah... well- this is the Watchers' gift," Eret mumbled. "Did you guys see the new button?"

"Yeah, I've never seen it on anyone's communicator before," Phil said, "I didn't want to risk anything so nobody pressed it yet. Do you know what it does?"

"Yeah," Eret nodded slowly. "It... teleports us into their universe. Into Minecraft."

"*What?!*" Everyone seemed to yell at the same time.

"It's not just us who have communicators though- well, for now we are- but anyone I 'whitelist' will also get one and be able to switch universes," Eret explained, sighing a bit since he still had a slight headache. "And as well as that, I'm able to use my admin abilities. So yeah... that's how I'm the first admin of our universe."

"Damn, am I dreaming or something?! Ranboo, pinch me-" Tubbo exclaimed, but Ranboo was still too dazed to even react to Tubbo's request.

"XD told me that it's already set to the server I made for the exam- but once there, we'll be able to leave to single-player worlds or even visit the Dream SMP. It's the same port we've got in game," Eret continued. "Also, the time dilation thing was changed so that now no matter which universe you're in, the same amount of time is passing."

"What are we waiting for?!" Tommy said, jumping up excitedly. "I've *got* to meet my other self-"

"Mate- at least buy an axe and put it in your inventory before we go-" Phil said, laughing. "It'd save so much time- and do you *know* how painful punching a tree is?!"

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In the end, the SMP members all agreed not to go to the other universe until they could all go at the same time- and at least until after they'd all made some preparations. Because as exciting as entering another universe based on a video game sounded, Eret and Phil quickly pointed out that most of them wouldn't be able to fight the hordes of zombies and monsters that would appear in the night. Even

though they would all technically have infinite lives on Eret's server, dying was still a traumatic experience that they wanted to avoid.

Over the next few days, they filled their inventories with various items they thought would be useful in the first few days- such as tents and fire starters, axes and bags of coal, cans of food and bottles of water- until finally, they all cleared their schedules for one weekend.

By then, Phil had grown out his wings entirely. However, he hadn't gone outside his house *once*, and now he looked like the most excited out of everyone to go to the other universe. *He looks like he wants to fly so badly*, Eret thought, also starting to get excited to show everyone the other universe.

"Right- you all ready?" he said, looking at his friends who were once again gathered in Phil's living room. Most of them nodded, Tubbo gave a thumbs up. Elaina and Kristin were coming along too- they were the first ones he'd whitelisted.

Eret picked up Elaina's hand and held it tightly, then nodded at everyone else in the room. Tommy sent the message on the Discord server for everyone to head out.

"Then, I'll see you all on the other side!" Eret said while grinning, before hitting enter.

Chapter End Notes

So uh, first of all, I lied. I ended up writing an extra chapter, from c!Eret's POV about what happened after cc!Eret went home. I was going to put it in the extras (3rd fic of the eret series) but in the end I thought it was kinda important and I didn't want anyone to miss it, so now there's an extra chapter for this fic! That's the next chapter :)

SO- there'll be one final chapter of this fic. The epilogue! It'll most likely be the longest chapter, so look forward to whenever that's out! :D

Enjoy the next chapter from c!Eret's POV! <33 Happy reading hahah!

extra: c!eret's pov

Chapter Summary

"We've been watching you for a very long time," one of the Watchers said eventually, though Eret could not tell for the life of him where the sound was coming from. It echoed in the room, causing it to sound like every other Watcher was saying it too.

"From the very start, in fact," a different voice added on.

Chapter Notes

TW: heavy suicidal thoughts, self-harm!!!!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"-ret? Y—ight?"

He groaned and squeezed his eyes, the ringing noise in his ears becoming increasingly loud. He rubbed his temple futilely, then opened his eyes slowly.

He was sitting on a chair in an average sized room, with a crowd of people around him- and his head had been leaning on someone's shoulder. He sat up a bit, looked over at the man's face- it was Phil- and blinked again.

He looked at his hand and curled into a fist, then released it again. He could control his own body again.

He opened his mouth. "I'm back."

The others looked at each other, all looking unsure of what to say or do. Of course. They didn't know if he- the original Eret- remembered anything. He gave them a tired smile. "I remember everything, you know."

"Then-"

"I agree with everything the other Eret said and did," he said. "I was the one who brought him over here, after all."

Phil woke up shortly after he did- and he explained everything to the others. How he'd known the future since ages ago, and how he used his Herobrine-related powers to bring the other Eret over. The others looked incredibly relieved to know that they wouldn't have to worry about the original Eret or Phil destroying what the other Eret and Phil had fixed.

It had been a bit disorienting at first, getting used to moving and controlling his own body again- but everyone else was always around to help.

And a few days later, he found himself suddenly getting that familiar feeling of teleporting- as if he were falling through dimensions, or in-and-out of existence- and he blinked, and was fine.

Or he hoped he would be, anyway.

He blinked again, in disbelief. He noticed a small movement beside him, and saw XD to his side in surprise. He looked around his surroundings then, taking in the massive hall or theatre- and at the crowd of flickering figures shrouded in darkness sitting at the top.

Where the fuck am I?!

Even DreamXD seemed to be frozen in shock. But before Eret could ask XD what was going on, the god suddenly seemed to realise who the strangers were.

"I- To what do we owe the pleasure of meeting the great Watchers?" XD said, a little flustered. But he quickly composed himself and tried to hide his panic.

Eret's eyes widened, and he looked back at the figures who sat high up in the air. He couldn't make out any of their facial features, no matter how much he squinted or stared- they somehow seemed to be *flickering*, always changing shape and never staying the same. He didn't have any idea what to say, so he let XD do the talking.

"Why have you summoned us? The Watchers never interact with the gods or players- not like this- you've only ever observed before," said XD.

"We've been watching you for a very long time," one of the Watchers said eventually, though Eret could not tell for the life of him where the sound was coming from. It echoed in the room, causing it to sound like every other Watcher was saying it too.

"From the very start, in fact," a different voice added on.

They didn't stop us from anything though, Eret realised. Does that mean they're not angry about what we've done?

"We found your story very... interesting," the first one said. **"We watched those two from the other universe change ours."**

"And it has been the most interesting story we've seen in years."

"So we have a gift for you all. Including those from the other universe."

"So you're... not angry at us for messing with alternate universes?" the god asked hesitantly.

"No," one laughed, and the others joined in laughing too. It felt eerie but there was nowhere to run or hide, so Eret just stood his ground with a clenched fist. **"No, we enjoyed watching it a lot."**

And then, the Watchers proceeded to explain the gifts they would give- and what they needed Eret and XD to do once they returned.

"And for your side," one said, **"we will give you a new server."**

"What?" Eret said, shocked.

He had expected that when the other universe's Eret- Alistair- returned home, he would no longer be an admin or connected to DreamXD anymore. After all, *he* hadn't been the one to study or pass the final exam- that had been the other him. So when he woke up in control of his own body again, he was surprised to hear from the god that he was still an admin.

"I changed the code inside your *body*, remember?" the god had said. **"I linked the universe to your heart, not the soul. So that means- now *you're* the admin."**

"What?! But the other me did all the work-"

"I know, but it's not like I can connect with someone from another universe anyway," XD had sighed. **"I can't- seem to find him. I can't *see* him, or feel him anywhere- usually I'd know exactly where my admins are. But now- all I find is... *you*. And Dream."**

"... I see."

That had been the end of the conversation. It didn't really change much to Eret's daily life, since he rarely needed to use his admin powers. He visited the server the other him had created *once*, just to check it out. He had to admit, it was a beautiful world.

It doesn't belong to me, he had thought however. *I didn't create this world.*

And after the Watchers explained how they would create a way for XD to regain connection with the other Eret, he expected he wouldn't be an admin anymore.

But now...

"The server that Eret- the alternate Eret- created will be connected to him once our universes collide," one Watcher said. **"So we will allow you to create a new server for yourself- since you are also an admin."**

"Th-Thank you," he stammered, quite surprised. *But I don't particularly need a server when I've already got my home on Dream's world...*

Meanwhile, XD was muttering quietly to himself, seemingly stunned from the news. **"I'll have three admins. Three servers to look over from now on..."**

"Three, technically, but we will connect two of them," the same Watcher cut in. He somehow seemed to be reading Eret's mind- because he then continued on, saying **"The new server will be connected to Dream's with a portal- so everyone will be able to move back and forth between the two easily. We will also allow you to keep the items in your inventories no matter which one you're in."**

Eret was speechless hearing that. It was something that was *impossible* to do in their world- something people often wished for, but quickly learnt was a pointless daydream. Every player learned that quickly when they were young- that whenever they moved servers, they would lose their items from that world until they returned.

Nobody was able to take items from one world and bring it to another.

But the Watchers had just given him and his friends that ability. He felt like he was dreaming- and then he suddenly realised that the Watchers were still talking. He'd missed out on a bit of what they were saying, but he caught the end of the sentence.

"-it is time for you to move onto the next chapter of this server- the next chapter of this entire universe."

Their echoing voices around the room somehow seemed even louder then, and Eret felt like their words permeated his skin and bones.

"And remember- we will always be watching."

He tried to look at the Watchers faces one last time, but still could not make out anything in their disfigured looks. He suddenly became nauseous and everything was spinning-

"While we may not be the best of listeners, we certainly do enjoy everything you do."

Eret tried to turn and look at XD, but his neck felt stiff and it somehow took a lot of effort to even move. The god seemed to be slightly better than him, but he could tell that DreamXD also seemed nervous about what was happening. The god's fist was clenched tightly.

"Be wary of the things to come, and enjoy your time together," the Watchers said together ominously, all at once- their disembodied voices overlapping each other and bouncing off the walls as Eret's consciousness slowly faded.

"Good luck- to you players, admins and gods alike. We look forward to watching you all."

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Eret woke up back on the Dream SMP- where the others had been anxiously waiting for his return. They told him that he had suddenly left the server out of nowhere earlier that day. He explained everything that happened to them- and XD showed up to confirm it, as well as check in that his admin was alright.

They were ecstatic, to hear that soon they would be able to meet the other Eret and Phil again someday- as well as the other versions of *themselves* too.

It took Eret a few more days before he had his server set up- but once it was created, a strange portal appeared out of thin air on both his world and Dream's- and true to the Watchers' words, anything he kept in one world's inventory, would be saved and brought over to the other.

XD had told him that it would still be a while until their universe would collide with the other Eret's- so they had some time to kill. The Watchers had instructed them to send a messenger to the other universe to tell their alternate selves about the gifts- so they got that over with first- sending Dream over despite his hesitation.

"Wouldn't it be better for you to go, Eret? You're the one who made all this possible- or even Phil" Dream had said, but Eret insisted that it couldn't be them.

"Nah, it'd be better for the alternate Eret and Phil to hear the news together from you- if me or Phil goes to their world, then the other version of ourselves will be back here, and unable to hear about the news," he had explained- and so, Dream reluctantly switched universes for a while. He seemed

excited enough when he returned though, talking about the things he'd seen in the few minutes he spent in the other universe.

But while he was gone, everyone else showed 'the alternate Dream that woke up in the admin's body' around the world. *This* Dream had been speechless at first, and he was clearly relieved to hear that he would go home quite soon- but he soon began to warm up to everyone as they visited the landmarks of the server. The younger boys told him stories of what the alternate Eret and Phil did- "This is where Eret gave a speech on the day of the election results!" Fundy pointed as Dream nodded.

"Is there anywhere else you'd like to see before this sightseeing trip ends?" Tubbo asked, and Dream thought about it for a few moments.

"I was wondering... if you could show me Logstedshire?"

"What?" Eret suddenly said, surprised. "Why would you want to see there?" *Eret didn't exactly leave it in the prettiest picture... It'd probably traumatise this Dream if he saw that scene.*

"Please," he insisted, biting his lip slightly and clenching his fist. "I need to see it."

The other guys looked at each other hesitantly. Other than he and Phil, none of the other ones knew how the other Eret had left the area. "I mean, we *could* go, but it's a long distance away, big man," Tommy said first. "You might be transported home while we're on the way there."

"Phil can fly, can't he?" he said, looking at Phil, then back at Eret. "Or Eret could teleport us with his admin abilities?"

"I... don't think it's a good idea to go to Logstedshire," Phil murmured. "It's... not great."

"That's even more reason for me to see it then," Dream said, more determined than ever it seemed. "I- I need to know how bad it was for Eret. So I can help him."

"...Fine," Eret sighed. "But I don't think all of us should go."

"Why not?" Niki asked, frowning.

"I don't think I can teleport us all without passing out," he admitted. "I'm still getting used to using admin powers- I can't use them as well as the other Eret did yet... But also because it'd probably traumatise someone."

The others turned pale, but they, like Dream, seemed more set on going. "I'm going," Tubbo said firmly. "If you can't bring me, I'll walk there myself."

Eret huffed, clearly defeated, and nodded. "Fine, let's get going. I'll try to teleport us all." *It's been quite some time since Eret left the place- hopefully nature will have taken its course and make things less... graphic.*

Thankfully, the trip was not too bad. He could feel the onset of a headache, but at least he hadn't passed out straight away.

He could hear the others gasping in horror though, and saw Dream dig his fingers so deep into his palm, that there would definitely be marks there later. He looked at the direction they were staring at- and saw the tower.

The unmoved, unbroken tower stared back at them, towering above them menacingly. His stomach involuntarily felt queasy when he stared at the highest point where the other Eret had stood- he could still remember the things nobody else knew about, after all.

Eret stared down at the mess he'd made- the ruins and rubble of a house he once stayed in, the explosion marks everywhere, the charred remains of trees and plants- and he realised, quite giddily, how small everything seemed from up here. How insignificant everything was.

He sat down on the ledge of the tall, cobblestone tower he'd built, with his feet dangling over nothing.

"Hah... Nothing," he murmured to nobody. "There's really nothing left. It's all gone."

It would be easy. It would be too easy to just... fall. To slip off the edge, to blame the wind, to just-

"I'm not," he said harshly, shutting his eyes tight, hugging his arms and subconsciously digging his nails deep into his skin. Not suicidal, he thought desperately, trying to convince himself.

He suddenly realised how cold it was up here, and how it was more difficult to breathe. He looked down at the bottom, and wondered, If I die, will I be able to go home? I might not need XD's help at all-

"What am I even thinking about..." he sighed, forcing himself to stand up. He felt slightly more dizzy suddenly, and he gritted his teeth together, trying to balance himself on the one-block wide tower. Even if I die, I still have one more canon life, he thought, a little annoyed.

"No, no, no, no- why the hell am I even having these thoughts?" he muttered, pulling out a bucket of water. Involuntarily, he wondered what would happen if he jumped down and the water suddenly became ice before he could land-

"Fuck," he breathed. "I need help. I need to go- I need to go before I actually-"

He slipped off the tower without waiting a moment longer, and landed with a splash in the ocean down below. He was relieved that physics did not exist in Minecraft- and that he was perfectly fine after diving into the sea. He had tested how far he could dive without damage long ago- and it seemed like MLG water buckets were a thing in this world after all.

He shuddered slightly, and then sneezed. He groaned, and waddled towards land while trying to pull off his now soaked shirt and coat.

Eret stared at the scene, praying that his efforts would delay Dream for a few days at least. He knew he still needed to do the finishing touches though- so he pulled out a knife, and took a deep breath before cutting his palm. Then, he scattered bits and pieces of bones and rotten flesh stained in his blood around the area to further make it look like he'd died.

If he had cut his palm a bit more deeper than necessary, that was for nobody but himself to know.

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He wasn't sure exactly when he became... suicidal. There, he said it. Or thought it, anyway.

Eret knew it had just been roleplay. Everyone still cared about him- they had messaged him every day for heaven's sake! And visited as often as they could! Dream's words and manipulation shouldn't have

gotten to him- so why was he having these thoughts and- self-harming?!

He leaned slightly closer to Foolish, who was on the other side of the bed. He could feel the other man's warmth, and that somehow made him feel more at peace- made him feel safe. He felt his breathing calm slightly.

Perhaps it was the loneliness. Despite 'talking' to everyone almost every day, he'd still been by himself for a few weeks- after Dream had banned visitors.

He knew that there was no way he could tell Phil about what he'd been thinking about while up on that tower- the man had already been freaking out when he'd first found the mess at Logstedshire. He'd just gotten Phil to calm down about him faking his death! He couldn't- he couldn't tell anyone.

He'd be fine. He was safe now. He'll deal with everything else another day.

Nobody knew that Eret had been able to hear Alistair's thoughts while they were in the same body. There was no reason to mention it either, so Eret had just let it be. But now that he was staring at the ruins of Logstedshire, he suddenly realised that maybe, it would be better to tell someone after all. Because although the other version of himself seemed to have healed eventually, seemed to stop having those haunting thoughts- he kept subconsciously pinching himself. The back of his hands, his arms, his neck-

I need to let someone from his world know. So that they can get him help.

The scene wasn't as bad as it had been months ago- flowers and plants of various kinds had taken over most of it, growing over the ruins- and the smell of blood and ash had long since dissipated. But the dark mahogany colour of blood remained on the few bits of bones they found half buried in the ground or the scattered pieces of Eret's coat, still trapped under some rocks- everything else had been washed away since.

Eret was sure their imagination could put together the missing pieces though.

He could see Dream hyperventilating so he shuffled closer to the man and put his hand on his shoulder. "He's... safe now."

"Yeah," Dream said quietly. "I know- but it's still..."

"He was going to do it, you know."

Dream looked at him stunned, speechless.

"He was going to jump," he said, repeating himself. "I just remembered. All of this was just meant to deceive Dream and buy some time- but he had *truly* thought about it for a moment when he was up there."

"How do you-"

"I could hear his thoughts when we were in the same body," Eret explained, watching the slow lulling tides of the sea. "He... stopped having those thoughts eventually, but he still has some self-destructive habits. And he never did tell anyone else about it- not even Phil."

"Fuck," Dream whispered, so quietly that Eret could barely hear it over the loud squawking noises from the seagulls passing by.

"Yeah," he agreed. "I'm telling you all this right now because someone has to know. Someone from his world has to know- so he can get help. So he can properly heal."

"Yes. Of course," the other murmured. "*God* this is so fucked up- what have I done?!"

"It wasn't your fault for writing your character."

"I *know* that-"

"There's no way Eret would blame anything about this on you guys. He doesn't even blame any of the guys over *here*," Eret said softly.

"So just promise me this," he said, turning around to face the alternate universe's Dream. "That *no matter what happens in the future*- even if you all move onto different paths, different chapters of your lives, different *stories*- you won't let any of your relationships become like the ones in the story you all wrote."

"I promise," Dream swore, his eyes burning with determination.

Eret smiled.

* * * * *

A few months had passed since the alternate universe's Dream's visit- but the time for the two universes to collide had finally come.

The Watchers had finally finished with doing whatever they had to do- and now Eret was waiting with some others for XD to return from the other universe. Supposedly. He wasn't sure if XD was truly in the other Eret's universe- or if he was just somewhere else in their one. Or what if the god ended up in *another* alternate universe?

But soon enough, the familiar green-robed god appeared out of thin air again. Eret stood up immediately. "How did it go then? Did you really meet him again?"

"**I did**," XD confirmed, and Eret could hear the smile behind his mask.

"That's good then," Eret exhaled.

"Do you know when they'll be coming then?" Tommy asked. "I can't wait to see the other Eret and Phil again..."

"It's going to be so weird though," Tubbo said. "Two of each of us- how are we supposed to tell each other apart?!"

"We'll figure something out," Wilbur laughed.

"So what do we do now?" George asked, looking at the god.

"**We wait**," he answered.

"**They'll be here soon.**"

A longer chapter than usual, but I didn't want to split it up so...

Anyway! Hope you guys enjoyed this chapter! It got a bit dark in the middle, but I wanted more angst. IDK if you guys understood it, but basically this whole chapter is c!Eret's POV, except for that italicised part in the middle about exile. That was cc!Eret's POV, but c!Eret could see and hear all that happening.

The reason why I didn't include that part about exile is cuz I only came up with the idea a few days ago- But I'm just gonna pretend I didn't mention it earlier because cc!Eret didn't want to think about it! And since this story is from his POV, we never heard about it until c!Eret's POV! I'm a genius :DDD

Also, some of the dialogue between the Watchers and c!Eret was taken from the altered End poem used in the last episode of Grian's EVO series. In EVO lore, Watchers can only communicate with players through riddles and rhymes, but in the End poem, they can talk normally (Also, the Watchers never met the players in person). But in my fic, c!Eret and XD are perhaps one of the first to meet the Watchers- and yeah, the Watchers can talk normally in person. Cuz I don't want to bother with rhymes lmaoooo

So yeah, like I said in the notes last chapter, there will be one last chapter out soon! It'll be the epilogue, and I think it'll be even longer than this chapter. It feels so weird to have this story come to an end- I kind of didn't want it to ever finish lol. But it had to, eventually- and I think I'm pretty happy with how it all turned out.

Thank you all so much for reading! I read the notes in the bookmarks too occasionally, and they make me really happy hahah :D See you all for the final chapter soon!

epilogue

Chapter Summary

Their plan was to stay in Eret's world for the first day and start setting up a town there, for whenever they went to the Minecraft universe- in their 'spawn chunks' so to say- and then visit the Dream SMP the next day.

"...Y'know, I can't believe the first ever entire Dream SMP meetup is still somehow in a video game..." someone muttered, as they split into smaller groups to explore the beautiful, sunshine-filled world that felt like it was created solely for them.

Chapter Notes

Final chapter of the story! It's finally here! Longest one too, it's about 6k words hehe. Hope yous enjoy, happy reading! See you at the end :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"-ret? Y—ight?"

He groaned and squeezed his eyes, the ringing noise in his ears becoming increasingly loud. He rubbed his temple, then he opened his eyes- but immediately began blinking at the blinding sunlight.

He was lying down on grass, with a tree overhead.

I feel like this has happened before, he thought to himself.

A person peered over him and he stared at the figure in front of him. It was Phil- with his *Kisuke Urahara cosplay*, *familiar green-and-white-striped bucket hat*, and his humongous pitch black wings that blocked out almost all of Eret's view of the sky.

He sat up and stared at the massive flower field in front of him, where all of the others were lying around too. Some were slowly stirring up from their sleep, while some snapped awake immediately and sprung up looking around frantically.

Phil held out a hand and pulled him up when Eret grabbed it. He could see Kristin shaking Wilbur awake, and a few others who had gotten up already too.

"We're really in another universe..." Tommy said, staring at the fields of flowers, the impossibly sized bees flying around, the scattered groups of animals in the distance.

The next thing Eret noticed- was that it *wasn't just him and Phil who were in their Minecraft skin's outfit*.

Tommy was wearing his signature red and white T-shirt- and Wilbur was in his yellow sweater and trench coat. He sighed in relief to see that while Wilbur's left arm *was* bandaged, it didn't seem to be bleeding. Eret quickly looked around to see what the other guys looked like- specifically, the ones that *weren't human*.

Fundy was the first one he noticed. He was already at the edge of a lake, staring at his own reflection in the clear water- at the two small ears on his head. One of them twitched.

"Fundy- *you're actually a furry?!"* Tommy screeched, who was also staring at Fundy like Eret was.

"Shut up!" Fundy yelled back immediately, as everyone turned to have a look at the fox-hybrid. He tried to hide his ears and tail in vain. "The first thing I'm doing when I get back is change my skin!"

"I think it might be too late to change that-" Eret laughed, remembering his conversation with the canon Dream. "I'm pretty sure that the stuff we do on Minecraft won't affect this universe anymore- meaning even if you change skin, you'll be stuck like this over here. You can try of course, but I'm like, 90% sure it won't work."

"You mean I'm going to be stuck as a cat in Minecraft forever?!" Antfrost suddenly yelled, though Fundy seemed to brighten up slightly when he noticed Ant.

"Oh god- oh god- I'm actually part enderman now, aren't I?!" Ranboo panicked, his tail swishing around as Tubbo poked him.

"Is it just what you look like though? Or are you actually an enderman-" Tubbo wondered. "Are you scared of water, Ranboo?"

"What? I don't *think* so..." Ranboo said, but everyone watched curiously as he dipped a hand into the lake that Fundy had been staring at. He immediately pulled back and hissed, making a sound that didn't sound *normal*. "...did I make that noise?" he said, after a moment of stunned silence.

"We're not going to stay like this in *our* world, are we?!" Puffy exclaimed, her fluffy sheep-like ear twitching nervously. The others froze, all unsure.

"Let's go back and check..." Eret said hastily after a second, and everyone quickly returned to their universe just as quickly as they had left it.

After the ones who had become hybrids of some sort in the other universe messaged that they were human again over here, they finally went back in. They wondered why it was only Phil and Eret who had changed even in the real world- but they assumed it had to do with the Watchers' gift.

"Anyway- let's get going! We don't have all day," Tommy grinned, catching an axe that appeared out of thin air from his inventory. "We've got to set up a house before it gets dark!"

Their plan was to stay in Eret's world for the first day and start setting up a town there, for whenever they went to the Minecraft universe- in their 'spawn chunks' so to say- and then visit the Dream SMP the next day.

"...Y'know, I can't believe the first ever *entire Dream SMP* meetup is still somehow in a video game..." someone muttered, as they split into smaller groups to explore the beautiful, sunshine-filled world that felt like it was created solely for them.

* * * * *

"I just want to let everyone know... I'm incredibly disappointed in you all," Technoblade deadpanned at his group of friends who were huddled and shoved into a small cave dug into the bottom of a mountain.

"Hey- I had *no idea* that creepers could even climb ladders in this universe, okay?!" Karl protested. Their attempts at building a community house on Eret's server had been... unfortunately delayed... after Karl led a creeper onto the balcony of their community house. "They don't even have hands- *how* was I supposed to know they'd still be able to get up on the roof?!"

They'd learnt that the tents they'd brought over were of little-to-no use to them. About half of the group were staying in the building they'd made (it wasn't big enough for everyone just yet), while the rest slept in the tents they'd brought. But not even ten minutes into the night, one of the tents tore when phantoms began targeting people in them- and that was when Karl rushed towards a ladder that had been closer than the door... which led to the creeper climbing up and blowing up, destroying the entire roof and almost everything else too.

They panicked, as they obviously would. The explosion had damaged quite a lot, and it was far too dark to see clearly- they could hear the low groans of zombies and the hissing screeches from phantoms and endermen outside- and a lot of their materials had been blown up since the creeper was too close to their chests.

And so, they were forced to take shelter in a cave for their first night in Minecraft after all. While Eret *could* technically just use commands to create a temporary hollow box for a house, or even summon items like torches or whatever they needed- everyone agreed that they wanted the vanilla experience of Minecraft first.

So here they were, crammed into a cave with nowhere near enough space.

"Hey- people touching the walls! Make the room bigger," someone complained tiredly.

"I'm *trying* to mine," Eret could hear Tommy huff loudly, "but I've barely got enough room to even swing my fucking pickaxe!"

"Wait, do you hear that?"

"Guys- be careful, I think there's a cave nearby-" Niki said, when Sapnap gasped.

"I found a ravine! Or I think it's one- can someone hand me a torch?"

It *was* a ravine. They were at the top- and they'd dug straight into the side. "I think that's a mineshaft over there," Eret muttered, squinting into the distance while waving his torch in its direction.

"Can we just light this place up and set up our beds? I'm too exhausted to explore this place now," Puffy yawned, and some of them agreed.

And so, they dug out a makeshift staircase in the stone and made their way to the bottom, all while fixing torches into the walls. Eret and Phil hurried forward and killed the zombies and other mobs that had spawned in the dark- and when they were done with the last one, they heard everyone clapping.

"That was *so* pog," Tubbo said, in awe.

"You guys *have* to teach us how to do that soon!" Punz said, and everyone else nodded.

"Of course," Phil laughed. "But come on- let's set up our beds now. We've got a big day ahead of us tomorrow!"

* * * * *

"Everyone's here, right?" Eret said, the moment they'd joined the Dream SMP- his eyes quickly scanning everyone's heads to check.

"Yeah, yeah, we're all here," Sapnap answered- the entire group had paired and grouped up beforehand for this exact reason- to keep track of everyone and make sure nobody got lost at any point, since it'd be easier for everyone to keep an eye out for one or two people than for one person to count and check everyone.

"Are you sure we're in the right place though?" Hbomb asked, looking around the area. "It doesn't look the same-"

At that moment, everyone heard their communicators sound and Eret sighed. "That'll be them. But yeah- of course it's not exactly the same as the Minecraft server- we went through a lot less wars and it's been a few months since- they've probably built a lot more and decorated things too."

He glanced at his communicator and smiled slightly at the greetings and excited messages from his friends- and he was about to send a reply when Niki suddenly asked, "How are we supposed to tell each other apart in the chat? Our names are the exact same..."

"Yeah..." Eret frowned. "I can tell the difference between people by looking at the code, but non-admins can't check..."

"We can just use our phones to contact each other, and the communicators if we need to chat with the others here," Fundy said, shrugging.

"And we could just introduce ourselves the way Charlie does in lore!" Tommy added with a huge grin. "Like, I'm TommyInnit from Earth!"

"It's nice to meet you, Tommy from Earth," someone sounding like Tubbo laughed, but it was clear that Tubbo hadn't opened his mouth at all. Eret turned towards the direction the sound had come from- and saw a crowd of people approaching them. Tubbo was closest, waving at them, and he waved back with a smile.

"*Holy* shit, this is really happening," Tubbo- the Tubbo standing behind Eret- started, looking shocked. The others had similar expressions on their faces.

"Eret! It's been so long!" The canon Tommy greeted him with a sudden hug.

"It's only been a week or so for me," Eret said, squeezing the teenager back. "But it's good to see that you're all still doing well! No wars or deaths have happened since, right?"

"Niki's bakery almost burned down- but that was an accident," Tommy replied cheerfully and Eret sighed, shaking his head in amusement. "A tree nearby got hit by lightning and it spread to the building... We put it out before it was too late though!"

The two groups of people introduced themselves afterwards, and then they began to head for the Community House. As they walked, Eret could see some pulling out snacks and items from their world that they'd brought over, and showing it to the ones from the Minecraft universe.

That had been part of his plan. He knew that if he brought someone from the SMP over to Earth immediately, they would freak out at practically everything. And as well as that reason, he still wasn't sure exactly *where* he could bring his SMP friends in the first place. He wasn't sure if they would look...well, *human* or not- and he didn't want to risk them getting photographed or anything anyways. The SMP people wouldn't know how to react if a group of fans went up to them out of nowhere.

The people from the SMP had been a bit upset when they heard that they wouldn't be able to visit Eret's universe right away, but they were understanding. Eret explained to everyone his plan to slowly introduce the people from the SMP to his home universe- by bringing new items over and letting them get familiar with concepts and objects from Earth first.

For example, a few of them had bought and brought over extra phones and electronic devices for their counterparts. (That had been a bit of a gamble- they weren't sure if they'd have service in the other universe, but their phones seemed to work just fine.) They showed the people from the SMP how phones could take photos and videos, play video games, read webcomics and so much more- they showed them photos of places from their world, their homes, their offices, the cities- and literally every single player were stunned at how much more advanced phones were compared to communicators.

"I mean, communicators are still really advanced!" Eret had protested though. "Just in a different way! Like come on, you guys literally travel across servers using these!"

Some other guys had brought snacks and beverages over- pretty much any food that they knew was impossible to find in Minecraft. They watched gleefully as their alternate selves reacted to the food from Earth- and it eventually led to Tommy from Earth demanding that the canonical L'Manburg members taste test things and guess whether it was from the UK or the US.

"If you get it wrong, you're not truly British!" he had exclaimed, before the game somehow ended up as a debate between the teenagers about whether British or American snacks were better.

A couple others packed clothes and books into their inventories- some brought trinkets and other items they thought would be fun to show the others- and in the end, Eret felt like the whole 'show and tell' they'd set up had been a huge success.

"I've got one last thing to show you guys," Tubbo suddenly announced, before walking just outside the Community House and reaching out.

Everyone- not just the people from the SMP- stared in shock as a *car* materialised from thin air. Tubbo's fingertips were touching the front door.

"Tubbo, what the fu-?!" Tommy yelped, just as both Bads exclaimed "Language!" at the exact same time.

"How did you even-?" Eret started, his eyes still wide. *Fit a car into your inventory? **Think of bringing something this huge?***

"I was wondering what the limits of these inventories were," Tubbo shrugged, leaning against his car with an easy grin on his face. "So I tried it on this. And it somehow fits into a single spot."

"So what *is* this thing?" the canonical Sam asked, his eyes squinting at the car.

"It's a car," the other Sam muttered beside him. "I can't believe he brought a car into Minecraft."

"So does anyone want to show them how it works?" Tubbo grinned, pulling open the door. "I don't mind driving, but there'd be a chance of me crashing into a tree-"

"Yeah! No- I'll do it," Wilbur hurried, jumping into the driver's seat. "Does anyone else want to get in?"

* * * * *

The rest of the trip to the SMP went by perfectly fine, and at the end of the day, Eret and the others returned home together. Although it was difficult to find a time for *all* of them to visit the other universe again, smaller groups went together whenever they had the time. Whether it was a few hours in the morning before they had streams to do in the evening, or the occasional weekend trips- they all fell into a semi-regular schedule to hop between universes.

Everyone stuck closely together on their visits at first, never venturing too far away from anyone else. But over time, everyone began to improve their survival skills (from practising with either the players from the Dream SMP, Phil or Eret, or mob spawners in Eret's server) and eventually became confident enough to visit the Minecraft universe with less and less people.

And every time they visited the Dream SMP, they brought more things from Earth to introduce them to. At some point, the canonical Eret, Karl and Wilbur had started up a museum/library-like space where they kept everything related to Earth- and the other SMP members visited it often to familiarise themselves with it all.

Eret's head tilted slightly onto his shoulder as he finished typing something into his communicator and shoved it into his pocket.

"Yeah, I got a table in the corner-" he said into his phone, when he felt a sudden tap on the shoulder. Eret turned his head around, to find someone with their phone in hand. They smiled and lowered their phone- and Eret heard the familiar 'Discord end call' sound.

"Eret, right?"

"Nice to meet you," Eret said, at the exact same time that Grian spoke. "Yeah! That's me. Glad you found this place just fine."

Grian slipped onto the seat opposite him, before laughing, "Yeah, I thought I was going to be the last one here to be honest." He paused for a moment, then half-nodded at Eret. "So uhm... why are you wearing sunglasses indoors?"

"I uh- It's just a habit," Eret said, glancing at the time on his phone. *A precaution, really.*

Luckily, they were interrupted before Grian could ask anything more. "Am I late?"

The two of them both turned immediately towards the out-of-breath, huffing Scott Smajor who had just arrived at the cafe. He sat down beside Grian.

"Nah, it's only the two of us here right now," Grian said, before looking back at Eret. "Where *are* the others though? I thought they'd be with you."

"Ah- they're waiting for us in a... park nearby," Eret said, awkwardly. "We'll meet up with them in a moment. But first- I apologise for lying to you both. We're not actually meeting up to film a video for Tommy."

The other two glanced at each other in confusion. "Uhm, okay...? What are we meeting up for then?" Scott asked, bewildered.

"It's a long story..." Eret sighed. "Do you want the short version or the whole thing?"

"...I guess the short for now?" Grian said, his nose bridge wrinkling as he spoke.

"I was teleported into an alternate universe where Minecraft mechanics are real," Eret said, his expression unchanged. Both Scott and Grian just stared at him like he'd grown an extra head.

"Right... are you pulling my leg right now?"

"Is Tommy and the others recording our reactions from somewhere?" Scott half-joked, glancing around the busy cafe.

"I'm serious," he answered, reaching into his bag despite knowing it was empty. This way, he could hide using his inventory- because although it would be a good way to prove he was telling the truth, he was still in public right now.

For now, these would have to do.

He placed the item on the table. Grian and Scott stared at the small, cyan-coloured pearl-like ball. He cleared his throat. "It's a 'Heart of the Sea'."

"There's no way-" Scott said, his hand reaching for the sphere. "That's not-" He suddenly dropped it, his mouth still open in disbelief.

"What's wrong-" Grian started, before Scott interrupted with a shocked laugh-

"It's got a *heartbeat*," he said, still stunned. "Am I imagining it or am I going crazy?"

Grian picked it up hesitantly, and his eyes widened as he felt the silent *thump-thump-thump* from the inanimate object. "How on earth-"

"Here's some more things-" Eret said, continuing to take out small items that wouldn't stand out too much in case a passerby noticed it. "This one's magma cream- these are glow berries- and this is-"

"A *clock*?" Grian gave a short stunned laugh, looking at the familiar-looking object in Eret's hand. "A proper Minecraft clock?!"

"I have more proof I could show you, if you'll let me," he said after they finished inspecting the items. The other two looked at each other for a moment, before Grian shrugged and Scott nodded. Eret stood up, and motioned for the other two to follow him.

As they walked out of the cafe, Eret took out his communicator and typed into it. "Can you check your pockets?" he said as they turned a corner into an empty alleyway.

Scott reached into his pocket confused, and immediately started spluttering when he pulled out a near identical device to the one in Eret's hand. Grian found one in his jacket not long after.

"You see that button?" Eret explained, pointing at the one on Scott's communicator. "Press it once- and it'll prove everything I'm about to tell you both."

* * * * *

"Eret! You're finally here!"

"Yeah," he said with a grin, taking Tommy's hand and letting himself be pulled up. He still felt slightly disoriented, but that was just something they had to get used to from jumping across universes. "Where's Grian and Scott?"

"Over here," Wilbur called.

"What the heck just happened?" Scott groaned, nursing his head as he sat up. But then, he blinked and gaped at the scene in silence.

"Where *are* we?!" Grian gasped, and Eret suddenly felt a nudge in his side.

"Mate, you didn't explain before you got them to teleport?" Phil said, raising an eyebrow.

"Phil-?! Are those- *wings* on your back?!?" Scott exclaimed in disbelief. His eyes widened as Phil laughed and nodded, then stretched his arms and wings at the same time.

"Excuse me, did you just say *teleport*?!" Grian interrupted, wide-eyed. "Did that weird machine do that?!"

"Yeah," Eret nodded. "Don't worry- I'll explain everything. But first," he grinned.

"Welcome to my server!"

* * * * *

Eret hadn't particularly planned on telling anyone outside of the Dream SMP about what had happened to him and Phil at first. However, after he had settled down back home again, he eventually remembered his talk with the canonical Eret and that he could research about 'the Watchers' on *this* side of the universe.

And after googling 'Watchers', 'Minecraft' and 'lore', he easily found articles and information about the *Evolution SMP*, an old Minecraft series that had been created by Grian.

He read as much as he could about the lore Grian had created behind 'the Watchers', but to his disappointment, there didn't seem like there was much information at all in the first place. So eventually, he decided that he would get into contact with Grian through Scott (who was friends with practically everyone-), and persuaded them to join a 'video recording session for Tommy's vlogging channel'.

He told them everything that he told the others. It didn't take too long to convince them, not when they were literally in another universe, had been shown various items that *did not exist in their universe* and were face-to-face with multiple people who should've been halfway across the world from them.

About an hour or so into Eret's explanation, Bad had suddenly logged into the world and ran past them. "Hey!" he'd greeted, momentarily shocked to see two new faces on this side of the universe. "First day here?"

"Still telling them the story of how this even happened," Eret had laughed.

"I still can't tell if I'm dreaming or not," Grian had murmured, which caused Bad to chuckle.

"Yeah, it's still quite unbelievable to me even though it's been a few weeks," Bad had said. "It's been really fun though! I'll see you both around more, if you two decide to come back. Anyway, I've got to go- I'm supposed to meet with Skeppy and he's been pinging me non-stop for the past five minutes-" and with that, he left the town hall and jumped into a portal.

Eret told Scott and Grian that he didn't mind if they told anyone else. "I'm telling you all this in case something similar happens again," he said, clasping his fingers together. "Who knows if someone will be whisked into a world as their lore characters again? I'd rather have you at least *know* it's possible, than have it happen out of the blue like it did for me."

"I guess so," Scott said. He opened his mouth to speak again, but then shut it, looking like he wanted to ask something, but unsure of how to ask it.

"I don't mind white-listing your friends either," Eret said, with a tired smile. "I was planning on it anyway. But anyway- the 'Watchers' can keep an eye on people just in case. They're basically able to ban people from coming to this universe... so yeah."

"That's... good, yeah," Grian agreed.

"So that brings me onto the next thing- the reason I reached out to you in the first place. What exactly *are* the Watchers in your lore?" Eret asked. "I read about it online but I couldn't find all that much about it... most of it was made by fans apparently."

"Uhm, well..." Grian said as he scratched the back of his neck. "I didn't really plan any lore afterwards? I don't know if you know much about the EVO SMP, but I basically 'became' a Watcher and ended my series. That was really it- I wasn't planning on bringing them back into my Hermitcraft series or anything else..."

"Oh."

"It does sound like them though, to just watch everything that happened to you and then give you a 'gift' at the end because they 'enjoyed watching you'," Grian said. "They're not *meant* to interfere with the players much- they only did anything to us in EVO whenever someone-" he coughed then, "did something that made them annoyed or upset. So I guess it's just like them to give you a gift for doing something good."

"And they won't... do anything to us later on?" Eret asked, hesitantly.

Grian seemed to understand that he was talking about what happened at the end of the EVO SMP.

"I don't... think so," he said, less confident than Eret would have liked. "I don't know, honestly. I don't think they have a reason to anyway. I only became a Watcher because I didn't want to continue with the series anymore..."

"I hope nothing too bad will happen then," Eret sighed and the other two only nodded.

"But anyway," Scott said suddenly. "What's Phil planning on doing then?! Didn't you say he's got wings in real life too?!"

About three months had passed since Eret and Phil first returned from the Dream SMP.

Elaina and Eret had returned home a while back, though it didn't really feel like that when they still saw the others every other day in the alternate universe, and when Eret could literally teleport

anywhere on Earth using his communicator and after searching up coordinates.

He was standing in a large rented hall, with only Elaina by his side at the moment. But within the next few minutes, this place would soon fill up- almost instantly.

He had made sure there were no cameras in the area beforehand, so that nobody would see what was about to happen- and now he took a deep breath. He typed a few commands into his communicator, and as soon as he hit enter, his friends from across the world were teleported one by one into the hall. He noticed that Dream, Ranboo and Callahan all had masks on.

"Can't risk it," Dream laughed, when George pouted.

"I've seen you in the other universe already! This is the first time we've met on *Earth* and you're still going to wear a mask?!"

"That's the point! Someone might take a photo and post it on Twitter or something, and then I'll be in the background by accident."

"I'd rather you guys not take any photos at all actually," Eret grimaced, and then explained, "What if some government people see it when we trend on Twitter, only to find out none of you guys got visas for this trip? And don't even get me started on how it'll look like all of us have identical twins."

"Aww," Tommy pursed his lips while lowering his phone. "So I can't vlog then?"

"Mate, I already explained that to you," Phil said exasperated.

Eret heard his communicator's notification sound, and he clapped his hands together after he checked the message. "They'll be here in two minutes guys!" he called, loud enough for them all to hear.

He had rented a party hall specifically for this meeting- because a few weeks ago, he'd gotten the canonical Fundy to visit Earth to test something.

Whether the players would keep their hybrid-traits on Earth or not.

So when Fundy showed up with his fox ears and tail, he wasn't *too* surprised since he'd honestly half-expected it. It still meant that their options for where to go would be narrowed down a lot though.

The others offered suggestions on where to meet- an empty beach, a forest somewhere remote, somewhere in Utah- but in the end, Eret chose to rent someplace closer to town, even if it meant spending money and time to confirm they wouldn't be recorded/caught.

"I'm not teleporting us to some countryside place with nothing for us to do," he had huffed. "We might as well just visit the SMP instead! They're coming over to see *our* universe- we have to show them things they've never experienced before!"

So here they were, all cuddled together in a massive party hall watching various Youtube videos while eating pizza (because nobody could decide on a single movie that they'd all agree to watch) after they had finished a massive Nerf gun war.

He couldn't wipe the smile off his face all evening.

* * * * *

There were still the occasional nightmares and panic attacks, still the random phantom pains in his neck or chest- the places he'd been stabbed and wounds he'd died from- (it didn't make sense to him though- *this* body hadn't experienced those deaths, and obviously still had all of its limbs- so how was he getting phantom pains?) and still the quiet, looming presence of danger he could never shake off, even after he got back home. He was almost always on edge, always watching out for something.

And besides, there were a few moments where he would *swear* he was being watched.

Eret never did quite return to his 'old' self after he got back- but nobody really expected him to anyways. Not when he had gone through so much change, had collected traumatic experiences like they were stamps or something, had literally *died and respawned*-

Yeah, there was no way Eret would be reverting back to what he'd been like before the SMP, for quite a while.

His first time streaming again since he'd returned had been an interesting experience- that had ended with a panic attack immediately after he ended it. He couldn't stop himself from imagining his viewers- every single one of them- being a Watcher. And then, he'd felt the same weird, prickly feeling in his neck, and it felt like eyes were boring into his back.

Another time, during one of the Minecraft Championships, he deafened himself on Discord to focus on Ace Race. It turned out to be a terrible idea, since his team members' voices had apparently been blocking out the construction noises coming from across the street- and when he heard a loud bang, he almost jumped out of his skin. He took off his headphones to close the window in an attempt to make it quieter- but before he could, more of those harsh, piercing noises filled the air.

Instantly, he was back in Tommy's small hobbit-hole base.

He could hear the TNT in the distance, the shouting and the swords clashing just outside. *I need to move*, he realised, still frozen in place. *The ceiling is going to fall! It's going to crash on me and Fundy-*

Move! he silently begged, but his body didn't feel like listening to him. *Move- damn it, move!*

"Eret?"

He heard a small, worried voice call his name from somewhere behind him. He tried to turn around, but he still couldn't do anything- *why couldn't he do anything?!*

A hand was placed on his shoulder quietly. "Eret, you're just having a flashback," the voice said gently, as he felt his hand be picked up. "You're in your room, on Earth right now. You're safe, I'm with you- just listen to my voice. What are five things you can see right now?"

"I see Tommy's base," he swallowed, his voice hoarse. The person beside him seemed to still for a moment. "My bedroom- in Tommy's base- and the spruce wooden door-"

"You're not really there. You're on Earth," the voice repeated again, even more worriedly this time. "Take a deep breath Eret, close your eyes for a moment for me, will you?"

His breathing hitched, but then he felt like he could control himself again slightly. He gave a short nod and breathed in deeply. He blinked. He blinked again. He was back. He was in his room. He glanced to his side and saw Elaina watching him with a concerned expression. "Are you better now? What happened? Was it-"

"The noise, yeah," Eret muttered, before dropping to the ground and nursing his head. "I just- I thought the ceiling was going to fall on me again. Shit-" his voice felt silent for a moment, before he looked back up frantically and at his computer.

"You were out of range from the camera," Elaina reassured him. "And I muted you from the stream when I came in."

"Thank you," he said quietly, squeezing her hand.

"Do you think you can continue streaming? Or do you want me to tell them you're busy dealing with some problems from the neighbours or something? I can make something up if you'd like," Elaina said. "I can join you if you want- we could put on a movie or someone else's stream- and just cuddle on the sofa."

"I think I'll be okay," Eret said. "After the stream though?"

"Of course," Elaina smiled. "I'd have to console you anyways, after my team beats yours!"

"I think you've got it the other way around," Eret snorted, feeling a little lighter than before. "You better get back to your computer now, they'll be wondering what's taking us so long-"

"Are you really sure you're alright?" Elaina said one last time when she got to the door. "You don't have to worry about your team or the viewers- I'm sure they can find someone else to substitute if you can't-"

"I'm okay," Eret promised tiredly. "I'll just turn up the music or something. I'll be fine."

He'd made up something about how Goose had somehow gotten stuck on the window ledge when he returned. Though his friends obviously knew he was lying, since they immediately checked up on him after MCC was over.

(*Phil*, by the way, had started binding his wings together to hide them whenever he needed to go outside or stream. Eret wore contacts.)

* * * * *

He still worried about how the two universes being connected would affect the future- he worried about the unknown, about whether the Watchers' gifts would be more of a curse than a blessing, about what would happen if everyone else on Earth found out about the truth...

However, he knew there was nothing he could do about it anymore anyways. Worrying about things wouldn't change anything. The Watchers had already begun watching, and it wasn't like he could turn back time and restart everything. Instead, the only thing he could do was hope for the best, and live his life without regrets.

Live like today was the first day of the rest of his life.

But anyway- despite all the huge changes to his life, the good and the bad, Eret was certain of a few things.

One, his friends from his original universe *and* his friends from the alternate universe, would all come rushing to his side to help him if he ever needed it. They loved him just as much as he loved them, and they would protect him like how he would protect them.

Two, he didn't have to do everything by himself any more. He finally learnt to accept help, finally learnt that he didn't have to solve everything by himself, finally stopped feeling the pressure to be the one to save everyone else all the time.

And three.

He was home.

Chapter End Notes

I'm finally done! How was it? I hope you guys enjoyed it just as much as I did writing it! :D About half way into writing the epilogue, I suddenly realised I had no idea how exactly I wanted the entire thing to end lmao. I knew most of the scenes I wanted to include, but had no clue what the final paragraph or so would be... but I think it turned out alright!

Thank you all so much for sticking around for my story, for all the kudos and awesome comments! Whenever I got an email about your comments, it always made my day, so thank you all for that :>

I'm actually working on 2(!) sequels for this fic! IDK how long they'll take to come out though, since I want a bit of a break before I start posting another long fic (and anyway, I'm rly busy these days cuz of life). One is still focused on the DSMP members, but the second one is focused on the Life series. Stick around if you want to read those, but if not this is goodbye for now I guess! Maybe one day you'll read my new stories, or maybe next time I'll be reading your stories! :D

(Oh and I'm also gonna post one more chapter after this one, but it's just gonna be me rambling a bit about the fic; it's not part of the actual story lol.)

I didn't write too much about the players and the streamers interacting, cuz it was getting too confusing for me lmao. They might interact some more in the sequel though! But for now, I imagine they'll pretty much all become good friends, and pull pranks on each other since they're literally all identical twins while in the MC universe. And as time goes on, the players will be allowed to explore Earth more (like they'd go to conventions or something, so nobody questions their 'cosplay' >:DDD). I don't want to go too much more in detail cuz I'm keeping the ideas for the sequel!

Oh and ofc, Hermitcraft members and other MCC players (and maybe other MCYT if I get interested in any others later on) will be invited to join the alternate universe in the sequels eventually :D

Anyway! If you guys got any questions left (IDK if there's any plotholes left, and I can't be bothered to check over the entire fic myself rn, but if there are you can point them out) feel free to ask! Or tell me about your favourite part or chapter of this fic! My favourite was actually exile lmao and then the confrontation on the 20th, because *angst* xD

Thanks so much for reading again. Goodbye for now! o7

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Okay so uh. I just wanted to ramble about the story a bit.

Like I said in the very first chapter, this fic was inspired by all those other fics where the ccs somehow become the canon characters- most of which were Tommy or Dream who got switched. I also said that the title came from Derivakat's song, ['New Year's Eve'](#), which *isn't* related to the DSMP.

However, I really liked/related to the lyrics of the song and put it on repeat for a good few weeks- and started coming up with ideas for a fic based on the lyrics. The first of which was actually 'a place I once called home is no longer mine.' I thought that would be a great line for something related to the exile arc. And as time went on (and as I listened to the song more and more lmao), I started having more ideas that I thought would work well- like the line, 'it feels like there will never be a chance to start again.' I thought it'd be perfect for someone who was trying to save the DSMP members from the original timeline.

So that was when I started thinking about writing my own version of where a streamer gets transported into their canonical character. I was originally going to write Tommy as the main character, because of the exile thing- but after I thought about it a bit more, I thought, "Out of everyone in the DSMP, who regrets the most? Who would want to change things, wants to help everyone, save everyone?"

And I immediately knew the main character would have to be Eret.

(And also, I don't think I've seen any story where c!Eret gets to restart, whether through time travel or as the content creator [or maybe I just missed them lol])

So yeah. I'll just start from the start!

1. there will never be a chance to start again (near end of June 2020 in MC universe - a year in the past for him) - This one is pretty self-explanatory lol. streamer!Eret wakes up and realises he's somehow become c!Eret, and knows that this is his *one chance* to save the others from the future he knew of.

2. the longer nights just blur through shorter days (July) - Eret starts to grind for materials and quickly learns how to survive in a war and hostile mob-filled world. Also pretty self explanatory, it's just the days going by. Everything is pretty fast paced though- during the day, he has to do everything he can to stay alive (and keep the others alive), and during the night, he has a meeting with Dream cuz he was too stressed to sleep

3. paper's full of forgotten goals (August 2nd) - Basically Eret manages to save everyone by delaying Dream and the others- and then realises he never made a plan to save himself oops xD. And so he loses his first life because of that.

4. my hopes and dreams were never far away (August 2nd) - His 'hopes and dreams' is that he is not alone! He finds out that he has Phil with him :)

5. seasons come and go (Mid-August to September) - Just the time passing, a way for me to move onto the election arc haha

6. another year of promises weighing on my mind (September) - Eret makes two promises, kinda. One is that he'll continue to protect and improve L'Manburg in the coming year after they got elected, and the other 'promise' was made to XD- to study for a year and become a full admin (so he could fulfil *another* promise- to save Dream from what would happen in the future).

7. things aren't always as they seem (October-November) - Quackity wasn't as forgiving as Eret expected, and attempted to assassinate Wilbur during the festival. Fun times! And it ends with them successfully saving Vikk and Lazar from Dream and Punz- but they don't feel relieved for long because then they find out...

8. a place i once called home is no longer mine (November 28th) - ...that while they were confronting Dream and Punz, alliumduo had gone ahead and burnt George's house. And so, Eret decides to take Tommy's place in exile because he won't let Tommy or anyone else suffer :)

9. it feels like every opportunity has come and passed (December) - More time passes, but Eret can't get through to Dream at all. He hoped to change Dream's mind while they were together in exile, but instead it feels like it's too late for Dream

10. just float along, wait it out (Mid-December) - Phil begs him to leave Logstedshire, tells him that literally everyone will come to his aid if he lets them. But he can't give up on the idea of saving Dream, so he decides to stay and try one more time.

11. until i find the ground beneath my feet (January) - Foolish joins the server :) and Eret finally, finally realises it's time to go.

12. through all the fears and all the doubts, i've learned to taste the sour with the sweet (January 18th-19th) - Eret finally tells some people and gets help. Progress!

13. people change with time (January 20th and after) - I thought about using this title as a time-skip chapter, like I could talk about Dream changing, or Schlatt or someone- but then I thought, what about Eret? He's definitely changed, after living in another universe, after all the traumatic experiences. So yeah, he ends up murdering Dream in this chapter- and that's something that would definitely change a person lolll. Mostly by giving him more nightmares!

14. for every broken promise there's a friend who's at my side (February-March) - This was a bit of a stretch- using my crazy lore about XD being best friends with the dragon, XD breaks his promise to protect the dragon from the players- because he cannot break his promise not to interfere with the lives and deaths of players. I guess the players broke the promise to not go into the End? Though that's more of a rule than a promise hahah.

15. for every time i've laughed and for every time i've cried (March-April) - Nothing really about this one. I just wrote about Dream having a breakdown while playing chess with Eret, and then Eret telling everyone he's from another universe and them saying thanks.

16. the passing of time (May-16th June 2021 in MC universe) - Self-explanatory, time passes and they prepare to leave the DSMP!

17. i couldn't tell you where i've been (Early July 2021 in original universe/2 weeks after he disappeared) - This one was funny to me lol. Eret in fact, *does* tell his friends where he's been. But yeah, I guess he didn't tell the police or Twitter, (not that he needed to in the end) so...

18. life keeps moving on (Few days after->a week or so later) - I knew from the start that this line would be the last chapter! After all the adventures, all the angst and fun times, he finally gets to go

home and life keeps moving on :D

I actually have no idea why I chose the title to be 'pretend that today is the first day of the rest of your life' (like srsly, the acronym is still massive), but it was too late to change it (and I didn't have anything else to name it anyway) and I liked it well enough so... yeah!

Anyway, I think that's all I have to say! Thank you all so much for reading again! :DD <33333

(AND LISTEN TO DERIVIKAT'S SONG IT'S RLY POG-)

End Notes

Fanart of my fic! Check it out, it's really awesome! :D

[Fanart by @angelau20021122 on Twitter!](#)

Works inspired by this one

[Worth a Memory](#) by [TheReal_TotallyNotBat](#)

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!