

## CHAPTER 26

### Nomanisan



The pain in Sadie's arm had once been like a dozen needles mercilessly piercing her skin. Now, it felt like thousands, with a sensation of each needle removing itself only to pierce her once more. And again. Sadie wondered how much longer she could hide her anguish, though Sumner was quite aware.

When they had walked off of the train by the French countryside, Sumner had approached Sadie's shoulder to ask her the important question. *Will what happened to Dark Sadie happen to you?* Upon hearing this, Sadie asked herself the same. The image of her dark

counterpart exploding after jumping out of an airplane was almost as painful as the needles. For that reason, she refused to answer Sumner plainly and instead told him to keep quiet for the time being. He obeyed, though Sadie caught his worried look lingering on her. *I'll be fine*, Sadie told herself repeatedly as they marched along the road to what seemed like nowhere.

Actually, Stevin appeared to have at least some semblance of a plan. He muttered something to them at the hotel about finding a way to the next hidden wonder by way of a train. Wallaby pressed Stevin on this, of course, but the detective remained cryptic, always buried in Mary's journal trying to decipher her words or hidden meanings. Sadie cared little about the words in this book and only wished to see this mission reach its end. Perhaps then she could finally be free, as Stevin had promised so long ago in Australia.

They walked for several hours on a beaten road that was accompanied by a strange river. Sadie admired how untraveled this path was compared to Paris, where concrete replaced what was truly beautiful. Here, creatures of all kinds lived in peace, away from the humans that could rob them of their homes. Pure bliss escaped Sadie, however, every time a needle entered her arm. *I'll be fine*, she said as the needled left her skin and then pierced it again.

Finally, they reached a small, decrepit cottage at the end of the river above ground. It was old, certainly, and appeared to have been abandoned for quite some time. When Sadie turned her gaze to



Wallaby, she could see that he was anxious to find out why they had come to this strange place.

“Stevin, there’s no way Kevin came anywhere near this place,” Wallaby complained. “And since when is a hidden wonder covered in cobwebs and rat droppings?” He nearly shrieked as a rat ran under his foot upon saying this.

“This is a hidden wonder, Wallaby, but not the next one on our list.” As he said this, Stevin opened the door to the cottage and carefully studied the broken house. Though it was dirty and smelled of rotted feces, Stevin inspected the rooms unaffected. Eventually, he took out his oracle and looked through its glass at a countertop. “According to Mary’s journal,” he continued, “the next hidden wonder is an island that was once near the Great Barrier Reef. She speaks of it several times and claims that it was ‘moved’ somewhere else. More

importantly, finding this island could be what got Mary in trouble with the person who kidnapped her. The person who can use magic.”

Wallaby frowned. “Magic? Like what we saw in Scotland?”

“Precisely, Walliver! Exactly so. This island has power, and Mary wanted to find it for some reason. She calls it *Nomanisan*.”

“And that’s where Kevin is?” Sumner asked atop Stevin’s shoulder.

“Along with Mary or her captor, hopefully. At the very least, it contains clues for why someone would want to snatch Mary. But I have an idea. Back at the bistro, I noticed something strange about that girl, Natalie.”

Sadie remembered this quite well. When they had captured the patrons at “La Ratatouille,” Stevin had interrogated one of them, though he only asked about her scarf.

“Natalie was wearing a green scarf when she seated us at the bistro. She never left the restaurant, but when we she came out of the kitchen, her scarf was a different color. It was red. When I asked her about it, she said she hadn’t changed, and I even scanned it with the oracle to make sure it had really been worn that entire day.”

Just one of Wallaby’s eyebrows rose. “What does that have to do with anything? That place was a hidden wonder, right? Let’s just chalk this one up to weird magic or something.”

“No, Walliver, this is bad. Robert Best claims that no one has seen Cara and Logan for *years*, even though they’re still alive and well in the future. Something is disrupting time in the way Shelby

Forthright was trying to prevent, and I'd bet anything Mary is caught up in it somehow."

Wallaby shrugged. "Fine, let's believe all that. How do we find this magic island and set things right?"

"It's not that simple, young Walliver."

"Stop calling me that."

"You see, Walliver, finding a magic island requires magic as I'm sure you've learned by now. Mary was able to do it with wood from this cottage that Kevin collected from her. Or, at least, she planned to. You have the power to travel through doors, of course, which means we can get to Nomanisan in no time."

"But Nomanisan is in another *place*, not somewhere in time. I don't know how to travel in the same time."

"True, but you'll figure it out. I'm sure it's not as hard as time travel. Sadie, can you help me break off some of this wood?"

Before Sadie had a chance to nod, the door behind them opened. A familiar girl with blonde hair was standing there. *Logan*.

As Sadie recognized her, she immediately sprang into action. In less than a second, Sadie was a full-sized lion. She leapt across the room to where Logan stood near Stevin and Wallaby, but the young detective got in Sadie's way and put his arm up. "Stop, Sadie. Her arms are in the air."

It was true. Logan had both hands up and didn't seem hostile. But Sadie still wanted to subdue her before she could have a chance to set her palms aflame.

“I come in peace,” Logan said evenly. “The chip doesn’t control me anymore. Not since Sadie...well, the other Sadie...”

This appeared to confuse Stevin. He hadn’t seen what Sadie and Sumner saw at the hotel. He and Wallaby had been too busy arranging their trip to the cottage. “Where’s Sadie? She came with you from BnL?”

“Yes,” Logan answered. “Shelby sent us to watch you all. We’ve been waiting for you to find Mary ever since Al told Shelby what you’re up to.”

*The toy tinkerer.* Sadie remembered his stink.

Logan looked down. “Sadie’s...she’s gone.”

The color left Stevin and Wallaby’s face. This was the “real” Sadie they had met at the Hexagon, before Shelby Forthright planted a chip inside her that put her in his control. To stop her, Stevin and Cara had to find the Sadie standing with them now. They had rescued Sadie and Logan from BnL shortly before the chips were implanted, but when they traveled to the future to rescue Wallaby and Sumner, “dark” Sadie and Logan remained.

“What happened?” was all Stevin could muster to say.

It was clear that Logan didn’t want to say anything, but she went on, dejected. “Her tattoo started glowing, and she exploded only moments later.” She paused for a moment and then continued. “My directive was to find Mary with Sadie. But with her gone, my directive has become invalid. My default orders are to return to BnL for a new

directive, but I've managed to suppress this because...I must destroy BnL for this."

Stevin cleared his throat. "Why? Was it the chip that did this?" He looked back at Sadie, who was covering her arm.

"No," Logan replied, "but they knew about it. I was awake when they put the chip in Sadie. I heard them talking about her tattoo and how the marks came from some sort of magic. I could hear Shelby say that there's a failsafe in Sadie's body in case she ever rebelled against the Maestro, but he decided to leave it in there for the same reason the Hexagon did. I don't know what triggered it, but BnL will suffer for this. Sadie was my friend. We survived the monster world together. She was my...she was my best friend. The only super I ever admired, even above my father. BnL *will suffer for this.*"

There was a strong harshness in Logan's words. As she clenched her fist, sparks erupted from her dusty knuckles. That was enough reason for Sadie to revert back to her human form.

Wallaby leaned in to Stevin. "The time being disrupted could have something to do with this, Stevin. What if us taking Sadie out of 1935 is what caused this?"

It was a scary thought, but Sadie didn't agree. Stevin answered this for her. "I don't think that's the case, Wallaby. Monsters go back in time repeatedly, and some even get banished. I still think this has something to do with Mary, and we have to fix it soon before..." He looked over at Sadie. The pain in her arm had brought her down to her knees.

“Sadie!” Stevin screamed as he rushed to her side along with Wallaby and Sumner.

“I’m fine,” she said weakly.

She looked over at Logan, whose face had darkened. “Send me to the future, Stevin. Let me stop BnL and put an end to this.”

He didn’t respond immediately, but it was clear Stevin heard her. “Stopping BnL won’t fix this problem. They didn’t take Mary.”

“But they’re after her, and the blonde kid can solve both our problems by giving me a doorway to the future. Otherwise, Shelby will send his men after me to take me down before I get the chance.”

Wallaby scoffed with his hand still on Sadie’s shoulder. “I don’t believe that for a second, and you shouldn’t either, Stevin. Think about it. Dark Logan just wants to return to BnL for a new directive. She’s using us to get there before having to wait for Shelby’s men. It’s all a trick.”

“Liar!” Logan screamed, barely holding back her fists from erupting. “I would never use Sadie’s death to trick someone. *Never*. My allegiance lies with her and getting the revenge she deserves.”

After she said this, Stevin looked at Sadie for a brief moment and then looked back at Logan. “Get a door ready, Wallaby.”

“Stevin, no! We can’t trust her!”

“I know. But just do it anyway.”

A few minutes later, Wallaby knocked on a door just outside of the dining room, since it was the least smelliest. Wallaby had reluctantly gone along with Stevin’s plan, though it seemed to leave

him feeling ill will toward the detective. Sadie wondered if this would create a lasting rift between the two of them, though it wouldn't be the first time these two had been at odds.

The door opened, and Stevin confirmed with the oracle that the path ahead was indeed the future. "If you can, make sure Cara, your counterpart, and the Tank Gang are alright," he said as she walked through the door. Logan gave him a quick nod. As she left, Sadie detected the faintest smirk coming from her dark, sullen face.

...

The dirigible landed softly on the field of grass in front of Mary and Belle. Finally, there was a chance for escape. *Kevin finally found me*, she thought. *I just have to get on that dirigible and...*

"Don't bother trying to leave on that ship, little dear," Belle said suddenly. "That dirigible is *never* leaving this island." She walked forward to greet a tall man stepping out of the hatch.

"Who are you?" the man asked Belle. Mary immediately recognized him as her old friend, the man who used his ship, "The Spirit of Adventure," to bring her the wood she needed to make the doors. But for now, Mary wouldn't let Belle know they were friends.

Kevin looked at Belle and Mary blankly, almost as if he was troubled. “What are *you* doing on this island? No one should know where this is.”

“Wrong, young man. Boy, you truly are clueless. You think just because this place was moved, I wouldn’t find it again?”

*Again?* Mary suddenly realized that this island was a hidden wonder, though she wasn’t sure which one. For a second, she wondered if it was Nomanisan, but that didn’t seem possible. *Nomanisan would be much larger than this place, and it would have a volcano.*

Both Mary and Kevin exchanged awkward glances. She tried her best to convey that he need not reveal the fact that he knew her, and it seemed to work.

“How do you know this place?” Kevin asked her, his guard still up. Despite Belle being an old woman, he didn’t seem at ease.

Her response wasn’t quick. Belle paced around the field a bit. “Why, I’ve known about this place nearly all my life. I spent years trying to find it.” She looked at the large tree behind them. “And I’m never leaving it. No one is.” Belle looked at him closely. “Perhaps I’ll turn you into a crow.”

It looked like Kevin wanted to laugh. “That’s entertaining. Look, woman, I don’t know what you want from this place—”

“My name is Princess Belle, not *woman*, you insufferable twit.” That infuriated Kevin. He was about to storm off as a fist made contact with his face. It came from behind him.

Mary watched in horror as a tall man with metal arms retracted the fist back into his body. *Is he a robot?* Mary wondered. He looked like a man at first, but there was no expression on his face. His eyes were blank, and his composure felt cold to her. He wore strange clothing that covered up what Mary assumed had to be wires. Finally, she determined him to be some kind of android.

As she studied that strange figure, Kevin recovered from the blow to his face. It was a minor hit, but it still drew blood. He scowled at the android and chose not to say anything. Instead, Kevin rushed toward him.

“I’m bringing you to Mr. Best,” the attacker announced as Kevin tried to tackle him. The android dodged Kevin easily and pushed him off-balance. “Because you are the poacher, Mr. Best has allowed me to capture you in any state I desire. Even if it means you are no longer alive.”

“Yeah, you can try,” Kevin sneered as he wiped the dirt from his face. He lunged a rock that had been sitting by his hand directly at the android, but he dodged it. This time, however, Kevin managed to sneak a punch on the android while it avoided the rock. Kevin punched the robot in the gut and then tackled it to the ground. Despite this, the android seemed unshaken.

*Kevin could really be in danger,* Mary decided. She wanted to use this fight as an opportunity to escape, but not without Kevin. *He may be a little surly, but he’s still my friend.*

The android pushed Kevin off of him and began striking him at his core. The blows nearly knocked Kevin off his feet, but it wasn't until the android kicked him from ten feet away that Kevin went flying in the air. He landed in a dry reservoir just by the hill surrounding the tree. As the android moved to meet him, Kevin surprised him with a flurry of punches, but the android blocked each one effortlessly.

"I learn from every battle," the android said dryly as Kevin recoiled from exhaustion. "And I've learned much from our previous fight. It is impossible for you to defeat me, poacher."

Kevin lifted his fist for one more desperate punch, but the android simply grabbed it. In an instant, metal cuffs covered Kevin's hands as he fell to the ground. The android lifted him onto his shoulder and turned toward the ship. He walked several feet before the broom hit him on the head. It was a powerful blow that Mary thought would shatter the android's head. Instead, he turned around with his eyes glowing red. Belle was the first thing he saw.

"No one leaves this island, garbage can." Surrounding Belle was a shroud of knives, brooms, buckets, and other assorted tools she had apparently summoned from the cottage. Each weapon was pointed directly at the android, as if they had a mind of their own.

Slowly, the android placed Kevin on the ground and then unleashed both arms toward Belle. They stretched like before, giving Belle almost no time to react, but she still did. Several of her tools smashed against the arm with incredible force, and more were summoned toward the android himself. They should have hit him, but

the android managed to block them all with one leg that could also stretch. *Those appendages have to be made of titanium*, Mary concluded. She couldn't understand how he was able to make a knife bounce off of his armor.

Finally, all of Belle's tools were gone, smacked away by the android as he approached her with his eyes beating even more red than before. As he was about to strike, she flashed a wand over him, as if she was casting a spell.

*This woman really is some sort of witch*, thought Mary. But the android looked at Belle confused.

"That spell should have turned you from man to crow," Belle said quizzically as she stared at her wand.

The android soundly responded, "I'm no man," as he grabbed her with both arms.

"Stop!" Mary shouted, though she wasn't sure why. Without thinking, she threw an apple that lay on the ground at the android's face.

He stared at her, dumbfounded.

"Um, there's more where that came from?"

Suddenly, the android was struck at his side, which freed Belle from his grasp. It was Kevin. He tackled the android with his hands cuffed and proceeded to strike at the android several times before getting kicked in the gut. The android hovered over him and lowered both arms. He screamed in blind rage, his eyes glowing fiercer. "I'll just have to send you to Mr. Best in a more permanent state!" the

android shouted as he struck Kevin with multiple punches that struck too quickly for Mary to see them. Kevin was on the ground nearly motionless as the android paused to strike just one last time. Before the fist made contact, however, another apple hit his side.

“ENOUGH WITH THE FRUIT!” the android shouted as he turned to see dozens more staring at him. In a moment, there looked to be over a hundred hovering in front of him. “What?” He saw that it was Mary controlling them, much to her own surprise.

The apples descended upon the android like bullets, shattering parts of his body and covering him in a thick, orange substance. *I’m surprised Belle told me to call these things apples*, Mary remarked to herself as the orange cream enveloped the android’s body and ultimately buried him. Not far from him, Belle gave a final sigh and sat down.

“Finally,” she said with relief as orange cream filled the reservoir. “That stupid robot was tearing up my beautiful moat.”

Mary rushed to Kevin’s side and lifted him out of the flowing cream. He was bruised and bloody, but breathing. A few moments later, he came to in Mary’s arms. “Am I OK?” he asked her weakly.

“Always the jokester, Russell.”

## THE PIXAR DETECTIVE

\*

*Disclaimer: this work is noncommercial and intended only for entertainment. It is not lawful to sell the above work, which is based on established properties copyrighted by Disney Pixar.*