

What could never be

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A little fic about The Thousand Master and my character, Sana. Reviews, please!

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Chapter 1 - default chapter

2

1 - default chapter

What Could Never Be

Part 01

Nagi shook his head slightly as the sound of footsteps behind him persisted. *She just doesn't give up, does she?* He didn't bother to turn around. He knew who it was. Maybe if he ignored her, she'd go away...

"Where are we going, Thousand Master?" Her voice was soft and sweet, but despite his best efforts, he couldn't ignore it.

"Well, I'm going to a nice little pub I know. YOU are not allowed in. You look under-aged." He'd decided the best way to lose her was to sit in the pub, where she couldn't go, for a couple of years, then leave once she'd gotten bored. Yeah. That'd work. He could almost hear her face flushing in anger. "I am NOT under-aged. I just...look like it. I'm 17, and you know it!" "What about the fox thing? What will you do with it while you're in the pub? You know if you brought it in, it'd just end up spillin' some guy's drink and get all of us in trouble." As if to prove his point, the "fox" pounce off after an errant butterfly, only to trip over a small stone in the path and roll into some village-woman's flower patch.

The angered woman's shouts followed the trio as they made their way into the town proper. As if in a hurry to get away from her, the frail dryad hurried up to Nagi Springfield's side, her hands clutching at his long black cloak in a possessive manner. Nagi looked down at her in surprise. In her lucid silver eyes was something that came very close to resembling a plea. "Please take me with you. I promise not to cause trouble. I'll make sure Io stays in line too." Rather surprised at her desperate outburst, Nagi said nothing, which Sana took to be an answer in the affirmative. "Come along, Io." She motioned to the fox with her free left hand.

The little fox hopped to catch up with the pair. Much to Nagi's dismay, it raced around jumped on his shoulder. With a depressed sigh, he stepped up onto the porch outside the pub.

A rather gruff looking man stepped from the pub as Nagi reached out to open the door. He fixed Nagi with a glazed look, opened his mouth as if to say something, then collapsed onto the wooden decking. Nagi cocked an eyebrow and simply stepped over the drunkard. As the door tried to close, he caught it with the end of his staff and held it open for Sana and Io. With a blush, she stepped into the smoky interior of the pub, her fox close behind her. Looking around, Nagi moved the unconscious body into a less troublesome area, then stepped quickly into the bar. *I hope it don't look like I murdered the guy...* He glanced around for his little tag-along, and spotted her making her way through the crowded room for the bar. He frowned when he didn't see Io. *So help me, if that thing gets me thrown out of here...* He grimaced and started to push his way through the drunks, making effective use of his staff. Several moments, and curses, later, he was standing by the petite brunette girl. "Bartender." A gruff man looked up from a small pile of dishes. "Bring me a bottle of warm sake. And none of those little-bitty cup things. Just gimme the jug." The man nodded and wiped his hands on a towel before heading into what Nagi assumed was a stock room.

Satisfied that he would soon be getting his drink, he turned to Sana. "So why are you so desperate to stick with me?" For once, his brown eyes were completely serious. Beneath his gaze, Sana again felt a blush creep up to her face.

"I...I just do. I want to thank you. I...." She tilted her head to the floor.

Nagi scoffed. "Yeah, right. I'm ready to listen when you're ready to tell me." He turned back around in his stool as the bartender came back, a steaming clay jug in his hand. Nagi grinned and slapped a couple of coins onto the counter-top before grabbing up the bottle and tipping the hot liquid into his mouth. Sana was hard pressed not to *giggle* as strangled cries of pain issued from Nagi. He slammed the small jug onto the counter-top and looked around wildly, his eyes watering. Without asking, he grabbed Sana's tea and slung his head back, allowing the cold liquid to pacify the fire in his throat. He sighed and slumped in his bar stool, a lazy grin spreading over his face. "Perfect temperature," he rasped.

Sana stared at him, then at her tea in his hand, then grabbed it from his grasp. "Give me that!" Fury in her silver eyes, she took a long draw from her wine, then slammed it down on the counter-top.

Nagi merely grinned, then swiveled back around in his seat, taking his jug back into his hands. He settled over the counter-top, his elbows resting on the wooden surface, a serene expression on his face. Sana's brow furrowed slightly, curiosity at what caused the change over-riding her previous anger.

Maybe he just got drunk really quickly...

"Hey, Thousand Master." Even against the din of the bar, her voice was easily heard. "You've never told me your real name. Unless your parents were both drunk when they named you..." She trailed off, making an uncharacteristic attempt at a joke.

Nagi didn't look up from his drink for several minutes, simply allowed the steam to flow over his features. He slowly turned back to face the brunette girl beside him. "My name's Nagi. Nagi Springfield. What about you?"

"My name is Sana. That's all" Nagi shrugged. "Okay. Sana. That's cute." He smiled, and lifted his drink in a mock toast. "To our friendship, then. Eh, Sana-chan?"

Smiling, Sana lifted her cup, swinging it gently against Nagi's jug. "Indeed." She raised the cup to her lips, and nearly spilled the dark liquid down her front when the door to the pub burst open. "What the-?" She spun in her seat to see what had so disturbed her.

From the doorway, a man dressed in a simple brown shirt and blue-jeans staggered into the bar, clutching his arm where a red stain was forming. "They're here!" His voice rasped through the now quiet bar. "Get ready, everyone. They're here!"

Sana looked around, puzzled. "Who's here?" No-one seemed willing to answer. Everyone was busy picking up their things, tucking bottles and such into pocket and satchels, all moving very calmly.

From her right, an old man spoke up. "It's the Uzoku, again. They're here to get their monthly amount of food. You guys sure chose a bad time to come callin'." He bowed a little absent-mindedly to the young woman, then started to a door at the back of the bar.

"The what...?" She turned to look at Nagi who was still drinking, as if nothing was going on. She frowned and punched him in the shoulder. "What the heck are the Uzoku?" she demanded.

"How should I know?" She punched him again. Harder this time. "Okay, okay. Gimme a sec." He tipped his jug up, allowing the last drop of sake to fall onto his tongue, then sat the jug down, licking his lips in satisfaction. "Alrighty then. He stood up and raised his staff into the air. "Hey! What's an Uzoku?" About half the people in the pub stopped to look at him briefly, then continued with what they were doing. Grumbling under his breath, Nagi stepped up to the man who'd stumbled in. "Hey, buddy. What's an Uzoku?"

The man stared in bewilderment. "They're demons! They're great, winged demons!" Slightly stunned, he brushed past Nagi towards where-ever it was everyone was going.

"Well, that was helpful," Nagi chirped, looking around for another, slightly calmer, person to ask. He reached out and grabbed a fleeing man by the collar with his right hand. "Excuse me, sir. What's an Uzoku?"

"Put me down,! You want us both to die?" He flailed about, trying to knock Nagi's grip loose, but only

received a sharp blow to the skull.

“Just answer me, and you can go.” The man rubbed at his head, then glared at Nagi. “They come down from the mountain about once a month to collect food and stuff from us. If we try to stop `em, they kill us. Simple. Now lemme go!”

Nagi nodded and released the man, who scampered quickly along with the rest of the people. “Well, I suppose that's all I need to know. He pushed the sleeves of his long cloak up and began towards the door. “Sana, you follow them. This could get messy.”

Sana whimpered. *He's just gonna leave me here while he goes out to fight? I don't think so!* She slid off the stool and grabbed lo, dragging him along with her. The crowd was making it rather difficult to move TOWARDS the door, but when Sana started chanting some gibberish, a clear path was opened up for her. *Idiots. Don't even know what a real spell sounds like...* When she reached the door, she found that Nagi had already left, leaving the door open to swing in the breeze.

“Here, birdy. C'mon out and play. I'd love to meet you.” His brown eyes scanned the sky, looking for, what he assumed, anything resembling a bird. After all, what else would a bird demon look like? After several seconds of seeing and hearing nothing, Nagi began to wonder if it hadn't been a false alarm. Then, from behind him, he heard the sound of air rushing about. He turned slowly, almost casually, to find a large black figure nearly atop him “Crap!” He instantly dropped to the ground, his coat ruffling around as the figure flew over him. He could feel its claws snatch at the hood of his cloak.

He turned over onto his back, and raised his staff into the air. “*Undecim spiritus lucis, coeuntes segittant inimicum, sagitta magica!*” From around his staff, eleven spheres of pulsating energy hovered, then shot off after the offending demon. With speed unmatched by their target, they converged on its dark form. The demon watched the spheres circle around it, panic lighting up its eyes. Then, without warning, all eleven spheres rushed the demon. Arcs of white energy played across its body, until a white aura surrounded it, and in a flash of energy, it was gone.

Nagi grinned and got to his feet, brushing off his cloak. “That was it? Heh. Nothing to get all panicked about.” He turned back towards the bar, confident that his job was over. Midway through his first step in that direction, he felt something bury its fist in the middle of his back. He pitched forward onto the ground, losing his grip on his staff in the process. The long bit of wood skittered across the ground out of his reach. Nagi scrambled to his feet, repressing a groan as fire shot up his back from where the punch had originated. He glared in the direction of the attack.

His eyes focused on the small army of Uzoku that fluttered before him, and his angry scowl changed to something closer to fear. “Oh crap...” He eyed his staff warily, then the Uzoku closest to him. It kept its shrewd eyes on him, although it motioned to one of its brethren to guard the staff. “Great. They're smart. What're the odds?” Nagi's lip curled up in determination. With a cry, he leapt towards his staff, his gaze focused on the Uzoku that was determined to guard it. It rushed him, and succeeded in landing a strong punch to his stomach. Seemingly from no-where, his own fist ground into the side of its face, producing an agonized, inhuman howl. Gritting his teeth against his own pain, Nagi back-flipped and sent his right foot crashing into its jaw. The crack its neck made as it snapped eased Nagi's own pain ever so slightly.

The reprieve was only momentary, however. As Nagi landed and reached for his staff, a rather larger hand grasped his wrist. The grip was tight enough that his hand immediately went numb beneath its large fingers. He tried to leap out of its grasp, but it jerked on his arm, flinging him in the opposite direction and almost wrenching his arm from its socket.

Nagi landed in a heap against the pub's front wall, his right arm basically useless. It felt swollen, and fire seemed to rush through his veins from his shoulder down. He struggled to stand as several of the bird demons converged on him.

From Nagi's left, a soft voice cried out “*Undetriginta spiritus obscuri...Sagitta magica, series obscuri!*”

Spheres of energy rather like Nagi's previous spell slammed into the oncoming demons, immediately stopping their advance. The three in the immediate effect of the spell weren't even given a chance to release their agony in a death cry, they were immediately disintegrated. The excess 13 spheres of dark energy sped off for the remaining Uzoku. Several screamed as the dangerous balls of energy found their targets. Two of the creatures fell to the ground in great squawking lumps, before dieing quietly. Five of the initial eleven turned on the duo with anger blazing in their eyes.

As if on command, all five of them folded their wings close to their bodies and dived towards the diminutive vampire. Nagi's worried cry broke through the air at the same time as the howls of the demons on their death run. Nagi broke into a dash for his staff, the muscles in his right arm protesting as he dove for it. His grip tightened on the oaken weapon as the first of the Uzoku reached Sana. As he spun, staff at the ready, her pained scream turned Nagi's blood to ice within his veins.

``Get away from her!" Nagi straightened to his full height and extended his staff. ``*Septendecim spiritus aeriels couentes...Sagitta magica, wries fulguralis.*" With more force than had ever been forced through his system, seventeen bolts of lightning shot from his staff, then arced towards the demons. The pure energy wracked their bodies, their own screams drowning out the injured Nymph's. All but one of their number fell to the wooden decking, their limbs twitching as the excess energy forced it's way out of their bodies.

Turning to glare at the Thousand Master, the last of the demons flapped it's expansive wings and rose into the air. ``Your insolence today, mage, will cost this village it's existence!" It's voice pierced deep into Nagi's soul, invoking a sudden surge of fear. He repressed it and stared defiantly at the demon. With a scowl, it's might wings propelled it higher into now evening sky. It flew unsteadily towards the shadow of a mountain to the north. At the summit of the mountain, Nagi faintly caught sight of lights.

Satisfied the beasts were completely gone, Nagi ran up to the brunette girl on the porch. He knelt beside her, and almost didn't notice when lo hopped onto his shoulder to look at his fallen master. ``Sana-chan, are you injured very badly?" He slipped one arm behind her back and pulled her into a sitting position on his lap. Her eyes were closed, and her breathing had slowed nearly to the point that Nagi couldn't feel it. He sat back against the front wall of the pub and rearranged Sana's still form so her head was resting in his lap. He smoothed a lock of hair out her face, and noticed that his hand was covered with blood.

``What the..."

A/N: What's gonna happen to Sana? Looks like she's in critical condition....If ya wanna see what happens, review an I might put up the next chapter!! Sayonara!!