Gearstandt Atoms

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Lucas stood up, wondering where he was. Looking around, he saw a window, one of the few that he could see that wasn't broken. Looking inside, he saw what looked like an old abandoned school building, with desks and their chairs randomly thrown around, with what looks like a thick layer of dust on everything. He adjusted his eyes so he could see his reflection in the window.

"God, I look horrific ." he commented to himself. He unconsciously adjusted his normally curly blonde hair, which was messed up more than usual, sticking up all over the place. His brown eyes darted around at the buildings. He then looked down looked at his wrinkled coat.

"Hello!" he shouted, but the only reply was his voice, echoing off of the tall buildings surrounding him, and the only movement being a few birds taking flight in surprise. He followed the bird's movement, partly to see where they were going, and partly because he didn't know what to do at the moment.

As he watched the birds, spiraling upward into the air, one of them squawked as it smacked into an unseen wall. A ripple-like motion grew from where the bird smacked into the structure.

"Going to ignore that." he said, turning away from the anomaly. He continued to look around when he heard a loud, systematic thumping. He turned towards the sound to see a gigantic, mechanical lizard barreling toward him, smoke pouring from its gaping jaws. He did what any sensible person would do in this situation. He turned around and he ran away from the monstrosity.

He slipped into an alleyway hoping the machine wouldn't fit. The creature immediately began to climb up the side of a building. Lucas stopped running and caught his breath when he heard a second set of rhythmic thumping that seemed to be coming from above. The first creature reached the top of the building and let out a mechanical screech. Lucas heard a familiar voice soon after.

"Another!? Really?" Emma shouted from the top of the building.

"Emma?" Lucas shouted from the alley. He began running trying to keep up with a figure he could see on the roof. He reached a road and turned

around watching Emma as she slowed down and hopped to a ledge. Lucas dove to the right as the creatures launched off the structure.

"Are you alright?" Emma called from above, her brown hair falling in front her bright blue eyes.

"A little warning next time would appreciated." Lucas responded dusting off his coat.

"Well, that's what you get for sending a second one of those things after me." She said as she climbed down.

"We appear to have taken care of them." Lucas replied, gesturing to the fallen machines.

The machines began to move. Lucas and Emma started to back away. Lucas felt his left hand become immovable. He looked down and noticed that it had become metal. One of the creatures moved towards Emma and brought its claw into the air.

"Emma!" He warned, but it was too late. The machine swung and threw Emma back into a wall. The second began to move towards Lucas. He attempted to run, but his legs became stiff and he fell to the ground with a metallic clang. The lizard continued to move toward him, brought up a claw and began to swing it down.

"Emma!" Lucas shouted as he woke with a start, his eyes flashing silver for a split second.

"Bartley? Another bad dream?" Emma responded calmly from down the hall.

"Yea. They've been getting more and more frequent." Lucas said, shaking his head and rubbing his eyes. "And would it really hurt to sometimes use my first name?"

"But, you respond to Bartley." Emma said.

"I do, but I would prefer you to call me Lucas."

"I think I'll just call you Bartley for now.. Good night."

"Good night."

The next morning, Lucas was sitting in a bench at the train station. He got up as the train screeched to a stop. Lucas grabbed his bag and got in line to board. Emma ran down the platform, waving her arms, attempting to get his attention.

"Bartley!" She called, smiling.

"Emma? What are you doing here? I thought father wanted you to stay at the estate," Lucas said with a smile.

"I'm here to see you off." She said staring into his eyes.

"And what about Jacob?" Lucas asked.

"He doesn't know." Emma said, frowning slightly. "Well, I left a note before I left without his consent."

"He's going to be a bit upset." Lucas said.

At that moment, a very large man in royal garb stormed over toward the pair.

"Emma!" he shouted "Get over here this instant!".

"Damn it, Jacob. Well, looks like it's time to board." Lucas said grabbing Emma by the hand and jumping through the door of the train. The two then walked through the train and stopped at a window. The train began to move and the two watched as Jacob began to fade into the distance, still yelling after the train. The train began to build up speed until the rapidly receding figure of their father disappeared all together. Lucas let go of Emma's hand.

"Well, that's that." Emma said.

"What do you mean, 'that's that'?!" Lucas yelled, getting strange glances from most of the people in the train car. "He's never going to let us go outside again!"

"It'll be fine." Emma said as she walked over to one of the vacant booths in the car. "You've been in worse trouble."

"I know, but still…" Lucas said as he wandered over to the booth that Emma was occupying. "I would rather not be in trouble when I need to get a job. If he decides to keep us inside for a time, then I won't even start before I'm fired!"

"Well… It's most likely going to be me that's going to be grounded, as I was supposed to stay behind."

"But I pulled you onto the train."

"He's not going to be able to do anything until we get back."

"I guess you're right." sighed Lucas, as he leaned back into the booth and gazed out the window.

"Bartley... Bartley!" Emma said, shaking him awake. "We're almost at the station."

"Very interesting. Wake me up when we get there." Lucas said with his eyes closed.

"Bartley."

"I just realized what you said. I'm getting up."

Lucas sat up as the train began to slow, stretching.

"What time is it?" he asked, yawning.

"10:30. We should be at the station any minute now." Emma said, checking her pocketwatch.

"Good." Lucas said, as the train screeched to a halt into the station. "Might as well start early. Potential employers look for that kind of stuff in their employees."

"I almost forgot! Today you are looking for your job!"

"Of course." Lucas said, as they exited their booth and made their way to the exit of the train. "Why else would I be going into the city? It's not like we need to run errands. Jacob's butlers do all of that for us."

"Why is it that you call him Jacob?" Emma asked. "He is your father too, you know."

"I'm adopted, remember?" Lucas said. "He isn't my real father."

"He has basically been your father for eighteen years."

"True, but it just isn't the same." Lucas said, opening the door to the train to be met by three of Jacob's personal guards.

"Damn it." said Lucas, looking up at the guards.

"That's an understatement." muttered Emma, crossing her arms.

"Quit your yapping." one of the guards barked as he grabbed the pair. "We need to wait for the next train. And if you try to escape, we will inform the rest of the guards and you will be in even more trouble than you are in now."

Emma shook the guard's hand off her shoulder and walked over to one of the benches in the station, pouting. The guards looked at each other, shrugged, and walked over to the bench, dragging Lucas along with them. They then stood around the bench, keeping a close eye on Emma and Lucas as they waited for the train back to the area of the city where they lived.

Around two hours later, they were out of the train and at their mansion. Lucas and Emma looked at each other nervously, and then stepped into their home. Their maid looked up at them.

"Your father is in his study. Please go up to him right away." she said, continuing to polish the stairway.

"Ok, thank you, Lucy." said Emma, wandering over to the stairs. "Lucas, come on. We should probably see how much trouble we're in."

"Fine." said Lucas, joining Emma at the stairs and starting to ascend them. At the top of the stairway lay his father's study. Lucas gulped, worried.

"Come on." Emma said, making Lucas jump. "What are you waiting for?"

Lucas walked forward and knocked on the doors of the office.

"Come in." said Jacob's butler, Galahad, opening the door.

"You wanted to see us." Emma said as she entered.

"What on Earth were you thinking!?" Jacob yelled.

"What do you mean, what was I thinking?" Emma said. "The city is safe... ish..."

"Even if it was perfectly safe, you were constrained to your room! You screwed up the dinner party, you face the consequences! Galahad, get me some wine." he said, putting his head in his hands.

"Right away, sir." said Galahad, bowing and exiting the room.

"It was one firecracker." Emma muttered under her breath.

"And you!" Jacob said, turning to look at Lucas. "What were you thinking?! Pulling her onto the train like that! You knew that she was grounded!"

"Sorry." said Lucas, looking at the ground.

Galahad entered again, bowing and holding a bottle of red wine, which he gave to Jacob.

"Thank you, Galahad."

Jacob opened the poured the wine into a glass and took a long swig, then set down the bottle and the glass on his desk.

"Anyways, you two are both grounded! I shall have guards posted outside your doors all day, and you shall be confined to your rooms for two weeks!"

"But father, all I did was go to wish Lucas off! I wasn't trying to do anything else, I swear!" cried Emma.

"No excuses. You knew that you were not to leave your room, but you still disobeyed me! I--" said Jacob, suddenly cut off by a coughing fit, which evolved rapidly into gasping and convulsing.

"No!" shouted Emma, running forward to help her father. "Bartley, you moron, do something!"

Lucas started and looked around to see Galahad, white as a sheet, at the door.

"Galahad, do something! Get a doctor!!" Lucas shouted, running to help Jacob as well.

"Y-yes, sir." Galahad stammered, bolting out the door.

"Father, what's wrong!" cried Emma, tears streaming down her face. "Speak to me! Say something!"

"I-I..." whispered Jacob, and with that, he took his final breath.

"No..." whispered Lucas, feeling very numb inside, not knowing what to do. Galahad sprinted in the door, out of breath.

"I-I called... I called the doctor." he said, panting. "I-is there anything I can do?"

"No... No... Thank you Galahad, you've been great." said Lucas, going over to sit next to Emma in an attempt to comfort her. She was curled up in a ball, next to her father, weeping uncontrollably.

"You are very welcome, sir." Galahad said, finally recovering enough to straighten his tie. "I shall inform you when the doctor gets here." He bowed stiffly and exited, still gasping slightly.

Lucas nodded, unable to do anything else, and put a hand on Emma's back. There was nothing else to do but wait for the doctor.

After around an hour, as far as Lucas could guess, the doctor finally showed up.

"Lucas, Emma." the doctor said, walking in the door to the office, led by Galahad, who bowed and exited. "I am so sorry to hear about this."

"Thank you." said Lucas, not looking the doctor in the eye. "C-can you tell us what happened?"

"Well," said the doctor, looking at Jacob, "No promises, but I will do my best. However, I am going to have to ask you two to leave the room."

"That's fine. Come on, Emma." said Lucas, leading Emma out into the foyer to wait, where they sat down on the couches, waiting the doctor.

A few hours later, the doctor came out of the office, carrying his bag, a worried expression on his face.

"Well, from my analysis on the body, it appears as if your father was poisoned."

"Poisoned?" Emma said, face still red and puffy from crying. "What do you mean, poisoned?"

"Well, you know that Jacob had a lot of enemies, being mayor and all. Someone probably snuck into the cellar and poisoned some of the brandy he had down there." said Lucas thoughtfully, looking at the doctor.

"My thoughts exactly, Lucas." said the doctor. "The poison in his system was fairly new to science, found in a few types of fungi, known as cyanide."

"Could you figure out anything else from this, besides the type of poison?" asked Lucas, looking up at the doctor.

"Well, a little. The poison would not lead us back to the killer, because the bottle could have been poisoned at any time. However, because this type of poison is a moderately new discovery, and based on how difficult it is to extract from plants, this leads me to the conclusion that the killer has the resources to extract the poison himself or the money to buy it off of the black market, considering how expensive cyanide is to purchase."

"Makes sense." Lucas muttered, deep in thought. "Thank you very much, doctor. We will call again if we need anything."

"You are welcome, Lucas." said the doctor, exiting the front door.

"We are gathered here today, to honor Jacob O'Connor Sweeney Heir to the throne. The father of two children, Emma Sweeney and his adopted son Lucas Bartley, and loving husband to Katherine Sweeney. He died as he lived, protecting those close to him. He will always be remembered." said the pastor. "Galahad, you knew him the longest. Would you like to say a few words?"

"Of course." Galahad answered as he stood up.

Galahad Phegan walked up to the lectern and rested his left arm on the top, making a hollow ding when it landed. His grey hair appeared white as snow in the light shining through the glass above him. He reached into his coat and pulled out a piece of paper. He cleared his throat and looked up at the filled pews. His eyes scanned slowly over the room and paused, focusing on Lucas and Emma for a few seconds before smiling kindly and continuing again. He looked down at the paper and back up at the crowd, cleared his throat again and began to speak.

"Jacob O'Connor Sweeney. He–"

Thump thump thump.

Lucas's back straightened and he looked at the window behind Galahad. Galahad froze, as he the light coming through the window quickly faded to red. A faint smile crossed his lips for a split second before he began to turn around to face the light. Suddenly, a distorted voice began to echo through the church.

"Why must you always be afraid? We are not here to hurt you. We are here to protect you from the dangers of this world."

The glass broke and a giant mechanical lizard climbed through and stood over Galahad. It loomed over the pews, casting a dark shadow on the once brightly light audience, it's glowing red eyes peering into the souls of anyone who dared to look at them. Smoke streamed out of a pipe on the side of the creature's body. The the voice continued.

"We are here to keep you safe. Do not be afraid."

A white aura began to surround the machine. A blinding, white light filled the church and the creature disappeared, taking Galahad with it.

To be continued…

Synopsis:

London. 1826. Just a normal day for Emma and Lucas, until their father is poisoned and killed by an unknown enemy. But it doesn't stop there. Gigantic mechs started appearing, just like in Lucas's dreams. The city falls into chaos, and it is up to them to stop whoever is behind this.