

Grade 10
Fiction ✓
Poetry _____
Nonfiction _____



XZea

Glurb

Xxawp

Nicneed

Zimvan

Peace Broken

King Ambrico was awoken from his deep sleep by a cold breeze coming in through the small window next to his bed. The king was a small man with tan skin and dark brown hair. He had a somewhat Asian look, as someone from Earth might describe it. His movements were graceful as he slipped out of his bed and started to glide toward the window to shut it. The ground beneath his feet was soft grass, although he was inside, and there were beautiful vines growing up the walls of his small wooden cottage. He, for a king, had fairly few desires. Just that his people were happy and that his forest flourished.

The wings sprouting from his back were large and translucent green color. They had swirling designs in a lighter shade of green and they were in the shape of a monarch butterfly's. Once he stepped out the door, he lifted them, taking off to fly through the air. He inhaled the fresh, crisp air, and sighed, closing his eyes and letting the sun warm his skin.

"King Ambrico! Your Majesty!"

The king was shaken from his trance by a young boy's voice. He recognized it as one of the newer scouts, Kayden. The king opened his eyes and smiled kindly at the boy, "What is it, son?" His voice was soft and had the same majestic, soothing sound of birds chirping just after a storm.

"It's the West Village! Something attacked!"

What did he mean, *'something attacked'*? There had been no attacks on the entire planet of XZea for millions of years. All of the Four Great Kingdoms had given everything to ensure the lasting peace of the planet.

"What do you mean?" The king asked the boy, a confused, stressed tone in his voice.

"U-um, Sir Valeron said something about a possible bombing? He's waiting for you at the entrance of the village."

King Ambrico nodded and sped off in the direction, dodging trees until he approached a tall, muscular man. The man's wings were a deep blue and had spotted patterns.

The king stopped in front of Valeron, still hovering in the air because of the foot and a half of height that Valeron had on the king.

"How many casualties?" The king asked with an urgent voice.

"Twelve dead and twenty-six wounded." Valeron breathed, "So far."

"So far?" The king asked, his voice shaky.

Valeron slowly nodded, "We're still looking."

The king swallowed. Twelve of his people dead in an act of violence. Who would do something like this? "What caused it? You said a bomb?"

"It seemed as though, but the technology used in this device is so simple. From at least half a million years ago."

Back in the village Valeron called his men to surround the device that had crashed. He could feel the intensity of the air as his soldiers awaited his command. He cleared his throat and started to speak with his large, booming voice, "We wait for Rhavo."

Valeron had sent message to Rhavo, the Dragon's Kingdom. Rhavo was Zimvah's closest ally. They helped each other in their greatest times of need. Rhavo's military force was already on its way, so Valeron knew it wouldn't be long until they arrived to help.

Valeron was startled by a sound coming from the device. A loud cracking sound. All eyes were glued to the device, as a large door began to open. There was a long silence, one that was almost unbearable for Valeron. He stepped closer to the device and his stance strengthened as he attempted to protect his army from whatever lied ahead. The silence dragged on for what seemed

like an eternity, before there was movement coming from within the device. A creature became visible, wearing a white suit made out of strange material, but it seemed stronger, synthetic. Two more creatures came into view. Valeron tensed, he had seen nothing like this before. Were these suits armor? What use could they have? What were these creatures?

The soldiers switched their stances to aggressive ones, but Valeron put his hand up before they could attack, "Don't. Stop, we don't need a fight."

They kept their positions but didn't attack. Valeron took a step toward the creatures.

The dragons of Rhavo arrived, just in time to see the creatures fleeing toward the other side of the village, dodging objects on the ground.

Bodies.

It seemed as if the entire army and the villagers had been slain. Every single fairy was dead on the grass or the street of the village. The commander of the dragon army, Siiklor, stopped in his tracks, terrified by the horrendous act of these creatures.

Siiklor heard a sound, what sounded like a kid crying. He ordered for his soldiers to stay still and he flew toward it. A young soldier hid in a narrow alleyway. Siiklor wasn't much bigger than the fairies, comparable to what size a male moose is compared to a human. His wingspan, though, was more than double the height of the tallest fairy. He had wide shoulders and bright green scales covered his body.

The boy sat against the wall, shaking and sobbing. He clutched his sword to his chest as if his life depended on it, and his eyes were slammed shut with fear. Many of his features were invisible, due to the dim lighting of the alley other than that he wore the same uniform as the soldiers and he couldn't have been older than sixteen years old.

"Soldier child." The dragon spoke softly, trying not to alarm the poor boy, "Come out here. You have wounds that need to be tended to." Siiklor could see a large gash in the boy's left shoulder.

The boy looked up at the dragon, "S-S-Sir Valeron," He stuttered, terrified by what he had seen, "They-they attacked him, they had weapons. Like-like misstyles, b-but they were holding them." He sobbed, visibly shaking and tears still ran down his face.

"Just come out here, child." The dragon bowed his head, a soothing gesture, "You'll be safe. I'll bring you to your king."

The boy shakily nodded and stumbled toward Siiklor, who lifted him onto his back, "Hold onto one of my scales."

The boy nodded and tightly gripped a scale with his right arm, cradling the left one to his chest.

"Search for more survivors!" He ordered his army as he flew toward the palace of Micheed where King Ambrico was speaking with the elf king, King Aroon.

By the time he arrived the boy on his back had fallen asleep, and the dragon had to make sure his movements were soft and slow, as not to disturb the fairy in such desperate need of rest. He slowly hit the top of his head against the door, knocking. One of Aroon's servants answered the door, "Siiklor! What a surprise." The servant smiled.

"I need to speak with King Ambrico. It's urgent." His voice was soft, as he was still trying not to wake the young fairy on his back.

"Yes, I'll get him right away. You may wait in the garden."

"Thank you." Siiklor bowed his head in respect, then he took the few steps to the garden and slowly laid down in the patch of grass. He allowed the sleeping boy to slide off of his back

and onto the ground. The boy's skin was cold to the touch and he shivered in his sleep. Siiklor covered him with his wing, to keep some heat in.

As the king of the fairies approached he was unnerved. Siiklor usually stood in respect when he approached. Ambrico's eyes scanned the dragon, but saw no sign of injury, "What is it, Siiklor? You called for me so urgently?"

The dragon nodded, "Yes, sir. It seems that the device was not a bomb, but a means of transport for an evil force. When I arrived to your village there was death, and blood. Your army and the village..." He paused, then closed his eyes, "There was only one survivor as I could tell, but I have my soldiers looking for more."

The king fell to his knees. His entire force, and the West Village? Innocent fairies were slaughtered because he wasn't there. Children. Children that had done absolutely nothing to deserve the horrible fate of an early death. The king swallowed, his eyes wide, "Th-the survivor?"

The dragon lifted his wing to show the boy that Ambrico recognized as Kayden, the boy who had alerted him that morning. He was sleeping, and there was a large wound in his left shoulder, his entire uniform was soaked and spotted in blood. The king rushed to his side, and lifted him from the ground. The boy had just graduated from the academy two weeks before.

"He's freezing." The king breathed.

"I tried to warm him, but as you know, my blood is cold." Siiklor again bowed his head and closed his eyes.

"Thank you for bringing him to me." Ambrico took off and flew toward his home, still carrying the boy.

When Kayden opened his eyes, the room was spinning around him and his head was throbbing. He was warm and under soft blankets. He was finally able to see once the walls stopped moving. He was in a small room with vines growing up the walls and the floor was grass. He laid in a bed that felt like he was floating on a cloud. The only discomfort was his headache and his sore shoulder.

He heard the door open, and looked to see King Ambrico walking in. He shot upright in the bed, "Your Majesty!" The boy gripped his throbbing head.

"Kayden." The king said, softly, "You need to rest. An unknown substance was found in your blood. I sent it to Glurb for analysis."

"The Troll Kingdom?" The boy asked.

"Yes. They have some very skilled scientists."

A terrifying thought crossed his mind, "Addie! Is she okay?!"

Addie was his younger sister. She was his responsibility, since his parents were away on a business trip.

The king smiled and nodded, "Yes, your family is all okay. The intruders were only able to make it through the West Village. Rhavo's army stopped them." He paused, "I need you to tell me what happened after I left."

Kayden breathed in deeply, then swallowed, "The bomb—er, uh, the *device*" he paused, "It opened. Like a ship, I think. And there were three creatures. Sir Valeron said not to shoot. He didn't want violence. Th-then one of them got a weapon. It-it was like a" he thought for a second, "I don't know. It was black, and fired little pieces of metal. The creature just started firing it. At everyone. Valeron made the command to defend." The boy stopped talking. He was shaking violently from the description he had to give, "The other two creatures got more of the

same weapons. I got hit in the shoulder. Sir Valeron was trying to help me.” The boy was quiet for a few minutes, then covered his face, refusing to show his weakness to his king, “Th-they killed him.” He breathed. He tried to regain his composure, “After that I don’t remember much. Everyone was screaming, and running. There was so much chaos and panic. I hid in an alley.” He bowed his head in shame, “I-I’m sorry, sir. I’m so sorry.”

“You only did what you had to. You’re too young to go into a fight. I doubt anyone there was expecting a battle. We’ve been at peace with everyone for thousands of years.”

The silence dragged on for what felt like centuries for Kayden. Until he spoke, “The creatures have been captured?”

“Yes, son. You’re not in any danger.”

“That’s not what I meant...” The boy paused, then swallowed, “What are you going to do?” The boy asked, hoping the king planned on ending their lives, for the horrible deeds they had done.

“They’re in a prison cell. They’ll stay there for eternity.”

“They killed an entire village. You’re letting them live? What if they escape?”

King Ambrico was startled by the boy’s words. This boy had refused to kill a spider for his mother on many occasions.

“Kayden.” Ambrico scolded, “What exactly are you proposing?”

The boy glared at the blanket on his lap, “They’re murderers. Why should they be allowed to continue living when they took the lives of so many?”

The king let out a loud sigh, “You’re scared, and upset. I understand why you’re angry, but killing will not keep the peace.”

“The creature has already destroyed the peace.” The boy countered.

“It can still be restored.”

“They killed your entire army and the West Village! You’re just going to forgive and forget? That’s not how this works! They will strike again unless—” Kayden stopped speaking.

He was terrified by his own words. Was he really trying to convince his king to execute three creatures? He was so angry, he had never felt this much rage. He had never felt this overpowering need for revenge. What was wrong with him? His mind was being skewed and twisted into dark forms as one thought shone through all the rest:

‘They deserve to die.’

He knew he couldn’t justify this thought, he didn’t even try. He just covered his face, “I’m so sorry, Your Majesty. I’m so sorry. I don’t know what’s wrong with me.” He breathed.

“It’s alright, son. There isn’t anything wrong with you. You’re scared for yourself and for your family. That’s all. Let me ease your worries. They’ll be held in an underground cell with guards on watch at all times.” The king smiled sweetly at his last remaining soldier. There wasn’t a bit of resentment toward the child that could be held. If anyone should’ve been resented, it was the king. He wasn’t there when his people needed him.

Kayden’s reaction to this was not exactly what the king had expected. He swallowed and looked up. He hadn’t thought about this. He wasn’t trying to protect his remaining friends and family. He just wanted the creatures to suffer for what they had done. He wanted their blood to spill onto the ground and he wanted them to scream in pain and in terror, as Sir Valeron had. The anger and hatred in his own thoughts scared the poor boy. He didn’t know what to think. He couldn’t remember ever having such hateful and morbid thoughts. There must’ve been something wrong with him. Maybe he was having a mental breakdown caused by the recent trauma, or he got brain damage at some point during the battle.

Or there was the possibility that he was going insane.

The king continued to try and put the soldier's mind at ease, but he could see that the joyful light that he had once seen in this child was gone, replaced by darkness.

"King Olack!" One of the scientists in the Glurbian lab yelled, "My dear king! It is a disease! A disease that all of the 'human beings' have! Send for the Fairy child! I must study his symptoms!"

"A disease? Have you been able to form medication?"

"Not yet." The small man peered through the microscope at the droplet of blood he had collected. The man had a pale complexion and had small hairs covering his body. He had thicker red hair on his head and parts of his face. He wore clean blue robes and his lab was spotless. The cleanliness of the lab and his clothing was an odd comparison to his greasy hair and mucky skin. He licked his lips as he continued to speak, "I need to analyze his behavior."

The king had the same red, greasy hair and pale skin, but he wore silk clothing lined with diamonds, gold and rubies. The king beckoned one of busy trolls to him with a grimy finger, topped with an old, cracked fingernail and a bright, shiny gold ring.

As he spoke to the troll his crackly lips smacked together between sentences, "My dear, would you mind calling for Ambrico and his soldier child?" he licked his lips, "I need to speak with them."

"Yes, my dear king." The troll scurried out of the room and into the system of winding tunnels. The lab they were in had a concrete border, but the majority of the rooms were dug straight out of the ground. Roots and stones often broke through the ceiling. On one occasion, King Olack was pelted on the head in his sleep with a small pebble. It had fallen from the roof of his bedroom. The lab, the hospital, and the king's storage room, were the only cemented places in the entirety of underground fortress. The only ones with good lighting as well.

Once Kayden and Ambrico arrived, Kayden was placed in an observation room with cameras and a one-way mirror. The scientist, who introduced himself as Merlin, observed him for hours as the child paced and tried to keep the demented thoughts out of his mind. Ambrico was only allowed in for five minutes every hour to check on the soldier and give him water. Each time him became more aggressive toward Ambrico. It seemed as if he was losing his mind. After a while he tried to punch his king, though, he immediately apologized and hid in a corner to sulk. At some point during the observation he started screaming. It sounded like he was in agonizing pain, but the devices monitoring his body showed nothing out of the ordinary, aside from his racing heart. The king used the microphone trying to comfort the child, but he only continued screaming, "What's happening to me?! Please, I don't know what's wrong with me!"

All the while Merlin was trying to find a way to help the soldier child, but none of the medications he was able to make helped Kayden in the least. Ambrico stormed down to the prison of Glurb after hours of watching Kayden suffer, and banged on the cell door to the three creatures' cell.

"What did you do to my soldier?!" He pounded on the door, anger curling in his veins.

"He's infected." The woman of the group stated, "But that's hardly our fault. It would've happened anyway."

Her nonchalant attitude forced another angry pound on the door, "Is that what you have to say about the hundreds of my people you killed, as well?!"

He saw her shrug through the barred window.

"Tell me how to help him!" He yelled.

"Ya know, I really wish I could do that. I'd make millions if I could tell ya how to cure the plague." She sighed.

"Plague? What are you talking about?"

She groaned and leaned her head back, "This planet is so behind. What did you call this place? Entra?"

"XZea." He corrected with acid in his tone.

"Right, Existia, or whatever." She rolled her eyes.

"What do you mean, *plague*?" he asked, still worried.

"It's a toxin that targets the brain. There are a lot of sciencey details, but basically, brings out the hatred and malice in a being. Usually drives the pure hearted mad. The guilt they feel for hurting or wanting to hurt others drives them insane."

This struck terror in the king's heart, "And *you* brought this here?!"

She put her hands up, "Like I said, it would've happened eventually. We were just trying to escape the devastation it caused at our home. Just as everyone else, we were just trying to *survive*."

"Tell me how to fix it!" The king again slammed against the door.

"Wish I could, my man, moth winged creature, thing."

"Now! He's just a kid!"

She sighed, "I told you I can't. I hope you're able to find a cure before his brain turns to mush, because we sure couldn't."

"You're not going to do anything?! You evil creature!" The king yelled.

"Look, I wish I could help. But I can't do anything for him. We didn't know that our ship was infected. I'm truly sorry, but I can't help. There's nothing you or I can do. Just try to help him through it so he might keep his sanity."

The king gave up hope on trying to get answers from her. He went back through the maze of tunnels and to where they were keeping the soldier. He opened the door and saw the boy in a corner, sobbing and apologizing. The king comforted him and told him that nothing was his fault for hours. Kayden started to lose it. As the woman had warned, he was going mad. He even started to hear voices, and when he told the king what they were telling him to do, it sent shivers down his spine. But he was strong. He didn't give in to any thoughts.

The boy shook his head and started screaming, "Shut up! Shut up!" He repeated, again and again.

"Kayden, what?" The king had to hold the boy down, he was thrashing and yelling.

"They're screaming! Quiet! Just shut up!"

"Hey, hey. No one else is here. Don't be afraid, you're alright." Ambrico held the thrashing boy to his chest, shushing him. The child was terrified. He was suffering so much. All because of those damn human beings. Terrible creatures.

"King Ambrico. There's only one way his suffering will stop." Merlin opened the door and spoke with a sad voice.

"Anything. Help him, please." Ambrico sobbed.

The troll twisted a syringe in his gloved fingers, trying to decide if he should explain. Then he sighed "This is a medication that will" The troll paused, then he bowed his head, "It will stop his heart. Painlessly, of course."

The king's words caught in his throat, then he swallowed, "You" He breathed, "You want to kill him."

The troll was silent for what seemed like forever, then closed his eyes, "Your Majesty. He's suffering, there isn't any way for us to help him."

"He's just a child!" The king yelled.

"A child who doesn't deserve the fear and pain he's being put through."

The king tried to get Kayden's attention, but his eyes were flickering across the room, seeing figures that didn't exist. The boy was sobbing and struggling to escape from the king.

Ambrico closed his eyes, then slowly nodded, "Fine. It's painless?"

"Yes." Merlin kneeled next to the boy, then he gripped his arm. The king hugged the boy, "I'm so sorry, Kayden."

The boy's eyes were able to lock on Ambrico as he tore his arm from Merlin, "Your Majesty." He breathed, "What's happening?" His voice cracked with fear, but Kayden was startled by a hallucination and his focus left Ambrico. He started sobbing and closed his eyes, again unaware of anything around him.

Merlin's hands were shaking as he injected the medication into his blood. The king sobbed as the boy's body slowly became limp. The fear faded from his eyes and they became empty.

"I'm sorry. I'm so sorry." The king said again and again, tears streaming down his face. He had never even witnessed death, let alone caused it for an innocent child. He was king in a world where violence was nonexistent.