

## Contract Signed In Ash

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## Contract Signed In Ash

by [5ievel](#)

### Summary

“This is the revival book.” Dream continued “I can bring anyone back Wilbur, I'm near godly with it! However, I need to work out the side effects. Find its limits.”

“And you need someone to use it on.”

“Yep, so General Soot...deal?” Dream held his hand out

“In return for L'manbergs independence, and peace between our two countries?” Wilbur questioned

“Of course.”

“And...if this book shows no consequence, I want you to revive my men should they ever lose their last life... with no trade-off.”

Dream sighed but nodded “Fine. Is that all?”

Wilbur nodded back and shook the other's hand. Anything for his family.

## Notes

I am so sorry its been so long since any update, this fic was kicking me hard man. also I should have more free time in like a month or so :)

also also do not worry, EVERY FIC I HAVE will be updated at some point, none are abandoned. Plenty are in progress rn

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

## The Exchange

While the rest of L'manberg was cheering about their previous winnings of the war, however small it may have been, and discussing ways to finally best Dream and The Greater SMP, Wilbur remained in the Camarvan with shaking hands gripping tightly onto a sheet of paper.

His men had no clue yet but Dream had sent a letter, one declaring yet another war. It claimed that they had even more weapons and promised defeat. Wilbur had faith in his people, he did, but even the most faith in the world can't overcome blatant power.

L'manberg had just lost Eret, many lives along with him, and they recently suffered heavy damage in the form of explosives. Dream and his men had the upper hand, L'manberg didn't have the equipment to handle another war.

Most of their food reserves went up in flames, and both their offensive and defensive equipment was dwindling. If what Dream wrote was true, L'manbergs people would fall quickly. He didn't know if they'd get up again.

While Wilbur loved L'manberg, in the end, it was just a country. Its people were more important. It wasn't worth losing everyone for a minuscule chance at independence. He'd rather have everyone come out alive and try again later than be left with nothing but ash.

So with distant chattering of his friends and family filtering in through the windows, Wilbur picked up a quill and wrote a formal request. One asking for Dream to meet with him on the outer edges of the SMP for negotiations.

After looking over the letter once more, he focused his attention on a cage that sat on his desk.

Quiet squeaks grew louder the closer he got as a couple of rats poked their small heads through the bars. Curious eyes stared at him as he unlocked the cage and removed the lid.

The smallest of the rats tried to grab at his fingers as Wilbur reached in, so opened his hand and let it climb on top of his palm before shutting the cage.

“Hello, there little one. I have a task for you.”

Wilbur held out the letter for the rat to take before whispering a target enchantment, allowing the animal to find Dream. When a familiar purple shimmer tinted its fur he released it on the window ledge and watched as it scampered away, the letter held tightly between its teeth.

“Wilbur!” A knock came from the front of the van. “Come outside by the fire, we can't plan without our General!” The laugh afterward made him think they were not planning anything serious, but he got up anyway, one night off wouldn't hurt.

~~~~~

It was five days later that a tap on his window woke him.

A dark green parrot sat on his window sill, a note in its beak. It let out a muffled squawk before tapping the glass again. His rat sat beside the bird, rubbing at its face.

Wilbur quietly got up from his bed, before slowly sliding the window open not wanting to wake the others.

The two animals quickly slid inside, the rat climbing up to Wilbur's shoulder as the parrot sat on his outstretched hand.

When Wilbur grabbed the note, the parrot squawked out a broken sentence, "One chance." and "Soot" before snapping at his fingers and flying out the window.

The note had a date, time, and a smiley face.

He wasn't sure he should be worried or glad Dream had agreed. He couldn't tell what the older man was planning, but he'd do his best to be prepared.

The rat squeaked for attention, making Wilbur slide the note in his desk drawer before giving the rat a small scratch behind the ear with a quiet laugh.

"You did wonderful darling, thank you."

~~~~~

"Wilbur."

"Dream."

The two leaders stood across from one another, neither taking a step forwards.

"I assume you got my letter?" Dream asked calmly

"And you received mine." Wilbur matched the other's tone, unwilling to appear anything but neutral.

Dream tilted his head sideways, "You asked to negotiate, why do you think I'm interested in anything you have? You have nothing to give."

"You showed up, didn't you? I must have something if you've agreed to meet." Wilbur had to hold back his grin, there was a chance he'd get both independence and safety for the others.

A low snicker made doubt creep into his mind, why was Dream laughing?

"Fine, got me there." Dream tapped a bag hanging by his side "I need a...test subject of course."

Wilbur took a glance at the bag and watched the other man pull out a book bound with a black cover.

"This is the revival book." Dream continued "I can bring anyone back Wilbur, I'm near godly with it! However, I need to work out the side effects. Find its limits."

"And you need someone to use it on."

"Yep, so General Soot...deal?" Dream held his hand out

"In return for L'manberg's independence, and peace between our two countries?" Wilbur questioned

"Of course."

"And...if this book shows no consequence, I want you to revive my men should they ever lose their last life... with no trade-off."

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“Wilbur!! Wilbur!!”

Loud shouts soon followed by pounding on the door, startled Wilbur awake. He quickly got up from his desk, trying to smooth the wrinkles in his uniform before opening the door.

“Wilbs!”

It's Tommy and Tubbo, with Niki close behind. The two boys shove their way in, and Niki waves happily before following them in much more respectfully.

“You'll never guess what happened, Wilbur!” Tubbo's smile is blinding and he's bouncing on his heels. Wilbur guesses he knows exactly what they're here for.

Before Wilbur could weasel in a guess, Tommy was speaking over him.

“Dream gave up! L’manberg has independence! We won, Wilbur!!”

Give up? He's surprised that Dream went with that. He expected the other to be too proud to ‘give up’ but if it keeps the others from asking questions or finding out his involvement, he was all for it.

“What's up big man, thought you'd be celebrating by now! Did you even hear me?” Tommy speaks again

“Wilbur?” It's Niki this time, her calm voice showing just a hint of concern as she places a hand on his shoulder

The touch snaps him out of his thoughts and he forces a surprised grin on his face “Sorry, I just...couldn't believe it! This is great news!!” Tommy's eyes were squinted in suspicion, but Tubbos cheer pulled his gaze away from the older man.

“Can we celebrate Wilbur? It doesn't have to be big.” Tubbo questions, Niki and Tommy nodding along with him, drawing a genuine smile to Wilbur's face.

“Of course! Go tell the others, and start setting up...Within reason, boys” He adds at the mischievous twin grins on the youngest faces

The two run off, and only Niki stays behind. “Are you coming, Will?”

“I'll meet you there, just got a few things to do around here first. Keep an eye on the others for me?”

She nods before leaving, quietly shutting the door behind her.

It's moments later a light tap hits his door.

“Niki? Did you forget some--” The person at the door is not Niki.

“Sorry, Mr. President.” The nickname sounds bitter, “Wrong person.” His head tilts and Wilbur

can imagine him smiling

“What do you want Dream, we spoke yesterday.”

“Well...” Dream shrugs casually “Never early to start is it?”

Wilbur's eyes widened. Already?

“Dream I can't. The others are expecting me.”

The other grabbed Wilbur's arm and led him out the door “It will be quick.”

~~~~~

Surprisingly, he wasn't taken outside of L'manberg, merely brought to the edge of it where some trees made a clearing nearly hidden from plain sight.

“Ok Dream, Let's get this over with--” Wilbur spun around, but was met with a blur of motion and a sharp pain in his chest.

“As you wish, General.” Dream laughed, letting the other man fall to the ground as he started wiping off his axe.

“Fuck you Dream.” He spat, weakly gripping onto his wound. He should have known Dream wouldn't be nice about his end of the deal.

“See you soon Wilbur.” Dream hummed, only fetching the book when the president stopped moving altogether.

Wilbur wasn't sure how long he lay in the field silently cursing Dream, until a loud sound caused him to snap his eyes open. He only got a glimpse of darkness before a bright light was barreling towards him and he reflexively rolled to the side.

A train...A train was passing by him. There were no trains in L'manberg.

He sat up from where he lay, watching the train disappear down the dark tunnel before focusing on himself. His hands were a sickly grey that made worry stir in his gut, but what was more pressing was the wound in his chest, painless but slowly oozing blue blood.

Was he in hell? He hoped this wasn't what heaven was.

Deciding to push his freaky new appearance to the back of his mind, for now, Wilbur explored around the seemingly endless station. Dream would be back for him any time surely, why not try to pass the time.

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“Hello Wilbur! How was the trip? Tell me everything.”

“Four days Dream!! You-You left me there for four days!! You said it would be quick!”

The masked man wrote something down before speaking “You were only gone for four hours Wilbur, it seems time passes differently in death. Now, what did you see? How do you feel?”

Wilbur felt a small ache in his chest, and his fingertips tingled numbly but aside from that he felt...normal. He told Dream so.

“Perhaps it'll fade with time, keep an eye on it Wilbur. Now, what did you see?”

“I--”

“Wilbur!!” Distant shouts could be heard.

Dream sighed frustratingly before tossing an enderpearl, “Were not done yet Wilbur.” and he was gone. Just as Tommy and Fundy slipped through the trees.

“Wilbur there you are! What are you doing out here?” Fundy asked

“Yeah the festivals about to begin!” Tommy added on

Wilbur fiddled with his fingertips, trying to will feeling back into them. “Y-Yeah sorry guys, took a walk and got distracted! Should we head back?”

“Yeah! We will grab your guitar on the way, can't have a L'manberg festival without it!”

# Roundtrip

## Chapter Summary

Dream comes again, and again, and again.

Wilbur declining, L'manbergs safe, and Phil wants to know who the fuck did this to his son.

## Chapter Notes

HEY! This chapter is not happy, and while it doesn't go into super descriptive stuff it's still dark. Legit is just death and death and death.

This is your warning, pls be careful reading if you don't like this stuff.

Quite a long chapter compared to the last XD

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

When he wakes up dazed, in pain, and clearly not where he went to bed the night before is when Wilbur realizes Dream stopped by while he slept.

Another test he supposes, although the thought of him being able to be killed so easily makes discomfort settle in his bones. He didn't even notice, didn't wake up. What if he hadn't made that deal with Dream, what if the revival book wasn't on the table? He would have been taken away from his friends and family, he would have abandoned them to whatever fate.

Wilbur sighs shakily, there's no need to spiral down that route. He won't stay here, Dream will come to get him. Even if it takes days again, he will find his way back home. The train station is temporary...it's temporary.

He stands up and for a moment, tries to find how he died. The axe wound is back, but he can't find anything new. Despite the mildly annoying pain, he feels there's nothing to show what Dream did. Perhaps it's a good thing, a new ghostly wound doesn't seem too appealing anyhow.

The train isn't here this time, at least not yet. So Wilbur explores once again, he knows there's most likely not a way out, everything is the same after all...but it's a never-ending station, thousands of platforms, and if it takes as long as last time to come back? He'll need something to keep him occupied. Even if it's a pointless activity.

\*

“Good morning, did you enjoy your rest?” Dreams' voice is filled with mirth, as he lightly taps Wilbur's cheek.

His head is pounding and he can't bring himself to respond with more than a groan.

“Soot?” The amusement is gone.

“Why?” He whispers. Nine days he counted, nine days alone in that stupid station.

“Wanted to see if being unconscious had any different effects. We have plenty of factors to test, don't we Wilbur? How was the trip? better than last time? Worse?”

Wilbur flips him off tiredly but tells him everything. He may have to hold up his end of the deal, but he doesn't have to be civil about it.

Dream laughs.

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The third time he's killed, he's washing his and a few other's uniforms in the nearby river. The others remain at camp doing their own tasks.

A hand grabs at his ankle and Wilbur kicks out in surprise, marking Dream's mask with a small crack.

They're both rooted in shock, but it doesn't last long and Dream is tugging him into the rushing water and forcing him under.

Wilbur fights, but Dream is glowing with the effects of a water-breathing potion, while Wilbur himself has to struggle to hold his breath.

He wakes up sopping wet and shivering in the train station once again, and lays down in defeat. He's already spent 13 days looking for a way out, a few more won't reveal anything new.

Wilbur realizes he can't sleep here, but simply losing himself to his thoughts passes the time quickly enough, and in the least amount of waiting so far he's being shaken awake, in the real world.

It's not Dream.

“Wilbur?!” Jack is the one shaking him awake.

Grabbing onto his arm to stop the panicked shaking, Wilbur uses the others' support to sit up and look around. Where had Dream gone?

“Wilbur! What happened?”

“I slipped.” The lie slips out easily. “Must have hit my head.” He coughs up some water, and Jack is patting his back in an attempt to help.

“Uh ok, well you seem mostly fine?”

He doesn't feel like it, he's still cold, and his lungs ache. He nods to Jack's statement anyhow.

“But let's head back, we'll get you resting up with a healing potion just in case. Alright?”

He nods, and when they get back he doesn't mention that the usually sweet potion tastes rotten.

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The seventh time it happens, he's reading leaned up against L'mantree.

It's quick and nearly painless.

An audible clicking draws his attention, and a crossbow bolt finds itself buried in his book. He knows what this means by now, and closes his eyes when he hears the second click. He doesn't want to see more than he has to.

By the time he gets back, the blood is dried and leaves a red splatter against the tree's bark beside the noticeable piercing mark of the arrow, and the sky has darkened.

Dream is waiting for him, notebook in hand. It hurts to talk.

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The sixteenth time, he's awoken by heat licking at his wrist.

Wilbur jumps up from where he was resting and backs into the corner. Flames are covering his room, growing higher and higher as smoke fills his lungs making him cough harshly and lower himself to the ground.

“Dream!” He shouts, “This isn't funny. Put it out!” Sure, the other man has been cruel in some of the deaths, but nothing quite as torturous as this.

He gains no response and he's not sure if Dream is even around, the fire is quickly spreading inwards. Someone else has to notice this right? It's too bold even for Dream. Someone will see the fire, someone will come. He won't die.

Doubt tugs at his mind when the fire reaches his foot.

“Dream!” Nothing, “Tommy!” Nothing, “Niki!” Nothing.

He screams out when the flames catch onto him, frantically trying to put them out and escape. “Help me!” He is not above asking for help, he doesn't want to die. He never did, even if he knows he will be brought back.

\*

When he finds himself beside a familiar train he pounds against the ground with an angry sob. He's tired, so tired. He doesn't want this anymore.

\*

Dream brings him back outside the flaming remains of his house, and he just remains on the ground beside him. The rat cage is placed between them. They both watch as his belongings go up in flames, and Wilbur feels phantom pain burn at his limbs.

Dream looks past the house, where people are running closer, and gives Wilbur a light nudge with his foot. “I'll be back in the morning, Wilbur.”

He nods as Dream leaves.

“Dad? Dad!” Fundy is slamming into him, hugging him tightly.

Wilbur breaks his gaze from his house and focuses on his son. Hugging him back just as tight.  
“Hey, it's ok.”

“Wilbur!”

“What happened?!”

“Are you ok?!”

The rest of L'manberg has arrived, some flocking to Wilbur and Fundy, the others working to put out the fire.

Wilbur doesn't answer their questions, and they don't pester him

He doesn't sleep after that night.

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The twentieth gives him a fear of wolves and dogs, he doesn't remember why.

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The twenty-eighth is something he never expected.

It's Tubbo who delivers him a basket of homemade goods, apparently, the boy baked some for everyone.

Wilbur ruffles his hair with a bright grin, thanking him for the sweet gift before he runs off to deliver the rest.

The basket is set on the desk beside his rats, and he goes off to finish his paperwork. Only after he's done will he reward himself with one of the treats.

Soon after he eats one, he's dizzy. Sharp pains come next, followed by his throat closing and his lungs seizing. Wilbur drops to the ground, clawing at his neck and struggling to do anything.

He finally gets a full breath of air, but by that point Wilbur's at the oh-so-familiar platform. He feels relief, for once he's glad to be back.

Here, there is no pain. Here, there is nothing jumping out at him. Here, there is nothing poisoning him.

When he's forcefully taken back he discovers he doesn't need to eat, not anymore. So he doesn't.

Perhaps it's a perk of dying?

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The thirty-second makes his hands shake due to trident lead lightning.

It's a few weeks after the electrocution that Niki approaches him. Nervousness is clear in her movements.

“Will?” She sits beside him and he looks over with a small smile.

“We've been talking and...” She looks to the ground and refuses to meet his eyes. “We think you should step down.”

His smile falls.

“We would love to have you as our President Wilbur!” Niki quickly adds “But you're not ok, I don't think the stress has been good for you. We are worried”

“You haven't been sleeping, aside from when you pass out.” He doesn't know what to tell her.

“You haven't been eating, or drinking.” He doesn't need to, but she doesn't know that.

“You're jumpy all the time.” He can't control it, anything could kill him.

“You're confused all the time, you forget things.” He knew that, but it wasn't that bad was it?

“You're becoming reckless, it's like you have a death wish, Will.” He found it hard to truly care when he can't die, or more rather isn't allowed to.

“You're shaking. You can't write anymore, you can't play...” He looked down at his own hands, and true to her words he was. It doesn't stop.

“Even your hair is turning white, you need a break, Wilbur. You are sick or something.” That was something Wilbur didn't know, he's avoided looking in the mirror lately. Only seeing his ghostly otherworld self when he does.

“I understand.” His voice is monotone, not a hint of emotion shows on his face. “I, Wilbur Soot, revoke my title as president.”

Niki looks a mix of relieved and scared.

“Thank you, Will, I'll tell the others...oh, one more thing. We called Phil. He said he could get here in a month or two and Techno said you are welcome to stay at his place if you need to get away from L'manberg.”

Wilbur nodded, not quite sure where he wanted to go. Where he can go.

“Ok well, I must get going. Thank you for being so understanding Wilbur. I hope this break does you good, and I am here for you if you need me. We all are, alright?”

By the time he zones back in, she's gone.

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He doesn't get to enjoy his 'break' long before Dream is teleporting beside him.

Wilbur sits at the edge of a cliffside, feet dangling off and enjoying the setting sun when Dream sits beside him.

Neither speaks until the sun sets fully, and it's then when Dream turns to him.

“With you being demoted, it seems like you just gained a whole lot of free time huh?”

Wilbur doesn't move.

“I think it's finally time we find out the effects of long-term exposure. Don't you think so?”

Wilbur sits up straighter but doesn't get the chance to say anything before Dream is shoving him forwards and he's falling. His desperate last-second grip on the cliff being shoved away by the handle of Dreams axe.

\*

Wilbur doesn't mind the first month in limbo, it's freedom. It's safety. Its reprieve.

Aside from his appearance, a collage of all his fatal wounds, it's paradise.

Sometimes, he sees his family and friends. He worries they've died, but they always disappear so Wilbur is not so sure. He speaks to them, and sometimes they respond. They let him tell them everything because while he promised no one would know, hallucinations can't tell anyone. He can finally get the weight off his chest.

Over time, as more months pass the view of heaven warps to show what it really is, it's hell just as it was back in the other world.

Trains rattle around in his head, and he can hear them even when he can't see them

Phantom pains wrack every ounce of his body at random times.

He can feel his deaths, forced to relive them.

Eventually, he doesn't feel happy, he doesn't feel sad, he doesn't feel angry, he doesn't feel and he's not sure what he prefers.

Time blurs together and it's hard to remember things, both in the train station and out. Time itself is hard to tell. Wilbur doesn't know how long he's been left here but he doesn't care. He stopped

trying to board the trains long ago.

Something is squeezing his hands, and he looks up into a white mask.

“Dream? When--?” He's out of the train station, he doesn't remember leaving. Is this another hallucination?

“Breathe.” Oh. he takes a deep gasp. He forgot to breathe and he giggles at the thought.

Hands squeeze his again and tug them forwards. “Looks like the long term isn't good at all, the effects seem pretty drastic.”

Wilbur looks at his hands, they look as if they were dipped in black ink. His fingertips to his wrists are pitch black, with thin dark veins stretching out. Aside from his hands, the marks seem to pool where his fatal injuries lay on his ghost self. It doesn't hurt anymore, instead, it feels numb.

The rats don't let him hold them anymore, instead they back away

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There is once after the prolonged limbo, that Wilbur tries to escape death.

He's in the nether on his way to Technos, he can't remember why he is going but he knows it's not the first time.

Wilbur carries around a belt of potions after the river incident and the fire incident, so when Dream collapses the bridge underneath him he is prepared with fire resistance.

He knows he's breaking the contract by doing this, but his mind screams at him with the thought of burning and being unable to breathe.

The lava burns, but not enough to be more than uncomfortable.

Arrows fly past his face, so he takes a deep breath and dives. Being blind is a new experience, but he'd rather that than a dipped arrow in the back.

When his hands touch the odd texture of netherrack he swims up and heaves himself out of the lava lake and bolts to where he knows Technos portal to be.

Amazingly, he reaches it and falls through before destroying it on the other side. He hopes Technoblade will forgive him.

When the adrenalin fades, he's hit with what exactly he's just done. What it might cost him. "Dream?" Wilbur looks around but spots nothing.

"We made a deal, Wilbur." The admin is standing behind him, stepping out of a freshly fixed portal. "You said you'd do this, but here you are. Running."

"I don't want to go back."

"You don't get a choice." Dream pauses. "Unless you want to end our deal? I'm always open for a trip down to L'manberg."

"No!" Even Wilbur is surprised by his own outburst. "I'll do it, just leave them alone."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes. They are happy. I want them to stay that way. No more conflict Dream. Please. I won't do it again."

He finds himself on the platform once again, he doesn't remember how he died.

~~~

He comes back in red-stained snow, Dream is gone only some footprints are left behind. They are slightly snowed in and he wonders how long he's been lying there for.

Wilbur pulls out his communicator, only to realize the black has spread past his gloves. He ignores it and sends a quick message to Techno, before getting up and continuing on.

When he reaches the cabin, he hears two voices. They are both very familiar.

“Wilbur! You're going to freeze! Where's your coat?”

He does have a coat, he-- oh. Where'd it go? “I think I forgot it”

“How do you forget your coat, we are in the tundra.”

Wilbur shrugs in response to Techno.

“Here, let's get you inside, we need to chat anyway.” It's Phil, putting a hand on his back.

He flinches but Phil either doesn't notice or ignores it, for he continues pushing him inside.

The trio settles down by the fireplace, and Techno hands Wilbur a bundle of dry wooly clothing and a blanket.

“Wilbur. Niki and the others told me everything.”

Wilbur nods and works on untying the blanket with shaky hands, it's a struggle and the gloves don't help.

“I think you should come back home with me.”

Wilbur's eyes widen at the offer, and he wants to desperately accept it. If he does, however, he doesn't know what will happen to his people and L'manberg.

“No thanks.” He hums, still fiddling with the blanket

“Wilbur--” Phil tries again.

“No.”

“Will--” Techno gives an attempt

“I'm...staying here.”

“Why?” Phil looks pitying

“I want to.”

“Do you?” Techno challenges

Wilbur doesn't respond, instead, he slips off his gloves in frustration and finally unties and opens the blanket. He wraps it around him. He's not cold, but it's nice nonetheless.

“What the fuck happened to your hands?” Phil is bolting out of his seat to grab at them.

“What?” Shit, the gloves.

“Your hands Wilbur, you better explain what the fuck happened for you to get this.” Phil's tone

borders on anger.

“Nothing that concerns you, Phil.”

“When my son shows up with the mark of death covering his body and says nothing? It sure as hell concerns me. You've got the literal void clinging to you like you're its home.” Phil is definitely angry now. “When did this happen, Wilbur?”

The mark of death, was he still dead? No, this doesn't seem like the train station...but there have been other times when it felt like he was alive when he wasn't. Dream revived him, didn't he? He wasn't there when he woke up...

“Are you real? Am I still dead?” he whispers, watching shock bloom on their faces.

Wilbur looked down to his hands, then moved his gaze across the rest of his body. He can see his ghostly wounds, he reaches out and touches them. Light traces of pain flare up when he does. He only sees them when he's dead so that means this isn't real right?

He's imagining things again.

“What are you doing?” Technoblade is pulling his hands away. “There's nothing there.”

“But Dream said he would revive me, he did I thought? How long have I been dead? Are you guys dead?”

“You're not dead Wilbur.” Techno states at the same time Phil asks “Dream did this?”

“Oh but I must be dead, Technoblade. I can see my ghost. I only see that with the trains, so I must still be waiting in Limbo. You're not even real, when he brings me back I am supposed to meet the real you.”

Suddenly he's being pulled into a hug, and he melts at the positive contact. It's been so long since he's seen Phil, it's nice to be with him again even if it's not real. It feels real enough.

“Techno get the rest of L’manberg here *now*. I need to speak with them all.”

## Chapter End Notes

Next chapter is about the SMP members noticing weird things about their dear leader, and the ending of this chapter :)

## Now boarding

### Chapter Summary

The rest of L'manberg shows up, they're followed.

### Chapter Notes

HEY! Still a dark chapter, not as much death as last but still.... it's not a happy story.  
Fair warning!

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

Tommy is the first to notice something different about Wilbur.

The eldest has been jumpy when previously it would take quite a bit to scare him. Now, all Tommy had to do was tap him on the shoulder and he'd be shooting out of his chair with a gasp.

“Woah calm yourself. It's just me, Will.” Tommy backs up, letting Wilbur get a good look at him.

“Oh. I'm sorry Tommy. What can I do for you?”

“Are you good, big man?”

“Yes Tommy, just tired. That's all.” Wilbur sounded honest.

Tommy believed him. and when it kept happening he chalked it up to the war. They all had effects from the fighting, and he wouldn't fault Wilbur for being so on edge.

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The next to notice something really off is Jack and Niki.

They're with Wilbur, walking around L'manberg and planning its future structures. Niki is discussing ideas for a library when Wilbur stumbles.

Jack catches him before he can fall and steadies him. "Woah Wilbur, you alright?"

He hums in response, and Niki steps forwards clearly not convinced.

"Do you want to go back home? Lay down for a little bit? We can continue and bring you notes to catch you up."

Wilbur shook his head and disagreed, and it wasn't much further until he fully collapsed.

"Niki!" Jack shouted, causing her to turn around only to see him lowering Wilbur down to the ground.

"Will. Wilbur. Wilbur!." They keep repeating his name and tapping at him, eventually managing to rouse him.

They bring him home, but yet as time goes on and it happens more and more, their concern only grows.

Niki starts bringing him tea, Jack makes him a weighted blanket, Fundy gifts him books, Tommy lends him his music discs, and Tubbo gives him a fan. They all try, but yet Wilbur still seems unable to sleep.

They are unsure of what to do, and when his hands begin to shake and white streaks become visible in his hair they decide enough is enough. Perhaps the solution is to remove the source of stress rather than giving him temporary solutions.

Niki brings back the news that he agreed, and they are all thankful but yet taken by surprise. Hopefully, he will recover and they can have their president back. In the meantime, Niki will take his place.

They call Phil.

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After Wilbur steps down, Fundy and Tubbo invite him to hang out with them. He agrees, and the two cheer.

They tinker about and make a modified bow and a modified crossbow, planning to test them against each other. Wilbur is supposed to be the non-biased judge.

He smiles and laughs at their antics and they can't help the joy blooming in their chest from seeing him looking healthier, if even for a moment.

Of course, the moment doesn't last as long as they'd like as the crossbow malfunctions as they are moving it and a wild bolt goes off. Thankfully it doesn't kill anyone, but it digs against Wilbur's forearm before landing in the dirt.

He goes rigid and simply looks at the steadily bleeding wound. He doesn't make a sound.

"Oh my gosh, Wilbur I'm so sorry!" Tubbo is rushing towards him yanking cloth out of his bag and quickly wrapping the cut as best he could.

"Wilbur?" Fundy tilts his head cautiously, Wilbur hasn't budged from his spot. Seemingly catatonic. He doesn't move, simply staring at the bandage.

"Tubbo, he's not moving."

Fundy nudges him and he still doesn't acknowledge it, Tubbo snaps his fingers by his face but he doesn't even flinch.

"Wilbur...Wilbur! Wilbur Soot."

“Fundy, has this happened before?” Tubbo questions, The fox hybrid would be one of the few that knows most about Wilbur.

He shakes his head nervously and gives his father a light shake. Despite the man's newfound jumpiness, it does nothing.

“Tubbo, it's not--”

Fundy is cut off as cool water splashes at him. Tubbo, is holding an empty bucket, and Wilbur is taking gasping breaths as he looks around wildly.

Both the boys hug him when he calms, both apologizing and bombarding him with questions. He answers them all with ‘I'm fine’ and ‘Its nothing’

“I'm sorry, I didn't mean to do that. Lost where I was for a moment.” Wilbur whispers, giving a light hug back. “How about we go home hm?”

They agree, done with the scares for the day.

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When Wilbur comes by to visit him, Techno notes he seems...wrong. It's not just the new hair, making him seem older than he really is. He knows something else is wrong, even if he doesn't quite know what it is.

He keeps a careful eye on him, and other than him disappearing randomly throughout the day only to come back with a faraway look in his eye, Tehnoblade can't see anything odd causing Wilbur's behaviour. He tries to follow him twice but loses him each time.

Instead, he tries to ask him where he went when he comes back, Wilbur stammers out an excuse before quickly claiming he's going to bed. An obvious lie Techno doesn't want to oppose.

When the storm rolled in, however, he finally got a hint.

The thunder rumbles and shakes his house, soon after Techno hears a thump from Wilbur's room.

He debates leaving him be and finishing his book, but the voices are persistent and he finds himself striding over to Wilbur.

For a moment, he sees nothing but a small whimper has his head spinning over to the window. Wilbur is curled in a ball, hands over his ears as he sits in the only light available.

“Wilbur?” Techno is slow to approach, not totally sure what to do. He wishes Phil was here to deal with it, but he's not so he's stuck with the job.

Wilbur is whispering broken sentences, but Techno can clearly hear “The trains...”, “Let me out...” and “Again.” He doesn't understand.

“Wilbur.” He touches his shoulder but that only makes it worse, Wilbur's eyes shut tighter and his fists clench his hair.

Still unsure on how to fix whatever's happening, Techno leaves to get his book. He brings back it, a blanket, and two teas.

Techno sits beside Wilbur, not quite touching him but with the big blanket wrapped around them both. He reads his book, and when the thunder or lightning startle Wilbur, he begins reading aloud until he calms down again.

He doesn't know if it's doing anything, but he's trying and when he wakes up to Wilbur leaning on him, an empty cup beside his foot, and eyes closed he likes to think he succeeded.

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As Techno begins messaging the people of L'manberg, he realizes perhaps that night wasn't a success. Wilbur's sleeping due to a weakness potion, and he can't help but compare him to the last time he was here.

The replies flood in, he ignores all of them.

“Phil. You said the mark of death. Is Wilbur dead? Dying?”

His wings shift as he looks away from Wilbur, instead turning towards Techno. “He's not dead, well not anymore. People only get them when they escape death. When they touch it and come away. Somehow, Wilbur has done that enough to get more marks than I've ever seen.” He grasps Wilbur's hand, for comfort or inspection Techno isn't sure. “Techno. I've been around a long time, and no one has ever amassed this much of the void. It might very well kill him, and if not? I'm not sure he'll ever be the same.”

“Can we do something to reverse it?”

“Unless we have a way to control the void and remove its hold, no. The most we can do is prevent it from spreading.”

“Oh.” It is not the news Techno wanted to hear.

“Yeah, I--”

“Techno!!! Philllllll!!!” Tommy is shouting from outside, knocking harshly. “Let me in!”

Phil beats him to the door, and following Tommy is the rest of L'manberg. Apparently, they all decided to travel together.

Trampling past Phil, Tommy sprints over to Techno. “What the fuck did you do to Wilbur, what was that fucking message about?” His face is angry, but Techno can see the fear swirling in his eyes.

He points over to the couch and Tommy, followed by everyone quickly moves over towards it. They all anxiously hover around Wilbur.

“What's wrong with him?” Niki questions.

“Something took his final life, we think it was Dream. Wilbur mentioned something about Dream reviving him.” Phil answers.

“No! no Wilbur has two lives left. He only lost his first to the control room with Eret, we would have known if he lost another.” Fundy protests, his voice rising.

“Fundy, he had only two lives when he came here. He lost his first as a child back home. If he lost another in that room...he only had one left.”

“He was acting weird after the control room...” Jack mutters, but Tubbo's voice overpowers his.

“What?! He never told us that. What happened?”

“He was chasing some animal, childish curiosity y'know? I just turned around for a moment but he'd already gone off by the time I looked. He found a frozen lake, it..wasn't strong enough to hold him and I didn't notice until it was too late. That's why he's always so cold, a respawn glitch.” Phil's eyes are watering, but his voice stays steady.

The others display a range of emotions, but it's Niki that speaks up first.

“Is that a respawn glitch?” She points to his hands “His hair too? Or the shaking?”

“I don't know about the rest, but his hands aren't a glitch. They mean he died god knows how many times, I don't know how he's still alive. I don't know what Dream did.”

“Is that why he's always gone? Dream took him?” Tubbo is much quieter.

Fundy glares at the ground, arms crossed in frustration. “But Wilbur didn't tell us anything about that! Why wouldn't he?”

“Maybe Dream threatened him? Forced him to lie?” Jack adds.

“Dream!!!” Tommy storms outside, yelling as loud as he can. “I know you can hear me, you bastard! You're a fucking admin, what the hell did you do to Wilbur?!”

“Tommy!” Phil chases after him, grabbing his arm and tugging him back inside. “We need to prepare, and we don't even know for sure it was Dream. We need to ask Wilbur when he's stable.”

“I didn't force him to do anything, We made a deal if you must know. One he broke apparently, we agreed not to say anything. But I guess here I am, breaking it too.” Dream is standing scarily close to Wilbur, axe held up to his throat. The contact causes him to stir and sluggishly open his eyes.

The others freeze, not wanting to provoke the other.

“Wilbur wouldn't make a deal with you!” Tubbo shouts

“Oh, but he did. He lets me play around with revival...in exchange for L'manberg's freedom. In exchange for your safety” He laughs as the others pale.

“Poor President... well, retired president. Gives up his life, time and time again, and in so many ways! And what does he get? Kicked out of his position, pushed away from a country he founded, a country he fought for, a country...he died for.” Dream laughs harder, and the axe shakes, drawing a small red line against Wilbur's throat.

“Dream let him go. He's held up his end of the deal, this has been enough. If you continue you won't be able to bring him back.” Phil steps forwards, wings flaring.

“I think you're right Philza. It was never meant to be.” Dream moves the axe away, and Phil's wings fall a little bit, everyone but Techno and Phil stiffen. “His part of the deal is done, and if I won't be able to bring him back I might as well not even try right?!”

Wilbur fidgets and tries to pull away but Dream is quick to grab onto the back of his neck. Lowering his voice, “No worries Wilbur, I will keep my promise. Nothing will happen to L'manberg by my hand, even when you're gone.”

Wilbur nods, closing his eyes. Dream smiles.

“Well General, I think you have a one-way ticket to hell.”

He swings, and screams fill the room as everyone races forwards.

“I have no use for a husk.”

All Wilbur hears is a train whistle, deafening everything around him.

#### Chapter End Notes

Welp. This is it, there are no goodbyes, there are no fixes, there are no attempts. There is only realization and loss.

#### End Notes

Thanks for readingggggg

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