

Tsumi Backstory: Eric Schaak

My friend Xou, whom I am not sure any of you have met of yet, has urged me to tell you my story that you may understand me and the forces which drive me better. I fear this is foolishness, but sometimes he does have a better perspective, and if it helps even one of you to avoid succumbing to the evil with which you are beset, then the pain of memory is well worth it.

I know not truly where to begin. I am from a world very much different from yours, and yet in some ways frighteningly familiar. I was... born... for lack of a better word for it in the heavens of this world of mine. Mayhap it is too strong a world to be calling it "mine" for I was a thinker, a philosopher of sorts, in a "world" of clear directions and actions. There was no need to ponder what the right action was, for it was presented to us clearly by the one who was our Father, and my... brothers... were beings of action. And yet... this is not quite right either, for there arose a discontent among us. Your world claims record, by word of mouth, of a heavenly uprising wherein the Brightest and his followers were cast down. This event, while you and yours have only ancestor's words to vouch for the veracity of here, I have witnessed the twin of in my own world. It was a terrible thing, to watch as ones I called brother fought amongst themselves. Even after all this time, I cannot keep from tears as I recall it. And yet... at that time none of us could be considered dead, for the very heavenly light the rebellion was aimed at did revive any fallen... Fallen... yes, that is what you call the rebels here I believe. Any case, after the fighting did reach the very throne of light, did the father step in and end it all. He declared that if my brethren did find such fault with the ways he did set for them, then they should make such laws as they felt were right, and govern themselves and those that agreed with them. But, he did declare, that like the pure light did shine from them while their home was in the heavens, so should their ideals shine through wherever they might be. Then he did cast them out of the heavens into a new realm which lie not truly beneath he earth, though it did appear so at times to those not gifted to see more than simply the three that you all can. You see the dimensions you can see, and that of the celest.... nay, I do become distracted from my purpose in this story. You see, I was not one of those that rebelled, that is... quite beyond me. But neither was I content to blindly follow after my Father after. For the perfection was corrupted and my mind was not willing to just go on as before. I did think before that there Must be a better way than that which we did pursue to lead the mortals on my world to the true Light, but had not the courage before to stand up and speak my mind.

So I did so to my Father and state my concerns. I did not fight in his war, I had lost my faith in His perfection, and could not go back to as I was. My choice had been to follow one I did not believe in, or join in a rebellion which would also betray the very ideals I held dear. What sort of a choice is that? I chose to stand aside, but this also was a betrayal, for I had sworn my very being to the Light, and then refused to protect it. For this I demanded (me? demanding? the very memory amuses me for what I was then, though a serious matter it was) to be treated like unto my brothers, for those who do not act to stop evil are as guilty as those who perpetuate it. Mine Father did ask if I was sure that this was what I wanted, my wings torn out, to view not the Light one day more, and for my very sins to be visible to those that pass me. Here I did weep, but did stand steadfast to my belief that what I had done was unforgivable, and that punishment must be given.

And so I did lose my wings that day. The pain was not so much physical as you know it, that pain was but a prick compared to that which I did feel severed in mine very spirit. I cannot find words which would adequately describe to you what it felt like, and I do hope none of you should ever have to experience that emptiness. When I awoke from the experience, I found myself on the surface of my world, more alone than ever before. The quiet alone nearly broke me right then, but the sounds of nearby conflict did distract me just in time from complete disintegration of spirit. I chose this path, I should have the strength to carry out my beliefs. I followed the sounds of this battle into a cavern where-in I found only carnage. A party of what I have come to call goblins was slaughtered in the entry. The blood...the absolute chaos of destructive force I saw within appalled me. Was this what the mortals I did champion do with the free will I believed so ardently in? Then I did see one last goblin struck down by arrows from around a corner. Not thinking that I was outcast, I did call upon my Father to lend me strength, and attempted to channel His holy will like I had often done in the past. I felt my very essence bend to the effort of will I put into the request, heedless of the dangers I knew of attempting to channel too much of the Divine Will. I felt as though there were a wall blocking me from even so much as a drop of that Light however and could not help the little green creature at all. Heedless I tried again and then once more with all my being and on that third try, as my very being was in danger of being torn apart by my own forces, I... cracked... that divine wall, and a shower of radiance did shine down upon the poor creature. I backed off amazed, my very gall at such an act did strike me, but as I did think this, a wave of contentment did flow over me, and I did come to realize that my convictions had not cost me everything. The Father would support me in little ways as long as I would continue to acknowledge him and follow his basic rules. He had made me equal to the lowliest of his worshippers on the mortal plane, and there I would remain until I proved I understood. A lot to be gotten from a single instant of feeling, and I was not quite sure what I was to understand, but I am still nonetheless grateful to Him for such a gift. There was more though, the goblin I had attempted to heal in vain had not only been fully healed by the radiance summoned, but it had also purged it's soul of the dark intents his race, I now know, is prone to. He had been Redeemed and reborn as a hobgoblin paladin. Never had such a thing been seen before. The skin had been changed from green to white and it's hair was a long platinum. He is now my dearest friend, though he does carry with him still memories of the dark past he did have. I in turn have told him he needs not share it with me, such as I speak but seldom of my own past, for it brings him only pain, where as my recollections do at least remind me of the goals I do have.

After that fateful day we did wander long roads as many of you do, and did our best to right what wrongs as we did find. The recounting of these tales would serve little save to cause you fright and give myself more accolade than I deserve, for I have not yet seen here the greater demons and devils that my brethren had become, and so I hope you have no need to fear them, and many of the lesser beasts you all already are full familiar with and are not worth noting. Along the way I did continue to give myself sacred vows to bring myself closer to mine lord, and continued to journey across the land and planes following my belief in your own wills to guild you toward the Light without the harshness and punishments that had been part of the cycle before. Slowly I came to see the reasons why such evils are allowed, and why sometimes pain is not evil, but rather intended to warn that there is wrong to be fixed, and in so doing, I felt my Lord's smile upon me more deeply, and know that while I was not exactly following His will, I was

nonetheless fulfilling my own self, and in so doing was coming closer to what was willed of me.

This might only serve to confuse you, but I assure you it is true that in coming closer to myself I did find greater contentment in my life. I have learned to laugh a little more at foolishnesses rather than judging as harsh as once I would have. All have the spark of love in them if they do have the courage to feel it. I do struggle with myself still to remember not only my own holy vows, but that sometimes the holiest thing is not the rules, but the Spirit that does fill them, the intent that does direct them to be made.

Nearly I had found my peace with the Father I saw, and the deeper love that did direct his actions when on one fateful day I did take a portal that seemed like many others I had taken before. As I stepped though I did feel a disconnection of sorts, but by the time I had realized what had happened It had closed behind me and my companions. Again! again I did feel this loss, but this time was different. It was not as though I was being blocked, but as if He who made everything had traveled beyond my ability to sense. There were traces which did feel both foreign and familiar at once. I was in this world you call your own, and I had no way back to my own. The basic structure was familiar to me, I sensed many of the same creatures here as in mine own home, and yet everything was askew. The humans here have taken over much of the landscape and shaped it to their will. This is not different from the overall direction of humanity, but in my home the fights against the other races which are so scarce here did inhibit their expansion. I would think you would be much more at peace, having so much less reason for strife and yet, having so few enemies with whom it is so easy to have differences of culture, and yet you all manage to segment yourselves so as to have sill foes... Words cannot describe my sadness upon viewing your world, and yet there is hope still. You all have as much capacity to love as those in my own world, so I hold my hope for a future where all will stand united by common understanding.

You confuse me for a guide from your history whom you attribute all sorts of powers to. I cannot tell you if the stories be true or false, whether there was once a man who was your own Lord of Light. I know only that there are those here who claim that such a being as the Lord has not contacted them for a long time, but mayhap they are masters of everything on this earth, but cannot themselves see everything that does occur in the greater picture. I intend this not as disrespect to those who I have found here, but merely as a question as I have asked my whole existence. Are you so sure in your knowledge that there can be no other option, or have you the humility to see another way? I am by no means perfect. I have taken the name Tsumibito as a reminder to myself of all that has come before. If you desire to know it's meaning, there might be a few who recognize it and could tell you, but you would have to open your eyes wide indeed in order to see everything.

Now that I have given thee a piece of my past, please do try to see past the words to the essence of who I am. Judge not one another, and do be wary of causing offense with crass comments. Who I am is not of your world, and any analogies you bring only demean your own history, which I have no way of knowing. Judge me for mine own self, and I shall do the same for you. Fare thee well, one and all, and may the higher powers of this world shine upon you in whatever form they may take.