

The Day the World Almost Ended

By: kremesch

All of Midgar was black that day.

Weapons attack went straight to the core of Shinra and the shattered glass fell, as if from the skies, like glittering shards amidst the black, choking smoke. It was complete and utter pandemonium.

Down below, the civilians of the Plate clamoured and ran like herds of wild and lost animals. Though some simply stood still, and stared in awe at the overwhelming reality of their world ending.

And above, all Rufus could do was stand slowly from the President's chair and watch as, for the first time in his life, he simply froze when the reality hit him. However, at the last moment, he brought his arm up to cover his face as if it was, somehow, going to protect him.

It's the end. He thought, almost bitterly at first, and that was the only thought that ran through his head as the massive force of Weapon's destruction came straight for him. Other than that, he thought and felt nothing, except for a strange sort of relief that suddenly washed over him as he thought that maybe it really was the end.

Down below, the Turks scattered in an attempt to bring order to the chaos; all except one, that was.

Reno simply stood there like the people around him, and gawked.

Why did he care?

He never cared when Rufus' father died.

So, why did he suddenly care when he realized that Rufus was up there when the blast hit?

He never liked Rufus...

None of that stopped him from suddenly running though. Although, unlike everyone else, he ran in the opposite direction, and ran straight into the heart of that which would most-likely kill him too.

However, none of that mattered to him.

And with his shirt over his face to block out the suffocating fumes, he ran with a burn in his muscles and lungs all the way up to the seventieth floor of the Shinra building. It was, perhaps, the one and only time in Reno's life where he actually considered that it might not be such a bad idea to stop smoking; the run was agony. But he couldn't stop himself.

"Fuck... Gaia... RUFUS!" He yelled, when he finally reached the top. Although he couldn't be heard amongst the deafening sirens and explosions, and the overwhelming sounds of failing reinforcements and falling concrete.

When there was no reply, a panic struck him somewhere inside, and he wound up pushing his way through the threatening debris while trying to avoid the fires that warned him not to go any further.

None of it made sense to him. The world was coming to an end. Meteor was approaching with an unstoppable force, threatening the existence to all of mankind. They were all going to die, and all Reno could worry about was saving a man that he always viewed as a psychotic sadist. But he wasn't really a man in Reno's eyes. He never was.

Rufus was a kid to him. That was how he met him and that was how he always viewed him. Albeit, he was a spoiled and messed up kid.

Or, at least that's what he always thought he thought about him.

The truth was that Reno never really knew what he thought about Rufus. The boy confused him, even though he wasn't really a boy anymore.

After letting out a pained grunt as something fell from above and hit him hard in the back, he wound up yelling out the new President's name again. Only it came out more panic-stricken than before.

"Ya'd better fuckin be alive, ya little shit!" He suddenly threatened, as he continued through the growing resistance toward his target. Though why he was threatening him made no sense, except to say, that in Reno's mind, he felt the President owed it to him to be alive for making him run up all those damn stairs.

And after all that, Reno stopped dead in his tracks, as his heart skipped a beat, when he saw a pale and bloodied hand from behind the President's desk.

"Shit..." He breathed out, as he hurriedly made his way around to see the once young and vain President lying, twisted, over the fallen chair and adorned in charred and bloodied clothing. The man was covered in debris and broken glass, and most ironically, his unconscious expression was one of peace.

It was in fact, a semblance of all that Shinra was, a massive and destructive force that shrouded itself in the belief that the end result was for the greater good.

"You fucking dumb-ass!" He yelled at him, not really knowing what else to do. Then he swallowed back a hard lump and hoped that he'd find a pulse when he knelt down to check. And with a sigh, he closed his eyes in relief and nodded to himself. Even though it wasn't much of a pulse, at least the boy still had one.

“I’m gonna get ya outta here, Kid.” Nearly choking as his words came out, he carefully put his arms under the near-lifeless form in hopes of not causing any more damage than what was already present on the suddenly seeming frail body. “I’m not gonna let ya die here... Not alone... Not like this.”

Why he cared, suddenly didn’t matter to him. At that moment, the only thing that did matter to him was getting Rufus to safety, and with a quick thought, he positioned Rufus so his face was pressed into his chest and his jacket covered the man’s head in a manner to protect him from the smoke.

All the while, he neglected to take care of himself. Reno had lived his life, and as far as he was concerned, it was never worth living.

None of it really mattered or made sense anyway.

But he just couldn’t leave Rufus there.

“Yer gonna be okay...” He muttered, when he finally got the President to the false safety of the ground below.

He didn’t believe it though. But he felt he had to say it.

And with a weak and tired breath, he brushed the matted bang out of Rufus’ face, because he knew the man had a strange quirk about that.

Of course, why Rufus didn’t just cut his hair to solve the problem was never a question open for debate, and once that was all out of the way, Reno decided his work was done. He’d grown so tired from the effort of trying to save the man for no reason, that he didn’t even notice the wounds or the small metal bar sticking out of his own back, and he simply passed out while muttering something he never remembered saying.

Rufus heard it though. In fact, he heard everything. He just didn’t have the strength or the desire to respond. But his eyes opened briefly, and confirmed that it wasn’t just a dream after all, when he saw the redhead passed out over him before he passed out himself.

However, Rufus never believed any of it, even though it was nice to, for a split second, believe that Reno actually did care about more than just his paycheck.