Chandler Flowers

English 301

April 20,2023

A Guardian Angel

Sai walked quietly through Heaven, passing multiple angels who were watching the world below with looks of disdain or boredom. Pieces of their conversation flew around Sai and one word was common among them:

“Abomination”

Each time that word was said, Sai’s heart ached, but that wasn’t important right now. He was summoned by the Lord himself for a task. Finally, he approached the golden door to the Lord's throne. Sai took a deep breath and opened it. There, seated on a throne of marble, was the mighty Lord. His long white hair touched the bottom of the room, his gleaming gold armor blinded Sai with his radiance, and his pure white eyes stared deep into Sai’s heart. The Lord held out his giant palm.

“Come, Abomination.” the Lord called in his booming voice

Sai summoned his wings and flew up to the Lord’s palm. He bowed, not daring to look into the eyes of the Lord.

“My Lord, what will you have me do?” asked Sai

“Look at this boy..” said the Lord

The Lord parted the clouds and revealed a young boy with blonde hair and bright green eyes. He sat in a hospital bed, bruised beyond belief, and he was crying his eyes out.

“His name is Raven Corvain. He is a child who needs someone to guide him. I would like it to be you.” said the Lord

“Why me? Wouldn’t a Guardian Angel be more suited for this task?” asked Sai

“You hear them outside, do you? The Guardian Angels have given up. We have had too many failures recently and most angels don’t see the point in trying to save humanity anymore. I cannot abide by that.”

The Lord stared even more fiercely into Sai’s eyes.

“Abomination, if you manage to save Raven, we could find a position for you here in Heaven. Do you accept this task?” asked the Lord

“I do, my Lord.” said Sai

The Lord waved his hand and Sai vanished in a burst of holy light.

The next morning, Raven left the hospital to go back to school in his neighborhood outside of San Francisco. It was the last day of junior year. He blocked out the yelling from his mother, grabbed his backpack, and left his home. It was a warm sunny day, too warm for the white long sleeve shirt he was wearing, but Raven would rather suffer in this heat than go back to the wrath of his mother. So, he kept walking with light steps to the school. Breakfast started in 30 minutes and there was no way Raven was going to miss it. On the way, Raven heard the rev of a familiar truck and tried to find a nearby tree, but it was too late. One of Caleb’s cronies, Mika, nailed Raven with a bucket of red paint. Caleb, who was in the driver’s seat, laughed alongside the rest of the cronies in the car.

“Enjoy the blood. It suits you!” Caleb called as he drove towards the school

Raven sighed.

“Not again. Mom’s gonna kill me.” Raven said.

Raven looked back at the house.

“It’s the last day. Let’s just go.” Raven concluded.

Raven continued walking towards the school, shivering in his shirt. Along the way, he noticed something on the sidewalk. On closer inspection, it was a bird. It was half blue and red and shivering. Raven also noticed a rock right next to the bird.

“Did Caleb and his friends do this to you?” Raven said to himself.

Raven scooped it up with his hands.

“Don’t worry. I can find somewhere to patch you up.” said Raven

Suddenly, the bird started to glow with bright light. In front of Raven’s shocked eyes, the bird turned into a boy with the same features. The boy’s eyes slowly opened and he tried to stand up, but he stumbled. Raven managed to catch him.

“Sorry about that. Those bullies are awful aren’t they? Doing that to a harmless bird.” said the boy

“...Who are you?” asked Raven

“ I’m Sai, your guardian angel.” said Sai

Raven laughed out loud.

“You know, I wouldn’t have believed you if you didn’t just transform in front of me. Where have you been for the past 14 years of my life?” said Raven incredulously

Sai paused.

“God doesn’t tell angels his secrets.” said Sai

Raven sighed. Of course Sai wasn’t going to tell him that.

“Are you ok?” asked Raven

“Yeah. I’m fine. Who do those punks think they are, messing with you like that?” said Sai

“Caleb, Mika, Richie, and Peter. The local bullies and people that I…” said Raven

Raven trailed off. Sai stared at him curiously.

“That you what?” questioned Sai

Raven smiled, the fakest one Sai had ever seen in his life.

“Never mind. Let’s go, we’re going to be late for breakfast. Pretend to be a cousin of mine or something.” said Raven

“You’re accepting this rather quickly for a human.” said Sai

Raven adjusted his backpack on his shoulders.

“Maybe I just want to believe that someone cares for me, I guess.” said Raven

Sai had nothing to say to that. The walk to school was practically silent. Judging from first impressions alone, Raven was a kind soul, someone who deserved a happy life. But, his soul was tainted with a hint of darkness, possibly from whatever he has gone through. Finally, they arrived at Helios Academy, Raven’s school. Raven guided Sai through the building towards the cafeteria. During their walk, it felt like the entire school was glaring at Raven. Sai felt as if he was still in Heaven. He looked over at Raven and noticed him fidgeting nervously. Sai quietly reached out his hand and put it in Raven’s. Raven seemed to relax slightly in his touch, which made Sai feel relieved. Finally, they entered the cafeteria, where a lovely smell hit Sai’s nose.

“Raven, what is that smell?” asked Sai

“Those are pancakes and cinnamon rolls baking. They’re delicious. Do you want one, Sai?” asked Raven

“Of course, my liege.” Sai teased.

Raven chuckled a little.

“I’ll be right back, Sai.” said Raven

As soon as Raven left, Sai was tapped on the shoulder. He turned to face Caleb and his group of friends.

“What do you want?” said Sai a bit too aggressively

“Hey, relax. We just want to talk and offer some…friendly advice.” said Peter

“Yeah. We want to make sure that you’re coming into this neighborhood on the right side.” said Richie

“The right side? I don’t follow.” Sai lied

“Tell em, Caleb.” said Mika with a grin

“Boys, boys, where are your manners? Introduce yourself to our new friend here.” said Caleb

Caleb and his friends introduced themselves to Sai. Then, Caleb focused back on Sai.

“Your name?” Caleb commanded

“Sai. Sai Corvain.” Sai replied

“Oh, so you’re related to him.” Mika probed

“Cousin from Texas. Visiting him for the summer for the first time.” said Sai

“That makes more sense. You don’t even know what he did.” said Peter.

Sai rolled his eyes.

“Please just get to the point.” said Sai out of exasperation

Caleb laughed.

“I like you already, Sai. Alright, I’ll give it to you straight: Raven is a murderer.” said Caleb

At this, Sai looked at him in disbelief. The same boy who was buying him breakfast and helped up an innocent bird killed someone?

“Really?” said Sai

“It’s true. We were all there. We all saw it.” said Mika

“If Raven really killed someone, why is he not in prison right now?” asked Sai

“Grand question. It’s because the police ruled that the death was an accident. THE POLICE RULED THAT DEATH A FUCKING ACCIDENT.” Caleb shouted

Silence filled the cafeteria for a second. Out of the corner of Sai’s eye, he saw Raven flinch. Caleb took a deep breath and returned back to normal.

“That’s why we bully him. To teach him a lesson. To show him that he deserves punishment for what he did.” said Peter

“And we help Caleb because we want justice too.” said Richie

Caleb put a hand on Sai’s shoulder. He squeezed tightly and Sai winced. He was strong for a human.

“So, here’s the deal Sai: Stop hanging out around Raven and we’ll leave you alone. Don’t protect Raven and we’ll leave you alone. However, defend Raven in any way and we will come for you. Understood?” commanded Caleb

Sai chuckled to himself.

“You show your true colors quite well, Caleb. No wonder angels believe you can’t be saved.” said Sai

And with that, Sai left, leaving the group in disbelief. Judging by how Raven and Caleb reacted, pieces of that story must be true. But, there has to be more to the story here. The Lord wouldn’t have sent him to save someone who didn’t want to be redeemed. Sai joined Raven at an empty lunch table, where a cinnamon roll waited for him.

“Have you tried this before, Sai?” asked Raven

“No, never.” said Sai

“What?! What do you eat in heaven for breakfast?” said Raven.

Sai chuckled at the absurdity and innocence of that question.

“Angels don’t need to eat, Raven. The human souls that pass on, however, miss their food, so the angels with more power create food for the humans. My angel colleagues see it as a pointless endeavor to eat, but I’ve always been curious.” said Sai

“Take a bite. You can brag to your angel friends about how delicious food actually is.” said Raven as he took a bite of his pancake covered with syrup. Sai looked at the cinnamon roll and took a big bite. His eyes widened and a big smile appeared on his face. The roll warmed his very essence. Sai looked back at Raven and saw a stupid grin on his face, the widest smile he had all morning.

“Are you that satisfied with my reaction, my liege?” said Sai

“Very. Its been a while since anyone sat with me to eat.” said Raven

The two finished their meal and classes began. The entire day, Raven was bullied by Caleb and his friends. Sai tried to interfere, but Raven always held Sai back. Finally, after lasting for eternity(even for Sai’s standards), the school day ended. Raven gathered his belongings and they walked through the crowd of students to leave the school.

“Are Caleb and his friends gone?” Raven asked

Sai peered around the crowd of students and didn’t see Caleb’s ripped leather jacket or smell of cigarettes that everyone pretended wasn’t there.

“No. They’re gone.” said Sai

“Perfect. Come on. I have an appointment and I can’t be late.” said Raven

“Oooh, who’s contacting Raven on a fine day such as this?” asked Sai

Raven playfully punched Sai in the arm.

“Come on let’s just go.” said Raven

Raven led Sai to somewhere, his pace faster than his walk back home. His eyes darted around every corner and he was fidgeting. Sai couldn't help but wonder who Raven was seeing if he was so nervous. Finally, they arrived at an unlikely place, an old telephone booth next to a police station. Raven fished into his backpack to find a plastic baggie with coins and stepped inside the booth.

"Stay outside. Make sure no one comes in." said Raven

"Ok." said Sai

Raven closed the door of the booth. Sai leaned against the phone booth and looked around. No one was there and Sai was bored.

"Let's see what Raven is talking about in there." said Sai

Sai summoned a bit of holy light and enchanted the phone. The phone glowed for a second and Sai could hear the conversation between Raven and someone that he didn't quite expect.

"Hi, Dad." said Raven

"Dad?! As far as I was told, Raven just had a mother." said Sai

"How are you son?" said Raven's father

"I'm good. Today is the last day of school." said Raven

"Already? Time really does fly." said Raven's father

"Yeah." Raven chuckled awkwardly

"...Listen, I have good news. I can come and take you to New York in two months." said Raven's father

Raven jumped up and down in excitement.

"He's too adorable." Sai thought as he smiled at Raven

"Really?! You mean it?" said Raven

“Of course. I can pick you up on your birthday, July 20th. Once we get to New York, I have a birthday planned for you. We can get pizza, eat a cake, whatever you want to make up for lost time. ”said Raven’s father

“I can’t wait. Listen, the phone booth is running out of time. I’ll come back at the same time tomorrow.” said Raven

“I’ll be there. I love you, forever and always.” said Raven’s father

“Forever and always.” said Raven

He hung up the phone and left the booth.

“Your dad is a kind person.” said Sai

“Wait, how were you listening?” asked Raven

“...Magic.” said Sai casually

“I shouldn’t be surprised anymore.” said Raven as he adjusted his backpack

“Hey, if I’m going to help you, I need to know about you.” said Sai

“...Fair point.” said Raven

The two started walking back to Raven’s home,

“So, why isn’t your father with you?” asked Sai innocently

Raven thought to himself trying to answer the question.

“...Mom and Dad got divorced when I was 8. She got a restraining order on my Dad, claiming that he was “mentally unfit” to take care of me. However, my mom is, well, not someone anyone would want as a mother. She deleted all traces of my father, even burning any letter that he sent, except for the first ever one, which was his number. I have to go to the phone booth to call him because if Mom ever sees that I called him on my cell phone, then I get punished.” explained Raven

“Are parents really that selfish?” said Sai

“Not all. Just mine.” said Raven

The two arrived at Raven’s house. Sai grabbed Raven by the shoulders.

“Raven, I’m going to need you to be honest with me, as this affects me helping you: Did you kill someone?” said Sai

Raven’s breath grew ragged as Sai finished speaking.

“I-I.” Raven stuttered

Just then, the front door flew open and a lady with messy red hair showed up. She was dressed only in her bathrobe and carried a glass of red wine in her hands.

“Raven, you're 2 minutes late.” she slurred out

“Sorry mother.” said Raven

He left Sai’s grip and went to the door. Sai couldn’t help but gag at Raven’s mother. She looked as if she couldn’t care less about making a good impression.

“Who is this?” Raven’s mother slurred

“...His name is Sai. He’s a friend.” said Raven

Raven’s mom chortled, an ugly and hideous laugh that made Sai hate her even more than he thought possible.

“You don’t have friends anymore, my son. Now, come to your room. It’s time for your confessionals.” said Raven’s mom.

Raven nodded, looked at Sai with fear, and walked inside the house. The door slammed shut. Sai turned into a bird and looked around for Raven’s bedroom window. He flew up and when he found it, what was inside shook him to his core. Raven was seated on his desk chair, sans his shirt, writing something on a piece of paper. His mom stood above him, brandishing a whip.

“Wrong answer! The Lord taught you better than this, filthy murderer!” his mom declared

A crack of the whip and Raven screamed. Another wrong answer. Another crack of whip. Another cry for help. And Sai could do nothing.

“...I understand now, my Lord. Human depravity is beyond even what the angels can tolerate.” said Sai

Two painful hours later, Raven’s mother locked the door from the outside. Raven opened the window, Sai flew in, and Raven collapsed on his bed. His sobs broke Sai’s heart.

“...Raven, can I heal you?” asked Sai tenderly

Raven nodded his head and Sai got to work. His hands lit up with holy light and it covered Raven’s body. The sobs gradually became quieter until they were no more.

“Relax, Raven. While I’m here, no one will ever hurt you.” said Sai

“Promise?” said Raven weakly

“...I promise.” said Sai

Raven’s healing was complete and he lay down on his bed.

“...The person I killed was Caleb’s sister.” said Raven

Sai sat up straight as he heard that.

“Stop right there. You actually killed someone?” said Sai

“Its a complicated situation.” said Raven

“Tell me everything, don’t you dare lie.” said Sai

Raven nodded and began his tale.

“I’ve known Caleb, Mika, Richie, and Peter for my whole life. We were best friends and we could conquer anything together. Caleb’s older sister, Bella, always took care of us. She gave us

snacks, took us to activities, and even joined us in our games. Those memories are something that I will always treasure."

Raven paused and took a deep breath.

"The incident happened when we were 14 years old. All 5 of us went to the lake. We were playing a game where we retrieved objects from the water. For fun, I took Bella's bracelet and threw it in the lake. I dared her to get it. She was a good swimmer, so I thought that it would be ok." said Raven

He was on the verge of tears again. Sai rubbed his back to soothe him.

"The bracelet landed near the rapids. She couldn't swim back. I can still hear her screams as she was pulled away by the river. We tried everything to save her but it wasn't enough. She was dead by the time the authorities got to her. The judge overseeing this case called it an unfortunate accident, but Caleb and everyone else refused to see it that way. In their eyes, I'm a monster. And they're right. If I hadn't thrown that stupid bracelet, Bella would have graduated high school." finished Raven

Sai sat there for a while, unsure of how to take this in.

"...The river killed her." said Sai finally

"...What?" said Raven in disbelief

"You did throw the bracelet in, make no mistake. You deserve some guilt for that, but calling you a monster? That's ridiculous." said Sai

"Sai, but…" started Raven

"But nothing! Look at me, Raven. I've met many murderers right before they were sent to hell. They are the most vicious and awful souls I have seen. But, you know what's the one thing that

most of them have in common? They have no remorse. They brag about their kills, especially their first ones, saying that it was just as addicting as a drug. That they needed more." said Sai

Raven recoiled at Sai's words.

"Your reaction is proving my point, Raven. Judging by your behavior today, it's clear to me that you are not a monster. You are someone who wants to be redeemed and I'm here to help you." said Sai

Raven sat speechless. Sai bowed before Raven with a smile.

"Now, my liege, will you let me help you?" said Sai

Raven cried again, this time from complete and utter joy. He hugged Sai so tightly that he thought that he was going to burst. Sai watched as Raven fell asleep later that night.

"Raven, the true monster is right in front of you." Sai muttered under his breath.

Sai transformed into a bird, flew into Raven's closet, and fell swiftly asleep.

Time in the human world passed faster than Sai anticipated. It was already late July, the sun beating down on the neighborhood. Sai and Raven spent their days swimming in the local pool, getting ice cream from the truck that would pass by(Sai actually thought that these were better than cinnamon rolls, which was an impossibility in his eyes), and calling Raven's dad, who Sai found was a pleasure to listen to. Plus, Sai loved the way Raven's father ended his calls: "Love you, forever and always.". The phrase soothed him in ways that he couldn't quite understand.

However, summer hasn't been sunshine and rainbows for the two. Caleb and his friends upped their game. Paint being launched on them, ice cream being taken from them, and even a few beatings that Sai had to protect Raven from, sans magic of course. The last time they fought, Sai left more than a few bruises on the gang, watching them skitter away like crazed animals.

"You chose the wrong side, Sai! You'll see." threatened Caleb as they ran

“I don’t think so, considering you’re the one running,” said Sai with a smirk.

Raven, Sai noticed, was doing much better. Beatings with his mother seemed to phase him less, most likely because Sai was always willing to heal him. He was laughing and smiling a lot more, even fantasizing with Sai about New York.

“I’ve always heard that New York pizza is delicious! We should ask Dad once we get there.” said Raven

“Really? I’ll believe it when I taste it.” Sai said

On the evening of July 19th, Raven received a letter addressed to Caleb which his mother surprisingly didn’t burn. After his regularly scheduled beating, Raven read the letter together with Sai.

“We cordially invite you to a birthday party. We’ll pick you up and go to the Golden Gate Bridge. You’ll have the time of your life.” Raven read

“Don’t go. It’s obviously a trap.” said Sai

“...What if its not? Caleb has never done this on any of my birthdays since Bella died. Maybe something happened.” said Raven

“...Raven, I appreciate your optimism but we also have to think about it for a second. He has been tormenting us all summer.” said Sai

“Yes, but maybe I just want to believe that he cares about me! I just want to believe that!” Raven shouted

Sai stopped in his tracks.

“...Ok, Raven. I understand. At least let me go with you, in case something happens.” said Sai

Raven smiled.

“Of course. I want you to celebrate my birthday with me.” said Raven

July 20th came and Sai fluttered down from the closet in his bird form. The clock on Raven's desk showed 3:00pm.

"Did I really sleep that late?" Sai yawned

Sai looked around the room and his heart sank after seeing that Raven was gone.

"Raven…that's right, the bridge! I have to go now!" said Sai

Sai left the room and flew tirelessly to the bridge. When he got there, his worst nightmare was in front of him. Raven was being held at knifepoint by Caleb, the rest of his cronies holding Raven by the railing of the bridge. Sai transformed from out of his bird form.

"Let him go, Caleb!" Sai yelled.

Everyone's head turned and Caleb smiled.

"Hello, Sai. Glad you can make it." said Caleb calmly

"What the fuck are you doing?" questioned Sai

"What does it look like? We're celebrating his birthday." said Mika

"And ridding the world of a monster." said Peter

The four boys dangled Raven over the edge. Sai's blood boiled.

"Caleb, is this what Bella would have wanted? You murdering your best friend?" said Sai

Caleb raged, hurling crazed words at the top of his lungs

"BEST FRIEND? THIS FUCKER KILLED MY SISTER! ALL I'M DOING IS TAKING A LIFE FOR A LIFE. RAVEN WILL SUFFER IN HELL, JUST AS IT SHOULD BE!" said Caleb

"...Caleb, I've said sorry to you multiple times. I showed up to the funeral, tried to give you space and gifts, even offered to spend time in jail for what I did. What else do I have to do? Please tell me and I'll do it." said Raven

Caleb leaned closer to Raven.

“You know what you can do for me, Raven?” said Caleb

Raven nodded. Caleb smiled.

“Drop him.” said Caleb.

The boys did as he commanded. Sai didn’t need to think. He jumped down after Raven, spreading his mismatched wings wide to catch him. Sai grabbed Raven and flew back up to the top. He placed Raven shaking back on the ground and glared at the monsters facing him. His right arm turned into one of shadow as if by instinct. Sai realized what was happening and tried to stop it, but his vision turned blood red and his hearing grew numb to everyone except Caleb. He wasn’t in control anymore.

“What are you?” questioned Caleb, his voice dripping with fear.

Sai smiled. Good. His mind screamed out for vengeance and his body responded, the claws on his hand getting sharper without his control.

“...I’m a monster. One that’s going to make you pay.” said Sai in a voice unlike his own

Peter, Mika, and Richie ran as Sai lunged for Caleb. He was eager to send him to Hell, where he deserved to burn for all eternity. His claws sunk deep into flesh.

But it was the flesh of an innocent monster instead.

Sai’s eyes widened as he saw Raven collapsed in a pool of his own blood. Everything returned to normal and Sai ran to him.

“No, no, no.” pleaded Sai as he healed him.

The holy light enveloped Raven and began its work.

Sai looked up at Caleb, whose shirt was covered with Raven’s blood.

“...You’re a monster. You’re a monster.” Caleb managed to say before running away.

Sai's entire world broke before him. Before anyone could see, Sai flew Raven back to his bed. Then, he went just behind Raven's house and sobbed, freely into the world.

"It happened again. It happened again. They were right, I shouldn't be in Heaven. I don't deserve Heaven. I'm a monster." Sai said while rocking back and forth.

Monster was the only word swimming in Sai's mind. The sun was about to set when Sai heard footsteps slowly approaching him. He knew it was Raven before even turning around.

"...Are you going to tell me the truth?" asked Raven

"The truth is that you should stay away from me. I was going to kill Caleb." said Sai

"But you didn't. You only hurt me." said Raven

"Only?! Raven, I could have killed you. I'm a monster." said Sai

"Again, I'm standing here right now, perfectly fine. Sai, we've been friends for two months and in that time, you've shown me that I am not a monster. That I deserve happiness and compassion. So do you, Sai. So does everyone, even Caleb and my old friends." said Raven

Raven sat down next to Sai and placed a hand on his shoulder.

"Now, tell me the truth, and don't you dare lie." said Raven

Tears rolled down Sai's cheeks. He finally looked at Raven and saw a pure smile on his face.

"Raven, the truth is this." said Sai

In front of Raven's eyes, Sai shed his human skin and revealed his true form. His right side was made of shadow, with red eyes and demonic horns while his left side was made of pure light with angelic wings and white eyes.

"I am not a pure angel. I am part demon, a monster because of the fact that I exist." said Sai

Raven was silent for a moment.

"...I like this form better. It suits you." said Raven

“...That’s it?” said Sai. He expected more resistance, more questions. But, Raven just smiled.

“You can tell me all about your demon form in New York. Now, help me pack?” asked Raven

“Of course, my liege.” said Sai

The two went inside and finished packing Raven’s things. The sky was soon alight with stars and at midnight on the dot, Raven’s father pulled up to the house. Sai woke Raven up, grabbed his bag, and began to race out the door. However, Raven’s mother, drunk and all, was waiting for them, broken beer bottle in hand.

“Where are you going? YOU’RE MINE! STAY AWAY FROM MY SON!” Raven’s mother screamed as she tried to reach for Raven’s hand.

Sai swatted her hand away. His shadow form raged, but Raven’s grip calmed him down. Raven looked down at his mother with loathing.

“...Goodbye, Abomination.” spat Raven as he went with Sai out the door. Sai transformed into a bird and sat calmly in the car with Raven. His father, still in a suit and tie, looked over at them.

“I didn’t know you had a pet.” said Raven’s father

“His name is Sai. He’s my guardian.” said Raven

“Oh? Where did you get him, Raven?” asked his father.

But, Raven was fast asleep. Raven’s father smiled softly and turned off the radio. Sai fell asleep in Raven’s hands, the happiest that he had ever been in his existence.

“....My place is with you, Raven, and whatever Heaven that we shall make with our lives. Thank you.” Sai muttered under his breath.

And thus, Sai and Raven were carried off to a happy and hopeful future, blessed with the fact that they will always be together.