

Flames whipped around him. Cornered, the Savers seemed to have finally got him. With Will and Vincent nowhere to be seen, death was looming on the horizon. Yet he found he wasn't feeling any fear. Now that he actually thought about it, it seems that he was always anticipating death in the Savers hands, for it was always inevitable. Flames grew larger, showing off their signature purple hue, Griffin had always heard the stories of whenever the flames touched people, and he cringed every time. They say that the flames leave no marks. When and if they find the person's body, it merely looks like they're sleeping. Yet the pain that the person suffers when the flames jet across them is far beyond excruciating; it is so overwhelmingly horrible that the person doesn't even feel a thing. Griffin was always fine with this part, not much gave him a sense of fear.

But then there was The Final Mark. The Final Mark is when they say that everything happens at once, all in a split second. The pain catches up to you, the skin burns up into ashes, and your life flashes before you. There has only been a single survivor of The Final Mark, and when the person crawled back to society, he brought the most chilling and grimmest account of all: During that split second, while you are being burned up and killed, you are forced to watch it. The flames force the human brain to slow down, making you watch every bit of your death. Then, just when you think it is finally over and you may rest in peace, your whole life flashes before you. It shows all of the wonderful moments you ever had, making you regret your death, to the point that you are in tears.

Suddenly, Griffin found himself dreading what was coming. Surely there was some way out of this, some chance that he could survive another day to see his friends again. Tears began to slowly drip down his face as the flames grew and roared, closing in on him. He began to sob, his wails so soft they could barely be heard. Then something happened, the whole Zerron seemed to turn a sky blue. Griffin figured that this was part of his death, yet after closing his eyes for a bit, he noticed that the roars began to die down.

He still shut his eyes, with tears pouring down now. The roars began to get even quieter. Cautiously, he opened one eye, only with him to leap back in alarm. There was a fawn leaping around him, with trails of ribbon in its wake. Then, he opened the other eye in surprise, there was a lion, roaring in front of him at the flames. The oddest of all, he saw a tortoise to his right, just sitting there, as if challenging Griffin to point it out. The fawn began to run and leap faster and faster, with ribbons casting a beautiful arc around him. The lion leapt into the flames, prowling through them, unscathed. The tortoise still just sat there, watching everything with a patient eye. Slowly, realization hit Griffin, yet the realization was far more crazy than any of the things that were happening. These were the three Guardians. Courage, the lion. Kindness, the fawn. Last was Wisdom, the tortoise. Griffin began to think back to the old fable.

The legend went that there was once a man who lived on Zerron, yet was a child of Ichor. His ability was to summon the three guardians, his own personal saviors. This man rarely used his ability, for he knew abusing them would do more harm than good. So he lived a peaceful life, occasionally going back to Ichor, his beautiful homeland of the floating isles, to be connected with his own world, inhabited solely by him. One day, however, the creature in Netherum at the time escaped, and he knew that he was the only one who could stop it. However, at the time he was in Ichor, and when he went back to Zerron to stop the monster, he found the world in a state of chaos, with all of the buildings reduced to rubble, and the sky turned a dark maroon red. He saw many of his friends dead, along with thousands of others. Anger overcame him, and without realizing it, he summoned the three guardians; but this time it was for the worst intention of all: revenge. This was the reason that people told this story, to teach young ones about never using their ability for revenge. The man attempted to confront the beast, but he lost control.

Needless to say, he died, and although he was the only child of Ichor, and the only one to ever have the three guardians as an ability, neither of those traits were ever passed down again. Yet here Griffin was, a child of Ichor, and with the ability of the three guardians.