

The Last Ember in the Skyforge

The Skyforge was making a weird buzzing noise, kind of like a giant angry bee trapped in a tin can. Arlen stood there, staring at everything like he had no idea what he was doing, which was probably true.

Lyssa came stomping in, breathing hard for no reason. "Did you touch something?" she yelled, even though she wasn't even sure what she meant.

Arlen shrugged in a way that made his shoulders look uneven. "I might have... interacted... with a gear. A little one. Hardly worth mentioning."

Something exploded, but not very loudly, which was disappointing considering the huge room. The middle of the Skyforge glowed like someone spilled glitter glue into a whirlpool. Lyssa squinted at it like she was trying to read tiny print. "Oh great. That's the Ember, I guess. It's doing... something."

The Ember flickered and made a noise sort of like a burp mixed with a sigh. Then a voice boomed out of nowhere: "WHO IS POKING ME NOW?"

Arlen winced. "Hey, uh, sorry. We didn't mean to wake you. Or we did. Actually, I don't know what we meant."

Lyssa slapped his arm for no clear reason. "Stop talking! This is a big magic thing! Or cosmic... something."

The gears overhead started moving, except some didn't, and others made grinding noises like they needed oil. The Ember glowed brighter. "YOU TWO ARE REALLY ANNOYING."

"Yeah, we get that a lot," Arlen said. He kicked a loose bolt across the floor, where it clinked sadly.

Lyssa threw her hands up. "We're apprentices! We don't know what we're doing! Please don't blow up everything!" There was a moment where nothing happened and everything was strangely awkward.

Then the Ember said: "FINE. JUST STOP TOUCHING THINGS." The lights dimmed. The buzzing stopped, mostly.

Arlen scratched his head. "Well," he said, "that was terrible. Let's go before the universe changes its mind." They both stumbled out, arguing about whose fault it was, while the Ember made a sound that might have been a cosmic eye-roll.