

Chapter 38 of *Signal in the Sky*

The Beginning of the End

By Purrsia Kat & Knight Writer

A/N: This chapter dedicated to Spaced Angel. You are missed.

Even Torr had grown tired of the scowl that had marred his face since leaving the Council meeting. At first, he had left on a high note. All he needed was to supply proof that his heroes were out there somewhere, and just needed help to come home. These were the ThunderCats, and in his mind, they surely deserved the extra effort, especially if they were in trouble. After all, if their legendary bravery were to be believed, they would do the same for any other Thunderian. But as he reflected more and more on the meeting, the more he felt a fool; and the more he felt that Lynxana in particular, would never take him seriously or act on his requests no matter what he uncovered.

Lynxnori had let the boy stew quietly, perhaps content to let Torr come to his own obvious conclusions on the matter. But no, rather than give up Torr was becoming more determined. Maybe he was too young to remember the ugly aspects of the old world and the old ways, but he could not let go of the feeling that they were not complete as a people without the ThunderCats. Their legend, in his heart and mind, loomed larger than life, and he would love nothing more than to see them with his own eyes in his lifetime. Surely, the good they performed far outweighed any negatives. Lynxana, he decided, was simply jealous and biased so he would find his own way.

Torr rose from the chair in the sitting room, and walked with purpose to his bedchamber, where he rifled through his belongings until he found what he was looking for. A small electronic device from the old world, it could scan the airwaves for signals of various origins. It was a novelty his guardians let him indulge in when he was younger – the thrill of scanning the air for communications ranging from the mundane to the exciting...a fire on the north side of town; police action required in the heart of the city. Of course, its range was limited, and he was not foolish enough to think he could pick up much but maybe with a little help that could be changed. And he had someone in mind to ask, if he could just muster the courage.



"Anointment trials, eh?" he asked as the image of Tygra barreling through a forest region coalesced in the bubbling waters of the cauldron. The new Lord of the ThunderCats wanted to prove himself just as Lion-O had before him. Such hubris from one so unassuming as Tygra.

The timing, he realized, just couldn't be better. Even so...

"Even so," he said, cracked lips scraping over rotted teeth, "I must be cautious." He had reached the decision days ago and had his henchmen in place – this time feeling more confident than ever that they wouldn't betray him - yet had found himself again hesitant. He knew well the potential consequences of what he was about to do, the danger it posed to his continued undead existence. And, that was assuming the Ancient Spirits of Evil would even grant him this wish in the first place. Centuries ago, they had made quite clear what they would do if they thought him to be getting, as the Second Earth expression went, too big for his breeches.

Grune and Slithe's slovenly bunch had, under his hand, come together in an actual alliance. If he could keep them away from each other's throats long enough, then this plan had a good chance of success. He merely had to fill his role in the plot to complete it.

"Every defeat," he muttered, the blood-red rage setting his demonic eyes aglow, "every humiliation, all the indignities I have suffered at their hands they shall feel a thousand times more!"

Ten years had been needed to recover from the damage of their last assault on his own home, with the one statue pulled down and a canopic jar in which rested the shriveled mortal remains that bound his life-force to this world was shattered. Had they finished the job, he would be nothing but a memory, now. Foolish ThunderCats, did they not realize that one cannot murder the undead? At least, not when one is foolish enough to show mercy, and he hoped their Code would be their ultimate downfall.

Enough reverie, he thought. Time to act.

"O Ancient Masters," he intoned, spreading his arms in supplication, "your eternal servant seeks your favor!"

"What reason would we have to grant you such?" they asked, clearly angered. "Lo these years, you have consistently failed us! Where is the Mumm-Ra who spread darkness and hate across these wild lands? All we see before us is a pathetic corpse, desperately clinging to a half-life!"

He had been afraid of that.

"I admit my weakness and failings," Mumm-Ra replied, kneeling on the dusty floor. "I wish to address these, so that I may be rid of them and finally accomplish the task I set out to perform when the ThunderCats crashed on our world."

"The power we granted Mefeset should be sufficient," they replied. "It is your misuse of that power which has allowed the ThunderCats free reign on this world."

"My Masters," he pleaded, keeping his tone and thoughts begging, "the time to strike is now. The new Lord of the ThunderCats has a weak connection with the Eye of Thundera, and is even now attempting the Anointment Trials! I have assembled the forces of evil to strike at them!"

"And, what of you? Why do you seek a favor from us?"

"This is no time for half-measures," he said, building up to it. "I wish for more power, that I may strike down the ThunderCats, and force them into our service!"

"Merely enslave them?"

"They will not pass from this life as easily as Lion-O," Mumm-Ra said. "Every facet of their existence will be defined by pain and disgrace! Their wills, their spirits, their bodies shall all be broken, and only then will the embrace of death accept them!" To Mumm-Ra, this was not mercy, as he was not planning to knock them down and let them be. No. This was to be the beginning of their end.

"You are aware," they began, and Mumm-Ra had to restrain himself from whooping with joy. He had them. "Of what may happen if you absorb too much of our power directly?"

"I trust myself to your evil wisdom."

"Very well," they said. "Enter the waters of the cauldron, that we may bestow upon you this new power. Do not fail us this time."

"You have my eternal gratitude, O Ancient Ones," he replied as the viscous fluid soaked him to the knees. The shroud trailed across the surface behind him, and what felt like liquid fire raced through his desiccated frame. The four statues began to emit an eerie jade glow that pulsed in time to the organs, which were sealed in their bases, before rising as though gravity had lost all power over them. Each statue extended a hand, palm down, and a shower of evil power fell over Mumm-Ra in a stinging downpour of agony. Around they spun, faster and faster, as Mumm-Ra felt closer to actually being alive than he had for thousands of years.

"Ancient Spirits of Evil," he began the chant, invigorated beyond anything he had ever felt possible! "Transform this decayed form... TO MUMM-RA, THE EVER-LIVING!"



WilyKat felt better than he had in a long time. It was a beautiful day, and he and his sister had been enlisted to meet with the Warrior Maidens in their Kingdom while their comrades carefully monitored the ongoing Trial Tygra was participating in. On one hand, Kat wished he were keeping tabs as well, but he hadn't heard any bad news, so he reveled in what an honor it was to be sent on such a diplomatic mission. It was nice to be taken seriously, even though yes, he and his sibling were still prone to their playful moments. Life was no fun if taken gravely serious all the time.

Willa had excused herself a moment ago, to attend to some unknown matter, and he and Kit were asked

to wait in her treetop hut for her return. He wasn't particularly alarmed – Willa certainly showed no urgency as she left. It was probably just one of the usual interruptions leaders were subject to, or at least it always seemed Lion-O, and now Tygra, would be prone to bouts of the same.

But boredom quickly set in, and his gaze left the blueprints that were spread out on Willa's desk – plans Tygra had drawn up and given him to bring, of a proposed tower – to the utility belt on his uniform and the tiny pellets held within the pouches there. He plucked one out and looked it over.

"You know sis," he said casually, "I used to think when we got older, we'd move on to some serious weapons. You know, like the others have."

Kit grinned broadly. "Yeah. Remember that time we swiped their weapons and tried them out in the forest? Ouch."

He couldn't help but laugh at their youthful enthusiasm, the memory amusing to him. "I didn't see it then, but these little capsules are nothing to sneeze at. Well...most of the time," he added, finding it fitting that he held the tried-and-true sneeze pellet in hand. "It's the fact that enemies don't expect to take these little things seriously that I still like them. They deliver the unexpected, which is a lot like us. We're smaller than the others still, but –"

"Who cares about size," Kit nodded, echoing an old sentiment. "The smoke screens, the flash bombs, and yeah, the sneeze pellets – you never outgrow an ability to create enough distraction to get one over on the bad guys," she agreed. "But I like what we've been coming up with lately."

"When we get back to the Lair, I gotta get down to Tygra's lab. I'm running low on these things, and I have some ideas for a few new tricks. I'll need your help though."

"Glad to see you've got your interest back," Kit remarked. "It...it was never your fault, Kat." She added the last part gingerly, as though she hoped broaching the subject wouldn't spiral him back into a darker mood.

It hadn't. "You know, I don't think Lion-O would blame me. And I don't think he would want me to dwell on it."

Willa ducked back into the room at that point, and the conversation between them fizzled. "Sorry about that," she apologized as she seated herself, but without offering an explanation for what took her away in the first place. "Now, where were we? I like the idea of a League of Third Earth. However, why do we need this new tower? Surely, the Maidens have survived centuries without any modern shelter or defenses"

Kat glanced at Kit and tried to choose his words carefully as not to offend the proud woman even further. "We mean no disrespect, Willa. The tower is primarily meant to be a better monitoring device, for the entire league to utilize to track enemy movements. But its main function will be to maintain communication with Third Earth after we leave. Currently, what we have in the Cat's Lair won't be as far ranging or effective."

"I see," Willa replied stiffly, glancing back down at the blueprints, and tapping her index finger on the circle that would top the proposed tower.

Kit nodded. "That beacon at the top – Tygra says it will be able to scan the entire of Third Earth as well as send radio and video contact to where we will be going."

Willa remained unsure. "Even if we do call you, over such a great distance, how will that help?"

"Lion-O had a plan before he, uh, left us. Part of it included eliminating or minimizing the major threats here on Third Earth," Kat began.

Kit jumped in before Willa could question that part of the plan further. "Also, we're building a new ship, called the Thunderstrike, that will be faster than—"

Nayda interrupted, ducking into the meeting all flushed and sweaty. "Willa, there's trouble," she gasped, "in the Unicorn Forest."

Kat's eyes grew large. That was where Tygra or Bengali should be on their route, if either or both of them kept good time. He shot up from his seat. There wasn't time to lose.



Cerise navigated her way through the crowded market. If anything was testament to their triumph in coming together in numbers and settling this planet, it was in the pushing, sweaty throng around her. She merely wanted to buy some fresh fish and head home where she would enjoy a quiet dinner and a relaxing evening. Alone. Every jostle and muttered 'excuse me' got her a fraction closer to that goal.

After some spirited haggling with the fish salesman, Cerise still ended up paying more than she intended, but she supposed the idea of splashing about in a stream fetching her own was worth the 'convenience' fee. She took her bundle and wove her way back through the crowd. Night was falling, and it had been a long day in the lab. The beacon had faltered, and it took her considerable effort to restore its signal. An incoming vessel carrying a few Thunderian families had been depending on it, so there had been great pressure to restore it as the vessel was still too far out in space to launch an escort to guide them. She passed a wine vendor and considered buying a flask but was ultimately too tired to spend the time. Homebound she remained.

The crowd was finally thinning, allowing Cerise to pick up the pace but then a body with a familiar face – a whey-faced boy, as Lynxana had once put it, in fact – appeared and blocked her path. He grinned at her nervously, and Cerise inwardly groaned, wondering what he could possibly want *now*. She mustered a weak, if not alarmingly fake, smile.

“Miss Cerise,” he began, his voice cracking under the strain of his nervousness. “So sorry to trouble you.”

“Ah, uh,” she faltered, his name escaping her for a moment. “Torr, was it?”

He nodded enthusiastically, and Cerise realized her mistake when acknowledging him by name seemed to give him a new confidence. It certainly didn’t work toward getting rid of him. She was normally fairly good-natured, but she was simply not in the mood to indulge him.

“I was thinking about the Council meeting, and how I needed proof, then I thought of something, but I need your help with it, if you don’t mind.”

The boy rambled at a rate that made Cerise’s head spin. She was sure he meant no harm. She was equally sure he had no career as a diplomat or any other career that would require clear and concise conveyance of one’s ideas.

“Could we talk about this later, I—”

Torr thrust a relic of a device toward her, cutting off her plea for respite from this assault on her mission to be alone. “If you could look at this sometime,” he implored her with earnest, “I would appreciate it. I’m willing to pay of course, although it may take me some time to pay in full. If you want to wait for a deposit, that’s fine. I—”

Cerise held up a hand to silence him. “What is it you want me to do with this?”

“I know you created the homing beacon and well, if anyone can make this scanner increase its range, it’d be you. I know you’re so busy, but it’s my only way to have hope of getting proof. Of you know, that they’re out there. Please?”

Cerise’s mouth fell open. The boy was mad. If the Thundercats didn’t pick up on the beacon’s signal, what was the point of this little device?

“Torr, we have a beacon and a signal for them to follow. Just be patient.”

She was ready to step around him and be on her way, when he sidestepped and once again blocked her path.

“But, this is two way. If they are sending a signal, I want to be able to pick it up.”

She shook her head. “We have radios for that—”

He wasn’t going to give up. For whatever reasons he had, the boy was insistent on having his own device. “Please! Whatever your price, name it. Please.”

Being rid of him would be payment enough, she decided, and snatched the radio from the elated lad.

"I'll be fair in saying this won't be a high priority, but I'll see what I can do."

He finally let her pass amid a cascade of thank-yous. It's not that it would be difficult for her to do, she simply didn't see the point. But if it got him to let her be, it was a harmless promise to make.

As she passed the gleaming buildings of their city, she couldn't help but be reminded of how some of the architecture from the old world was evident. For all the talk of moving on and leaving the past behind, it seemed some parts of their heritage would always be with them. She had to wonder if that would someday include the Thundercats. Cerise also marveled at the part of her that was curious; that wouldn't mind seeing their return.

Only time would tell. If they were out there, they would pick up on the signal in the sky. That was all that could be done for now, the same as for any other Thunderian wandering the stars.



Cheetara, in the control room of Cats Lair, paced unable to relax. She had found Tygra that morning, but her pleas fell on deaf ears. Even Panthro asked her to back off, assuring her there was plenty of people on watch to ensure no ambushes or attacks harmed the integrity of the Trials or their friends. It had seemed to Cheetara that they had lost faith in her dreams. Or perhaps that in her grief following Lion-O's death, it was natural to dream about him and perhaps it wasn't as real as she felt it had been.

But her sixth sense was in over-drive, and she made the firm decision to go to the Sword Chamber, pluck the Sword from its perch, and find Tygra again. She didn't care what the others thought. He was going to need all the help he could get, for she could not shake the feeling that something perhaps nobody but her could foresee was going to shock them all. She fought images in her mind of Lion-O holding his baby daughter, their red manes merging into a bloody pool of death. Years had passed, and suddenly the vision was back with a vengeance, pushing her to interfere in the Trials. Whatever they were going to be up against, Tygra was going to need the Sword and Jaga's luck.

She didn't even pause to tell Felina her intentions, leaving her behind with the cubs in the Lair. If they were going to go down, it would be fighting, she thought grimly as she sped off toward the Unicorn Forest.



"That went well," WilyKat said, the muted whine of their space boards playing counterpoint to the rustle of leaves being blown about by the mild breeze of the day.

The edge of the Unicorn Forest was growing ever closer as the twins raced on. He made small talk in an effort to calm his nerves. It was probably nothing, he told himself of the trouble they were going to investigate. Nayda could give little details. He hoped it wasn't anything to do with Tygra or Bengali. Rather, he hoped it was something manageable, like a Wollo getting robbed, or some Unicorns being harassed. Kat had called in and was told by Panthro the perimeter of the Forest was clear, but that a small part was blocked by the scanner, so could they check it out? Panthro didn't want to leave his post where he was keeping watch over that leg of the Trial. Seemed reasonable enough.

At any rate, several factors since they had left the Warrior Maidens kingdom made these theories easier to believe, but still something nagged at him. Since Lion-O's death he had become far more paranoid, always jumping to the worst conclusion as he had when Nayda burst in announcing trouble. He hated being that way. Keeping up the conversation would take his mind off it.

"Willa seemed to kinda like the whole 'League of Third Earth' thing. She was warming up to it," he mused.

"I don't know," his sister replied, pulling out ahead. "Even if we teach everyone how to use the technology of the Lair, and if we get this Tower of Omens built, Mumm-Ra's still gonna be stiff opposition, y'know?"

"At least he'll be out of *our* hair," he said. "Mumm-Ra came with this place, and he can stay with it far as I'm concerned."

"Yeah. Besides, we have to help prepare Pumyra for her part in the Anointment Trials tomorrow." Both fell silent at that for a moment, remembering Lion-O's run through the most rigorous tests of a ThunderCat's worth. "You sure it's a good idea for Tygra to do the Trials like Lion-O did?"

"I don't think Tygra should bother with this at all, Wilykit," he said. "At least, if he really wants to do this, he should wait until we're on New Thundera. You know that..."

What felt to be a physical wall of air hammered into the bottom of the spaceboard, sending both he and his sister toppling to the ground from the violent impact. The grass wavered as the invisible pulse radiated out from the central point in which they landed.

"What in the..." Before he could finish, something cold and metallic slapped against his right forearm and closed with a soft click. He spotted an identical gauntlet on Wilykit's arm, the wire leading from it into a thick bunch of ferns when ants began to skitter madly across his nerves and forced his body rigid.

"Just about right," Vultureman said, powering down the shock bracers via the knob on the side of the wide-barreled launcher. The wires detached from the bracer each cat wore, disconnecting the attaching leads and winding back into the squat weapon. The sonic mine hadn't managed to knock them out, but if there was one thing the Mutant knew when it came to dealing with ThunderCats it was to always have

a Plan B. With these two, however, it never hurt to have a Plan C or Plan D, either. At least he hadn't needed so much preparation this time.

"I hope you like slavery," he cawed, fetching the Thundrainium shackles Grune had provided. "The pay sucks but it's lifetime employment."

"*A Mutant ambush?*" WilyKat's thoughts raced as he fought to stay conscious. He had radioed in as they'd left Willa's hut. The perimeter of the forest, he was told, remained clear in anticipation of the arrival of the Trial participants. Panthro would have told him not to approach from this side if there were Mutants in the area. This couldn't be happening!

"The perimeter is clear but our scanners are blocked by something in the Unicorn Forest. You better check it out," WilyKat heard Panthro's voice say the words, just as he had when he'd radioed earlier, but he was gazing up at Vultureman, who now stood over him with some sort of device held in front of his beak.

Vultureman moved the object from his face, and when he spoke again, it was in his true voice. "Gotcha."

WilyKat's stomach dropped. His signal had been intercepted, and they'd flown right into a Mutant trap. With Tygra and Bengali unarmed for the Trials and possibly the others tricked into other traps, they were vulnerable. Even as the Thundrainium in the shackles made his muscles ache with fatigue, he knew that he and Kit had to get out of this. Somehow.



"I think he'll enjoy himself," Pumyra said absently, thinking about Tygra's upcoming test against her in the Anointment Trials.

"Before we were found," Lynx-O replied, "he was the resident healer among the ThunderCats. Perhaps you'll be too easy on him?" It was a concern felt yet not voiced among the ThunderCats concerning Tygra's insisting on undergoing the trials to prove his worth as Lord of the Thundercats. It felt wrong, somehow, as though the matter of his succession after Lion-O's death were being forced.

"Easy? It's the test I had to pass before being certified a healer," Pumyra said, slightly indignant. They walked between two of the mighty trees, which made up the Unicorn Forest, having just been called off their shift of patrolling the perimeter by Panthro. "Trust me, that test is *not* easy."

"My apologies," he came back in his ever-calm tone. "I did not mean to impugn on your abilities."

"Don't worry yourself," Pumyra said with a small sigh. "Ever since Thundera was lost, it feels as though all the rules have changed and nothing has to make sense anymore..."

"Pumyra!" Lynx-O's alarmed shout came too late as the impact rammed into her right side, throwing her to the ground in a tangle of rough threads, which clung to her body with a clear resin. Snarling, she thrashed and strained against the net regardless of the fact that she was ensnaring herself further.

"That'sss one down," Slithe's hissing, guttural voice said as the Reptilian emerged from behind the shelter of a mighty oak with Jackalman at his side.

"What's the meaning of this?!" she growled, now firmly trapped.

"That's a trick question, right?" Jackalman snickered, locking his eyes on her own. "It's not like this is our way of offering you a modeling contract, you know."

"Release her at once," Lynx-O demanded, an edge to his calm voice.

"And who'sss gonna make us, old-timer? You?"

"I've got this one," Jackalman sneered, twirling his short-handled axe lazily as he sauntered over to the eldest ThunderCat. Lynx-O remained still as Jackalman began to circle, seemingly oblivious to the Mutant's location. Pumyra ceased struggling, watching the trio intently. Jackalman sprung forward, his axe arcing through empty air where Lynx-O's head had been a moment before and the momentum of the swing threw him off balance. Lynx-O sprung up from his crouch as though the years and his age held no sway over him and delivered a tap to the Mutant's head that sent him to the earth in a daze.

"You will find," Lynx-O said, "that I am not so easy to defeat as I may appear." Pumyra felt a surge of joy as Lynx-O sidestepped without pause and Slithe's rushing shoulder tackle sailed past. Lynx-O's foot caught Slythe's own and tripped the Reptilian ass-over-teakettle to land squarely atop Jackalman.

"Perhaps you are," came a voice that sent shivers down Pumyra's spine and recalled months of hell trapped in a rough-hewn stone chamber, "but you just don't know it yet." Grune emerged into the clearing, arrogant smirk firmly in place on his throwback's face. "This is the part where I enlighten you, O Wise One." With a deft toss, a pair of shackles landed at Lynx-O's feet. "If you think you're fast enough to stop me from bashing that pretty little Pumyra's head in, think again. In case you can't tell, I'm a lot closer to her than you are."

"Don't, Lynx-O!" Pumyra cried out. "Forget me and run!"

"I cannot," the lynx replied, resigned. "To abandon you to him would be to seal your fate with cowardice."

"Trust me, I *will* have my fun with her if you run away," Grune said, casting a lascivious look over her immobile body and causing waves of horror to radiate through her. "Put them on, and make it quick."

The sound of the chains locking shut on Lynx-O's wrists echoed like a gunshot in Pumyra's ears. And what of the others? Had they met fates such as this?



Cheetara pushed herself to her physical limits as she strained to maintain her top speeds coming into the Unicorn Forest. The flashes of light and thunderous noises that assaulted her senses during her journey gave her the will to find the inner strength to push herself. By the ancients, it sounded like someone was shelling the forest with heavy artillery! The narrow wooded path opened ahead into a clearing, and it was then that she slowed her pace.

She had slowed to a jog as she entered the clearing, the Sword of Omens still clutched in one hand. Cheetara nearly dropped the sacred weapon in astonishment as her eyes followed a towering figure up until her eyes met his, which were incredibly at tree-top level. In the Unicorn Forest where the mature trees stretched a hundred feet skyward, it was a humbling sight to behold. She held the demon's fiery gaze and knew this was an everliving Mumm-Ra they had never seen before. The mere sight of him made her knees feel weak and her jaw go slack, but she fought the wave of hopelessness that began to spread over her.

"Cheetara."

She broke with Mumm-Ra's derisive glare in the direction of Tygra's ragged voice when he spoke her name. A quick assessment of his condition told her that physically he had not taken a beating, but mentally he was drained – it showed in his gaunt face and sunken eyes the pure exhaustion and it was in that moment she realized what he had been sustaining himself with against this monster. Weapon-wise he may have been unarmed, but he always had his mind and the special powers it possessed.

Instead of feeling elated at the revelation, she nearly choked on the lump in her throat that had suddenly sprung up. He had been hanging on against this foe, but her appearance there had broken his hard won concentration and destroyed whatever elaborate illusion had been serving his survival. The absence of the other ThunderCats that should have been nearby for the Trials meant they had already fallen. Cheetara felt caught in some surreal paradox where events and revelations were happening in rapid succession, and yet in the same instance, time had slowed to an agonizing crawl.

"Go back to the Lair," Tygra ordered, the strain in his voice heartbreaking to her ears. "Prepare the children."

It was too late. She didn't have to look and knew by the flash and the rise in temperature in the air that Mumm-Ra had made his move on her. With a split-second decision to make, she threw the Sword toward Tygra while launching herself through the air in the hopes of avoiding the searing missile Mumm-Ra had launched in her direction.

She saw Tygra grasp the Sword's hilt, its mystic energies visibly invigorating him upon contact. While

Cheetara had avoided a direct hit, her move did not come without sacrifice. The pulse of the blast – so much more super-sized than ever before, coming from its behemoth master – knocked the wind out of her. In her incapacitated state, Vultureman crept from the foliage and snapped a bracelet on her wrist before she could recover. She knew from its effects that it contained a goodly amount of Thundrainium, and she would be helpless now to aid Tygra. Even as Tygra called upon the Sword and the ThunderCats insignia surged out of it with a defiant roar, her own recovery was minimal. The Thundrainium was just too strong.

Tygra was their best hope, and he was for all she knew, on his own. Even if Felina would heed the Signal, they had hidden the Book of Omens from her. She would arrive with nothing more than arrows, a few cubs, and a Snarf. Against this version of Mumm-Ra, they may prove more of a hindrance than a help. Cheetara squeezed her eyes shut and prayed Tygra could hold out long enough for Mumm-Ra to lose strength. Surely, he could not sustain that level of power for long.

Tygra had to win.

*Down on your knees
You'll be left behind
This is the beginning
Watch what you think
They can read your mind
This is the beginning
I got my mark, see it in my eyes
This is the beginning
Well my reflection I don't recognize
This is the beginning*

*We think we've climbed so high
Up all the backs we've condemned
We face a consequence
This is the beginning of the end*

*You wait your turn
You'll be last in line
This is the beginning
Get out the way
Cause I'm getting mine
This is the beginning
God helps the ones that can help themselves
This is the beginning*

*May be too late as far as I can tell
This is the beginning*

*We think we've come so far
On all our lies we depend
We see no consequence
This is the beginning of the end.*

--The Beginning of the End – Nine Inch Nails