

so you wanna be immortal
with a loaded gun

five

1521 AD
Tenochtitlan, México

"Dru..."

"I know, my darling. I know."

"There's no more Deviants in this area. Let's get back to the others." I said wiping the sweat o my face and looked at the war in front of me. "I just don't get it. Why would they do such a thing?"

"I wish I could explain it to you. I wish I could make it stop, my darling Vena." Druig sighed helping me stand up and we walked towards the rest. "Just... Don't listen to what's happening. At least until we get back to the others."

"And there they are!" Phastos called out rushing towards us. "Are you two okay?"

"Vena has a bruised rib and a dislocated shoulder, I have a bruised ego and a mild concussion. We'll live." Druig explained as Ajak healed both of our wounds.

"Druig's just pissed because I tackled five Deviants while he only managed to take three at once." I smirked holding Thena's hand. "And that obviously bruised his ego."

"He's a thinker, not a fighter. That's you and Makkari." Thena said amused and glanced at me. "Are you okay? Besides the bruises and all that?"

"Take a wild guess, Thena. It's honestly a miracle that I'm still standing here and not chained down against my will." I scoed and heard more gunshots. Thena tensed and placed a firm arm around my shoulder pulling me closer to her.

"Deep breaths, little one."

"Don't... We don't interfere in their wars." Ajak reminded and I tried to hold back my sobs.

"It's not a war... This is a genocide. Their weapons have become too deadly." Druig said kissing my cheek before walking away. "Maybe it wasn't a good idea to help them advance, Phastos. I mean, it's only breaking my wife's heart to the point where she doesn't even smile anymore. How long has it been since we've seen a real smile? Two hundred, three hundred years?"

"Druig."

"Don't remember? Try two hundred and seventy seven years with sixty nine days. And yes, I've been keeping track because the day she smiles again will be the best damn day in this bloody hellish life I've been living. So please, someone please enlighten me."

"Technology is part of their evolutionary process, Druig. It's not exactly something I can stop. And you don't think we don't hurt seeing Vena like this? You don't think."

"No you can't!; but I can! And you're not the one who's married to her, are you? You're not the one who constantly tries to make her smile every single day. But how can I do just that? When they're fighting wars with the weapons you created!" Druig spat and I hid my face on Thena's shoulder.

"It's okay, little one. Nothing is going to happen to you." Thena said shakily and I shook my head. "It's okay... It's okay."

"Druig, that's enough. Look, maybe you're right, maybe you're wrong. And I understand that Vena hasn't been herself in almost six hundred years, but we can't go around pointing fingers at everyone. If I were you, I'd go to her because she looks like she's one gunshot away from breaking down." Ikaris butted and I heard Druig sigh before he took me from Thena's arms and into his own.

"I want them to stop. I feel so useless." I choked out as Druig swayed us back and forth and kissed my head various times.

"You're not useless, my darling. It's okay. You're okay." He assured and I broke down into a fit of sobs. "Don't cry, my starlight... It'll be over soon."

"It's too late..."

"Thena?"

"Everyone is going to die." She choked out and I turned my head just as she conjured a spear and tried to hit Sersi with it.

"What the-"

"Druig, get Vena away from here!" Ikaris yelled charging at Thena who blocked the hit.

"Adonis!"

"Shh, it's okay... it's okay. Come on." Druig tugged my arm but I stayed out. "Aphrodite, please cooperate with me here."

"It's Thena... She's our mother." I gave him a sad smile before turning around and faced Thena who had glowing eyes and was staring me down. "Thena, it's your little Vena. Remember me? I'm your family, Thena. We all are."

"Everyone is going to die." She said and lunged at me but I blocked the hit with a barrier of rocks and pushed her back towards a tree.

Makkari grabbed Thena and dragged her through the ground trying to knock her down. I rushed towards them with Ajak and pushed Makkari away from the spear.

"Thanks, Vena."

"Can't let my best friend die. Signed back and stood up watching Thena's glowing eyes falter slightly until she stabbed Ajak.

"Vena! Little help!" Gilgamesh called out.

I rushed towards them jumping on Thena's shoulder and tried to block her movements but she slashed my legs and threw me back making me bang my head against a rock.

"Vena! Are you okay?!" Druig asked crouching down in front of me and cradled the back of my head. "You're bleeding."

"No shit!" I grumbled and winced in pain. Ajak pushed Druig aside and placed her hand on the back of my head closing the wound. "Is Thena okay? Where is she?"

"Gilgamesh managed to knock her out. Now we just wait."

"What the hell was that?"

"Mahd Wy'ry."

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"I thought Mahd Wy'ry was a myth?"

"There's no cure. Nobody talk about it." Phastos sighed. "Vena, I wouldn't sit so close if I were you."

"Bite me." I hissed as Thena jolted awake.

"What happened? Is Vena okay?" Thena asked and I held her hand making her sigh in relief.

"Thena... you attacked everyone. You wounded Sersi, Phastos, and Vena. You nearly killed Makkari." Ajak explained and Gilgamesh and I helped Thena sit up.

"I don't remember." She choked out.

"You have Mahd Wy'ry. Your mind is fractured with the weight of your memories... All I can do is erase, so you can start over."

"What?!" No way!" I protested and Ikaris grabbed me pulling me back. "Ajak, please!"

"And we have to inform Arishem, and take you back to the ship where we have all the technology to help you." Ajak ignored me and I fought against Ikaris' tight grip.

"Ajak, please! That's my mother! That's Druig's and Makkari's mother! Don't do this." I sobbed and fell limp in Ikaris' arms. "Please... not again. Don't make us have this conversation again."

"She won't be Thena anymore. Makkari signed.

"Ajak, please don't do this. She's my mother... Please don't take that away from me." I sobbed breaking from Ikaris' grasp and stood in front of Thena with glowing eyes.

"Vena, she hurt everyone here in one way or another." Ikaris sighed.

"So have you, Ikaris! So has Druig, Phastos, Sprite... We've all hurt each other in some way or another! How is this any different?!"

"She almost killed Sersi!"

"You've almost killed me various times! And Sersi was just stabbed, Makkari was the one who almost died." I spat and held two flames in my hands. "You take one step forwards and I'm burning your head clean o and I'll be the one planning your damn funeral."

"But what if this happens again? She could've killed you, she could've killed all of us!" Kingo protested.

"I don't care! She's still my mother."

"Please... I want to remember... I want to remember my life." Thena sobbed.

"Thena, I love you. But listen to me, it's not important if you remember or not... Your spirit will remain. You will always be Thena deep inside. Trust me." Ajak smiled so ly and I shook my head as the flames grew more intense. "Vena."

"Why should she trust you? You wanted to do this once before with Vena. You're asking her to let you erase who she is. It's not fair to Thena or to us... It's not fair for her children." Druig defended taking a step forwards.

"Druig, I know you're upset."

"Upset? That wouldn't even begin to describe it. We trusted you for 7000 years and look where you've gotten us! I watched humans destroy each other when I could stop it all in a heartbeat. Vena has seen men attack woman and children in inhumane ways when she could stop it all with a flick of her wrist. Do you have any idea what that does to someone a er centuries?!"

"Druig."

"Could our mission have been a mistake? Are we really helping these people build a better world?!" Huh?!" He yelled and turned to the war happening behind us with clenched fists. "We're no better than those soldiers down there... Pawns to their leaders, blinded by loyalty! It ends now."

"Adonis, think before you do something rash." I thought and he unclenched his fists.

"Do you trust me, my darling wife?"

"Of course I do."

"Good, because I really need you to not hate me for what I'm about to do."

"Do what you must, but please think about your family first."

"You, Karri, Thena and Gil are the only family I care about. I love you, my beautiful Vena." Druig shut o his mind to me and I let out a so groan in frustration.

"What is he doing?" Thena whispered and I sighed hearing the soldiers drop their weapons.

"He's stopping the war... It hurts... Their anguish, it hurts." I grumbled dismissing the flames and held my chest in pain.

Ikaris grabbed Druig by the arm and pinned him to the wall as Sersi made her way towards me with Makkari and helped me sit on the floor.

"It hurts." I hissed feeling my chest tighten. "It hurts so much."

"Let them go." Ikaris spat and Druig smirked.

"You're gonna have to make me. You're not the boss of me."

"Vena, make him let them go." Ikaris ordered and I shook my head.

"She can't, Ikaris." Sersi butted.

"Can't or won't?"

"Maybe both?" Druig teased turning to me. "Vena?"

"I'm okay, I promise." I choked out and sent him a small nod.

"You sure?"

"I'm positive... I love you, my Adonis."

"And I love you, my Aphrodite." Druig sent me a wink and walked away from all of us.

I was forced to stand up due to Ikaris' grip on my throat and I flailed around trying to break free.

"Make him come back!"

"Ikaris, you're hurting her!" Sprite yelled but Ikaris didn't budge.

"He's not coming back. I couldn't make him if I tried!" I wheezed struggling against his grip. "He's gone, Ikaris, Druig's gone."

"Ikaris, let her go! She's already in enough pain as it is!" Sersi called out trying Ikaris' hand from my throat and I fell into Kingo's arms.

"What's gotten into you?!"

"They both had this planned from the start, Sersi!"

"Yeah, because Thena having Mahd Wy'ry is something that I knew about 7000 years ago." I spat rubbing my neck in pain.

"This never would've happened if we just..."

"What? Erased my memories that night? Is that what you were gonna say, Ikaris?"

"Yes! Why is it that whenever something terrible happens, you're right in the middle of it!" Ikaris asked and I pursed my lips jumping down from Kingo's arms.

"Ikaris!" Thena, Sersi and Ajak yelled in my ears and I found my brother. I stepped towards him with tears in my eyes and placed both of his hands around my neck.

"You want me out of the way? Well here I am, Ikaris. I'm not going to stop you, but good luck explaining to Druig why you killed his wife. I'd be terrified to see how that will turn out." I chuckled and noticed he was tearing up as well. "A er all, I was always a burden to you."

"I didn't mean it, Vena." He whispered not removing his hands.

"People o en speak the truth when they're angry, mostly because they don't think before they speak. So please... kill me. But good luck living with that for the rest of your eternity."

"Vena, have you gone mad?!" Phastos yelled and I nodded. "Druig really was the voice of reason."

"Vena... What on Earth are you doing?!"

"You wanted me to trust you, right? Now it's your turn to trust me, Druig."

"I trust you, I just don't trust Ikaris. Open your mind to me, Vena... please open your mind to me and stop this!"

"Ikaris, stop!" Sersi yelled as her and Sprite pried him away from me. "You'll kill her!"

I fell to the ground gasping for breath looking around.

"What happened?!" asked Makkari who crouched down and pulled me into a hug.

"He almost killed you... You stopped breathing for a few seconds and your entire face turned red. She signed shakily and I widened my eyes still gasping for breath.

"You did it?!" You seriously almost did it?!" Phastos cried out pushing him back but Ajak stood in the way. "Druig will kill you if he ever finds out!"

"Well he's not here, is he?!" He spat.

"I'll take care of Thena and take Vena to Druig." Gilgamesh butted rubbing my back once I started to cough. "Let her keep her memories."

"One day when she attacks you, you're going to have to kill her." Ajak sighed.

"I'll take that risk." He said and Thena sighed in relief rushing towards me and engulfed me and Makkari into a hug.

"You're all free to go... The Deviants are gone. There's no reason for you to stay with me." Ajak smiled so ly glancing at all of us with tears in her eyes.

"Shouldn't we discuss this with Arishem first? We are a team. We should stay together." Ikaris butted.

"I didn't ask for your advice, Ikaris. Do not forget your place." She said sternly. "This is where we say goodbye. You are free to go. I want you to go out there and live a life for yourself, not as soldiers... Not with the purpose you were given. Find your own purpose, and one day... When we see each other again, I want you to tell me what you found."

"Come to me, Vena... Please come to me. I need to know you're okay."

"Where are you headed?"

"Our Garden."

...

"Adonis?"

"Vena? Oh thank the Celestals! I was so scared." Druig cried and engulfed me in a tight hug. "I stopped hearing your thoughts for a few moments and immediately thought the worst... What happened a er I le ?"

"Chaos, pure uninged chaos and not the good kind. Ikaris almost killed me for good, we all split up and..."

"He what?!" He exclaimed pulling away and looked at the bruises on my neck. "I'll kill him. I swear I'll kill him!"

"It's not worth it." I said wiping his stray tears and kissed him.

"Thena's keeping her memories. She's staying with Gil. Once they're settled, we can go visit them with Karri."

"And the rest?"

"Phastos be first, Sersi and Ikaris le together obviously. Makkari wanted to travel with Kingo for a bit but she promised to come visit us, and Sprite stayed with Ajak."

"Vena... I never wish to be parted from you."

"I'm sensing there's a but here." I sighed and he nodded. "I know what you did. I know you took people... to give them a better life. I can help with that?"

"But would you truly be happy?" He asked placing his forehead on mine. "You're a wild spirit, my love. You crave adventure. You want it because it makes you feel alive."

"So is this it then? A er centuries is this the end of us?" I sobbed and he shook his head wiping my tears.

"We'll do what we've always done, my starlight. We compromise. You go out and live your adventure, and then you'll come here until you're ready for the next one. And I promise I can join you for some and we'll visit Thena and Gil every couple of years. How does that sound? Like Makkari's story of Hades and Persephone! Remember that one?!" He chuckled and nodded.

"How long?"

"However long you want it to be. Could be five years, could be fi y. But I'll always be here waiting for you whenever you decide to come back." Druig smiled. "Does that sound okay?"

"But you promise you'll join me for some of them?!" I asked shakily wrapping my arms around him.

"I promise, my starlight."

"Okay, then we'll do just that." I whispered and smiled making his smile grow even more.

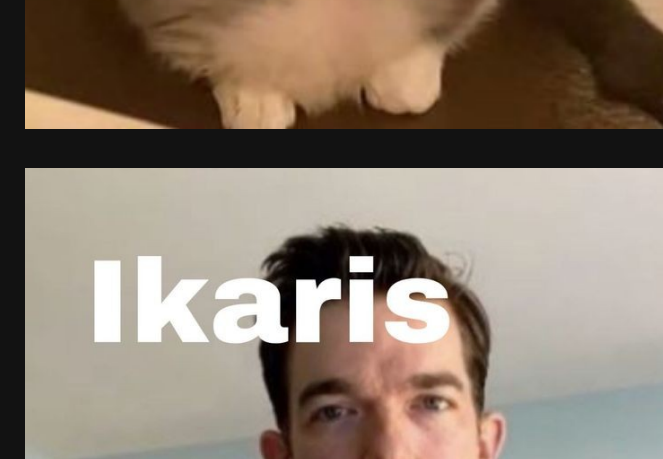
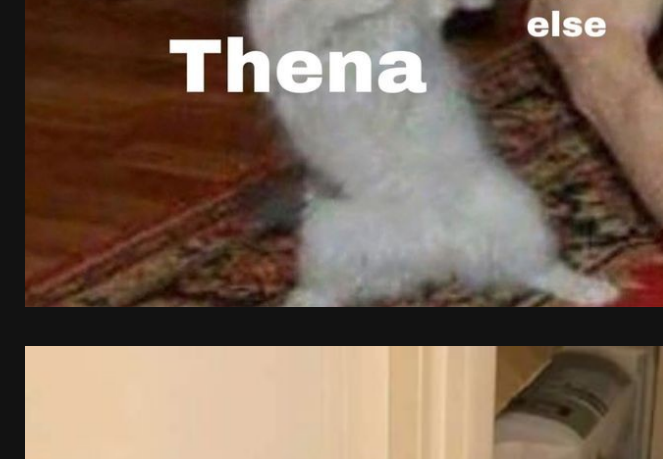
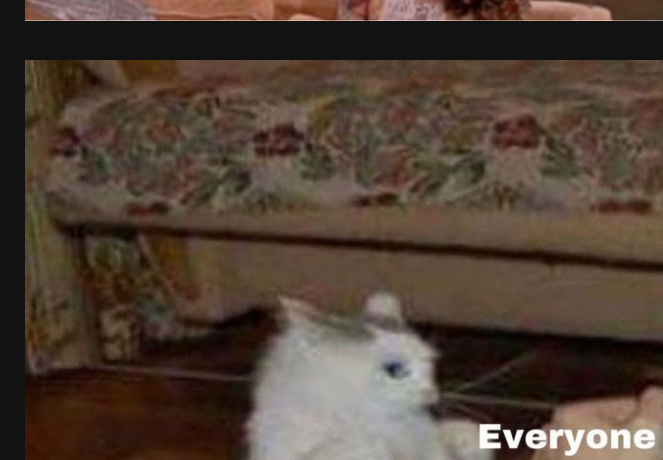
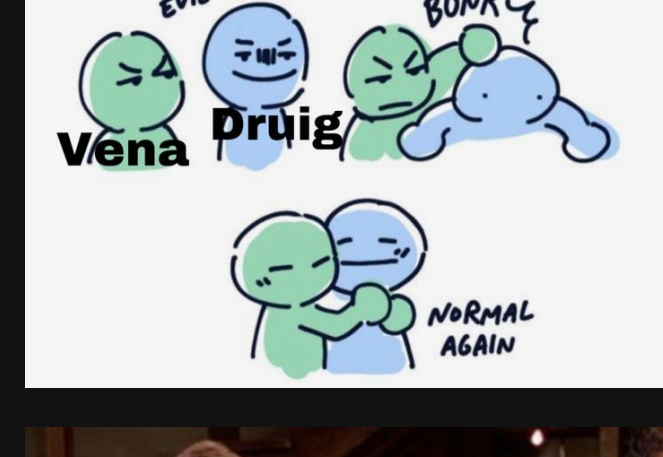
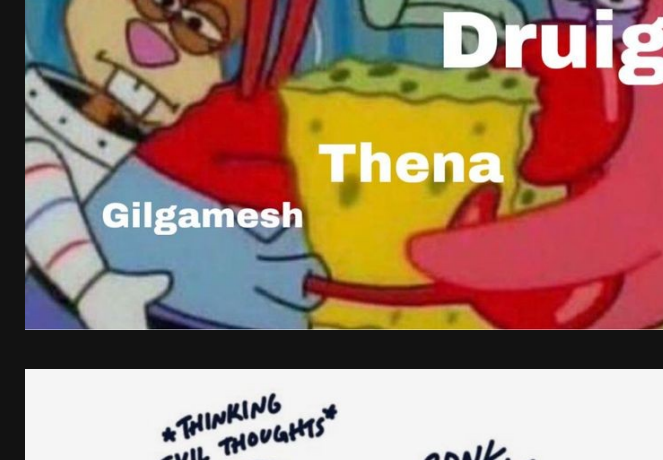
"I missed that beautiful smile of yours, Vena." He said holding my face in his hands and kissed the top of my nose. "But I have just one small condition to our deal... If that's alright with you?"

"Depends."

"I get to have you all to myself these first few years. I'm not ready to share you with the world just yet." Druig whispered and I nodded holding his face as well. "This could be our home, Vena... Your home."

"Druig... You're my home."

MEMES:



A/N: the song above is literally all I was listening to when I wrote this chapter.

Continue reading next part