

Chapter 70

Seated side-by-side at a circular lunch table that they weren't sharing with anyone else, Sush disclosed - in hushed tones - of Kenji's "joke", and Greg decided the wimpy eastern octopus was humorous enough to not get himself killed. This time.

Fear his cousin? Please. That softie's rules were so much less rigid and so much more standard and boring than Greg's own ever had been.

Sush promptly added, "I'm only telling you this to come clean. Don't spread this around. For all I know, he either told me that in confidence or during a temporary lapse of judgment."

"Well, that's his mistake, isn't it?" Greg smirked, practically inviting her strong kick to his leg, at which time the tilt of his lips drew higher when his breath glided across her ear as he purred, "I see you're regaining your strength. Looks like we can look forward to an eventful night."

"Is that all you think about?" Sush reprimanded in a whisper, not admitting to herself that it was all she thought about whenever she wasn't working and her mind was left to wander.

"Oh, I think of other things too. Things that would speed up your recovery from a busy night for us to keep having busy nights."

"Hm," she hummed, as if impressed. "And what did

you find?"

His hand on her thigh climbed up to her waist, skating across her back, fingertips skimming up her side when he muttered, "There are certain things that I leave to showing, not telling."

"Like your temper when I speak to the opposite sex?" she deflected before her own restraint disappeared.

His lips twitched. "Let's not dismantle the honesty we've built by succumbing to hyperbole, my huntress."

Swallowing the chicken sandwich faster just to be able to deliver a retort a few seconds earlier, she fired back, "How is it hyperbole when you've literally said you'd shoot Agu and threatened to bury Kenji alive?"

"First of all, I implied that you'd shoot him. Not me. I could do it too if you allowed me to. And second, I'm not like that with every man. I wouldn't mind if you spent hours with your noble leader, your co-Chief Archer, or many of your baby octopuses."

Her eyes narrowed. "Baby octopuses?"

"Your subordinates."

"I know. They're not babies."

"I'm well aware. Some of their competencies just make them look like one, I must say."

Bringing her mug to her lips, she murmured, "Demented and arrogant. Impatient and presumptuous, even."

"Afraid so," Greg readily admitted. "You've got the worst member of the family, Sush. Probably the worst in the kingdom. Luck has definitely not been on your side."

Eyeing him in amusement, she uttered, "You've got the most overbearing, demanding, obtrusive and dishonorable member amongst the hunters, one who's here for herself and not the entity. I wouldn't say you've been blessed either."


Chuckling lightly, he brought her hand to his lips, his breath fanned across her skin when he uttered, "If this is who I get from being cursed, I'll never ask to be blessed."

The declaration rang through their ears, its meaning easily understood. When he was "blessed" with the mate bond, he became bonded with a monster that was using him to get to the most important person in his life. The experience only didn't destroy him because he was determined to destroy her and everyone she was connected to first.

Although Sush didn't leave the most memorable first impression, didn't seem to carry a light that gravitated creatures to her at first blush, her light shone when she began speaking, and it blinded the room when her mind worked, when she worked. Her light parted the darkness in any room, and it was this very element that made people remember her.

Greg learned quickly that he wasn't satisfied with just being acquainted by her skills anymore. He was obsessed with cataloging every way her brow could arch, the rhythm of her chewing that would give him a clue of what she was eating, the sound of footsteps that echoed off the floor differently

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depending on whether she was thinking while sauntering, pacing in frustration, or just striding across the room to get something.

Even having that set of knowledge now, he felt it wasn't enough. He loved that he could read her mood based on her quirks, but he wanted to feel her. He wanted every sliver of emotion running through her veins and every gentle nudge to her heart be tangible to him. Only to him.


He wanted to mark her.



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