

## Chapter 810

"No," Leona snapped. I barely saw Hayden's reaction. She took a step forward, her blade flashed out and she slit Leona's throat with one fluid move.

The blonde's hands flew to her throat but it was too late. Blood splashed everywhere. She staggered for a moment then flopped to the ground, kicking out the last seconds of her life. It was easy to hear their horrific words and forget they were a homicidal cult. Hayden's reaction was similar to the emotion I showed when at the supermarket and realized milk had gone up two cents a gallon.

Essentially displeased yet accepting it was bound to happen eventually and definitely going to forget about it by the time I got the bags to the car. That is how the Amazon High Priestess ended the life of someone her culture actually valued - my bet it was because she was a breeding female.

"Ursula, step forward," Hayden commanded.

"Why? What have I done?" Ursula gulped as she came forward.

"Someone has to answer for Leona's crimes since she is no longer able," Hayden explained coolly. "Do you wish to offer up some other member of your House to take your place?"

"This is wrong, Hayden. Leona is dead at your hand," Ursula declared.

"That's right," Hayden sighed. "You were born with the blood of the Unconquered, blessed by our Goddesses, triumphant in our trials and feted with prestige of the oldest martial tradition on Earth."

"He is a male of no tradition and a mutt bloodline. No prestige. No training. He bravely faced his fate minutes ago without plea while remaining defiant and loyal to a House he did not belong to," Hayden looked at Ursula yet aimed the words at the room. "In case you missed it, when that child approached, he shielded her with his body against you, Ursula, despite the obvious pain he was in."www.ñø(ν)el(ω)or•©.coM

"If you are not ashamed at exhibiting less concern for our people than a boy, walk away Ursula," Hayden stressed.

"You are showing mercy where strength is needed!" Ursula shouted. "You killed Leona over a male!"

"I killed Leona because she defied the Council, Ursula," Hayden purred. "We prayed and sought guidance before choosing the 'New Directive'. We have not only broken with tradition, we have killed it, burnt the body and scattered the ashes." She held up her hand. "Cáel, what is going on with Havenstone?"

"I doubt you are looking for a moral assessment," I grunted. I was almost at the door with Sydney. "Your male population is broken, your girls are being born deformed, mental, or sterile and your own genetics are screwed up. You are desperately bringing new male and female blood. Even then, you are treating your new women like 'runners', not like the Host."www.nov©ŁWôrm.©ó©

Runners was the best interpretation of foot soldier in Old Kingdom Hittite. It referred to the peons who ran up to support the chariots - the true striking arm of those ancient kingdoms. In more modern times we called them 'cannon fodder'.

"Since you haven't bothered to update your definition of the term masculine in millennia, I can understand you treating men like a boot knife in a gun fight," I explained.

"Not at all what you want, but better than dying," I added.

"You believe we think so little of you?" Caitlyn asked.

"Need I reference all the women who came to my defense when Leona first shot at me? Or where Khalid is? Or what is going to be the fate of every male all of you have bred with over the centuries before now?" I replied.

"If you don't trust us, how can we rely on you to be obedient?" Brielle queried.

"Don't get me wrong; if I had a magic button that would kill every Amazon over the age of 17, I'd been pounding that bitch as hard as I could," I grinned. "A better cut-off age would be 15, but I kinda think Loraine deserves a chance to grow up to not be like the rest of you."

Loraine smiled at me. She wasn't alone either. It took me a second to clue in - it was my spirit that was attracting them. That and their desire to be the ones to break it. Even after the fight on Tuesday, that had been what Madi had mentioned to Katrina.

"I don't trust you because your whole race is insane. I will obey because I owe Katrina that much and more," I pledged.

"Have I been merciful to you, Cáel?" Hayden asked.

"Am I about to die?" I reposed.w(ω)w.Ñøv•Łwo(•)m.©Oм

"No," she promised.

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"Then 'no', you have not been merciful," I grouched. "At this rate I am going to have to date Buffy and Desiree and I was really looking to avoiding that amount of heartache."

Take into account that there were several women in attendance who hadn't a clue what had transpired since the first arrow flew at me. Everyone of importance had been chattering away in a language that was not only dead; it was also from a dead language family. There is no Old Kingdom Hittite word for 'Buffy' so when I mentioned her name, she stared at me.

A flurry of emotions washed over her face. On some level she was worried about my health. She also had figured out that I knew what Fabiola had called her on Friday and wasn't happy I hadn't informed her of this - even though she would have had to then kill me for knowing.

"Buffy," I explained in English, "I told them I plan to sleep with you first."

Buffy stood taller and pushed her chest out farther at that new - almost preening.

"You will be sleeping with me first," Hayden declared in English.

"Can we make it a three-way? Buffy scares me," I stated.

"I should scare you more," Hayden countered.

"Well, you'll need to beat Buffy's story about wresting a live jaguar to the ground and pulling all its teeth out," I fabricated. "I'm sure you have one only I haven't heard it yet." In English, because Buffy needed to be part of this conversation.

"You are dismissed," Hayden studied me as I was dragged away.

I lost the conversation in the archery field as the doors shut and I was 'escorted' away.

"You are one tough son-of-a-bitch," Sydney commented out of nowhere. The guard chuckled. These were some cold-ass people, if there was any doubt. Sydney had black hair, like Marilynn, except hers was heavily streaked with grey.

"Are you Marilynn's aunt?" I tossed out there.

"I'll make it easy on you. I am Hayden's oldest and Marilynn is my oldest and yes, I wish she'd get her life together," Sydney informed me.