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Deidre hadn't come by my place on Monday to warn me that Uncle Blockhead was trying to kill me. She was prepping me for the knowledge that they had killed Lumpy - to save me. Those incestuous nightmares had trotted Uncle Carrig out like a Barnum & Bailey Sasquatch, to loud acclaim and fanfare.

Before I could do some in depth research/check to see if this was the 'real' Sasquatch, he would vanish aka be killed to save me. Well played ladies. They should have taken into account I worked for Katrina Love. Katrina undoubtedly played three-dimensional chess on-line so she could lure out the true Vulcans trapped on Earth.

My aunts' straw man wasn't going to cut it. Back to the reality that included my father never again enjoying my meandering thoughts over dinner. Back to the other curious 'real' players as they moved in, having soaked up my ceremony and our O'Shea family struggle. If there as a benefit in that misadventure, it was the look on the faces of the two most distant groups.

The ambassadors had on their poker faces. I was two decades away from having a chance of deciphering them. Foolish mortals, both groups had brought women with them though. That was not to imply that women can't keep secrets - they are among the experts. It wasn't secrets they were defending though - it was the interaction between Brianna and me that opened them up.

If you are a woman and you see a man bring a different woman to orgasm with his fingers in under ten seconds and you are NOT intrigued, you have been sexually neutered. Even if you are a lesbian, you want your lover to pick up that technique. From the level of interest coming my way, I could tell what their bosses/associates really thought of me.

The lady who was already thinking how to pull me aside at the reception was also projecting that I had piqued her co-workers, despite their feigned disinterest. The one who was plotting out how to disguise herself as a maid, so she could hide in my bathroom closet until I came in for a shower this evening. Then the feigned interrogation/instructional demonstration could begin, which told me they had chosen to not leave Chicago today despite previous travel plans.

The three assholes won the social dare contest and approached me next. They were cool, somewhat disdainful and not a party to the murderous program that led us here today. They were still Condotteiri, thus my enemies and slayers of my Dad.

"Mr. Nyilas," a smooth talking Canadian male began, "I wish to pass on the condolences of..."

"I know it was you," I broke in. The Canadian - Ottawa, I thought - stopped talking, allowing me to vent. "You killed my father, you fucks. Now here is your 'I got drunk and stuck my cock in a meat grinder only to discover some other moron plugged it in' bullet to the brain. I am not only C  l Nyilas, I am C  l Ishara and C  l, grandson of C  l O'Shea," I narrowed my vision to menacing slits.

"I will let you figure out which Goddess is Ishara as well as the convoluted genetics that has resurrected male Amazons. I want you to know that my father was the Head of House Ishara. You killed a Factor of the Illuminati, the 'Voice' of one of the Nine Clans, one of your own Generals, a Grand Master of the Egyptian Rite, a Ba Wang of the 7 Pillars, or a Chosen Son or Daughter, of Earth & Sky

"That's right," I let the fear sink in. "This goes beyond a breach, Dumbass. You BROKE the Truce and have ended the Protocols by killing an Amazon leader. I'm sure claims of ignorance by your Generals will be taken for the empty blathering they are. It is time for your blood to soak the sacred soil of my father's place of entombment."

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Having buried him and his two cohorts in a rockslide of truth, my final bluff passed unrevealed for the empty threat it was. I could see by the looks in their eyes. Amazons didn't care about law enforcement. They would kill those three, vanish into the surrounds then slink back to their secret compounds. It was how the Condotteiri thought Amazon's worked.

"Or," I grumbled, "Are you going to make me and my sisters hunt you down and work for it. Killing you with our knives is going to be..." I was saying when their retreat began. I was going to say 'messy'. Those three took a half-dozen steps back then ran for it. Now the stage was fully set.

The three members of the Nine Clans came next. I took a totally different tone. Selena stepped up to speak, bowing as she started to speak.

"We wish..." she started. There was a lot of interrupting going on today.

"Please do not bow to me," I requested softly.

"We have fought and it seems inappropriate to me that, without there being a martial decision, we cannot be sure who should be more respectful to whom," I suggested. Selena quickly switched gears. She and her two female companions were now openly staring at me.

"My Sith Lady is most likely preparing for trouble at my most vulnerable point," I told Selena.  v  l     m.c  m

"I'm much more trouble than I first appear," I added. A hiccup in the conversation took place.

"You are the male Head of an Amazon House... how?" Selena questioned.

"My father and the fathers before him carried the genes of the original Ishara. When Her daughters died out, the legacy fell to me," I explained.

Really smart girls - really, really smart girls.

"You do not have any daughters, so your first born daughter will be the next Head of your House," the Hashashin noted quickly. "Of any line?" Ah, the siren call of 'please have unprotected sex with me, Mr. Studmuffin. Not only will I walk bow-legged for a week afterwards, I'll have a political tool to use for a lifetime.'

"Yes, that is true. Please understand, unless you can catch a thrown tomahawk with your feet, I can't say you are at the top of the list," I sighed. "Speaking of the acrobat of my dreams, how are you doing Miyako?" I knocked away at the barrier between our respective groups. I could hardly be considered an Amazon if I wasn't stacking the odds against the Condotteiri, now could I?

On came that child-like Nipponese girl's smile that made me want to double-check her ID for proof of age.

"It is recovering nicely. Thank you, Ishara-sama," she smiled warmly.

"May I see?" I inquired.

Miyako nodded so I went down until I was balanced on the balls of my feet. She deftly slipped out of one of her shoe, placed her foot on my knee then began rolling up the pants leg until the bandaged was revealed. In the past few hours my medical knowledge had not increased one iota. I was pretty sure that Miyako knew what this doctor's visit was really all about.

I gently massaged her leg from ankle to knee, examining it for flaws and weaknesses. I received some manna from Heaven when I stumbled upon a muscle spasm in her foot arch. I worked it out in under thirty seconds and she gave me a musical murmur of relief when I was done. I put her shoe back on and rolled down her trouser leg.

"I would still like you to see our medic if you could spare the half-hour," I offered as I stood.

"If it would ease any misconceptions about our first encounter, I will do it," Miyako changed her mind from last night. My next neural misfire was "Did I pack enough condoms to do all these girls I've been promising to fuck since I got here?"

"Estere Abed," the thinly-veiled applicant to be the mother of my first child introduced herself. I was at my father's funeral, I'd been hit with the realization that my incestuous aunts are going to emasculate the uncle I'd just met before they kill him, and I was talking to a woman with skin the color of well-seasoned Oak, eyes as dark as espresso-roasted coffee beans (so deeply brown they were almost black), a pale turquoise, virtually transparent pretend-burqa, with inner, skimpy clothing bits keeping her barely street-legal and visualizing what our daughter would look like.

"I am of Kurdish extraction," she lowered her head minutely. Ding-ding-ding-ding-ding! Not only was a-bed something I was seriously considering with this woman, Estere was a Kurdish name of Old Persian extraction. It meant Ishtar... who was the advanced incarnation of Ishara. Bitch - aimed up at my Matron Goddess and Ancestral Mother turned Dominatrixes of my soul.

"How... how mystically convergent that is," I grumbled. "I apologize. Me and my matron Ball-buster are exchanging psychic barbs at the moment. Had you somehow predicted this would have happened, I would be happier. With my luck though, this is accidental from the perspective of the mortal plane, thus a point of incredible annoyance to me right now."

"Do you often talk to your ancestors?" Estere inquired politely.

"Only after I've done something bad," I groaned. "Usually my Goddess is short on instructions yet always ready with 'I told you so'."

"How can she chastise you for doing wrong if she fails to give you direction?" Estere was so sincere.

I had to keep in mind she was a professional librarian with the nasty habit of misfiling people's lives.

"I can tell you don't deal with the Spirit World much," I gave a sad grin. "The last time she gave me a prod, I was staring down a life sentence in a dog cage - after I was condemned, not before."  v  l     m.c  m

"You escaped," she reminded me with a sparkle. I gave a harsh laugh.

"No - no, I didn't," I said. "I'll prove it." I lashed out at Estere. She turned my strike aside and was about to do something I assumed would be unfortunate for me when she restrained herself. "See, Estere, you've been doing this most of your life. I'm a college kid who had a good fortune to meet and be guided by a series of stellar women."  v  l     m.c  m