



Blood and beast's

"Eir! Finally!"

He beamed, but I still just stared at him. What is this? But before I could answer, a rather clumsy figure crawled over the ship's railing and fell over on the deck. She bounced right up again and scanned the People on deck.

"Maya!?"

She squealed and clapped her hands before running over and throwing herself around my neck. I hugged her back before I grabbed her shoulders, held her out before me, and gave her a thorough look over.

" Oh god! What happened to you? Are you okay?"

I couldn't help but throw Tew a suspicious glance. She looked like she'd been beaten even if she was smiling, bright as the sun. Her lip was swollen and had a deep cut that seemed just to have closed up. Red and blue marks around her throat, minor shapeless bruises, and small cuts down her arms, shoulders, and on her cheeks. My hand gently brushed against her swollen cheek, so scared it would hurt her.

"I am fine, really! At least now!"

"But, "

My eyes kept finding new marks on her as I looked at her. My chest tightened. Scowling at Tew and his men over her shoulder, I whispered in her ear.

"Did they do this? Why? Please tell me I will castrate them in their sleep!"

Tew looked unimpressed, some of his men looked away smiling, and Maya let out a short laugh.

"No, Eir, they saved me! It was that man, you know, who wanted me to be the perfect little housewife. He didn't like that I was leaving, even though he had already asked for me to move into the shelter."

She whispered that last part like it was something to be ashamed of.

"I am so sorry for what he did to you! But on the bright side, you are no longer tied to a grumpy, sexist mutt!"

For a short moment, everything was like before. We held hands, almost jumping while giggling and making weird squealing noises, and began to talk simultaneously. We quickly updated each other on what must sound like an utter mess of noises and words. It wasn't even helpful information, just chit-chat and happiness. I didn't mention anything about Toke; she didn't mention anything about her last days in the Vikings pack. For now, we both just needed to be happy.

Someone cleared their throat, and we both abruptly cut the conversation and glared at the one daring to disturb us. Tew looked between us, and behind him, I could see Hades and Arcane trying not to laugh. Oh, right! I forgot all about it for a second. But wait, they said my family. But Tew?

"Tew, long time no see!"

I felt really awkward, and I didn't really know how to go about this. I did not even know what to ask without it sounding weird. Tew scratched his neck and looked over at one of his men.

"Yes, well. I am glad to see you are well. Where is that used-to-be-alpha puppy?"

He leaned forward and frowned,

"And what the heck is that? Who did that?"

Pointing at my neck, he slowly turned to Hades while anger started rolling off him. Surprisingly enough, Hades didn't seem to be affected by his mood change. He didn't even seem bothered or bare his neck as some of the men standing closest to him did. Arcane, on the other hand, looked a bit uncomfortable and looked away, suddenly having great interest in studying a bird flying in the sky.

"Calm down; no need to pull the pissing contest card! Toke, well, we don't know what went through his head. He accused her of being a slut and an alpha maiden in the same sentence; can you believe that? Anyway, he attacked her and tried to mark her, but we managed to rip him off her. Resulting in a nasty little wound, but it is fine; it will heal, and they are not bonded. "

"He did what? AND HE IS STILL ALIVE?"

"Calm down. That can wait; let us take this first!"

He tilted his head in my direction with an arched brow.

"Fine. But I'm not letting this slide; that he is an old friend of yours will not help this time, Hades. I've had enough of that Viking pack!"

Turning his attention back to me, the barbarian had an actual smile on his face. Not beaming and shining like Maya, but the barbarian could smile. The big bad man even had dimples; how cute! I cleared my throat, hiding my laughter.

But my amusement died down fast as he began to talk. He could as well

have been discussing the weather because none of it was relevant. Where his pack belonged, how many they were, and that they had a long line of direct descendants from people I hadn't even heard of.

"Tew, just say it as it is. Stop walking around the porridge. "

"Porridge?"

"Stop stalling; tell me why you are here and why you think I have family here."

He paused and glared at Hades. Hades, however, responded with a shrug, at least pretending he was a little sorry.

"Okay, so I didn't know you knew that. But you do remember I asked about your mother, yes? Not that you look much like her, but you are a spitting image of your father. Then I read your files; I'm even more sure you are the one I think you are. The girl that disappeared so many years ago, Rosabella. I also understand your reaction now when I pushed so much about your mother, and for that, I am sorry. "

"But that doesn't make sense!"

"Why?"

"You pushed forward a claim on me as a mate for some alpha, and that was before you met me. Or even saw me or my file."

"Since the war dissolved, we stayed out of the Vikings' business most of the time. We do, however, guard the portal every time they open it. Every five years, we watch them go and come back again. Nothing has ever stuck out, and not once have they taken anyone with them as they leave. One of my guards this time smelled you, and even if I hate the fact that you were bleeding, it was the only reason he recognized it. You see,

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wolves all have a distinct smell, one that is supposed to be particularly appealing for your mate. It is how our beast forms recognize pack members, other pack members, and mated and unmated couples. Who are mature and who are still considered children. Also, each family has a slight similarity to one another. One particular smell that lingers beneath the beast's unique one, that is the way we find our relatives, how we are able to solve who fathered a child or what family a child belonged to after the chaos of war calmed."

"Wait, so you know I have family here? It is not just something you think?"

"Yes. "

"so, what was all that mate claim stuff and moonstone thing?"

"Ah, well. We figured we could finally get justice, that we could once and for all prove that they were the ones who stole our woman and her child. That the Vikings pack helped her out of this world and back. You can't lie or hide anything while the moonstone is activated. Getting the old alpha and his son to step into the moonstone circle would answer all our questions and suspicions once and for all."

Now, he beamed, too, waiting. What he was waiting for, I'm not sure. But he looked so full of hope that I almost felt bad for not understanding what he wanted from me right now. Seconds passed like snails, and the vibe around us turned awkward, and slowly, his smile faltered.

"Dormant, stubborn beast"

Hades grabbed Tew's shoulder and coughed the words out, making us all look at him with questioning frowns. Then Tew lit up,

"Of course! I forgot! Then call for her!"

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"I tried; she scolded me and burned my fingertips!"

"She what?"

"You heard me, brother. I know she is there, she answered, but she pretty much sniffed me like I was a pile of horse shit and told me off and scolded me for not being worthy. She didn't like me asking for her name either."

Now, they both looked at me like it was something dark and rare, with awe and wary. I didn't follow. Called for who?



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