

GUPTA EMPIRE 400 AD

AURORA

I have never liked Ikaris.

It's not like I hate him— I don't. He's nice and he's helped me in battles and with my anger issues. There's just something about him I can't quite place that gives me a weird feeling.

He always seems to be distant, like he's always reminding himself that we're on a mission and not actually on a trip or on a break.

Except this once.

I don't think I've ever seen him act more human than right now.

Sersi really did a number on him. They'd fallen in love over the years, and a er so much time they were finally getting married.

I had to admit, I really liked them together. They seemed to fit almost perfectly, like pieces of a puzzle.

It did Sersi good, to love and laugh as she did with him, so I guess that seeing her happy with him made me dislike him less.

Either way, I never turned back from a party, and this was going to be a big one.

Part of me though, as much as I was happy for them, also envied them. Why did they get to have their love story? Why did they get to fall and love and I couldn't?

I didn't like anyone on the team... I hated the only person I found attractive in this group.

Also, he was acting more of an ass than usual, and that made me despise him even more.

I pursed my lips, turning my head slightly to see where he was.

He was talking to one of the girls, his coy smirk flashing across his mouth as he flirted. It made me so angry for some reason. I hated seeing him so smug, I hated seeing that he could go and flirt and not care at all.

A part of me wished I could do that, but time had proven that I wasn't made for humans and humans weren't made for me. No matter what happened I always seemed to back away when the thought of them dying and I living entered my mind.

I wouldn't fall in love with someone who was going to die and force me to go on with life without them.

I clear my throat, taking a sip of my drink and adjusting my headscarf.

I liked the Gupta Empire. It had started to grow on me, even more than Babylon.

The people here were nice and willing, and I'd found myself making friends around the village. In my free time, I would help them plan and cook and paint, something I had never thought I would be able to do.

Still, I kept myself reserved, not willing to call this place my home. That way my heart wouldn't break as much when this Empire fell, just like the others.

"You look like you're about to burst into tears" Sprite's voice jolts me out of my thoughts.

"I wasn't going to, but now that I'm seeing your ugly face I just might" I retort playfully, laughter lining my words.

Sprite laughs out loud, reaching to pull at my scarf. I jolt away, laughing and then extending my arm to go for her own.

I let out a loud laugh, dodging her hand and then pushing her head away. Next to Sersi and Makkari, Sprite had also become one of my closest friends on this team.

I was about to push her when Ajak's warning glare from across the room met mine, and I let Sprite go, laughing and just opting for a judge in the shoulder instead.

As the laughter died down, we stared at the wedding party, watching as Ikaris and Sersi danced, looking at each other in a loving gaze.

I sigh, tilting my head to the side slightly, a sad smile tinting my face.

"I hate them" Sprite's tone comes out hateful, surprising me entirely.

"What?" I ask, my eyes wide as I turn to her.

She nods, lips pursed, eyes blazing.

"They get to live like that. They get to fall in love and live forever. She gets the boy." She turns to me. "I get nothing"

I frown, looking down at her and grabbing her shoulder for comfort.

"You'll live on your own time, Sprite, don't worry" I assure her.

She doesn't say anything else but rather lets the moment pass before she silently edges away from me and makes a headline towards Ajak, on the other side of the room.

And just like that, I'm le alone again.

—

I like to do this ritual— a tradition of sorts— when we get to a new place.

It goes like this:

I go to a random bar or gathering place. Most of the time I go alone (most of the time I'm drunk).

I find the shadiest place there is, and then I go inside, and I bet whomever I see is the strongest to a fighting match.

They never say no.

They also never win.

Most of the time none of the Eternals find out, which is why it has been going on for quite a long time now, but they've come close to figuring it out several times.

So here I was, drunk o my mind, stumbling o from the wedding to find a place to start a fight.

It was dumb, I know, but it helped me get o my anger sometimes, and I enjoyed hitting big men.

It took me about five minutes to find my target. As nice as this city was, all cities had their bad places, and this was one of them.

I entered the small room, immediately engulfed in the stench of sweat mixed with alcoholic beverages and men that hadn't bathed in a long time.

I walked up to a table, sitting beside a group of ugly men and stealing one of their drinks.

The men stopped talking, turning to look at me with scowls.

"What do you think you're doing?" One of them asked, watching as I downed the drink I was holding. I fought back from making a face, knowing that they would take that as a sign of weakness.

I put the drink down, looking at all of them with a stupid smile on my face. I had to admit, the drinks in this city really fucked up my sense of direction.

Maybe this wasn't such a good idea?

No. I had to go through with it.

"I'll tell you what" I start, completely ignoring his question. I point at him "If I beat you in a fight, I get to drink all of your drinks on this table" There were about 10 drinks "And you have to buy me more" I dare.

The man looks at me, a scowl on his face. He had two choices. Decline, and look like a coward for not taking up a fight with a woman, or accept and get his ass beat.

"Alright, I accept"

Bingo.

His friends burst into laughter, standing up from the table and motioning to the tables around us, letting everyone know something was about to go down.

The man stood, towering over me with an easy 6'2.

God, what had I gotten myself into?

I laughed to myself, shaking my head and taking o my scarf, and leaving it on the table.

I put my head up, using one of the knives in one of the tables to hold the knot in place.

The rest of the people made space in the center of the small room, just enough for two people to fight in.

I walked towards the center, cracking my knuckles and trying to sober up a little before I actually fought.

I wasn't going to use my powers— I didn't like beating people if I had an advantage, so most of the time my skills were the ones that were put on trial.

I stepped into the circle, followed by the other man.

He smiles, revealing his rotting, yellow, teeth. I resisted the urge to gag.

"You start in!" A man beside us yelled "Three, two... one!"

The room burst into a series of shouts and cheers as the man lunged at me full force. I crouched, sliding away from him and then up again to punch him in the nose.

He reeled back, a groan escaping his lips before turning around and lunging back at me. I smiled to myself. This was proving to be a lot easier.

I made a series of more moves, twisting his arm one time, hitting his head the other. I was beating him, and I could tell it was making him angry.

I was about to punch him square in the jaw when he caught it, his fist wrapped around my hand. I winced in pain, not being able to process as he twisted my arm around.

I heard a sickening pop on my shoulder as he completely twisted me around so that my back was to his. I let out a scream of pain, unable to hold myself back.

My vision blurred, turning black around. the edges as he pressed the back of my knee to make me kneel.

I thought about a way to get out of his hold, but my mind was muddled by the e ects of the alcohol, and I was beginning to panic.

I didn't want to use my powers. I wasn't even sure if they worked well, given the fact that I was so intoxicated I couldn't even focus.

I didn't even notice him take the knife out of my hair.

In an instant, he was holding it against my throat, the rest of the people in the restaurant cheering and hollering.

I closed my eyes, trying to think straight, trying not to panic, but I couldn't think of anything.

Fear began to build up my throat as the man provoked the others, yelling things about giving me what I deserved and making me learn a lesson.

He grabbed my arm, making me scream in pain as he hoisted me up into a standing position, knife still at my throat.

I swallowed down another scream as he pushed me forward, tears silently falling. I slammed my eyes shut, trying to fight o the pain.

"You'll su er, you little bitch. No one fights me and ge—"

He halts in mid-word, going still. I wait for a few seconds for him to start speaking, and when he doesn't I realize that the entire place has gone silent.

I open my eyes slowly tears still falling down my cheeks.

The people around me stand still, eyes glossed over and white.

The man holding me finally lets go, releasing my arms and dropping the knife to the floor.

"You're hurt" His cold tone cuts through the silence, echoing through the soundless room. It comes out more of a statement than a question.

Druig.

I turn to him, my vision blurring with the pain. I look around, my eyes meeting his, though I can't actually see him clearly, I can see his forehead is wrinkled with worry, his brow is furrowed.

He takes a step forward, and now we're just a few steps away from each other I know that if he hold out his hand I can take it.

He scans me from head to toe, jaw clenching with what I assume is anger.

Around us, the men still stand there, at the command of Druig. For the time being, it looks like they aren't going anywhere.

"Whaaaat?" My voice sounds strange in my throat as I try to play it o, even though I know I'm about to faint. I shake my head lazily, my ears ringing "No... I'm... I'm..."

My legs give out from under me, and the last thing I see is Druig jolting forward to catch me before everything goes black.

a/n: Druig's pov for this next continuation of this chapter or should we stay with Aurora's?