ᴛωσ

" You look tired."

"I'm exhausted."

"The nightmare again?"Makkari asked furrowing her eyebrows when I nodded. " Persephone... this has gone on long enough. What about Druig?"

"He won't do it anymore. Can't say I blame him, y'know? But I can't sleep, Makkari. I'm terrified of falling asleep now. That's how bad it's getting."I shrugged and a plate of fruit was placed in front of us. "Thank you, Gil."

"Little one, you look exhausted." Gilgamesh pointed out just as I yawned. "And I was right."

" She's not sleeping."

"Bite me, Makkari."

"Is it the nightmares again?" Sersi butted from the corner of the room and Makkari nodded. "Vena, what are the nightmares about?"

"I'm not talking about them." I grumbled and Gilgamesh sighed.

"I'm not saying everything that happens... All I know is that Druig dies in every single one." He said and Sersi gasped rushing to my side.

"How!?"

"I'm not saying." I spat and continued to do the puzzle I was doing earlier with Makkari. "What happens in my mind is my business. I'd appreciate it if you all just back o and hop o my ass for one minute."

"You need to talk to someone about this." Sersi sighed and I shook my head. "Maybe Ajak could-"

" She's tried. Ajak won't listen. So she still has them and Druig has to ease her to sleep every night. But since he's away with Ikaris, Sprite, Thena and Kingo, she hasn't been sleeping."Makkari explained.

"How long will they be gone?"

"At least a few more days, according to Ajak. Which isn't a lot considering how long Vena leaves when she's fighting Deviants, but she needs the sleep." Phastos shrugged and turned to me. "You have bags under your eyes and you look half dead."

"Thanks, Phastos. You look half dead as well." I spat and placed the last piece of the puzzle.

"I sleep, you don't."

"Vena, it's normal to have the fear of losing Druig. Just like he has the fear of losing you." Sersi said and I sighed banging my head on the table. "What's not normal is you having these nightmares every single night. Especially when he's away and can't soothe your mind."

"I've tried, okay? I've tried everything. From him tampering with my mind to exhausting myself and passing out in random corners. But nothing works, Sersi. I can't help it." I mumbled as Makkari forced me to stop banging my head.

"Maybe you could sleep with one of us, at least until Hades comes back."

"I spend my nights with Makkari."

"She's scared to be alone. And it's fun because we escape in the middle of the night to go through the city."

"Ares comes back, I'm staging an intervention. This has gone on long enough." Gilgamesh shrugged and I groaned resting my head on Sersi's shoulder.

"What about Ares?" Druig asked walking inside and frowned when he saw me. "I've been gone for ten days... Don't tell me that you haven't slept at all!"

" She hasn't!"Makkari signed and I punched her shoulder. " It's obvious! I'd lie if you didn't have those bags under your eyes!"

"Was it the nightmare?" Druig asked kissing my cheek and crouched down in front of me. "You definitely haven't slept a wink, my darling."

"Vena, you look like hell." Sprite called out and I grabbed an apple throwing it at her. "Right... I'll shut up now."

"Vena, we've talked about it already." Ikaris sighed ru ling my hair and I glared at him.

"I know, I know... I just have this feeling... I can't explain it. It's like my senses are heightened and there's nothing I can do about it because it's in my dreams. But when I wake up, it gets worse. My powers are heightened and it takes a while for me to calm down. It's not the dream that's bad... it's the feeling a erwards."

"It's the bond you and Druig have formed over the centuries." Ajak said walking inside the lab and smiled at everyone. "It's nice to see our family back together."

"Ajak, why do I get the feeling you know something we don't?" Druig asked as I rested my head on his shoulder dri ing in and out of consciousness.

"Everything will be explained one day if Arishem allows it. For now, I think you all should rest... especially Vena."

...

"Should've done this 7000 years ago."

"DRUIG!"

"Vena? Darling, wake up."

I jolted awake with glowing eyes holding a ball of fire defensively and took in my surroundings.

"It's okay, my love. It's just me, it's Adonis." Druig whispered lowering my hands when the flame extinguished and held my face in his hands. "It's just me."

"You were... I couldn't..."

"I know, my starlight, I know. We've been through this before. I need you to take deep breaths. Can you do that for me?" He asked taking deep breaths and I tried to imitate it. "That's it... that's my girl."

"I... volcano... Deviants..."

"Shh, you don't have to speak if you don't want to. It's okay, we're both okay." Druig cooed pulling me to his lap and I started crying. "I'm here, Vena. I'm not going anywhere."

"Don't leave me, please... Don't leave." I choked out clinging to him.

"I wish I could take this from you, Vena. You don't deserve to keep living like this."

"I want it to stop. I can't keep doing this, Druig. I want it to stop." I sobbed and he sighed pulling me closer.

"We'll find a way, my starlight. I promise we'll find a way."

...

"Nope, no sleeping in my lab."

"You do it too, Phastos."

"Because it's **my** lab. You get your own lab, you make your rules." He said forcing me to stand up and I groaned. "I thought you were in your room."

"Adonis is out trying to find something to make me sleep, Makkari is who knows where, and you're the only one here that will actually let me sleep and wake me up if I get the nightmare again." I grumbled slapping myself awake. "I'm fully convinced that I'm in hell."

"You talked to Ikaris about them?"

"I did. We both had a deep conversation about it and now we're actually getting along." I shrugged sitting on the table glancing up at his new invention. "Do you remember the time I created the papyrus plant back in Egypt?"

"I specifically remember Ajak scolding you every single day for it. But you did manage to stop the floods and created stu so they could write instead of stones."

"Ajak never seemed to fond of whatever I did. Luckily I had you and Druig to defend me." I smiled leaning my head on his shoulder. "Do you think the nightmares will stop one day, Phastos?"

"We can only hope, Vena."

...

"Druig-"

"It's foolproof! Because those are the only nights you don't have nightmares!"

"I'm not having sex every night!" I laughed and Druig started whining.

"And why not!?"

"Maybe because sometimes I'm too exhausted from fighting Deviants or maybe I'm just not in the mood. Besides, what about the nights where you're gone or I'm gone? The other way doesn't quite help with the nightmares, sweetheart." I smirked and he sighed banging his head on a wall.

"Then I'm stumped!" Druig exclaimed and I laughed hugging him from behind. "So what do you suggest then?"

"Thena o ered to straight up knock me out, same with Makkari. Other than that, I guess we'll just have to wait it out." I shrugged pressing a kiss to his shoulder. "Ajak said the nightmares comes because of the bond we have, Dru. I honestly have no idea what that means."

"But I don't have those nightmares anymore. I haven't had them since we got married, darling. Meanwhile, yours got worse since that night."

"I know... But I have faith that it'll pass. We just have to wait it out." Druig sighed turning around and smiled so ly.

"My darling Vena, always the optimist."

"My charming Druig, always the pessimist." I teased and kissed him.

"Hey!"

"But did I lie?"

"No..."

...

"Alright... I was woken up before I had a chance to have the nightmare. What the hell is this about?"

"Intervention." Gilgamesh said and I groaned sliding down a wall next to Thena and glared at everyone. "It's necessary, Vena."

"It's actually not, but sure." I shrugged and Ikaris sco ed. "Yes, Ikaris?"

"Why are you now acting like a bitch, Vena?"

"When you don't sleep for ten days in a row and only manage to get a few hours the following three nights, you'd act like a bitch too." I spat.

"Anyways... Vena, why don't you tell everyone what the nightmare is about?" Ajak sighed and I shook my head furiously. "Everyone needs to know in order to help you, Vena."

"Fine! The dream is all of us on a beach where a volcano is erupting. The next part is hard to explain because not even I know what's going on. All I know is that Ikaris grabs Druig and kills him before I have the chance to react. I don't know what happens next because I always wake up right a er that." I shrugged looking at their deadpan expressions. "Yeah, I'm all kinds of messed up."

"And... have you talked to Ikaris about this?" Sprite asked a er a few minutes of silence and I nodded. "And Druig? His ability is mind control a er all."

"I can't keep tampering her mind. Whenever I try to ease her back to sleep, I have to push the nightmare to the far corners of her mind and create a sort of barrier. The thing is, I never know what's hidden until she wakes up the next day. My fear is that one day I'll hide much more than I wanted and Vena won't be able to distinguish what's real and what's not." Druig explained.

"I don't get it." Kingo butted.

"To ease her back to sleep, I have to plant an illusion on her mind that's so real, she might think it was real life and hopefully overpower the nightmare she had. It's the only way to keep her emotions in check and to calm her down. The mind's a tricky and confusing place to be in, Kingo. One wrong move and the Vena we all know and adore will be gone."

"But why Ikaris? Out of all of us, why him?" Sersi asked furrowing her eyebrows.

" Because the two of them had issues before... And because him and Hades hate each other."Makkari shrugged. " But what confuses me is that her and Ikaris solved their issues centuries ago."

"Maybe there's something le ? Some hidden resentment somewhere?" Phastos o ered and Ikaris shook his head.

"Nothing there. Vena and I cleared the air and we act decent towards each other."

"Yeah, it's like we're actually family." I smirked leaning my head on Thena's shoulder. "It's something weird to explain, okay? That's why I don't do it."

"Was that place somewhere we've been, Vena?" Ajak asked.

"I'd honestly couldn't tell you. Kinda reminded me of Mesopotamia, kinda reminded me of Greece. I don't know if it's somewhere we've been, will be, or just a figment of my imagination." I shrugged closing my eyes.

"So we're just expected to say nothing and let you handle this alone or something? Because you having this dream over and over again isn't healthy, Vena!" Phastos exclaimed.

"When you come up with a way to make them go away, I'd be more than happy to try it out... And no, we're not erasing my mind. If Arishem wants that, the asshole will just have to come down here and do it himself." I sighed. "It's not every single night, it just happens most nights."

"So out of seven, like six?" Kingo sco ed and I nodded. "That's comforting."

"I'll talk to Arishem and tell him about the situation-"

"Don't you dare, Ajak. I already know how that conversation is going to go. Look, I can deal with it. I haven't died yet or lost my composure over it. It'll go away eventually... I hope." I mumbled the last part and Thena sco ed.

"There... May be a way for it to stop, but it's too risky." Druig mumbled and we all turned to him. "I could try placing the barrier again, this time more permanently. But I don't know how long it'll hold and what will happen once it breaks."

"I thought you said you weren't going to mess with her mind anymore." Sprite butted and he sighed.

"What choice do we have? We're not erasing her memories, that's out of the questions. It's either I do that or she'll just keep having them for who knows how long." Druig said crouching down in front of me. "I wouldn't have o ered it if I wasn't confident that you can handle it. Your mind matters too much to me."

"Do it." I nodded and Druig pursed his lips looking down before nodding back.

"Vena, if this doesn't work-"

"If it doesn't work, I'll get my memories wiped or go back to Olympia by myself. I can't keep living like this, Ajak. I can't keep forcing my family through this every single night." I said and she nodded. I turned to Druig and held his shaking hands. "It's okay, Dru. You could never hurt me. It's okay."

Druig took a deep breath holding my face in his hands as his eyes glowed for a few minutes and then subsided to his natural blue irises.

"It's done. How do you feel, my starlight?"

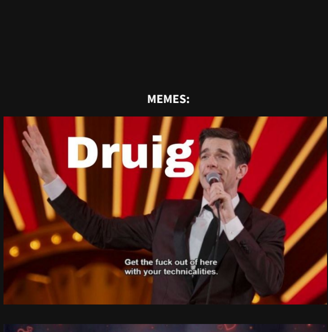
I shook my head blinking a few times as my eyes turned back to normal and sighed in relief.

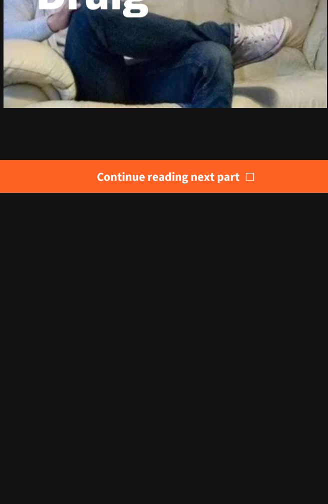
"Felt odd at first, but now? Better than ever."

"Did it work?" Kingo asked and we all shrugged.

"Only one way to find out, huh? I'll see you all in the morning."

MEMES:





Continue reading next part