



VAIL
HALLA
IS FULL OF
HUNKS

A MONSTROUSLY
MYTHIC TALE

C. ROCHELLE

VAL
HALLA
IS FULL OF
HUNKS

A MONSTROUSLY
MYTHIC TALE

C. ROCHELLE

CONTENTS

[Typos & Languages](#)

[Content, Warnings & Triggers](#)

[Stalk C. Rochelle](#)

[Author's Note](#)

1. [Iola](#)
2. [Iola](#)
3. [Iola](#)
4. [Fenrir](#)
5. [Iola](#)
6. [Surtr](#)
7. [Iola](#)
8. [Iola](#)
9. [Jörmungandr](#)
10. [Iola](#)
11. [Iola](#)
12. [Fenrir](#)
13. [Iola](#)
14. [Iola](#)
15. [Surtr](#)
16. [Iola](#)
17. [Iola](#)
18. [Jörmungandr](#)
19. [Iola](#)
20. [Iola](#)
21. [Fenrir](#)
22. [Iola](#)
23. [Iola](#)
24. [Surtr](#)
25. [Iola](#)
26. [Iola](#)
27. [Iola](#)
28. [Iola](#)

29. [Jörmungandr](#)

30. [Iola](#)

31. [Iola](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[Reviews](#)

[Monstrously Mythic Playlist](#)

[Books by C. Rochelle](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[Glossary](#)

Copyright © 2023 C. Rochelle

First Printing: 2023

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the author, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Author's Note: The characters and events portrayed in this book are fictitious. Any similarity to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental and not intended by the author. All characters in this story are 18 years of age and older, and all sexual acts are consensual.

If you've read this, you get your own stable of Skarsgards.

ASIN: B0BB3GH1TB

Cover design by divineconception

TYPOS & LANGUAGES

While many people have gone over this book to find typos and other mistakes, we are only human. **If you spot an error, please do NOT report it to Amazon.**

Send me an email:

crochelle.author@gmail.com

or [use the form](#) (also found in my FB group, pinned under Featured/Announcements)

Please reference the glossary in the back of this book for foreign definitions, and keep in mind that I chose to anglicize certain words to make them easier for those who don't speak Scandinavian languages.

SLANG NOTE: There is also a bit of American slang peppered in, but I didn't bother translating, as much of it is common lexicon at this point. When in doubt, use Google, or contact me using the methods above if you truly believe it's a typo.

CONTENT, WARNINGS & TRIGGERS

Valhalla is Full of Hunks is a monstrously mythic, extra spicy rom-com loosely based on Ragnarok in Norse mythology, with many ridiculous liberties taken.

This is a spin-off from the main duet—**The 12 Hunks of Herculeia** and **Herculeia the Hero**—and I strongly believe you can read Valhalla on its own, or before going back to the original duet. But you may still want to read both Herculeia books first—if only to fully understand the cameos and references to past events (none of which are required to understand the plot of *this* book).

This book is meant for readers 18 and over.

Please do not hesitate to [email the author directly](#) with any questions or suggestions for adding to the TWs.

NOW THE GOOD STUFF

Content, Tropes & Kinks:

- Multi- (first-person) POVs
- MM, MMF, MMMF (loads of it—with the guys getting their own relationship arcs. Love is love!)
- Monster fucking (also loads, literally)
- A five-foot-nothing unapologetic ho meeting her stable of Skarsgards
- An overly possessive, extremely unhinged group of kinky monsters (including Iola)
- Dominance and submission (with a variety of dynamics)

- Three co-Doms (Daddy, Sir & Master) who share one very lucky (and bratty) good boy/plaything/pet
- Praise & degradation
- Voyeurism & exhibitionism
- Fancy-featured monster peens, all around
- Mate-marking and knotting
- Breeding kink with no pregnancy (these are monsters, after all)
- Sex toys, used as the main event or as assists (CUE PEGGING)
- Pussy worship
- Edging (MEN WHIMPERING)
- Creampies as bait
- Sexy lederhosen
- Horns used like the handlebars they are
- All the blow jobs, pussy licking, and dicks in holes (including cockpockets!) you could want because this is a pack of horny monsters in a Why Choose romance

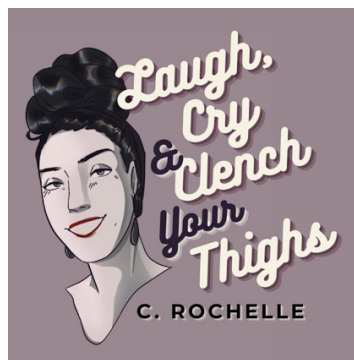
Possible triggers (please also check above list):

- Sweary dialogue
- Naughty, medium-dark humor
- Cutesy pet names + honorifics
- A complete lack of personal boundaries and aggressive flirting/banter between three extremely competitive alphas (Iola included)
- Explicit sex, including kink and edgeplay (see above for specifics)
- Using religious phrases in an overtly sexual and/or casual context (Jesus Christ/Oh, my God/Insert Greek or Norse god/dess here...)
- The word “bitch” being used (never directly at anyone, although one instance is meant as a low-blow insult)
- Very loving use of the words, slut, ho, and whore (mostly for one very lucky sea snake)
- A concerning lack of lube (between the monsters—they like it, promise) and condoms (Iola knows a

thing or two about monster jizz)

- Kink-related power imbalances that leak outside the bedroom (but eventually get righted)
- Self-worth issues related to job/being single/uncontrollable powers/living in someone else's shadow (ongoing, Iola) and brief insecurity surrounding monster parts being different (Jör)
- Sex used as ammunition (Iola)
- Traitorous feelings creeping in when it's just supposed to be hot sex
- Very few morals (we're not dealing with humans here)
- Iola being drugged and kidnapped for the purpose of smuggling her to an undisclosed location (she is NOT touched inappropriately during this time)
- Non-sexy handcuffs (on Iola) & self-binding for punishment (one of the monsters)
- A truly infuriatingly stubborn, toxic alphahole who certain types will go feral for (you hoes know who you are and you can have him)
- An enraging moment of miscommunication, because why ask for clarification like a human when you can go full scorched earth like the drama monster you are?
- Loss of body autonomy and free will (in the past, but also ongoing)
- Family abandonment (Iola's mother, in the past and only briefly mentioned)
- Snakes (our sea serpent Jör but also a cameo from Herculeia's Hydra)
- Slightly descriptive abuse, graphic violence, and gore, based entirely on the Norse legends. Eg. A god getting his hand bitten off, another being swallowed whole, baby monsters being taken from their mother, and a wolf's jaw being pierced through with a sword. (All past, briefly mentioned besides one longer recap, and necessary for the thrilling backstory of what happened to these monsters)

STALK C. ROCHELLE



- [Join my Clubhouse of Smut on Patreon](#)
- [Subscribe to my newsletter at C-Rochelle.com](#)
- [Join my Little Sinners Facebook group](#)
- [Stalk me in all the places on Linktree](#)

This one's for the proud monster hoes.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Hey, monster hoes! I rarely put my author's notes at the *start* of my books, but wanted to provide a few extra warnings this time (*aside from my mile-long list of content, tropes, kinks, and triggers. Be sure to check those too!*).

Valhalla is Full of Hunks is a spin-off from the Monstrously Mythic Herculeia duet (**The 12 Hunks of Herculeia** and **Herculeia the Hero**). It stars Leia's ride-or-die bestie, Iola, who finds her own monsters—this time from Norse mythology instead of Greek. Since the original duet ties up the loose ends in *that* story, I wanted to treat this book like a spoiler-free standalone as much as I could.

That being said, there were a few key points from Herculeia—related to Iola's character arc—that were too necessary to the Valhalla storyline to be avoided. I did my best to leave out the *major* plot twists from Herculeia, so I strongly believe you can read Valhalla on its own, or before going back to the original duet. But you may still want to read both Herculeia books first—if only to fully understand the cameos and references to past events (none of which are required to understand the plot of *this* book). So, for those of you who have read the Herculeia duet, that explains why certain events/reveals were glossed over here.

Please also keep in mind that Iola's monsters are very different from Leia's monsters, in the sense that they've been living among humans almost since they found themselves trapped here. Therefore, they behave more "human-like" (even with the occasional, tasty moment of possessive monster-itis),

including their use of kink honorifics. The island has Wi-Fi, and our guys are horny AF, so I would bet our sea snake, Jör, fell into an internet rabbit hole at one point and brought everyone else on board his slutty schemes!

And speaking of horny monsters, Iola is on a mission to get Dicked. Down. (and do the fucking) in this book. She specifically states this, and has been dreaming of her “stable of Skarsgards” since the original duet. I only bring this up because I simply don’t want to hear that there’s “too much” sex in Valhalla (and yes, this is a subjective opinion). My books are known for being kinky smut + plot, and monster fuckers are a thirsty bunch, so of course I’m going to give the people what they want (I’m not *that* much of a monster). So if a heartwarming tale coated in monster jizz *isn’t* your thing, please move along and find something that is.

My final note is that while Valhalla is Full of Hunks is loosely based on Norse mythology—and I do my research, trust—there are *many* ridiculous liberties taken. However, I almost guarantee that the weirdest bits come straight from the mythology itself, so if you have the time to come for me over a silly plot point, I suggest using that time to Google it instead. For those who aren’t mythology buffs, all you really need to know is this: The gods were lawless hoes and e’rybody fucking e’rybody. You’ll enjoy yourself more if you just roll with it.

Now that we got that out of the way, keep your arms and legs (and tentapeens) inside the vehicle and hang on! It’s going to be a delightfully bumpy ride...

XXX

-C./Corinne

IOLA

“Lovely, yes? It’s the end of days.”

I nearly jumped out of my skin when a friendly voice came out of nowhere to string these two contradictory sentences together.

“Uhhh...” I eloquently replied.

Slowly turning to face the person speaking to me, I had to tamp down a slutty moan at how godsdamn *hot* he was.

The thing about having a type meant every time I flew to Sweden on business, I was forced to appear professional while beating back my permanent lady boner. Before my first trip, I’d honestly thought the Skarsgard family was simply blessed. Now I knew almost every Scandinavian native had been hand-sculpted by the gods to torture me.

And Sexy Sven here is no exception.

He was blond—*of course*—with the pale skin and blue eyes this country was known for. His height tracked, too. Dude had to be at least 6-foot-5 and was doing nothing to make himself look smaller, as many other Swedes had politely done in my short-ass presence. He was casually but immaculately dressed in clothing that was no doubt designed in a lab to be moisture-wicking, wrinkle-free, *and* lady-boner-inducing.

Continuing my unapologetic perusal, my gaze caught on his Rolex before finally noticing he was holding a stack of thick textbooks.

Brawn and brains, apparently.

Dazed beyond repair, my attention drifted back to the artwork in question—noticing it for the first time. It may have *looked* like I'd been admiring it before, but I'd been blankly staring while contemplating my entire future during a blessed break between meetings.

Meetings that could have been an email.

I *did* enjoy working for Ancient Olive Skincare. But I'd also expected my promotion to Acquisitions Director to be more... *something*. Exciting? Glamorous?

Including a juicy benefits package featuring an entire stable of Skarsgards?

But, apparently, Herculeia is the only one who gets to magically wash ashore on hot-bod monster island.

Hmph.

I didn't begrudge my bestie her happiness. Hera knows she'd dated some doozies during her long career of sleeping her way through New York City. If anyone deserved a herd of fancy-peened boyfriends to dote on her—and fuck her into the Squishmallow nest every night—it was my ride-or-die.

But TWELVE?

Save some dick for the rest of us.

Ho.

A polite cough reminded me that Mr. Smokin' Hot Scandinavian was waiting for me to respond to his weird icebreaker.

“End of days, huh?” I blurted out, flashing the same vapid smile I'd been wearing all morning while tuning out cloudberry harvest data.

“Indeed!” Blondie nodded enthusiastically, apparently just *dying* to chat about morbid randomness with a complete stranger. “This piece depicts *Ragnarøkkr—or Ragnarok*, as you most likely know it. An exact translation would be the ‘final destiny of the gods,’ but I greatly prefer Wagner's interpretation of ‘Twilight of the Gods.’ It's more... ephemeral, don't you think?”

“Indeed,” I deadpanned, my lips twitching with a smile over his flowery, yet seemingly genuine, ode to a doomsday legend.

While I *was* enjoying ogling the man in front of me, I had absolutely nothing of value to add to this conversation. Yes, I’d heard of Ragnarok. But all I could conjure up at the moment was Chris Hemsworth swinging his huge hammer around a fabulous rainbow bridge like some sort of LGBTQ+ fever dream.

Viking Pride, y’all.

The Swede grinned crookedly in return, and I almost melted into a puddle of swoon and vaginal juices. He was too perfect to be real—angelically aglow in the mid-afternoon light filtering in through the Stockholm University library’s skylights.

High above the mid-century architectural pieces, of course.

Rudely reminding me I was here on business, not pleasure, the timer on my phone chimed, signaling the end of my fifteen-minute break. “That’s my cue.” I shrugged apologetically, legitimately sad to leave this delicious piece of man meat behind. “Back to the grind.”

To illustrate, I jabbed a thumb over my shoulder, toward the meeting room Ancient Olive had rented for today’s meeting with our cloudberry farmers, but my new friend’s gaze never left my face.

“A pity,” he murmured, adjusting his hold on the stack of books—making his biceps flex enticingly beneath his long-sleeved shirt. “You Americans are always rushing around like the world will end if you don’t accomplish everything on your list before the sun sets each day.”

Accurate.

Huffing a laugh, I raised my fresh 20-ounce cup in a mock salute. “Guilty... but at least I’m caffeinated!”

His baby blues flitted to my reusable—I’m not that much of a monster—tumbler before returning to my face. “Ah, a

coffee lover. But have you experienced the Swedish tradition of *fika*?”

I cocked my head—intrigued. “Not yet, I haven’t.”

But if it’s a Swedish massage with an extra happy ending, count me in.

He smiled again—broader this time and revealing canines that looked a tad too sharp. Not that I was complaining. “You must allow me to educate you on how *we* drink coffee here... as if we have all the time in the world.”

There was a strange edge to his voice, but dude was so good-looking, I let it slide. After all, I was a New Yorker. If this Scandinavian stud tried anything I hadn’t consented to, I’d rip off his nuts with my bare hands, no sweat.

“Sure, why not?” I replied nonchalantly, topping it off with a sweet little smile. “I could meet around 10 am tomorrow. Just tell me the name of the best coffee shop in Stockholm and I’ll be there.”

He arched an eyebrow as I took charge of what was *definitely* a date, but I had plans. Though my meetings wrapped up today, I’d extended my stay in the country by two weeks—and I fully intended to make the most of this much-needed vacation. Stuffing my face with Swedish meatballs was fairly high on my Scandinavian vacation bucket list, but so was tripping and falling on some international dick.

And Sexy Sven here is going to be one of the first notches on my traveling bedpost.

“Mmm, I cannot divulge secrets like that out in the open.” His—very full and biteable—lips twisted in a smirk. “Not around such... *thirsty* college students. Allow me to give you my phone number. If you text me, I’ll tell you where the best *kaffi* is to be found.”

Oh, okay, I see you.

I was already a complete ho for banter, but it was the hard ‘t’ pronunciation on ‘thirsty’ that did me in.

“Fine.” I rolled my eyes good-naturedly, pulling my phone out of my purse and staunchly ignoring that I was officially late returning to my meeting. “Hand over the digits so I can save you in my contacts as ‘Scholarly Sven.’”

He threw back his head and laughed, and it was at this moment that I realized he wasn’t behaving like most of the Swedes I’d met. They weren’t *cold*, per se, but definitely reserved, and they usually saw small talk as futile. I’d already assumed I’d be doing the hunting when I hit up the Stockholm bar scene tonight, even if it *would* be nice to be pursued for once.

I really got lucky with this guy.

“Not scholarly,” he replied, flashing that toothy grin again. “I’m simply doing some light research.”

This comment had me squinting at his stack, all of which looked like Norse mythology textbooks no human had touched in centuries.

“*Poetic Edda* and *Prose Edda*, hmm?” I teased, reading off the spines of the dustiest-looking ones. “Sounds like thrilling reading material.”

“Quite,” he murmured, running his tongue over his bottom lip in a way that immediately evaporated my panties. “I felt as if I were experiencing the historic events firsthand. Although both texts were written after Christianity infiltrated our society, so there’s quite a bit of... creative liberty being taken with the original myths.”

No surprise there.

Before I could continue flirting with the hot nerd, he rattled off his phone number—forcing me to concentrate on entering it correctly. Then he canted his chin toward the meeting room behind me. “I’ll let you return to your equally thrilling business, and look forward to sharing my culture with you tomorrow.”

With that, he brushed past me—close enough to make goosebumps appear on my skin—and I spun around to stare

unapologetically at his ass as he walked away. It was only then that I realized I hadn't gotten his name.

“So, you're fine with being known as Scholarly Sven?” I called after him—blinded by hotness once again when he smiled at me over his shoulder.

“It's Fen,” he replied. “But I think I'll save *you* as *sötnos*... for now.”

Like I'm not going to Google that immediately.

And Google it I did as soon as the lights dimmed for yet *another* PowerPoint presentation on how the extreme cold brought on by climate change was affecting the cloudberry harvest.

Aww, Sexy Sven thinks I'm a 'cutie.'

Or... candy?

Unclear.

Because yes, I still saved Fen in my phone as ‘Sexy Sven.’ I also Googled *Poetic Edda* and *Prose Edda*, discovering—big surprise—that both collections of Norse mythology included poems about Ragnarok.

I hope I'm not dealing with a doomsday prepper...

“Excuse me, Iola?” Elsa—no, *Ellin*—politely interrupted my light research. “Have we provided you with enough information on the challenges we've been facing?”

I cleared my throat and tucked a strand of fire engine red hair behind my ear—praying that my cheeks weren't the same color. “Um, yes. You have been extremely... thorough in your PowerPoint presentations. Thank you.”

Ellin looked relieved, which immediately made me feel like the asshole I was for only half-listening this entire time. “Oh, wonderful. We do not wish for these external factors to jeopardize our working relationship with Ancient Olive. Hopefully, we can discover a solution together?”

Meaning, they want my bosses to front some serious cash for said solution.

I didn't actually think cost would be an issue. The three sisters who owned Ancient Olive had fate on their side—literally—and more money than god.

Or the gods.

The issue was with how *fickle* they were. If a change in the weather meant fewer cloudberry in the wild, they were more likely to find a shiny new 'miracle' ingredient rather than waste time saving the old one.

Meaning these nice people will lose their biggest customer...

The idea of going out to the bars while people worried about their *jobs* suddenly seemed selfish.

So the least I can do is attempt to help them.

"I promise I will present your dilemma to my bosses," I earnestly replied—meaning every word. "And I will do everything within my power to fix whatever's been negatively affecting your harvest."

Wait.

Where the fuck did that come from?

Even sweet Ellin looked dubious about my bold claim to stop global warming.

Maybe I need a drink after all.

The meeting wrapped up soon after, but I stayed behind to send off an email to the sisters while it was still fresh in my mind. I did my best to explain how the oddly cold temperatures were affecting the cloudberry and asked if they'd at least get someone out here to take a look.

Someone more qualified than me.

Someone who's not about to get dicked down on her two-week vacation.

Theeeeenks!

Proud of my job well done, I powered down my work laptop and packed up my things, determined to have the

sluttiest out-of-office experience one ho possibly could.

IOLA

Something felt *off* when I woke up the next morning in my hotel room—which usually meant I’d experienced a vision overnight. With a sigh, I stumbled to the bathroom to splash some cold water on my face, annoyed that *this* was how my vacation was starting.

Since the bar scene last night was also a bust.

The reason I got these prophetic visions was because I was a descendant of a powerful Greek *Pythia*—*thanks for nothing, Mom*—but the worst part was that I never fully remembered what I ‘saw.’ At best, I had a clear enough inkling to know who was involved and how dire the situation was, but usually, it was nothing more than a general sense of foreboding.

Little info, all vibes.

Since Leia and I grew up as close as sisters, most of my childhood involved dreaming about *her*. I idolized the older girl, and this singular focus made her the main character in my life—which never bothered me before.

But then Greece happened...

Sure, I was happy to have helped Leia and her twelve ridiculous mates—even if I’d misjudged their unconventional relationships at first. But now that the dust had settled, I was tired of living for someone else.

Not that I have much of a plan for myself...

Blessedly, my visions had died down in the year since I’d moved to Athens and started working for Ancient Olive. The

copious partying helped. Hard liquor combined with the frenetic singles scene meant I was generally too exhausted or distracted to dream at all.

Unsurprisingly, thoughts of sleeping around with a shit-ton of hot Greeks made me miss my bestie, so I checked the time—neither of us were early risers—and texted Herculeia.

You up?

Sixteen Dicks Deep: Is this a booty call?

I chuckled at the newest name I'd programmed for her in my phone.

Talk about someone with an entire array of sex toys at her disposal.

Bish. You couldn't handle this.

Sixteen Dicks Deep: You'd be surprised what I can handle.
[praise hands emoji]

No, I wouldn't... because you tell me everything. [eye roll emoji]

Sixteen Dicks Deep: Fair.

Sixteen Dicks Deep: Do you need someone to pick you up at the airport today?

I grimaced. I'd planned on extending my time in Stockholm for a while—and put in for vacation with our bosses—but had forgotten to inform my bestie.

Okay, so maybe I'd purposefully forgotten.

I actually decided to stay here for the next two weeks.

Incoming...

Sixteen Dicks Deep: WHAT?!!!

There it is.

Sixteen Dicks Deep: Why didn't you invite me to join you?
[sad eyes emoji] We could have asdfjkdk

Case in point.

As often happened, one of Leia's monsters ripped the phone out of her cum-covered hands and took over the conversation, like the nosey-ass bitches they were.

Sixteen Dicks Deep: Did we not discuss how dangerous your search for Norse monsters is, Iola? They will not be as kind as I have been.

Oh, hello, Vann.

You salty squid.

Vann was *the* Kraken, with a capital K, and the only Norseman among the Greeks in Leia's stable. He'd become trapped on the island along with the others because he was visiting when he-who-shall-not-be-named cut them off from the outside world with a wall of mystical mist.

Also, because of his role in the original 12 Labors of Heracles.

Despite his complaining, once my bestie broke the spell, Vann *hadn't* gone scampering back to the North as fast as his tentacles could carry him. This was because he was whipped—and not just by Leia, but a certain Hydra whose slutty chaos brought all the boys to the yard.

Although I doubt anyone else besides Leia is sharing a bed with Timyn now that Vann has claimed him...

Thoughts and prayers, all around.

I also had to roll my eyes at his grossly inaccurate self-assessment. Vann was not kind. He wasn't even civil most of the time—and that included toward *me*, who he tolerated more than most.

But he had been helpful when asked to assist with closing the cloudberry deal on my first trip to Sweden. Unsurprisingly, Vann hadn't played tour guide while we were here together, but he *had* let it slip that there were mythical monsters around suffering from the same 'affliction' as those in Greece.

Cue the start of my not-so-secret obsession.

And I wasn't the least bit sorry about it, either. Men who looked like my ideal type in human form who could also

sprout freak nasty accessories between the sheets? Count me the fuck in with a side of Swedish meatballs.

I can't wait to eat some Swedish meatballs...

And dick.

Realizing—but also loving—that Vann was probably fuming over how I hadn't immediately apologized, I finally replied.

Never fear, calamari. I met a boring ol' human instead.

Sixteen Dicks Deep: How big is his dick, tho? [ruler emoji]

Welcome back, ho.

Apparently, Leia had wrestled her phone out of Vann's clapper claws, and while I normally loved oversharing, I suddenly felt... protective over Fen. Who I barely knew.

That's weird.

No idea. Yet. We have a coffee date today, so I can make sure he's not a serial killer before we fuck.

Which is more precaution than I usually take.

Sixteen Dicks Deep: Snore. Well, keep me posted. [eyeballs emoji] I want to live vicariously since I'm a boring ol' housewife now.

This time, I rolled my eyes so hard, I almost ended up back in Athens. Leia's life was far from boring. If anything, *mine* had become nothing but the 9-5 grind *she'd* escaped.

With none of the fancy peen benefits she now enjoys.

That unpleasant stab of jealousy flared up again, making me want to cut the conversation short before I said something I'd regret.

Okay, wifey. I need to get ready so I look hot as hell for this Fen character. [coffee emoji] [eggplant emoji] [two hole emojis]

TTYL bish.

Sixteen Dicks Deep: *OoooOOOOoooo FEN, huh? Ok well I expect ALL the post 'coffee' date deets oisahgoadjkskj*

I sighed and exited our message thread, since I had absolutely zero interest in being scolded by the sour sea creature again.

Being 'mommed' isn't really my thing...

I revisited last night's brief text conversation with Fen as I brushed my teeth. Halfway through hitting up the fruitless bars, I'd drunk texted him some flirty bullshit. He'd immediately replied with the address for the coffee shop—along with a reminder to drink water—which earned him a few points. I'd replied with a promise to both meet him at the coffee shop *and* stay hydrated, which then resulted in a mic drop text from mystery man.

Sexy Sven: *Good girl.*

If my pussy could have given me a fist bump, she would have. Fen continued to prove himself to be a very *un-Swedelike* Swede, but both Little Iola and I were here for it.

That's right. My pussy has a name.

Deal with it.

A 10 am coffee date was *not* my usual strategy, but I could always claim I had something booked for the afternoon if dude turned out to be a creep.

Otherwise, some afternoon delight works fine for me.

Yeah, I was a little sex obsessed, but I was in my prime. Plus, now that I knew I could have monsters of my own someday, I wasn't interested in settling for just anyone.

Sorry, not sorry, boring humans.

My phone chimed, reminding me I needed to leave soon if I wanted to arrive on time to the unfortunately named Kaffi Kaka.

Time to make the magic happen.

Giving myself a once over in the bathroom mirror, I assessed my current state. I'd showered before going out last night—and Swedish bars were gloriously smoke-free—so all

my hair needed was a touch of dry shampoo. To top it off, my bright red dye job was newly touched up and truly serving the evil queen look I was going for.

After adding a practiced swipe of cat eyeliner to each lid, and dabbing on a subtle shade of ‘please, fuck me in the daytime,’ pink gloss to my lips, everything from the neck up was ready to go. I dressed in my favorite pair of boyfriend jeans and a Rolling Stones crop top, before shrugging on a soft yellow designer blazer I’d snagged at a cutthroat sample sale back in NYC.

I’d just finished zipping up my knee-high dominatrix-style boots when a wave of unmistakable déjà vu swept over me, making me stumble backward onto the bed.

Shit, shit, shit.

My vision swam with flashes of imagery—too fast to identify what I was seeing—but the imminent danger vibes were clear. With a gasp, I scrambled for my phone, desperate to call Leia and warn her and her men so they could run.

Wait.

This isn’t about Leia...

Icy fear slithered down my spine as I realized whatever I’d just witnessed didn’t concern *her*.

The one who should be scared was...

Me.

I need to get the fuck out of here!

Being in a public place sounded better than waiting for something to corner me in my hotel room. Grabbing my purse, I raced out the door and into the elevator, exhaling in relief the instant I found myself surrounded by the familiar throng of bodies on a city sidewalk.

And meeting up with a big, strong Swede will make me feel even safer.

IOLA

“**T**here you are, *sōtnos!* I worried I’d frightened you away.”

The aftermath of my vision was still buzzing beneath my skin, but the instant I saw Fen’s too-sharp smile, some of the lingering tension bled from my system.

My hot-bod bodyguard for the day.

Guarding me with his dick.

Yet again, he looked effortlessly handsome. He’d paired junk-gripping jeans with a T-shirt this time—showcasing full sleeves of blackwork tattoos.

Jesus Christ on a pogo stick!

That was it. I didn’t care how weird Fen acted during this deceptively tame daytime date. I now suspected he was a complete animal in the sack, and no way in hell was I going to let the opportunity to tap that pass me by.

“It takes more than an invite for coffee to scare me off!” I lightly laughed, shaking off the last of my foreboding feelings.

Gripping my elbow in a weirdly hot way, he led me through the bustling crowd to a magically empty table. Two steaming mugs were waiting for us, along with a tray of pastries, and my cold, dead heart rallied to life.

“You already ordered...” I mumbled as *he pulled out the chair* in front of the coffee that didn’t look like it could disintegrate a spoon. “How did you know how I took my coffee?”

After getting me situated, Fen sat across from me and shrugged—looking adorably caught in the act. “It was difficult to miss the scent of pure sugar emanating from your cup at the library. I assumed you had a sweet tooth.”

He already has my number.

“Guilty again!” I cackled, snagging an infamous *kanelbullar* to add to my plate. Unable to wait for him, I broke off one of the twisted knots and popped the cinnamon and cardamom-flavored goodness into my mouth before moaning obscenely.

What can I say? I have a thing for cinnamon rolls.

Fen took a long sip of his sludgy black coffee, watching me with great interest as I chewed.

Wait a minute.

“This entire tray isn’t for *me*, is it?” I asked, horrified at the implications.

Yes, we Americans were known for our enormous portion sizes, and—also yes—I could have happily eaten the entire tray of pastries by myself. But the perfectly put-together specimen of manhood seated across from me didn’t need to know that.

A girl is entitled to her secrets.

Fen’s lips twisted in a smile as he helped himself to a jam-filled cookie. “No. I was simply giving you a head start before I devoured everything in my sights.”

Behave.

“Everything, hmm?” I teased, taking a sip of my coffee and releasing another moan at the shot of caramel he’d ordered.

His blue eyes darkened as he licked a crumb off his lips. “Yes. I also have a sweet tooth and there’s nothing I love more than sinking my fangs into tiny little sweet treats.”

I sat up straighter at that. It usually bothered me when people commented on my height—since my *big* personality

more than made up for my small stature—but Fen’s unwavering stare made me feel tiny and precious and I weirdly didn’t hate it one bit.

Except...

“I should probably tell you my name’s Iola.” I helped myself to another bite of cinnamon goodness. “Although I’ll let you get away with calling me *sötnos*—even if I’m not at all sweet, full disclosure.”

“Perfect,” he replied, flashing that tempting grin of his. “Neither am I.”

Oh, it is on!

As badly as I wanted to jump Fen’s bones and take him to the floor, it *was* only 10 in the godsdamn morning. So, instead of risking arrest for public indecency, I glanced around the coffee shop to take in the scene. Unsurprisingly, it was a lot of white walls, light wood, large windows, and healthy houseplants, but the vibe was an odd mixture of relaxed and energetic. This was mostly because of the sheer number of people—in no rush, apparently—who were all engaged in animated conversations over coffees and trays of treats.

“Dang, you weren’t kidding about this place being good, huh?” I mumbled around another bite. “Don’t these people work?”

Fen threw back his head and laughed, and I noticed quite a few customers give his exuberant outburst some serious side-eye. “*This is fika, Iola.*” He grinned, looking beyond pleased to be educating me. “Swedes take a twice-a-day coffee break—a *true* break—and 10 am is traditionally one of those times. It gives them the opportunity to fully enjoy the company of friends and colleagues before returning to their work, refreshed and recharged.”

Although this sounded like the complete opposite of the hustle culture I was raised in, that wasn’t what caught my attention. “You said ‘them’ instead of ‘us.’” I smirked and cocked my head. “Are *you* not Swedish, Fen?”

Something odd passed over his face—a momentary crack in the serene veneer—and it only made me *more* intrigued by the man before me.

Spill it, dude.

“I wasn’t born here, it’s true,” he carefully replied, his expression guarded. “My family comes from one of the original Old Norse bloodlines—so old, it’s... difficult to explain.”

As if that doesn’t make me want to dig deeper.

“Do your tattoos represent your heritage?” I asked, staring at his right arm and internally drooling as it flexed while lifting his mug for another sip. I knew this could be an extremely personal question, but Fen had already proved to be unreserved, so I figured I’d shoot my shot.

“Absolutely.” He grinned over the rim of his mug, apparently more than happy to give me the tattoo tour. “Most are traditional Viking symbols for protection and victory in battle, but others are more specific to *my* journey.”

My gaze instinctively fell to the arm still resting on the table. It was nearly black with interlocking tribal designs, but I spotted distinct symbols framed by the patterns. “What’s the ‘N’ stand for?” I asked, deciding to start there.

“It’s an ‘H,’” Fen replied—his expression amused. “It’s the rune *Hagalaz*, which translates to...”—he vaguely waved his hand, as if searching for the right word—“bad weather... a storm. Catastrophe and loss.” When I grimaced, worried I’d touched upon a sore subject, he smiled kindly. “But it also represents rebirth and the opportunity to make things right.”

Okay, so we’re going deep.

I nodded sagely, well-versed in life-altering events that shatter everything you believed to be true about your existence. Growing up without a mother kicked things off, but supporting Leia during the loss of her dad—while feeling personally responsible—followed by *her* year-long disappearance, and every bombshell since, had taken its toll.

On top of my pesky prophetic visions.

Which have apparently returned with a vengeance...

As nose-y as I was, I decided not to dig *too* deep—not twenty minutes into our first date—so I moved on to a cool-looking spear on his forearm. “And this?” I asked, boldly reaching across the small table, lightly touching the interlocking triangles it was centered over.

We both flinched as an electric shock passed between us at the contact, and I remembered the strange sensation I’d experienced when Fen brushed past me in the library yesterday.

“That was... unexpected,” he murmured, looking genuinely confused.

“Sorry!” I awkwardly laughed and started to lift my hand, uber-aware of how I was invading his personal space.

“Don’t be.” Fen grabbed my hand so fast, I barely saw him move. Then he took my pointer finger and traced it over the triangular design. “This is the *Valknut*. Again, a symbol of strength and protection, but I prefer its association with death and those who’ve fallen in battle. It’s also known as Odin’s knot, which is why I’ve paired it with *Gungnir*—Odin’s spear. It was said his weapon never missed.” He paused to wink at me. “Although I’d bet that wasn’t entirely true.”

I couldn’t help grinning in return—not only because of that cheeky wink, but the way he so casually spoke of Norse mythology and the gods. This was ancient history to his people, and nothing but tall tales to most, but I knew firsthand how very real and current the gods were.

Especially the Greek ones.

“It must be cool to have such a... connection to your heritage.” I dropped my gaze to my half-eaten *kanelbullar*, weirdly shy, all of a sudden. “I’m of Greek descent, but was raised in the U.S., so even though I live in Athens now, I don’t feel like a *local* or anything.”

Even if my bloodline is old-as-time as well...

When Fen didn’t immediately respond, I cautiously lifted my gaze to find him gazing at me—deep in thought.

“Interesting,” was all he said as he set down his now empty mug.

A subconscious warning zipped down my spine, so I quickly brought the conversation back to *him* before he started to pry. “So, you’re really into all this, huh? Between your tattoos and the ‘light research’ you were doing yesterday... You know, to prepare for the end of the world.”

His lips curled up again, although this time, the smile didn’t reach his eyes. “There’s nothing to prepare for, Iola. Ragnarok has already occurred.”

Again, I was hit with a deeper knowing that did not bode well. But I rapidly blinked—forcing myself to remain present, even as my eyesight grew alarmingly hazy.

Focus, Iola!

Probably interpreting my pained reaction as skepticism—which was partly correct—Fen hurriedly added to his statement. “This is a known interpretation of the old texts. And I happen to see it as the truth.”

I started to sweat, and could tell there was no stopping my incoming vision. All I could do was hope that whatever this hottie was about to witness wouldn’t end the date completely.

I’ll just tell him the coffee didn’t agree with me...

“Cool. Tell me more,” I croaked, pushing my plate and half-empty mug aside. Then, I laid my head down on the cool surface of the table to avoid falling out of my chair and being trampled by the *fika*-loving masses.

“Oh, *sötnos*.” Fen’s voice had taken on a darker edge that my pussy definitely responded to, even as the rest of me shut down. “You’re about to learn everything there is to know about the end of days.”

FENRIR

“**W**hy on Jörd’s green earth would you *kidnap* the seer, Fen?”

I snorted at Surtr’s fiery expression, and his disapproving tone—as if luring Iola to our island home *hadn’t* been part of our original plan.

So what if I improvised a bit to ensure victory?

He glared harder at my dismissive reaction. It was all I could do not to set down my precious cargo immediately and relieve his tension with the fight he clearly needed.

It would be a relief to both of us, to be honest.

Surt’s full name meant ‘swarthy one,’ and it was a fitting description. His skin was still a pale Northern tone, like mine, but the man’s thick locks and full beard were as black as his soul. While I was tall, I still blended in with the Swedes, whereas he towered over even the tallest Scandinavian, and outweighed all others in sheer muscle mass.

Coupled with his imposing appearance, his anger might have threatened a less powerful creature. Had our seer not been drugged and slung over my shoulder like a sack of potatoes, she most likely would have been afraid, but I preferred Surt like this. I bathed in the scalding glow of his rage—a reminder of how he once led us to battle with his flaming sword held aloft.

“Calm yourself, *jötunn*,” I teased, delighting as he growled menacingly at the reminder of his status as ‘other’—as a creature who’d originally lived beyond the realms of men and

gods. I may have been half-*jötunn* myself, but Loki himself had sired me. That connection alone had always made me more comfortable here on Midgard than my companion was.

Not that I'm any happier about being trapped here.

Looking the way I do...

I realized Surt was still waiting for me to explain my deviation from the plan. “She’s already familiar with our kind,” I reminded him. “So I saw no point in tempting fate by dragging out—”

“Shhh!” he hissed, his earthy brown eyes darting around as if *the Norns* themselves might appear to stop us.

A fair concern, considering this little morsel works for them.

I, for one, was unconcerned with incurring the wrath of the Fates or the gods, since the old ones made me their enemy the instant they bound me. Tyr—god of justice, ironically—was the first to realize the enormity of this mistake.

His right hand was a tasty appetizer.

As much as I didn’t want anyone to suffer the same fate I had, similar precautions would have to be taken with this half-mortal. We couldn’t have her escaping once she regained consciousness, or attempting to contact her friends in Greece.

Including the Kraken, who’s the entire reason we know about her existence.

Leaving Surt to his fuming, I carried Iola into what would be her room—for however long this took. Carefully laying her down on the plush, king-sized bed, I chained her tiny wrists to the headboard and stood back to admire my handiwork.

A pity we can't make better use of these restraints...

Despite barely reaching my chest at her full height, the seer was a force to be reckoned with, and I allowed myself a moment to fully drink her in. Her olive skin, glittering brown eyes, and thick fringe of eyelashes had confirmed her Greek heritage, although the artificially bright red hair initially surprised me. These long tresses were currently splayed out

over her pillow, like pooling blood, and I longed to run my fingers through the silky softness for no good fucking reason.

Since this is a hostage situation—nothing more.

Unfortunately, my cock wasn't getting the message, as it had remained in a semi-hard state ever since I'd tracked her down at the Stockholm University library. I hadn't allowed myself to jerk off to her memory after parting ways, but I was finding it harder and harder to resist.

It would help if she didn't smell like a field of twinflowers in the springtime.

I'd been prepared for her presence to affect me—being a fellow immortal—but I hadn't expected my body to react in the way it did.

As if I've finally sniffed out my mate.

Regardless, I was determined to not only resist biting and knotting the prophetess, but keep the urge to do so to myself. After all, my needs were inconsequential when we had larger issues to focus on. As soon as Jör arrived with Iola's luggage, we'd lock down the island and proceed with utilizing our secret weapon against our mistaken fate.

I hadn't been lying when I told Iola the end of days had already occurred. Odin, ruler of Asgard, had been swallowed whole by yours truly. Jör's poison defeated Thor, and Surt had successfully burned down the world *and* taken Freyr with him. When Odin's son, Vidar, held open my jaw to run his sword through it, I'd died painfully but peacefully—knowing my destiny was fulfilled.

So why the fuck are we still here?

When I first awoke on the battlefield to a newly reborn, post-Ragnarok world, I'd felt disoriented and confused. I was still in my true form then—a giant wolf who could devour the sun—and it didn't take long for me to discover the equally formidable Jörmungandr and Surtr were also still alive.

Even though I watched them both fall...

We joined forces—as we had eons ago—to challenge Vidar and the rest of the remaining gods to face their destiny on the field. Instead, they chose a coward’s path, cursing us to immortal life with mortal forms, before wiping their hands of the very creatures who elevated them to the thrones of Asgard.

Now, after existing for what felt like an eternity beyond our original lifespans, inhabiting these cursed bodies had grown tiresome indeed.

Although... This form is physically compatible with Iola...

I attempted to banish the thought. Despite how conventionally attractive my companions and I appeared, *parts* of us were too monstrous to allow deeper relationships with unsuspecting humans.

An inconvenience no doubt orchestrated by design.

This added insult to injury rarely bothered me, as Surt and Jör fulfilled all my needs. However, the irony of finally meeting someone who wouldn’t shy away from what we were—under *these* circumstances—didn’t escape me.

She may still be interested...

I shook my head with an exasperated growl, even as my greedy gaze continued to take in the drugged woman before me. Perhaps if the *Norns* had been kinder, Iola and I could have explored the blatant electricity I’d felt crackling between us at the coffee shop, but that path had already run its course.

A true pity.

Especially when she smells so godsdamn good.

Quickly glancing over my shoulder to confirm Surt wasn’t lurking in the doorway, I leaned down and buried my nose in the seer’s blood-red hair before inhaling deeply.

Fuuuuck.

I stifled a groan as my nasal passages were filled with a sticky-sweet, floral aroma that made me want to bury my face in other areas.

Along with other parts of me.

There was no escaping it. Iola smelled like *mine*.

This is going to be a problem, isn't it?

With my cock throbbing in the tight confines of my jeans, I fled the room—needing to put as much space between myself and this fragrant temptation as possible.

Surt was furiously pacing when I rejoined him in the common area—the air so thick with anxiety I could taste it. Just as I was about to inquire whether we should order a replacement for the jute rug he was wearing a hole through, the fire giant spun to face me.

“How do you expect this to play out, wolf?” he snapped, deliciously vibrating with fury. “Never mind who she works for. All that needs to happen is for *Herculeia* to snap her fingers before twelve worthy opponents head our way.”

I scoffed and crossed my arms. “*Worthy* opponents? Have you forgotten who we are? Two sons of Loki and the giant who brought an army to Asgard’s door. Besides, the way Vann made it sound, this *Herculeia* and her monsters keep each other fairly distracted, day in and day out.”

The Kraken truly should put a lid on his gossiping.

Surt cocked his head, narrowing his eyes. “Is *that* why you were so eager to lock the seer in our home? Are you hoping she enjoys monster cock as much as the other one does?”

Well, yes.

Instead of confirming his uncomfortably accurate suspicion, I handed him Iola’s phone—hoping to lure him in with a sense of control. “It’s no matter to me if she does. You and Jör already provide everything I need.”

Almost everything...

My knot had threatened to inflate from a single whiff of Iola’s hair, but I channeled any lingering desire toward the man across the room. The truth would only complicate matters.

And this situation is complicated enough.

After a tense standoff, Surt's gaze flickered to the window and out to sea. There was nothing but miles and miles of roiling waves, but I could guess who he was looking for.

"Jör should return shortly," he absently spoke, before his gaze found mine again with a heat I knew well. "Let's relieve some tension once he arrives, then get down to business."

"Yes," I grinned, sighing in relief as my fangs elongated for the first time in what felt like forever. "Business."

Since that's all Iola can ever be.

IOLA

When I woke up, my head felt stuffed full of cotton and I couldn't move my arms. Both concerns immediately evaporated, however, because there was a godsdamn *lizard-man* staring at me from two inches away.

“*JESUS FUCKING FUCKING CHRIST!!!*” I shouted, causing the ancient alien to flinch as if *I'd* startled *him*.

“Oh, my!” he chuckled, placing a hand over his heart and grinning broadly. “You're a feisty one, huh?”

Upon a second glance, he actually looked human enough—if you ignored the vertical reptilian slits for pupils in his unblinking, aquamarine eyes. I wasn't sure if the smile he now displayed was meant to put me at ease, but the mouthful of razor-sharp teeth was *not* helping.

The only reason I hadn't passed out from sheer terror was because I was well-versed in monsters lurking beneath the skins of men. Plus, there was something about him that reminded me of Herculeia's Hydra, Timyn.

I swear to gawd, if that meddling ho is behind this kidnapping...

Either of them.

Despite how tense I was, I sweetly smiled in return, deciding that making friends was as good a tactic as any.

Especially if he has keys to these handcuffs.

Because yes, someone had apparently *handcuffed* me to a bed in a large rustic-looking room. This was *Scandinavian*

rustic, however, which meant effortlessly stylish and cozy. Natural light was pouring in from massive windows, casting the light wood and white walls—*surprise!*—in a glow as soft as the linen upholstery.

I'm shocked the cuffs aren't covered in neutral-toned wool to match...

My gaze snagged on an unexpectedly bright red throw—*sacrilege!*—before returning to the man sitting uncomfortably close on the bed. Flesh-chompers and disconcerting eye situation aside, dude looked like a dead-ringer for my number two boo, Bill Skarsgard.

If you have to ask who my number one Skarsgard is, we can't be friends.

He was also wearing lederhosen—ironically, I assumed, since he'd paired the suspended shorts with a hot pink baseball cap that said *Bier ist leben*. More important than his fashion sense, he wasn't taking a bite out of me, and that had to count for something.

“Are you related to... *Timyn?*” I nonchalantly asked, eager to start the process of elimination for who was going to catch these hands for the crime of cockblocking.

On that note, I wonder what happened to Fen...

I hope this one didn't eat him.

“The Kraken's mate?” he scoffed, confirming that *Vann* was at least partially responsible for this mess. His reptilian eyes narrowed accusingly as his grin faded, reminding me to focus on the potential threat in front of me, instead of worrying about Scholarly Sven's fate. “How dare you?! We're not even the same species.”

So predictable.

When it came to these mythological monsters, I'd learned most were one-off limited editions, created by the gods for singular purposes. Despite this—and comparisons between them being apples to oranges—they all firmly believed *they* were the bestest one there ever was.

May the fanciest peen win!

“That’s a shame.” I sighed dramatically. “I can’t think of anyone more impressive than the Hydra.”

As I’d hoped, mystery man... monster immediately launched into a villain monologue to identify himself. “Excuse me? The Hydra was but a passing labor, easily defeated by a half-mortal. I am *Jörmungandr*—the Midgard Serpent! Vast enough to circle the world!”

He wasn’t done. If anything, the dramatic danger noodle was just getting started as he *climbed onto the bed* to continue his soapboxing from a higher perch.

“It was *I* who brought about Ragnarok!” he shouted, shaking a fist at the exposed wood beams high above us. “Just as the prophecy foretold, I released my tail and the sea violently churned, signaling the coming flood. Like a harbinger of doom, I rose from the depths, filling the air with poison... The same poison that defeated the mighty Thor, nine steps after he mistakenly thought himself victorious—”

“*Jörmungandr*; huh?” I interrupted, raising a judgy eyebrow as I gazed up at him. “That’s a mouthful.”

His attention snapped to my face and, for a moment, I wondered how wise it was to taunt a giant sea snake with very pointy teeth.

While being chained to a bed...

I shouldn’t have worried. The filthiest smirk I’d ever laid eyes on stretched across his handsome face, and I could only gape as he seductively trailed a hand down a suspender to cup his junk through his lederhosen.

That has no business being as sexy as it is.

“Yessss...” he purred, swiveling his hot little hips for effect. “I’ve been told I’m *quite* a mouthful.”

What a slut.

Come to Mommy.

“What the *fuck* are you doing, Jör?” an unfamiliar—and rudely timed—voice snapped from somewhere behind Magic Midgard Mike. “We asked you to monitor the girl, not dance for her.”

“But Suuuurt...” *Jör’s* voice has taken on a bratty quality that made me want to put him *and* his lederhosen over my knee. “She wants to see my cock.”

“I didn’t say that!” I huffed.

Although he is 1000% correct.

Silence followed. Not the kind of silence where the other person was at a loss for words. This was the silence of someone waiting for an answer.

The *right* answer.

Jör was either well-trained or had *some* sense of self-preservation in that pretty head of his. Like a switch being flipped, his bravado fizzled and his gaze lowered as he gracefully stepped off the bed.

“Sorry, Sir,” he mumbled—so perfectly obedient my mouth fucking *watered*.

I tore my gaze away from my next conquest—*because Jör* would *be mine*—to settle on whoever could effortlessly demand such respect.

Oh, hello, sailor!

Pirate, rather.

The man looming in the doorway—so tall he had to slouch to fit—looked as if Captain Jack Sparrow had mated with a godsdamn grizzly bear. I had few weaknesses, but even tragically still clothed, I could already tell he was packing a full coat of chest hair under his V-neck shirt. And *that* was my kryptonite.

I wanna roll all over you like a bearskin rug.

As if my pussy had voiced her opinion aloud, Sexy Swashbuckler sharply glanced at me and immediately scowled.

Instant. Boner.

“Don’t think you can seduce your way out of this situation, *seer*,” he growled. “I’m the one with the keys to your freedom and am not as easy to sway as our serpent.”

My eyes narrowed, and not just because he’d—*perhaps rightfully*—implied I would fuck my way out of this. The pieces were falling into place about the reason for this not-so-random kidnapping, and I realized these men knew more about me than I wanted them to.

“Why are you calling me a *seer*?” I muttered, hoping I sounded confused enough for them to question whether they’d snatched the right snatch.

Dude in the doorway—*Surt*—rolled his eyes. “We are not idiots, *Iola*. We know who you are, we know what you can do, and you *will* use your abilities to aid us.”

Oh, is that so?

Captain Jack-off here might have read my resume, but he clearly had *no* idea who he was actually dealing with. I was Greek, a New Yorker, and part of Gen Z.

He doesn’t stand a chance.

“No,” I calmly replied, staring him down. “I won’t.”

I’d always thought the description of ‘the air crackling between us’ was just something romance authors liked to say in their spicy books. But the air in the room definitely *crackled* as *Surt* advanced while rapidly growing in size. If he’d seemed massive before, nothing compared to having a literal *giant* towering over me in a large room that suddenly seemed extremely claustrophobic.

“You *will*,” he stated, in the same ‘tone’ he’d used to get *Jör* to behave. “Because you’re not the only one we know everything about. If you don’t cooperate, we’ll start picking off your dear *Herculeia*’s monsters, one by one, until all that’s left is *her*. Unprotected and vulnerable.”

Shit.

Grumpy men in fur coats weren't my only weakness. Numero uno on my list of the most important people in this life and beyond was Leia, and while I wasn't close with all her monsters, I knew the loss of even one would feel like a knife to her heart. I didn't know if Surt had included my niece, Agape, on his hit list, but if he was threatening to harm the most perfect chimera in existence, I would do anything he said.

Well played, asshole.

Of course, I wasn't about to let this—annoyingly still sexy—psychopath know he'd won. Instead of acknowledging his threat, I allowed my gaze to trail down Surt's enormous frame, pausing long enough on his crotch to make things uncomfortable before landing on his face once again.

“Tell me, *Sur...t.*” My lip curled in a smirk as I enunciated the ‘t’—making it absolutely clear he would *never* get an honorific from me. “Does the rest of you stay proportionate when you Hulk out like this?”

To my amusement, the big guy stumbled backward before glancing down at himself in alarm, as if he somehow hadn't noticed he was threatening the integrity of the architecture.

Interesting...

“Fuck,” was all he said—more to himself than anything—before shrinking enough to fit through the doorframe and race from the room.

Girl, bye.

“Yes.” Jör threw me a saucy wink from where he was casually leaning against what looked like the bathroom doorway. “Surt *does* stay proportionate when he *Hulks out*. Although”—his expression grew thoughtful—“it has been a long time since he's done that... or been able to...”

Oh.

Fuck is right.

Leia and I told each other *everything*, so I knew her monsters had found it easier to shift into their true forms once

they'd come into her proximity.

And... come into her.

I'm just gonna keep that piece of intel to myself.

The last thing I needed was to give these guys a reason to hold me hostage indefinitely. And as much as I didn't want to negotiate with terrorists—even hot ones—I knew I should play along for now, if only to get out of these cuffs.

And possibly into someone's pants.

Someone's lederhosen, to be exact.

“So, Jör.” I decided to try to kill two birds with one stone. “I get the impression you like to be a good boy.”

As expected, his gaze darkened, and he immediately rejoined me on the bed. Now that my senses were no longer tinged with fear, I noticed he smelled like the sea—salty and pungent. Wild, just like him.

“Sometimes...” he murmured, his gaze tracking my tongue as I licked my lips. “Although I'm not the best at listening.”

A brat.

My favorite.

“I bet you listen really well when you want to,” I cooed—spreading my legs a little wider. These monsters could smell a purring pussy from a mile away, and I was prepared to use every weapon in my arsenal to come out on top.

Since that's where I do my best work.

The way Jör's gaze was riveted on my lower half told me I had him within my grasp, so I went in for the kill. “And I would be *so proud* if you could borrow the keys from Surt and get me out of these cuffs.”

Jör ripped his attention away from my crotch long enough to meet my gaze. That filthy smirk of his reappeared, and I realized I had no idea what this chaos gremlin was going to do next.

How thrilling!

“I would like to learn all the ways to make you proud,” he replied, and the unfiltered openness of his statement momentarily startled me. “But let us start with this.”

There was no time for me to analyze his confession. With a flourish, Jör opened his hand, revealing a shiny set of tiny keys resting on his palm.

Good boy.

SURTR

While it felt fantastic to experience some of my old power again, I would have preferred my cock not get hard in the process.

Especially in front of the girl.

Not that it mattered. Something told me I could have been at full height and wielding Laevateinn—as I had during Ragnarok—and Iola still wouldn't have backed down. Under different circumstances, I might have found her tenacity impressive, but as it stood, a mouthy hostage was inconvenient.

And an attractive one is dangerous.

With a growl, I hurried through the common area, trying to get my size back under control before Fen spotted me.

“Well, look at that.”

Too late.

“S-she *provoked* me!” I sputtered, spinning to face the wolf while gesturing wildly at myself. “We need a muzzle to go along with the handcuffs. I suggest we put her in a cell, so the only contact we have is through the food slot.”

Although, I'd still be able to smell her...

When I'd happened upon Jör performing his... *mating dance* for the little witch, I'd practically gagged on the arousal scenting the air. It wasn't only coming from him, but from *her* as well.

I can't have her touching my plaything.

I can't have her—

Wrenching myself away from my dark thoughts, I found Fen watching me thoughtfully. Once he realized I'd returned to the present, he approached and laid a hand flat on my stomach, instantly settling me.

"It's good to see you like this again," he softly spoke, his gaze taking in my enlarged state with affection. "Do you think our curse might be lifting on its own?"

The raw emotion in Fen's voice had me shrinking to human size again, which was still a bit taller than him. "Doubtful," I replied grimly, placing my hand over his in solidarity. "Just more tricks from the gods—"

"What the *FUCK* is this?!"

We jumped apart, and I gaped to see *Iola* standing at the end of the hallway. Her tiny hands were planted on her tiny hips, with her legs spread in a battle stance, but the *rage* emanating from her filled the room.

Maybe a cell wouldn't be a terrible idea...

"Iola... please, allow me to explain..." Fen was cautiously approaching the girl with his hands spread beseechingly.

Oh, it's Fen she's angry at.

And he cares for some reason.

"No!" she barked. "Allow *me*, Fen—if that's even your real name. Apparently, you slipped a godsdamn roofie into my coffee, then kidnapped me to fuck knows where so I can help you psychopaths with my second sight. Because, if I *don't*, you'll hurt those I care about. Does that sound about right?"

Fen glanced at me in alarm. "You told her we'd hurt her people if she didn't cooperate?"

Oh, this is rich.

If all went to plan—a plan *Fen* helped orchestrate—the world would burn a second time, taking everyone on earth

with it. So now wasn't the time to start worrying about who might get hurt along the way.

They'll all be collateral in the end.

“And *you* drugged and kidnapped her when you were supposed to win her trust,” I reminded him, crossing my arms over my chest. When he glared at me, I decided to be charitable and addressed Iola next. “Although, his name *is* Fen. *Fenrir*, actually. *The Fenrir*.”

Most mortals familiar with the old legends would be terrified to know they were in the presence of this infamous beast—even in unassuming human form. Beside a glimmer of recognition in her amber eyes, Iola barely reacted to the news.

A mighty warrior, indeed.

Fen sighed and boldly took another step toward her. “I’m sorry for deceiving you, Iola. I was worried you wouldn’t help us if I tried to explain, so—”

“So you decided for me. Got it.” She sighed heavily. “Knowing you’re a monster *partly* excuses your behavior, since acting like socially inept cavemen seems to come with the territory. I just... could have done without you pretending to be interested in me. Thanks.” Dropping her gaze, Iola frowned at the floor, wrapping her arms around herself as if she were cold.

Such dramatics.

I rolled my eyes, but before I could ask how *else* she’d expected him to get close to her besides feigning interest, Fen abruptly turned and grabbed one of his tacky blankets off a nearby chair before gently wrapping it around her slight shoulders.

Both hissed as his hand brushed the exposed skin of her arm, but I was too busy gaping at the fact he was *coddling* her to fully register that detail. The only other creature who got such care from him was Jör, and that was usually only after I fucked the serpent until he couldn’t move.

Come to think of it... where is he?

My blood ran cold as I realized Jör hadn't emerged with Iola. "*Where is Jörmungandr?!*" I bellowed, advancing on the seer so quickly, Fen instinctively placed himself in my warpath. "I swear, if you've hurt him—"

"I'm in here, Surt!" Jör's cheerful voice echoed from the bedroom. "Just waiting for the lovely lady to come back and play with meeeee."

Sigh.

"You handcuffed him to the bed, didn't you?" I growled, realizing my keys were gone from my pocket. I couldn't decide if I was more annoyed with Iola for having feminine wiles or the idiot down the hall for falling for such witchcraft.

The bane of my existence shrugged noncommittally. "He was asking for it. But I told him I needed a snack first, because lord knows, your girl is *not* riding a tentapeen—or whatever that man's packing—without fuel."

Tentapeen?!

"You're hungry?" Fen perked up, annoyingly reverting to his caretaker role once again. "I could fix you something to eat."

Why is he acting so strangely?

Iola sniffed and drew the blanket more tightly around herself—displaying more dramatics. "Only if I get to watch you make it. *And* you have to taste every piece before I do."

Fen's lips twitched as he fought back a grin. "Of course, *sötnos*. Whatever you need..."

SÖTNOS?!

"Give me the keys," I snarled impatiently as I held out my hand—needing to get away from this loathsome display.

The instant the witch dropped the keys into my palm, I was stalking down the hall. If Jör and Fen wanted to fall all over our hostage like she was an honored guest, so be it. Babysitting worked just as well as bondage, and unless she could swim for days at a time, Iola wasn't finding her way

back to the mainland. Not before she'd helped us seek revenge.

And she'd better stay out of my way in the meantime.

Upon reaching Iola's bedroom, I found Jör handcuffed to the bed, as suspected.

Sigh.

"Surt!" he exclaimed, grinning as if he *hadn't* freed our prisoner and gotten himself into this predicament. "Will you be joining us for playtime?"

With a growl, I slammed the door shut behind me before reaching the bed in two strides. Jör yelped as I flipped him onto his stomach—painfully crossing his bound arms in the process—and tore his foolish pants in half.

"Those were my favorite lederhosen," he grumbled, even as he wiggled his way onto his knees—presenting himself to me.

A wise decision.

"Don't care." I spat on his twitching hole while wrestling my cock free. "Just like I don't care that you seem to think Iola is here to *fuck* instead of putting her gifts to use on our behalf." Without waiting for a reply, I shoved myself deep inside in one violent thrust, grinning when he hissed at the burn.

"By Thor's hammer!" Jör gritted out. "No cunt for you today, I take it?"

"Oh, I'll get there." I gripped his ass with both hands and spread him wide. "First, I'm going to remind you *this* hole is mine." Another thrust. "Then I'll take your cunt." Another. "Then, if you're lucky, I'll let you suck the cum out of me."

"Your plan doesn't seem very sanitary—" Jör sassed before I wrapped my hand around the back of his neck and squeezed. Hard. "Yes, Sir!" he squeaked. "Anything you want, Sir."

That's better.

Losing myself to the familiar feel of Jör tightening around me, I continued—unrelentingly—until the only sounds in the room were my grunts, his cries, and the addicting slap of our bodies meeting, over and over.

Only once I felt Jör come on the bedspread beneath us did I withdraw, flip him over, and plunge into his other hole. I pummeled mindlessly until my overstimulated plaything was close to another release. Then I pulled out and purposefully added to the puddle between his shaking legs.

A well-deserved mess for an unwanted guest.

My satisfaction was unmatched as I marked both Jör's body and Iola's bed with my cum. She might have tried to seduce the serpent—and may still succeed, whether or not I liked it—but the little witch needed to understand whose house she resided in.

Mine.

Which means everything under this roof belongs to me.

To soothe the possessiveness still buzzing beneath my skin, I swallowed Jör's writhing length, holding him steady until he'd emptied himself down my throat with a pained groan.

Including her.

“Thank you, Sir,” he gasped, as perfect as ever.

And she'd be wise not to forget it.

IOLA

As far as kidnappings went, this one wasn't off to the worst start.

Sure, I was salty as fuck that Fen had deceived—and drugged—me, but the home-cooked Swedish meatballs I was now chowing down on were a tasty consolation prize.

And he didn't drug them this time!

You might say my standards were low—and as someone who mostly dated human men, you would be correct—but this was an extreme circumstance.

And it was one thousand percent Vann's fault.

Just *knowing* these monstrous hotties were out there had made me *thirsty*, and I was relentless when there was something I wanted. As if on cue, my newest obsession—Jör—wandered out to join us, looking as thoroughly debauched as I'd expected.

Since Surt just loudly fucked him.

On my bed.

“Ooh, meatballs!” Jör exclaimed, snatching a handful off the serving platter and shoving them into his mouth with absolutely no concern for how sloppy he was being.

I sure hope he eats pussy with the same enthusiasm.

Instead of using a napkin, he then carelessly wiped his hand on the bed sheet he was sporting as a toga before grabbing the cold water Fen helpfully placed in front of him.

“Thank you, Daddy,” he mumbled as he raised the glass to his lips—so softly, I almost didn’t catch it.

Oh, but I heard it, all right.

“Daddy, huh?” I spun on my high top stool to face Fen so quickly, I nearly pulled a neck muscle. “The fearsome *Fenrir* has a nurturing side for his sweet baby boy?”

Fen’s pale cheeks reddened deliciously, but he still did his best to glare in response to my highly invasive question.

Tough titties.

You want to kidnap me?

We’re gonna be best friends forever.

Unfortunately for him—but fortunately for me—Jör had zero filter. “Oh, yes.” He swallowed quickly and set down his glass, adorably eager to spill the tea. “Fen takes *such* good care of me! My human body can only take so much before it needs to heal, so he makes sure I’m all fixed up for when Surt wants to play again.”

It was then I noticed the painful looking bite mark on the juncture of Jör’s neck and shoulder, half-hidden by his makeshift toga. If I didn’t know any better—and I did, thanks to Leia’s exploits—the placement and intensity of the wound reeked of a mating bite, which made no sense. These three men had most likely been together for centuries, so the claiming part of their relationships was long past needing to be established.

Unless a rival appears in an alpha’s territory.

Knowing Surt did this on account of li’l ol’ me made my competitive tendencies roar to life. I was more than capable of being a switch in the bedroom, but what I preferred—where I was in my element—was when everyone else was on their knees.

There’s a new alpha in town, bishes.

“What a lucky boy you are,” I cooed, tracing a finger along Jör’s still sweaty arm. “You have a Sir to wreck your ass and a Daddy to make it all better.”

He shivered, his eyelashes fluttering. “I *am* lucky, aren’t I?” When his pretty aquamarine eyes refocused on me, there was a question in them that went beyond the one he was asking out loud.

Fen was watching us closely from across the kitchen island, but his expression was more curious than anything, so I felt it was safe to continue my hunt in his presence.

Let’s be real—I wouldn’t have stopped either way.

“So lucky. And so *good*,” I confirmed, loving how responsive he was. An evil plan was already forming in my mind for exactly how I would infiltrate this throuple in a way that would be satisfactory to everyone involved.

Well... to me and Jör, at least.

Frankly, I didn’t care what Fen or Surt wanted. Sexy Sven had led me on, and kidnapped me, and Captain Jack-off was a grade-A jerk. If I was going to be trapped on this island—because, yes, I’d already taken full stock of the situation before making my jailbreak known—then I sure as shit wouldn’t be celibate while doing it.

Determined to stake my claim, I continued my lecherous path along Jör’s pebbled skin. Lightly trailing my finger over his shoulder, I paused at the mate bite, and gave it a hard rub that had him releasing a slutty little moan.

Perfect.

“You have everything a good boy could want, but I wonder...” I mused, tilting his chin so he was gazing down at me. “Do you still need someone to *please*?”

“Yes,” he rasped, his voice breaking in desperation. “I would very much like to please you.”

Again, his willingness to lay it all on the table threw me for a loop. My gaze drifted to Fen again to find his expression had darkened, noticing he looked as close to feral as I was feeling.

Too bad, because payback’s a bitch.

“Do you like this, Fen?” I smirked, allowing my hand to travel down the front of Jör’s toga, tracing his pecs and abs on my way further south. “You wanna watch me dominate your sweet boy?”

The wolf was already telling me everything I needed to know. His chest was heaving, his pale blue eyes blown out as they tracked my hand’s trajectory to where Jör was packing the tentapeen of my dreams.

Or... not?

My confidence momentarily faltered when I discovered nothing between his legs, but then he gave a tiny thrust—a subtle ask for permission—and *something* nudged me from beneath the folds of the bedsheet.

“I suggest you remove your hand before I remove it for you, seer.”

With an exaggerated sigh, I released Jör and slowly spun my stool to face Surt, startling when I found him standing there *butt-ass naked*.

Don’t look at his cock. Don’t look at his cock.

It took an amount of willpower I didn’t think I possessed, but I managed to hide my surprise *and* keep my gaze above the proverbial belt.

I deserve all the gold stars.

“What’s the problem, Surt?” I sneered, manspreading my legs to take up as much space as possible. “Jör doesn’t seem to mind, so I don’t see why this is any of your business—”

“Because that’s my mate,” he growled in return.

That made me hesitate. Several of Leia’s monsters had paired off as mates—outside of the free-for-all of fucking most were involved in—and while their bonds with *her* were unaffected, it did result in deeper emotions than the camaraderie they all felt for each other.

And do I really want to get in the middle of that?

Figuratively speaking.

Before I could take a hard look at my—admittedly gray—morals, Fen spoke up. “He’s not your *mate*, Surt. You’re just being an ass.”

OooooOOoooo...

Surt huffed but didn’t argue. Instead, he strolled to where Jör was leaning against the island and yanked the other man tightly against him before lowering his mouth to worry the faux mate mark with his teeth.

Jör moaned like the whore he was, dropping his head back against the larger man’s chest. “Please, Surt. I want to *play* with her...”

“She’s not here to play with,” Surt gruffly replied, although I caught a flicker of affection in his eyes before he buried it. “She’s a means to an end—”

“Who has very specific gifts you need to achieve your goals,” I curtly interrupted. “And as with any workplace environment, morale is improved when juicy perks are available.”

All three men stared at me with mixed reactions. Jör looked hopeful, Fen was obviously attempting to stifle a smile, and Surt appeared almost lost for words.

Almost.

“You... believe you’re entitled to *employee benefits*?” he scoffed, looking me over as if just now realizing he’d underestimated me.

They always do.

“Yuuuup!” I grinned. “If you expect my best work, you’ll want to keep me happy. And he”—I pointed my fork at Jör—“is what I want.”

Fen flinched for some reason, but then turned his attention to the guy who *thought* he was in charge. “What’s the harm, Surt? At the very least, it will keep Jör busy while you and I focus on... strategy.”

Oh, yes... for their mysterious plan.

Well, guess what, assholes?

I've got plans too.

“Mmm... yeah, good idea.” I nodded solemnly. “It will also stop me from astral projecting back to Greece to tell Herculeia and her monsters exactly who kidnapped me.”

Surt roughly shoved Jör behind him—as if worried I might immediately spirit away with a slutty sea snake in tow, never to be heard from again. He had nothing to worry about, since—even when I astral projected—my earthly form stayed where I left it.

Not that I'm gonna share that piece of intel, either.

I knew it was a gamble to show my cards, but the more powerful these men thought I was, the better chance I had of earning their respect.

Along with a healthy dose of fear.

Unsurprisingly, Fen reacted more rationally. “You can... do that?” he asked, cocking his head and looking me over with interest.

“I sure can!” I crowed before popping another Swedish meatball—*because, godsdamn, they were good*—in my mouth. Then I made them wait until I'd chewed, swallowed, and washed it down before continuing. “And I was planning on doing just that, but then I met sweet little Jör here, and my priorities changed. Plus, I have a soft spot for sad boi man-monsters like you. I've helped one pack shed their curse. What's the harm in helping another?”

Fen cleared his throat and glanced away, but Surt looked thoughtful.

Almost there.

“Of course, I'll also be needing some basics, like toiletries and clothes.” I added three more meatballs to my plate. “Since all my luggage is back at my hotel—”

“I brought your luggage to the island!” Jör piped in, leaping from behind Surt's massive frame to grin wildly. “That was my job.”

“Good job,” I warmly replied. I was already thinking of the toys I packed, even as I vaguely wondered what had become of my phone and laptop. “And I have just the thing to reward you...”

“Surt! Sir...” Jör tilted his head to gaze up at the giant man with a pleading expression. “Please, let me play—”

“Fine,” Surt brusquely replied with his gaze still locked on me. “You may *borrow* what’s mine, Iola. With restrictions.”

Oh, is that how you think it’s gonna be?

I had little intention of letting this man police what I did in the bedroom, but my curiosity got the better of me. “And just what are we not *allowed* to do?”

Surt dropped his hand to Jör’s bed sheet-toga-covered crotch, expertly fondling him, making the other man moan.

What are you hiding under there, little snake?

“There will be no penetration.” He smirked evilly. “I don’t need his cock contaminated with your cunt.”

Oh, you silly man.

I almost laughed in his smug face, but decided not to give the game away. “Fine. Jör doesn’t penetrate me. Got it.”

Good thing I brought my strapless strap-on.

Surt’s eyes narrowed at how readily I agreed, but I simply smiled serenely and popped another meatball in my mouth.

I truly can’t help myself.

“Why don’t you get Jör cleaned up, Surt.” Fen expertly steered us away from our employee benefit negotiations. “I’d like to talk with Iola about how she might assist with our... curse.”

Surt looked surprised, but nodded. Wrapping a hand around the back of Jör’s neck possessively, he led him from the room—shooting me one last triumphant look on the way out.

Whatever helps you sleep at night.

After swallowing my latest meatball, I eyed Fen. “Isn’t aftercare your job?”

He tilted his chin in agreement. “It usually is, but it wouldn’t kill Surt to provide it now and then. More importantly...” He peered around me, as if checking the others were out of sight. “I wanted to talk to you. Alone.”

IOLA

“**Y**ou wanted to get me alone, huh?” I teased, even as my intuition alarmingly buzzed—signaling *something* was incoming.

Pay attention, Iola.

And try not to pass out.

I braced myself for the possibility of experiencing a prophetic episode in front of someone I didn’t particularly trust and focused on keeping my breaths even. “Should we go somewhere more private? Like my bedroom?”

In case I need to lie down...

I knew how it sounded, even if I had no intention of fooling around with this man—at least, not without some proper groveling. But I also didn’t mind the idea of leading him on in the meantime.

An eye for an eye.

Fen tensed and glanced in the direction Surt and Jör had disappeared once again. “I... don’t think that’s a good idea.”

Jesus.

I get it, dude—you’re not interested.

Now that my appetite for both meatballs and dick had mysteriously vanished, I pushed aside my plate, ready to get down to it. Out of these three amigos, Fen was simply the guy delegated to deal with me.

Nothing more, nothing less.

“Very well.” I adopted the same businesslike tone I displayed during meetings. “Before you tell me how *I* can help you guys, I need to understand more about your situation. Who did you piss off to end up like this?”

Fen’s eyebrows shot into his hairline. “What? No one. We fulfilled our collective destiny, so our fates should have been assured.”

But something didn’t go according to plan.

I leaned back on my stool and considered the man before me. Few people believed in fate—or *the Fates*—nowadays, but Fenrir had existed since the time when their power not only terrified the *gods*, but humans as well.

As with most deities, the Fates seamlessly crossed mythological borders. In Greece, they were called the *Moirai*, while Vann and these Scandinavians knew them as the *Norns*. No matter the culture, the basics remained the same. They were three sisters who wove the story of your life, doled out allotted time, and snipped the thread when that time was up.

And there was nothing you could do to change it.

“So... you suspect your lives haven’t turned out as they should?” I kept my tone non-judgmental, since I was genuinely curious to learn what he believed was going on here.

Fen rose from his chair to pace the length of the kitchen, clearly agitated. “It’s not a *suspicion*, Iola. Ragnarok happened. We fought a mighty battle against the gods of Asgard and, as foretold, we all fell. *All* of us. I can still remember the sensation of swallowing Odin whole. Of Vidar’s sword as he made his killing stroke in revenge for his father’s death.”

He stopped and ran a hand through his gorgeous blond hair, momentarily distracting me.

It’s really a shame I won’t get to yank on it...

I quickly returned my attention to his info dump. “The world began anew, and their successors replaced the old gods. All of this matched the prophecies. Except...” He met my gaze. “*We* are still here. For reasons Surtr, Jörmungandr, and I

still do not understand, we woke up on the battlefield—despite the fate that was written for us.”

I didn't know how to respond. It wasn't that I didn't believe him, since I was one of the few who knew mythology was *fact*. But destiny was a slippery beast, especially when it was based on predictions written—and rewritten—thousands of years ago.

Usually by men with an agenda.

Even with my unique understanding of how this worked, it was difficult to keep the incredulity out of my voice. “You're upset that you didn't... *die*?”

If I'd cheated death like he had—while still defeating my enemies—I would have focused on doing all the things I never had the chance to experience the first time around. I certainly wouldn't be crying about how things didn't work out the doomy way some dusty old tome had predicted.

But what the fuck do I know?

Apparently nothing, as Fen sighed and crossed his arms, exasperated with how my tiny brain was struggling to keep up. “Odin, Thor, Freyr, Heimdall, Tyr, Loki... *they* now reside in the halls of Valhalla, as all brave warriors slain on the battlefield are destined to do.”

Ohhh...

My mouth dropped open as I *finally* understood the issue. “So you want to hang out in Valhalla with the cool kids—is that right?”

He gaped at me a moment before giving me the chuckle I was hoping for—albeit a sad laugh. “Well, yes. The very gods who mistreated us in life now enjoy the honorable fate meant for us. We *deserve* a hero's death.”

Okay, so they need the therapy-and-reparations combo.

Obviously, I had no choice but to cooperate. These monsters already knew enough about me to confirm I was the target they wanted. Surt had addressed me as a ‘seer’ from the start, so Vann must have let slip the basics about what I could

do during one of his visits. However, they'd seemed surprised to learn I could astral project and communicate over long distances, so he was probably as infuriatingly vague with them as he'd been with me about their existence.

So I need to play my cards right.

I didn't feel particularly *unsafe* in my current situation—even with Surt's threats against those I cared about—but I also wasn't dumb. The more powerful I made myself out to be, the more likely they would let me go once I outlasted my usefulness. In the end, these three were not human, and therefore didn't follow the same moral code as mortals. I couldn't allow myself to get too comfortable.

They're using me, so I'll use them in return.

Yes, I would do what I could to help them, if for no other reasons than staying alive and experiencing my dream of fancy peen while I was at it. Never mind that my control over my visions was shaky at best, or that I didn't always remember what I saw.

We'll just keep those pesky details to ourselves.

“Ok. Got it.” I nodded solemnly, even though Fen had pretty much just confessed that this was all about him and his friends feeling FOMO about the afterlife clubhouse. “Sooooo... who are the key players in this situation besides us?”

My sexy Swede pressed his tasty lips into a thin line. “Odin's son, Vidar, is the one who cursed us to inhabit these human forms when we first tried to petition our case. He and the other Asgardians have ignored us since then. We've tried to capture the attention of *the Norns* in various ways, but it seems they have forsaken us as well.”

This sounds like something modern technology could solve.

“Do you want me to email my bosses?” I suggested, before grimacing. From what I'd seen of Jör, he probably hadn't handled my luggage with care during his delivery. “Assuming my laptop made it here in one piece... or my phone.”

Do they even have Wi-Fi on this island?

Talk about a vacation off-the-grid...

Fen's gaze flickered past me again. "Your phone is in Surt's care, along with your laptop. We would also prefer no one knows you're here with us—for now. Not until we're ready to strike."

My eyes narrowed. It was one thing to liberate monsters from their unwanted human forms or help them break into Valhalla through the back door. But this was sounding suspiciously like they planned to take a few choice individuals with them.

I wouldn't say I was *close* with my bosses—and Leia was obviously their favorite, big surprise—but they'd been generous to offer me an employment opportunity at all.

Probably to make up for my shit hand in life.

"You do realize you can't *kill* the Fates, right?" I carefully replied. "Or the gods. Like, it's not physically possible for you to accomplish."

Maybe in your true form...

But we'll keep that to ourselves.

A slow smile crept over his face, including a hint of fang that was decidedly *unfriendly*. "Of course not," he replied so coldly, I shivered. "But we still want to reclaim what's rightfully ours. And you're going to help us do that."

This conversation felt like it was going in circles, which tracked for anyone trying to communicate with a mythological creature.

"But how?" I threw my hands into the air in exasperation. "You don't want me to contact the Fates on your behalf, but you clearly believe my very valuable and extremely unique abilities are just what you need. So. Tell me, Fen. How am I going to help you guys get into Valhalla? Please enlighten me, because I'm at a loss here."

The wolf in man's clothing leaned across the kitchen island, and I instinctively met him halfway. "You're going to

use those prophetic powers of yours to spy on the future for us, and once we know the Fate's plan for our path, we can work on diverting it."

My brow furrowed, incredibly confused how he thought this was possible. "You can't change the fate that's been woven for you..."

He chuckled low, and I couldn't stop my gaze from dropping to his mouth as my intuition buzzed again. "Do you truly believe that, Iola?" he whispered, his voice seductively coiling around me, drawing me in. "Look at how your life turned out—so exhausted in the daytime that you drown your sorrows at night. Do you believe *that* is all that's meant for you?"

Godsdammit.

The man did his research.

Or I'm a sad office worker stereotype...

Yes, I *was* thankful for the opportunity I'd been given at Ancient Olive—and it sure beat my bike messenger job back in New York. But I'd be lying if I said I hadn't shuddered at the thought of *this* corporate mundanity being my future.

So why not see if I can change my fate as well?

My lips were centimeters away from Fen's, and I was extremely disappointed in myself for suddenly having standards that included *not* making out with the guy who kidnapped me against my will.

Cockblocking myself.

"Ooh! Is playtime starting?"

I smiled and turned to face the insatiable sea snake. Jör was freshly showered and dressed in nothing but a pair of gray sweatpants, with tufts of brown hair adorably sticking out from underneath his hot pink hat. Since he was shirtless, I noticed he also had a tribal-style tattoo like Fen. His covered his left pectoral—over his heart—with a bold "X" in the center of the design.

Another rune?

He chewed his plump lower lip, shifting on his bare feet while eyeing the tiny space separating me and Fen like he was seriously considering muscling his way into it.

Typical monster.

Zero refractory period.

“No, *beibe*,” Fen chuckled—the spell between us broken as he straightened. “Iola and I were simply coming to an understanding. Now it’s time to work.”

“She understands what’s at stake?” Surt appeared, also looking fresh from the shower, but still as grumpy as ever.

Of course, this made me think of the two men *sharing* a shower, and it was all I could do not to demand my luggage so I could dip into my toys.

But apparently, it’s time to work.

On my vacation.

“Yes, Surt,” Fen replied—that odd edge to his voice making an appearance again. “Our little seer has been caught up on everything she needs to know.”

Refusing to allow myself to preen over the offhand use of ‘our,’ I nodded and gave the group my sweetest smile. There was no doubt these men had their own agendas—and secrets—but so did I. If this trio of immortals needed my help to sneak into Valhalla, so be it. I’d use the time we had together to reevaluate *my* goals and ride some monster dong.

Pretty much what I was hoping for during my break, anyway.

Once this little adventure was over, I’d hopefully have a fresh perspective on what I truly wanted, both personally and professionally.

The gods know I should probably start living.

JÖRMUNGANDR

I was extremely put out that Fen had decided we should work instead of fuck.

Especially when there's someone new to play with!

Someone who's so pretty.

Iola being here was exciting and new. *I* was used to being the pretty one, the one everyone doted on in their own ways. But this half-mortal was so shockingly pleasant to look at—*and she smelled so good!*—that I was already scheming a million ways to make her happy.

Like helping her unpack!

“Jör! Why are you... What are you doing?”

I grinned cheerfully at my new obsession over the mound of clothing and other fascinating items I'd eagerly dumped all over her bedroom floor.

“Getting you settled in!” I sang, sorting her belongings by color, starting with red.

Like her wondrous hair...

Iola's flowing locks reminded me of the cinnamon candy Fen bought for me whenever we went to the mainland to terrorize the locals. I loved how it crackled on my tongue and made my human form sweat to the point of mild discomfort. Both sensations only made me want to pour the entire box down my throat at once.

Just like I want to devour her.

“That’s so... thoughtful. Thank you.” She climbed off the freshly made bed to kneel beside me, and while I tried my best not to stare at the way her skirt rode up her thighs, it was a losing battle. “But I doubt I’ll be staying long enough to need to unpack.”

Pure panic unlike anything I’d experienced before shot through me. “You’re not leaving!” I shouted before tackling her to the floor. “I only just got you and I am not giving you up.”

“Jör!” Iola shrieked and tried to wiggle away, but I’d plastered myself to her smaller frame, pinning her against the floor to prevent her escape.

And maybe to take a little sniff.

She smelled like cinnamon and honeysuckle and magical rainbows, and I could already feel my cock stirring to life inside me.

Fuck.

Surt said we couldn’t.

I want to, though...

Pushing myself up, I sat back on my heels as she rose to stand and stared down at me.

Oh.

I like this view.

“That was naughty, Jör.” Her edible mouth twisted, as if she was fighting off a smile. “I’d expect better from a good boy like you.”

I like everything about this.

Placing my palms flat on my thighs, I gazed up at her, drinking in the perfect Cupid’s bow of her top lip. The way her olive skin showed a hint of flush from our tussle was divine, but nothing compared to how her amber eyes bored into my very soul.

Not that I have one.

“I *am* good,” I insisted, slightly offended she’d say otherwise. “I was *so* good all morning, but I’ve been dying to touch you, and you smell like my favorite candy... I simply couldn’t control myself.”

That should do it.

Iola pressed her lips together disapprovingly, and I immediately realized I may have forgotten an important bit.

“Oh! And I’m sorry!” I blurted out, swallowing a moan when she raised a tiny boot-clad foot and pressed it against my bare chest—pushing until I fell backward onto my ass. “I’m sorry... *Mistress.*”

No, that still doesn’t sound right.

“Hmm...” she hummed, her tone implying she agreed with me. “Apology accepted, although you *do* need to learn some manners. Would you like me to teach you how to behave?”

Oh, gods, yes!

I was so excited, I couldn’t form the words needed to reply. Instead, I nodded so rapidly, my vision blurred, which made Iola laugh. The sound was so musical I almost swooned, and when she finished booting me onto my back, I landed with a breathless gasp, feeling wetness already gathering between my legs.

Ugh.

Not fucking is the worst.

“Rule number one,” Iola began as she planted her boots on either side of my head. “You will not touch me unless I give you permission to.” When I whined mournfully, she chuckled. “I promise, Jör. If you’re a good boy—the *best* boy you can be—I’ll let you touch me wherever you want.”

“Fuck,” I rasped, slamming a hand down on my groin to stop my cock from emerging and frightening her away. “I’ll be so good, I promise.”

I meant it, too. While I’d admired mortal women from afar before—more for the aesthetics and fashion tips than anything—I’d never been interested enough to experiment. But, at this

moment, I honestly felt as if I might wither and die if I couldn't explore every inch of the goddess above me.

Not to be dramatic.

“Please...” I croaked. “I'll do anything! Please, just...”

I wasn't entirely sure what I was begging for—besides *everything*—but Iola's smirk told me she understood.

Because she's perfect.

“You want me closer?” she murmured, dropping to her knees before sitting heavily on my heaving chest. “Like this?”

I was *squirring* on the floor beneath her, but I dutifully kept my hands to myself. “Closer, yes. Please... *Master.*”

Ooh!

Iola smiled, and it was as if I were restored to my true form, watching the sun rise over open water—the sea so calm it shimmered like painted glass.

“What a good boy you are for your *Master,*” she praised, tapping her finger against my nose while she did. “Such a Good. Little. Pet.”

She booped me!

My cock uncontrollably shot out of my opening to writhe against my sweatpants. But Iola blessedly focused on raising herself to her knees, hovering the mouthwatering source of her arousal mere centimeters from my face.

I may end up in Valhalla yet...

“Would you like a reward for being patient, pet?” She lowered herself until the cotton of her underwear brushed my lips. “I know you can smell me. How about a taste?”

A warrior's death.

I checked my teeth were back to blunt human form before straining upward to mouth her through the fabric. Running my ridged tongue along her dripping slit, I groaned when I collected the faintest taste of paradise.

Fuuuuuuck....

“Oh, shit... You have a *fancy* tongue, huh? Yeah, just like that... you’re doing so, *so* good, pet...” Iola was riding my face—the thin fabric separating us now soaked—and I hovered my hands over her thighs, wordlessly asking to touch.

Please, please, please.

Iola grabbed my hands with her much smaller ones and slapped them onto her biteable little ass. I uncontrollably bucked, feeling copious amounts of precum leaking out of me as I tumbled toward release, all the while vaguely wondering if my cock was strong enough to punch its way through my pants to reach her.

“Yes, yes, yes, YES!” my *Master* chanted, grinding herself down on my face—depriving me of air I didn’t need, anyway. “Oh, fuck, I’m already so close. We’re definitely doing this with nothing in the way next time—”

Why not now?

Without waiting for permission—forgiveness, or punishment, sounded more fun, anyway—I felt my teeth sharpen just enough to tear the offensive shred of fabric out of my way.

Much better.

I groaned as her unobstructed taste hit my tongue. She was honey and sunshine and as musky as the swampy shallows along the coast. I wanted to start and end each day drowning in this flavor while her scent permeated my airways. Until she’d replaced the blood in my veins.

Odin-willing, I’ll die like this.

“Oh, fuck, oh, fuck, fuckfuckfuckfuuuuuuuck...”

She convulsed in my hold, her cunt leaking nectar I could survive on, and my vision whited out as I experienced a rare double orgasm—my back arching as I moaned through both my external and internal release.

“Did you...” Iola’s sweet voice brought me back down to Midgard. “Ohhh, you just came in your pants, huh? What a messy boy. What a good, *good* boy...”

“A good boy, indeed.”

I groggily lifted my head, finding Fen leaning against the doorframe behind Iola. His relaxed stance suggested he'd been watching us for a while, as did the telltale yellow tinge to his eyes. It wasn't possible for any of us to take our true forms any longer, but we could occasionally extend our fangs, claws, and horns, or adjust our eye color to a shade of what we once were.

Especially when we're turned on.

“Hello, Daddy!” I called out happily. “Iola was teaching me to behave.”

“I see that, *beibe*,” he chuckled, a soft smile playing on his lips. “Such a *hands-on* teacher. So thorough.”

Iola scoffed and rose to stand, moving out of my reach too fast for my sluggish body to snatch her again. “Yeah, well, if I don't get off at least once a day, I get cranky. More so than usual.”

Me too!

This time, Fen threw his head back and laughed, and I realized with a pang that it had been a long time since I'd witnessed him display such open joy. “Well, then you and Jör will be perfect playmates. Freyja knows we can't keep up with him.”

His tone sounded *sad*, and I couldn't have that. Finally regaining control of my limbs, I stood and approached, draping my arms around his neck before standing on tiptoes to deliver a sweet kiss on his kissable lips.

I still need you.

He shivered when I pulled back, his gaze darkening further as he took in my messy state. Then he placed a hand under my chin and tilted my head to the side before running his nose along my cheekbone.

Scenting me.

No.

Collecting her scent.

“We should keep her,” I stated, confident he’d say yes, since he obviously wanted Iola as much as I did.

And Daddy lives to please me.

Fen huffed a quiet laugh and ran his thumb over my bottom lip, his sad gaze meeting mine. “You know that’s not possible, Jör... not least of all because you can’t just *keep* people—”

“Oh, but *kidnapping* them is fine, hmm?”

I wiggled out of Fen’s hold to face Iola again. She was glaring at the man behind me with arms crossed, but the pheromones she was putting out told a different story.

She likes seeing us together!

That’s it.

We’re keeping her.

Fen cleared his throat. “On that note, I’ve brought some henbane to burn, to help with your visions. Along with this...”

I turned again to find him holding an iron staff just over a meter long. It was corroded with age, but featured the remains of bronze detailing along the shaft and on the spindle-shaped decoration at one end.

Just like what the Norns use to weave our fate...

With a growl, I shoved past him and stalked down the hallway. Yes, I knew our endgame had always been to find our way to the gates of Valhalla—to achieve the noble death we’d been created for—but I was no longer as keen on the idea as the others. Fen knew I hadn’t been on board for a while.

How could I be, when life consistently delivered excitement?

So I did not appreciate the subtext of Fen’s reminder one bit. In fact, it was terribly rude of him to remind me of our death pact just as I found someone perfect for me.

For us.

I didn't stop moving until I'd exited the house, climbed over the rocks, and reached the island shore. Staring out at the stormy sea, I could *feel* my true form clawing to get out—closer to the surface than usual, yet still frustratingly out of reach.

Peeling off my sticky pants, I dove into the choppy waves, intent on washing myself clean in the icy waters, in more ways than one. By the time I emerged, I wanted to shed the weight of prophetic visions and covert plans—of the suspicions buzzing under my skin, stubbornly insisting my destiny wasn't set in stone.

Because nothing can be promised in the end.

IOLA

Watching Jör stomp away was weirdly upsetting, and from the look on Fen's face, he was also struggling to not go after the other man and offer comfort.

His 'baby.'

Fuck, they're hot together.

Of course, the last thing I wanted was for this duplicitous man to know how much he affected me. Fen was an infuriating combination of boldly seductive, effortlessly cool, and selectively sweet. The combination worked well for the whole Daddy vibe he had going on, but it made it difficult for me to get a solid read on him.

And now the idiot's offering to drug me again...

Why do men?

“How 'bout we see what I can do *without* the hallucinogenic henbane, theenk.” I smoothed my skirt down over what was left of my torn and soaked panties, willing my legs to stop feeling like they were made of jelly.

The orgasm I'd just experienced had been mind-blowing. It didn't surprise me that a *snake* would be good with his tongue, but whatever fancy ridges were involved had made it feel like the island beneath us was in danger of breaking free from the earth to float off toward the horizon. Overall, it was solidly in my top five of best climaxes *not* achieved by yours truly.

Oh, who am I kidding?

Top five overall.

Enthusiasm earns extra points.

I also didn't know what to do with the fact Fen here had just watched me come on his boyfriend's face. Brother, if you wanted to get technical. But almost everyone in mythology seemed to be related to each other—because the gods were hoes—so I could let it slide.

I'm charitable like that.

Realizing the giant wolf in handsome human form was waiting for me to take the oversized wizard wand from him, I gathered my dignity and approached. Fen wordlessly handed the iron staff to me and I gasped at how godsdamn heavy it was.

“Is this really necessary?” I grumbled, using both hands to hold the potential murder weapon as I inspected it. “I've never needed accessories before.”

Only Herculeia to focus all my attention on...

Fen was watching me closely. “It is an ancient *Völva* staff, for use during rituals.” When I tried to disguise my immature laugh under a cough, he rolled his eyes good-naturedly and clarified. “A *Völva* is our equivalent of a Greek *Pythia*, and while the basics of the trancelike state they fell under were the same, our seers could not glimpse the future without this staff.”

I sighed and climbed onto the bed, getting comfy among the pillows to prepare for my incoming spirit journey. “You're really counting on me seeing a future where you're not just a bunch of dudes hanging out on an island, tilting at windmills, huh?”

The *Don Quixote* reference was a low blow, but Fen had not only interrupted my orgasm but my post-orgasmic nap. Plus, I didn't want him thinking that handing me an old fence post meant I was going to find the answers they were hoping for. I liked the idea of sticking it to the man. But I also knew firsthand that if you didn't have something the gods needed or wanted, you were on your own.

And it sounds like these three already served their purpose.

Fen's jaw ticked, and he stared at me a long moment before speaking. "I would prefer you to hold on to the staff during your journey. The distaff"—he pointed at the spindle-shaped adornment on one end—"will wind back your life's thread. This will ensure your soul returns to your body once you're done."

All at once, I felt like the biggest jerk there was. Despite the bad blood between us, Fen was doing what he could to make my experience—this entire situation—more safe and comfortable for me.

Just like a good Daddy does.

I'd never been into daddy kink—mostly because I had enough parental issues to fill several therapy sessions. But the idea of someone *else* taking care of things while I flailed my way through adulthood sounded mighty appealing.

I wonder who takes care of him, though?

In no mood to catch feelings for these fools, I laid back and positioned the staff on my chest, grasping the shaft with both hands to hopefully find my way home again.

HERE.

Not home.

By Hera... One ride on a monster tongue and you're ready to move in.

The iron quickly warmed beneath my skin, and I noticed an energy to the object that probably came from all the *Völvas* who'd handled it in the past. I kept my face expressionless, even as I started to internally sweat over the fact I'd never consciously brought on a vision by myself before.

What if Fen realizes he picked up a defective seer?!

Just as I was about to crack a joke to redirect, the half-scary, half-sexy wolf-man in my midst started... *singing*.

Fen's voice was low, the words foreign but full of power. He simultaneously kept time with the steady slap of his palm

against his—*incredibly muscular*—thigh, and I let my eyes flutter closed, instinctually matching the primal beat with every breath.

The next thing I knew, I was airborne, drifting upward through a fog so thick it was nearly suffocating. I sensed something large nearby as I ascended, and caught glimpses of what looked like a mountain through breaks in the cloud cover. All at once, I emerged to clear skies above and realized what I'd thought was a mountain was actually an enormous tree. Its trunk was unfathomably wide—like a wall stretching endlessly to the horizon on either side—and at the top of the tree, resplendent in gold feathers, sat an extremely regal looking...

Rooster.

Because, of course.

Where would mythology be without a big golden cock?

The rooster and I stared at each other for so long, I wondered if I'd spirited myself from Norse mythology into Polynesian.

He's the Heihei to my Moana.

“Um... hi?” I ventured.

Instead of making me feel like *less* of an ass by answering, the rooster simply tilted its head to better observe my stupidity. Before I could call it a day and return to my humiliated earthly form, something behind me caught the rooster's brainless attention.

And whatever it is, must be scary as fuck.

Norwegian Heihei was shooketh. The rooster was making such a racket that I had to clamp both hands over my ears to drown out the panicked squawks. Awkwardly maneuvering myself in mid-air, I turned to have a look, assuming it would be useful information to bring back for Fen and the others.

“Oh, shit...” I croaked, feeling as shooketh as the empty-headed bird.

It appeared there wouldn't be any need for me to explain the scene, because the guys were *here*. Not as the men I knew,

but in their monster forms.

Their *true* forms.

One was a wolf so massive, the bottom of his jaw grazed the earth while the top disappeared into the clouds—his gleaming yellow eyes promising death for all who crossed his path. Beside him walked a horned giant whose skin resembled black rock shot through with veins of molten lava. He was carrying a flaming sword, clearing the path in front of them with broad strokes, burning down the world as they advanced.

Fenrir and Surtr, apparently.

I knew nothing in these visions could hurt me, but my blood still froze to ice in my veins, especially when a third monster appeared. This one was so large it made the other two look like harmless kittens.

Jörmungandr.

The World Serpent.

Some tiny, still-functioning part of my brain found it incredibly ironic that Jör—with his sweet, subby, golden retriever energy—was actually this nightmarish creature. I'd assumed the legends overstated how Jörmungandr could encircle the entire world, but I now realized the claims were no exaggeration. It was as if The Great Wall of Snake was bearing down on us—with enormous greenish-blue scales undulating as he slithered closer—and when he opened his mouth to roar into the sky, even the enormous tree behind me shook.

This can't be a glimpse of what's to come...

Fen had said holding the *Völva* staff would help me see into the *future*. But he'd also insisted Ragnarok had already happened. As far as I knew, the Norse end—and rebirth—of the world was a one-time event, so if this was truly a sneak peek, then we were all in a lot of trouble.

I've got to warn the guys!

But what if this is what they want?

Concerned with how close the three behemoths were getting, I scrambled around to face the panicked rooster—finding Heihei still crowing up a storm *and* trying to fly away from his sacred perch.

“Oh, no you don’t, chicken nugget!” I yelled, kicking my feet to awkwardly air-swim toward the bird and grab him before he flew the coop. “I need whatever message you’re supposed to give me first.”

I snagged the runaway chicken by the tail feathers, but then he clawed me with his talons, causing me to lose my grip.

“*MOTHERCLUCKER!*” I shouted, ripping out a handful of golden feathers as I snatched my bleeding hand away from his spindly-legged grasp.

Then, I was falling, and while this wasn’t an unusual way for me to exit my visions, I couldn’t stop the scream that tore from my throat as I dropped like a stone into the clouds below.

I NEED TO STOP THIS!

“IOLA! *Sötnos*, can you hear me?!”

I startled back to reality to find that Fen had wrapped his arms around me and hauled me into his lap, with the world’s biggest boner digging into my side.

Is that the Völva staff, or are you just happy to see me?

“Praise, Freyja. I thought I’d lost you,” he murmured into my hair, removing the staff crushed between us so he could squeeze me closer.

Aaaaand, it was the staff, apparently.

“There was a... bird... on a tree...” I babbled, desperate to get as much out before it faded into the ether. I also wasn’t doing a damn thing to remove myself from his lap.

Just until I get my bearings.

“A bird?” Surt’s voice broke through my mental fog and I peered around Fen’s broad shoulders to find the giant man eyeing me with concern. As soon as he noticed my gaze on

him, Surt darkened his expression into more recognizable annoyance, but I'd seen enough.

He was worried about meeeee!

"Yeah..." I cleared my throat and awkwardly untangled myself from Fen's arms before sliding off his lap and onto the bed. "No. It was a rooster! A *golden* rooster at the top of an enormous tree."

Both men were staring at me with a mixture of amazement and disbelief. "You saw... *Vídópnir*, at the top of *Yggdrasil*?" Surt scoffed, but there was another emotion on his face—one he was trying to hide.

Hope.

"I-I'm not sure who or what that is..." I weakly replied as the rest of my vision abruptly vanished like water running down the drain.

"*Yggdrasil* is the World Tree," Fen calmly explained, reaching forward to smooth my no doubt crazy hair and tuck some wayward strands behind my ear. "And *Vídópnir* is the rooster who sits atop and signals the arrival of Ragnarok."

"Ragnarok..." I frowned, feeling *something* attempt to poke at my consciousness.

"Yes," Surt confirmed before shifting his focus to Fen. "It's a good sign, no? Especially if she saw him crowing."

Did I?

"Fuck, you're bleeding!" Fen hissed, and we all snapped our attention to my tightly clenched fist. It was *my* turn for amazement and disbelief, because, sure enough, I was bleeding all over the bedspread.

This can't be good.

I'd never sustained an injury from a vision before. In fact, I'd always believed I was nothing but a passive bystander—only there to collect information and pass along what I could.

"Who did this?!" Surt growled, grabbing my wrist to yank my hand closer for inspection.

I gasped as a shock of electricity raced through me at the contact, reflexively unclenching my fist and releasing a handful of...

Feathers.

Both men stared at the pile like they'd seen a ghost, and I was right there with them. I'd also never brought back a vision quest souvenir before, and nervously wondered why I was starting this party trick now.

I have a bad feeling about this.

"Are those...?" Fen whispered.

"Yesssss..." Surt breathed, his grip on my wrist tightening to the point of discomfort as he wildly grinned at Fen. "And you know what that means."

Fen slowly nodded, an awestruck smile spreading over his handsome face. "I do."

"What does it mean?" I cautiously asked, although something told me I wouldn't like the answer.

Surt chuckled darkly, and I almost wished I could return to my vision, to escape the pure evil in his expression. "It means the chest holding Loki's sword can be unlocked, and Laevateinn will be mine to wield again."

IOLA

The dynamic changed in the days that followed. No one was offering me a ride off the island, but I also no longer felt like an expendable prisoner. I was now being treated like a part of the *team*, actively involved in... whatever still mysterious scheme these maniacs were scheming.

Hera forbid I be given all the info at once.

“Soooo...” I fidgeted on my stool at the kitchen island, wondering why we weren’t holding our daily meetings on the comfortable-looking couch and chairs across the room. “You want me to somehow bring the rooster feathers *back* into a vision, so I can use them to unlock a giant chest for... reasons?”

Yet-to-be-explained reasons.

Even without my second sight, I can see this is sus.

“My sword is locked inside the chest,” Surt slowly replied, as if he were speaking to a small child. “Laevateinn is the only weapon that can kill Víðópnir. More powerful than Odin’s spear and Thor’s hammer—”

“I thought it was *Loki’s* sword?” I interrupted, completely uninterested in his showboating. “And on what planet does it make sense for the *rooster* to provide the key needed to unlock the weapon that can kill it?”

Mythology is so weird.

Whatever tiny crumb of patience Surt may have unearthed to deal with me had officially withered and died. But while he

looked close to exasperation, Fen was clearly fighting back a smile.

“Yes, it was my father’s sword,” the wolf calmly explained. “He created it from a twig retrieved from the gates of Helheim—the land of the dead ruled by my sister, Hel.”

“Creative,” I dryly remarked.

Surt sighed heavily, but Fen wasn’t done with his Scholarly Sven routine. “However, I agree with you. There’s no logical reason for Víðópnir’s feathers to be what unlocks the chest holding Laevateinn. So it must be... *fate*.”

I couldn’t resist teasing. “But I thought you didn’t *believe* in fate. Since your own went so horribly awry.”

All humor left Fen’s face as he observed me with an unreadable intensity that almost burned. “I don’t. But a believer could be made of me yet.”

Oh?

“None of that matters,” Surt brusquely interrupted what was clearly a precious moment. “I require the sword, and you will get it for me.”

THIS guy.

“Mmm... maybe,” I murmured, focusing all my outward attention on my manicure. “But only if you tell me what you plan on doing with it.”

Surt threw his enormous hands into the air. “Kill Víðópnir! Haven’t you been listening, seer?”

Ah, yes, because it’s all so clearly explained...

I didn’t dare ask what the point of killing the Ragnarok alarm rooster was when the end of days had already occurred. But I woke up choosing violence most days, so decided to at least annoy the giant a little more before we were finished with today’s thrilling meeting.

That could’ve been an email.

“What does *Laevateinn* mean?” I sweetly asked. Surt squinted at me—probably trying to guess my angle—but I

simply batted my eyelashes and gave him my most vapid smile.

Nothing to see here.

Just me and my empty head!

He cleared his throat, his gaze shifting away from mine. “Why does it matter what Laevateinn—”

“It means ‘damage twig,’” Fen smoothly replied, the smirk on his face broadening by the second.

“*DAMAGE TWIG?!*” I howled, practically falling off the high stool in absolute joy.

“Ooh! What are we laughing about?” Jör appeared, wearing Hawaiian board shorts and a tiny crop top that said ‘I [heart] Swedish boys.’

Same, monster, same.

The big guy beside me was attempting murder with his glare alone, but before I could bring Jör up to speed, Fen came in with the assist. “We were explaining to Iola how much Surt enjoys plowing through fertile fields swinging his enormous *damage twig*.”

Tag team!

“I beg your fucking pardon?!” Surt sputtered.

Jör’s cheeky grin appeared—the brat ready to join the action. “Oh, yes, his *damage twig* is quite large. Sometimes I wonder how it manages to fit.”

Okay, but now I’m horny.

What other people did in the bedroom was usually none of my business, but that was before a certain grump decided he was going to govern what I did in mine.

Incoming!

“Oh! This reminds me, Surt.” I leaned into his personal space, intentionally crowding him. “You said I wasn’t allowed to put *Jör’s damage twig* in my *damage chasm*, but what about the other way around? Like reverse damage points?”

Jör clapped his hands excitedly while Fen furrowed his brow in confusion. Surt simply gaped at me a moment before pinching the bridge of his nose as if he had a headache. “I think we’re done for the day,” he sighed. “Let us reconvene before dinner and see if Iola can pinpoint where Sinmara’s chest is located.”

Before I could ask who *Sinmara* was, he abruptly rose from his stool and stomped away, shaking his head while muttering about being ‘surrounded by idiots.’

Welcome to my life on hot-bod monster island, dude.

“I think he likes me.” I grinned at Fen, feeling like maybe I’d forgiven him a teensy bit for kidnapping me.

Collective roasting goes a long way.

He smiled so adoringly, my breath caught. “Yes. The mere fact Surt hasn’t killed you speaks volumes of his affection. He must be as smitten as the rest of us.”

The rest of you, huh?

As if drawn to the increase in pheromones—which wouldn’t have surprised me—Jör draped his arms over my shoulders from behind before cuddling closer.

So much for asking to touch me...

But I’ll allow it.

“Can we show Iola around the island, Fen?” Jör mumbled, his words muffled in my hair. “You’ve been so busy all morning and I need fresh air and exercise.”

Big golden retriever energy.

“Would you like a tour, Iola?” Fen asked—his attention briefly flickered to where Jör was nuzzling me before meeting my gaze again. His expression was as serene as ever, but the unmistakable lust in his eyes gave him away. The blue had darkened to the color of ocean depths, the irises ringed in a yellowish glow that tugged at my memory.

Where have I seen that before?

Determined to continue reminding these predators who the real alpha was around here, I breezily laughed. “Ooh, I’m getting attention from *both* of you for the afternoon? Maybe we should see if Surt wants to join. I think I could handle all three of you at once.”

Fen sharply inhaled while Jör moaned softly against my neck. “*Blódughadda*,” he growled before nipping my neck with his sharp teeth, making me yelp.

Big bitey puppy energy.

“Jesus, Jör!” I laughed. “Does the Scandinavian spell you’re invoking make my skin taste better?”

He cackled maniacally and spun me to face him. “*Blódughadda* means ‘bloody hair’ and was one of the nine daughters of Ægir and Rán, gods of the sea. These daughters were waves personified, although I’ve never met *Blódughadda* personally... until now...”

Jör leaned down, possibly for a second helping, but I wiggled away and ran around the kitchen island to hide behind Fen. “Save me!” I cried in mock-terror. “Save me from becoming a virgin sacrifice to the World Serpent, Daddy!”

Fen froze. I froze. Jör grinned broadly—displaying all his terrifying chompers.

Good job, Iola.

Because the sexual tension around here wasn’t tense enough.

Ever since my impromptu playtime with Jör, Surt had done his best to make sure the snake was occupying *his* bed every spare moment of the day. That is, when Jör wasn’t outside, completing his seemingly never-ending cycle of an icy ocean dip, followed by their hot-as-Hades sauna. When I’d asked him how he could stand such extremes, he’d simply laughed and said, “*Lagom är bäst.*”

The right measure is the best, apparently.

On a related note, I was *not* getting the ‘right measure’ of dick—which had been the primary goal of my vacation—and

my toys only went so far to scratch the itch. I wanted skin on skin, sweaty and unhinged until everyone involved was satisfied. And that my dream monsters were right in front of me, waving their mysterious dicks around where I couldn't get my claws on them, was driving me crazy.

And unlocking a daddy kink, apparently.

Fen took a *very* slow, deep breath before slowly rising from his stool. "Let me clean up from lunch, and then Jör and I can show you around."

"And play!" Jör added.

"*You* may play, *beibe*," Fen gently replied. "But Iola decides who is allowed in her bed."

So we DO understand consent...

Wait.

Does this mean Fen wants to be invited?!

The infuriatingly unreadable wolf was already washing dishes in the sink with his back to me, so I threw him another bone.

"Well, I'm going to grab my sneakers," I called over my shoulder as I pulled Jör down the hallway toward my bedroom. "But yeah, playtime later might require some supervision... from *Daddy*."

Might as well lean into it.

I smirked as Fen's shoulders slumped and he dropped his head forward with a pained groan. I couldn't be sure if his reaction was general annoyance with my antics or genuine sexual frustration, but I could work with either.

Especially with such a perfect partner in crime.

I wasn't sure I wanted to examine why a sex-addicted sea serpent made me feel so seen, but the thing I liked most about Jör was that he made no apologies for what he liked.

Although his complete lack of boundaries could use some work...

“Ooh, what’s this?”

I looked up from tying my shoes to see Jör examining my thrifted Malibu Barbie fanny pack like it was a fascinating archeological find.

“It’s called a fanny pack,” I replied, realizing if anyone could pull off the impulse buy, it was *him*. “You clip it around your waist and the pouch sits over your fanny.”

He gingerly unzipped the main pocket and peered inside. “What’s a ‘fanny?’”

“Welllllll...” I snickered. “If you’re talking to an American, it’s your ass, but to the Australians and Brits, it’s slang for the part of *me* you’ve already had an up close and personal encounter with.”

We should do that again.

Instead of taking the bait like I one thousand percent expected him to, Jör kept his gaze firmly fixed on the neon blue and pink item in his hand. “So *I* could wear it either way, then...”

Oh.

Our beibe has a cockpocket.

There was a note of *uncertainty* in Jör’s tone I’d never heard before, but unbeknownst to him, I was already familiar with this fun little feature. Not because of personal experience, but thanks to Leia, her big mouth, and that her men were naked more often than not. One of her monsters, Zephyr, had a jack-in-the-box-style cock, and the extra hole was a big hit with *both* his mates.

One of whom has two cocks.

That ho is such a lucky bish.

Realizing Jör was nervously awaiting my reaction, I patted my knee. “Come here, pet.”

He hesitated, but then obeyed like the good boy he was. Sinking to his knees at my feet, Jör rested his cheek on my thigh and gazed up at me. “I... am a little different from what

you're probably used to, but I want you to like what you see," he whispered, barely audible. "I want to please you."

UGHHHHHHH....

I would be the first to admit I wasn't the most nurturing person, but I could see why Fen felt so compelled to care for this adorable little destroyer of worlds. Jör was both incredibly sultry *and* achingly sweet. If 'Daddy' wasn't already taken, I may have felt compelled to step into the role myself.

Master will have to do, I suppose.

"Jör..." I combed my fingers through his soft brown hair, already messy from his morning swim. "I am going to be pleased with whatever you offer, because *you* please me. Does that make sense?"

He nodded, the tension visibly leaving his hot little body as he grinned up at me. "It does. I can't wait to play later."

I chuckled, amazed I'd finally found someone with a higher sex drive than *me*. "Same. Hopefully, Surt won't reserve you again before I can get my hands on you."

Jör's grin turned decidedly more mischievous. "I'll just pout until I get my way."

A true brat.

"And I shall figure out how to convince Fen to *supervise*," he added, the mischief amplifying. "I have my ways."

I laughed and gently moved his head off my lap so I could stand. "If anyone could accomplish both those feats, it's you, *danger noodle*. Now let's go find Fen for this grand island tour."

And hope for a very happy ending.

FENRIR

It was difficult enough having someone like Jör around, constantly luring Surt or me—or both of us—away from our plans. But now I was trapped on an island with *two* tasty temptations on the loose.

There could be worse fates, I suppose.

Our island was actually a fairly good size, and located at the north easternmost point of the Stockholm Archipelago. This allowed us easy access to the mainland when needed, but also gave anyone looking for us a challenge.

30,000 islands to investigate would discourage anyone.

Surt and I purchased the entire island back in the 1600s from a local fishing family. Since then, we'd torn down their derelict shacks to build an open floor plan timberline structure, coated in black tar against the elements and half hidden among windswept pines.

We'd scattered additional guest houses around as well, but that was simply to thwart Sweden's 'everyman's right' law, which gave anyone permission to come ashore, as long as they weren't within sight of a building. There were no grassy fields to speak of, and the shallow pebble beach was flanked by a steep rocky shoreline—making our location truly uninviting.

Just as we like it.

The last stop on today's exclusive tour was the boathouse, where Iola was currently eyeing one of our top of the line speedboats with great interest.

“Do you know how to man a boat, *sötnos*?” I asked. My tone was casual, although my gaze was trained on her face with deadly focus.

She slowly blinked before turning to face me, shrugging awkwardly. “I mean... I took a few sailing lessons as a teenager, but I was too uncoordinated to stick with it.”

My eyes narrowed, trying to assess whether she was telling the truth. I wasn't particularly worried about her escaping—especially as the nearest island was too far for human eyes to see. But I liked to know my opponent.

And Iola is a larger threat than she outwardly appears to be.

My wolf may have mistaken her for prey, but I recognized a fellow alpha when I saw one. Despite her smaller stature, she was truly a force to be reckoned with.

A tiny terror.

I understood why someone like her would be upset by the methods I used to get her to the island. Not only because humans were a sensitive bunch, but because I'd put her in a vulnerable position.

And Iola likes to be the one in charge.

I certainly wasn't opposed. The way she dominated Jör was like poetry. Neither Surt nor I could make the World Serpent obey all the time, but Iola had clearly cast a spell on our slippery snake.

And me...

My desire for the half-mortal wouldn't have felt so urgent if my wolf hadn't already decided she was my mate. The *need* to mark her as mine was clawing a hole through my chest, but I refused to do anything about it. Not without her consent, anyway, and since I highly doubted she would forgive me for drugging her, the chances of that happening were slim to none.

I fear that ship has sailed.

“Okay, that's enough tour for today! Let's go back inside and get some real exercise.”

Iola huffed a laugh at Jör's singular focus. "Patience, pet," she replied. "I'm supposed to go vision questing again before we're *allowed* to play, remember?"

I frowned, disapproving of how Surt was using Jör as a carrot to make Iola do what he wanted—on top of his initial threat to hurt those she cared about.

As if you're behaving any better, Fen.

At least Surt was showing her where his priorities were, which was far better than my ongoing deception. Besides the way I'd brought her to the island, I hadn't been completely honest with what the three of us were trying to accomplish.

A repeat of the end of days.

My reasoning was that no mortal—or half-mortal—would agree to dooming the planet they lived on, so *of course* I couldn't give her the full story. I could also blame my deceitful actions on my father being the god of trickery, but Jör was also from this lineage and yet was honest to a fault.

"But I want to be naaaaaked!"

Case in point.

Iola didn't laugh at Jör's ridiculousness, or reprimand him for continuing to push. Instead, she walked to where he stood and placed a tiny hand on his chest—over the rune inked on his human flesh—immediately settling him.

She has no idea of the power she holds.

At first, I'd assumed Jör chose his rune to be *Gebo* because of its association with sex magic. Since then, I'd come to realize how fitting its other meanings were for my sweet boy. Jör was a gift who gave of himself freely and—out of all of us—he'd seemed to accept our unexpected situation with the most grace.

Something I'm incapable of doing.

"Jör." Iola's voice brought me back to the present—firm but full of seductive promise. "What did I say about being a good boy?"

To my shock, the serpent lowered his gaze. “That if I was good, I could touch you wherever I wanted.”

A well-deserved reward.

“That’s right,” she purred, raising herself up on her tiptoes to brush her lips over his. “And maybe if we’re *both* good, Fen will watch.”

By Odin!

It took every bit of my self-control not to throw them *both* over my shoulder and race for the bedroom. However, for all I knew, Iola was simply teasing me for my duplicitous past crimes... and current ones.

A well-deserved punishment

“Yes.” I cleared my throat and squinted out to sea for no other reason than to lessen temptation. “Let us return to the house so you may attempt another vision before dinner.”

When my gaze found hers, she was smirking. “Sure. Don’t forget to give me that hard rod of yours again. It really helped.”

It took me a moment to realize she was referring to the *Völva’s* divination staff, but by the time I thought to reply, Iola was already leading Jör back toward the house.

Deep breaths, Fen.

In and out...

But not like that!

Once inside, we collected Surt from where he was pouring over the ancient tomes I’d borrowed from the Stockholm University library. I had every intention of returning them... eventually, but assumed having reference materials during this temporary experiment with Iola could prove useful.

Because it is only temporary.

I waited until our token seer was comfortably positioned on the bed—clutching a fistful of rooster feathers and the *hard rod* between her perfect breasts—before chanting the same protective *vardlökkur* I’d sung before.

Freyja, please guide your vessel on her journey.

Just as before, Iola was deathly still, with the only sign she was still alive being her slow, even breaths. I continued singing—had started going into a trance myself—when Surt abruptly spoke.

“What’s wrong, Iola?”

My rhythm faltered, and I snapped my attention to her face, wondering what the giant had noticed.

Is she hurt?!

Iola sighed and opened her eyes, although she kept her gaze averted. “It’s just... nothing’s happening. I would say I don’t know why, but... the truth is, I-I can’t *force* a vision. They usually just... come to me.”

She tensed, and I realized to my horror that she thought we would *punish* her for her confession. My gaze shifted to Surt, who looked as scandalized as I felt.

Interesting...

“*Sötнос.*” The nickname continued to slip easily from my tongue. “I’m not as familiar with Greek *Pythias*, but our *Völvas* were held in extremely high regard—including by the gods themselves. The gift of prophecy is sacred indeed.”

Iola finally met my gaze again, and I had to physically restrain myself from going to her when I saw *tears* welling up in her pretty amber eyes. “So w-why can’t I make the vision happen?” she sniffled.

Jör whined in response to her distress, and even Surt looked mildly sympathetic when he turned to face me. “Were you chanting a different *vardlökkur* last time? Or was Iola lying in a different position—”

“It was the same!” I snapped, mostly because I wanted more than anything to ease her concerns. “The only difference is that immediately prior to her last vision, I’d walked in on her and Jör...”

No...

If Iola requires sex magic for her visions, I am going to perish.

The room fell into an uneasy silence as the implications of my half-statement were absorbed. Iola looked slightly embarrassed—which only made my protective instincts roar to life all over again—while Surt was already backing toward the bedroom door.

“If that’s the case, I will gladly return to my research,” he mumbled, sounding suspiciously close to frantic. “There’s absolutely no need for me to be involved with this sorcery.” With that, one of the most formidable warriors I’d ever known turned tail and practically fled from the room.

Perhaps I’m not the only one struggling with... urges.

Unsurprisingly, Jör had already bounded across the room to join Iola on the bed. “Ooh! I volunteer as tribute. Use me, oh lovely *Völva!* I am your willing servant.”

Iola giggled as he began peppering her with wet kisses, blessedly cured of her insecurities. Not for the first time, I was grateful for the snake’s sunny personality.

Not to mention, the sight of them together is addicting.

The last thing I wanted was to follow Surt out of the room, but I also wished to respect Iola’s boundaries. “I can also leave if you want me to—”

“No!” she interrupted, breathless as she pulled Jör’s tiny shirt over his head. “I want you to stay. To *watch.*”

My prayers have been answered.

Not trusting myself to speak, I simply sat on the end of the bed—giving them space while remaining within ‘supervising’ range. Under different circumstances, Iola’s inability to access her visions might have worried me, but the only thing that mattered right now was the breathtaking pair in front of me.

Iola set aside the staff and feathers and reached for Jör’s pants, only to have him bat her hands away. For a moment, I thought he was playing the brat, but then realized he was *nervous.*

What's the matter, beibe?

“Jör.” Iola’s stern voice immediately had him sitting up straighter. “We talked about this.” When he didn’t respond, she reached forward and gripped his chin, forcing him to look at her. “I will be pleased with whatever I see. Do you understand?”

“Y-yes, Master,” he replied, gracefully sliding off the bed and moving his hands back to the waistband of his colorful shorts. “Every part of me is made to please you.”

These two are going to be the death of me.

“Very good, pet,” she replied—her gaze locked on the reveal. “Now show me. Show me what belongs to me.”

IOLA

The normally airy bedroom felt oppressive and electric, like the atmosphere before a thunderstorm. I'd seen way more monster peen than the average girl—thanks to Leia's men being allergic to clothing—but this one was different.

This one's mine.

I hated that Jör still seemed nervous about unveiling his cockpocket-possible-tentapeen. But I also knew what he needed from me at this moment was no-nonsense Master vibes, not comfort.

Wolf Daddy can handle the aftercare.

My gaze was riveted to where Jör was *slowly* pushing his board shorts down his narrow hips, but I was also hyper aware of Fen sitting only a few feet away. I wasn't sure if the energy I felt between us was real or just a figment of my horny imagination, but I wasn't about to turn down a bonus boner in my bed.

With an equally slow exhale, Jör *finally* slid his shorts to the floor—stepping out of them and allowing me to see what he was working with.

Oh.

My.

GAWD.

It was all I could do to not bounce on the bed, clapping like a kid on Christmas morning. Not only did Jör indeed have

a cockpocket—located in front, like a vaginal opening—but something very close to a tentapeen was currently emerging like a squid from the darkest depths.

No.

Like a snake.

The gasp I gusped could have been heard in Greece. Jör's cock was now unfurled, undulating against his cut abs as the gorgeous iridescent green coloring caught the light.

And the special features...

The surface had overlapping horizontal ridges—like a dragon's armored tail—with a line of nubs running up the middle for extra stimulation.

Imma ride that.

“Do I... please you, Master?” Jör hesitantly asked, although he would've had to be blind to miss the lust I could feel radiating from my pores.

“Absolutely,” I quickly replied, scooting across the mattress to sit on the edge of the bed. “Come here so I can show you how pleased I am.”

With a shuddering breath, he stepped closer, hissing when I immediately grabbed his cock with one hand and ran my thumb up the center with the other.

My precioussssss....

I moved my lips within centimeters of contact before peering up at him through my lashes. “Since you've been so good, I'm going to give you the sloppiest blowjob you've ever had. Just say 'red' if you need me to stop, and 'yellow' to slow down. But be warned, after I've made you come, I'm going to ride that pretty cock.”

Jör looked like he was about to faint, but Fen suddenly tsked. “Careful, Iola,” he teased, the smirk in his tone apparent. “Surt said no penetration.”

I growled and glared at him over my shoulder, even while continuing to stroke my new toy. “He didn't say anything

about Jör fucking my throat.”

The sea snake moaned, his hips thrusting forward. “Daddy, pleeeeeease... I want to fuck her throat!”

Fen swallowed down a laugh and smiled adoringly at his baby. “I’ll allow it, but only if I can help.”

Oh?

My pussy throbbed at the idea, but I wasn’t done giving this man a hard time. “I promise, I don’t need any—”

“Help handling a cock that looks completely different from any you’ve seen before?” he scoffed and rose to stand before stalking around the bed.

Okay, fair.

Looming over Jör from behind, Fen wrapped a hand around the other man’s throat, leaning down to run his lips over his pulsing jugular vein. I could only watch, mesmerized, as Fen’s other hand slid down Jör’s chest, toying with a pebbled nipple before resuming its trajectory south.

“You’ve discovered one of his erogenous zones,” Fen nonchalantly began, dragging his finger along the fascinating center nubs, making Jör moan. “But he’s even more sensitive where the scales separate to allow flexibility.” Taking my hand like he had back in the coffee shop, Fen maneuvered my thumb and ring finger to slide down the sides of Jör’s cock.

My little danger noodle bucked so suddenly, I almost lost an eye. “Da... *Master!*” he gasped, writhing in Fen’s hold. “Please... I need—”

The poor baby doesn’t know who’s in charge.

“I’m the only one you need to listen to right now, pet,” I firmly spoke, giving Fen a *look* until he unhanded *my* snake peen. “All you need to do is feed me your cock.”

“Go on, *beibe*,” Fen murmured, planting licking kisses along Jör’s shoulder. “Listen to your Master.”

Now that Daddy had gotten the message, Jör whimpered and tilted his hips forward, carefully sliding his cock into my

waiting mouth.

Holy shit.

While I owned no shortage of monster-inspired sex toys, it had never occurred to me to try deepthroating one. Now I wondered why I hadn't. The alien sensation of Jör's ridges bumping over my tongue had me *moaning*—imagining how fan-fucking-tastic they were going to feel on other parts of me.

Because that will be happening.

Sorry, not sorry, Surt.

The taste was unique as well, not least of all because it came pre-coated in Jör's internal juices. Men always tasted a little musky, but this was extra salty—briny even, like oysters—and I didn't hate it one bit.

Cock on the half shell.

“Look how good your Master treats you,” Fen's smooth voice had me glancing upward, finding his gaze locked on the sight of Jör's cock disappearing into my mouth. “Because you're so good for *us*.”

Jeeesus, Fen...

The idea of *sharing* Jör with this man—with *all* of them—instead of battling for dominance, unlocked something inside me I'd never considered before. But now wasn't the time to examine group dynamics.

Not when I needed to focus so much energy on not passing out.

I had severely underestimated how much Jör's cock flared *outward* toward the base. I was only halfway down and already finding it hard to breathe. Since I had no interest in gagging—or dying—in front of my co-Dom, I wrapped both hands around his scaly shaft to stop him from tunneling further and redoubled my efforts.

Death or glory, bitches.

I worked my tongue over his tasty ridges as best I could while bobbing my head. Not that I could have stopped it

anyway, but copious saliva was dribbling out of my mouth, delivering the sloppiest beej I'd ever delivered.

As promised.

“*Fuck, fuck, Iola, fuuuck...*” Jör chanted before his words were swallowed up by Fen, capturing his mouth with his.

Fuuuck is right.

In the history of time, I had never seen anything hotter than these two hotties making out with each other. They were both growling like the monsters they actually were—teeth clashing and pouty lips being nibbled—and Jör moaned loudly when his Wolf Daddy's fangs drew blood. Through it all, Fen's hand was still firmly on Jör's throat, handling him like a man who knew who was in charge.

Wait.

I'm the one running this scene!

Determined to be the one to get this monster to spill, I slid one of my hands beneath the curve of Jör's shaft, finding no balls—*interesting*—but an extremely wet hole just begging to get fucked.

We'll get there.

I'd meant what I said about Jör pleasing me, no matter what sporting equipment he was playing with. Sexuality had always felt fluid for me. Sure, I loved getting dicked down, but I also loved doing the dicking. I also didn't mind if no dicks were involved at all. Other people had their preferences—as was their right—but I was usually down to get down, no matter who or what.

Just like this tasty treat right here.

As if on cue, Jör ripped his mouth away from Fen's and cried out, throwing his head back against the other man's shoulder as he came. I quickly pulled back, wanting to catch as much flavor as I could on my tongue. Of course, this only resulted in *more* sloppiness as most of it ran down his cock and my chin.

My work here is done.

“Good boy. So *so* good...” Fen crooned as Jör shuddered in his arms, and I was thankful for him offering immediate praise when I was still busy with cleanup duty. “But I don’t believe your Master is done with you yet.”

You got that right.

Swallowing what I could, I hummed in approval and slid back onto the bed to make room. “Not yet. Help our boy lie down so he can continue pleasing me.” Fen froze, and it took a moment for me to realize what I’d said.

Our.

Jör could be ours...

I cocked an eyebrow at Fen—daring him to call me out while mostly hoping to hurry him along. Luckily, he moved past my slip and simply used his big strong muscles to get my new toy into position for me to play with while I got undressed.

Soon enough, Jör was spread out like a tasty *smorgasbord*, still coming down from his orgasm, and gazing at me with dreamy heart eyes like the adorable destructor he was. Fen remained at his post beside the bed, standing over Jör’s head, but my attention was on the main attraction. Confirming my suspicion that these monsters had zero refractory time, Jör’s dragon dick was still hard and resting on his abs—like a grinder just waiting for me to bump and grind.

Don’t mind if I do.

Straddling Jör’s muscular thighs, I reached between his legs and gently slid a couple of fingers into his cockpocket, making him squirm. Gathering his wetness, I spread it down his cock to use as extra lube when combined with what I was bringing to the table.

Because Little Iola is drooling.

He bucked and moaned, so deliciously needy I could barely stand it. “Yesss... Oh, fuck... Please, *please*.”

“You want me to fuck you, pet?” I cooed as I lowered myself and began slowly rubbing my clit over the raised nubs

of his cock. “Because I have toys in my suitcase that could allow me to do that.”

Both men snapped their attention to my face. Fen was intrigued while Jör looked about two seconds away from spontaneously combusting.

“Rán below, yes, please!” he gasped, driving upward to give me more resistance. “Maybe you and Fen can fuck me together.”

Holy shit.

Fen hissed again, but I refused to look at him to see what his expression held. Instead, I leaned down and silenced Jör with a kiss, tangling my tongue with his ridged one, and swallowing down his slutty little whimpers as I continued to chase my release. All the while, Jör trailed his fingers over my body—down my spine, up my thighs, through my hair, anywhere he could reach. His touch was soft, almost reverent, and I recalled how Fen had explained the importance of *Völvas* in their culture.

It was odd to think that these men respected me at all—never mind held me in high regard—especially since they were still technically my kidnappers. But I quickly reminded myself the only reason they brought me here was to sneak them into Valhalla, and that *my* main purpose was to squeeze in as many orgasms as I could before they left.

Don't catch feelings for anyone who can't catch 'em back.

I sat back up and made the mistake of meeting Fen's gaze. He was doing nothing to hide the fact he was watching *me*, and suddenly, I needed to think of a way to distract both these terrible temptations before things went in a dangerous, *emotional* direction.

“*My* pet wants us both to fuck him.” I tried for a haughty tone, but it came out more breathless than anything. “Why don't you stuff his mouth with your cock?”

Jör whined, already scrabbling over his head to clumsily unbuckle Fen's Scholarly Sven dress pants. True to form, Daddy calmly did it himself, wrestling himself free but

maintaining eye contact with me the entire time—daring me to look.

Fine.

A girl only has so much willpower, after all.

I unapologetically let my gaze fall to Fen's dick and my mouth *watered* at what I saw. It looked human enough—besides being pornstar length and thickness—but just as I'd hoped, Wolf Daddy had a Wolf Daddy knot.

Honestly, I might join them in Valhalla after this adventure is done.

Before I could start comparing notes with my latest paranormal romance read, Fen slid us closer to the edge, until Jör's head was hanging off the bed. "Ready, *beibe*?"

"Yes, Daddy," Jör replied, barely audible and clearly wrecked, but obediently asking for more.

He's so perfect.

I'd expected Fen to fill Jör with the same amount of care he always showed him, but I was wrong. He slammed all twenty million inches of himself down the other man's throat in one hard thrust, causing my pussy to clench so hard, we almost ended up with penetration after all.

"Oh, fuck, I'm..." I choked out, increasing my speed even as the world around me went hazy. Blindly reaching out, I grabbed the front of Fen's shirt, almost tearing off a few buttons to avoid toppling off the rapidly spinning bed.

Fen immediately wrapped an arm around my back to support me as I collapsed against his chest. "I've got you, Iola." I could hear his voice from somewhere far away. "Just keep going. We'll call you home."

IOLA

My orgasm exploded like shards of white light behind my eyelids as I found myself plummeting past the World Tree, screaming in terror as the ground raced up to meet me. Just as I braced for impact, the roots opened, and I tumbled into a dank subterranean tunnel, tumbling over rough earth until I landed in a heap.

A naked heap.

Because, yes, since I'd apparently kick-started a vision while coming on Jör's cock, I'd now astrally projected my bare ass to a cave beneath the World Tree.

Fuck my life.

Of course, the cave I'd ended up in wasn't empty. It was lived in and currently occupied by a giant woman staring down at me with exactly the right amount of confusion and annoyance I'd expect to receive in this situation.

"You smell like..." The giantess leaned down to take a better whiff of whatever the cat dragged in.

Monster jizz?

The blood of an Englishman?

A formerly gifted child who's now a burned-out perfectionist full of unmet potential?

"Surtr," she grumbled, straightening to stand.

That was *not* the answer I was expecting, not least of all because Surt had done his best to avoid me since I arrived on

the island. He certainly hadn't come close enough to leave his scent on me.

Wait a minute...

"How do *you* know Surt?" I narrowed my eyes as I rose to my full five-foot-one in a sad attempt to stare down this giant woman.

She grunted derisively in reply before turning to stir whatever she had bubbling in her oversized witch cauldron. This dismissal made me see red, and I realized—to my horror—that I was feeling weirdly possessive over the last man on earth whose dick I thought I'd care about. Surt was a grumpy psychopath, but apparently, some irrational part of me saw him as *my* psychopath.

Just another deeply buried issue to throw on the fire.

Or under the cauldron.

Hopefully, not full of gamey humans like me.

Deciding to reclaim a shred of dignity, I helped myself to a random shawl thrown over a nearby drying rack before tying it around myself like a sarong. "Let me guess," I drawled, in no mood to be ignored in *my* vision. "All giants know each other."

My unwilling host made a noise that could have been a laugh, but by the time she turned to face me again, her expression was neutral. "Many moons ago, Surtr was my consort." When I embarrassingly *growled* in response to that intel, she smirked. "But the wise Mimir was my husband."

Ohhh, so Surt was a side piece.

Okay, girl, get it.

That a casual relationship bothered me *less* irritated me all over again, but I wasn't here for gossip. "Yeah, well, *I'm* Surt's consort now," I boldly claimed, deciding this little white lie might grant me some authority. "And I'm here on his behalf."

Apparently, this was the juiciest piece of gossip yet, as the giantess gaped in obvious shock before peering down at me

with way more interest than before. “Surtr *survived* Ragnarok?!” she gasped. “How is that possible?”

Even if I had the answer to that, I wouldn’t have shared it, since I wasn’t entirely sure who this woman was and whose side she was on. So instead, I squinted at her in return. “How did *you* survive?”

This time she did laugh—heartily—and gestured to the tree root cave surrounding us before pointing at a worn wooden table across the room. “I like your spirit, *Völva*. Sit. My stew is ready, so you should dine with me while we exchange stories.”

Hoping I wasn’t about to be fed my own kind—or drugged again—I awkwardly hauled myself onto an enormous chair and waited to be served. Once the giantess sat and took a bite from her own bowl without croaking, I did my best to do the same with my comically large spoon. Based on what made it into my mouth, it was delicious, and blessedly a vegetarian option.

Never mind that I’ve never eaten during a spirit journey before...

We ate in silence for a few minutes before I could no longer pretend I wasn’t a nosey bish. “Tell me about Surt. He doesn’t share much about himself.”

The giantess hummed before setting down her spoon. “That’s unsurprising. Like all fire giants, Surtr is from the realm of Muspelheim. It was his duty to guard the realm until Ragnarok arrived. When the time came, he wielded Laevateinn and led an army of his fellow giants into battle.”

That... doesn’t sound right...

“Really?” I asked, mostly stuck on *why* I would think events happened differently.

Did I see something in another vision?

She chuckled, apparently mistaking my reaction for a more general confusion that required her to burst into spontaneous prose:

“In the midst of this clash and din the heavens
are rent in twain,
and the sons of Muspell come riding through
the opening.
Surtr rides first, and before him and after him
flames burning fire.
He has a very good sword, which shines
brighter than the sun.
As they ride over Bifrost it breaks to pieces, as
has before been stated.
The sons of Muspell direct their course to the
plain which is called Vigrid...
The sons of Muspell have there effulgent bands
alone by themselves—”

“Speaking of *very good swords*,” I interrupted, redirecting us away from a poetry reading. “Surt has tasked me with locating Laevateinn. Do you know where I can find it?”

The giantess nodded toward a large chest in the corner, half-covered by a blanket. “Of course. I am Sinmara. As the keeper of Laevateinn, it was returned to me after Ragnarok.” When I started to gracelessly wiggle off the chair, she abruptly added. “Why does he want it?”

I sighed and turned to face her, realizing I needed to match her energy and come clean. “I honestly don’t know. The guys are mostly upset that they *didn’t* die at Ragnarok and get into Valhalla—”

“WHO ELSE?” Sinmara boomed, standing so suddenly her chair fell over with a bang that echoed around the cavern. “Who else survived?”

Ek.

“Um... well,” I stammered, hoping she wasn’t about to grind my bones to make her bread. “Fen... rir and Jörmun...”

“*JORMUNGANDR?!*” While I was thankful that my host spit out the rest of his ridiculous name for me, her extreme reaction was making my Spidey-sense go haywire.

Maybe it was because I was around supposedly terrifying creatures from Greek mythology regularly, but I’d honestly forgotten my guys were legendary monsters capable of planetary destruction. Especially after being trapped in a house with them for days on end—sharing meals and seeing how messy they were—I’d stopped thinking of them as anything other than human.

But they’re not.

And if she’s this worried... should I be?

As abruptly as she’d freaked out, Sinmara settled again. “It matters not. One needs a tail feather from *Vidópnir* to open the chest, which you clearly do not—”

Just as I started to panic over how I’d forgotten the *one thing* I needed back on my semen-soaked bed, a single golden feather drifted down to fall into my bowl.

Heihei in the house.

Sinmara took a step back, eyeing me with a healthy dose of respect—and fear. “The gods must favor you, child. And the *Norns*.”

Besides being on their payroll, I wasn’t sure I agreed with that sentiment, but I took my opening to snatch up the stew-seasoned feather and slide off my chair. Hustling toward the chest, I peered at the nondescript iron lock, wondering how a *feather* was supposed to unlock it.

Glancing over my shoulder, I noticed Sinmara had crept closer—the curiosity on her face telling me she was as invested in the outcome as me.

At least as much as her former side piece....

Refocusing on the chest, I wiped the feather on my makeshift sarong and stabbed it into the lock, quill-first.

Open sesame.

I'd half-expected it not to work, so when there was a loud click followed by a creaking groan as the rounded lid opened a crack, I couldn't help taking a step back to join Sinmara.

"Are you not eager to see what's inside?" she murmured in my ear with a note of smugness in her tone.

"I-I don't know," I replied, flustered.

You'd think I'd be racing to finish this vision quest and return to the hotties in my bed, but *something* was nudging at my awareness—like a ship on the horizon I couldn't quite bring into focus.

"Go on," Sinmara urged, suddenly an enthusiastic member of Team Laevateinn as she practically shoved me toward the chest again. "Claim your destiny."

Until this moment, I hadn't cared *why* Surt wanted his rooster-killing sword. All I'd gathered was that making a rotisserie out of Heihei was related to the guys getting into Valhalla somehow.

Maybe I should be asking more questions...

I shook my head. Right now, my 'job' was to use my gifts to retrieve the sword, so I could then get back to monster fucking. Gingerly opening the lid, I groaned to find an identical chest waiting for me inside.

Locked up tight.

What the actual fuck?

Sinmara cackled, before reciting more poetry:

"Laevateinn is there, that Loki with runes
Once made by the doors of death;
In Loki's chest by Sinmara lies it,
And nine locks fasten it firm."

NINE?!

With a sigh, I set to work unlocking nine freakin' chests with the same stupid feather. Beyond annoyed by the time I got to the last one, as soon as I heard the telltale click of the lock, I ripped it open—ready for my prize based on principle alone.

Too bad there was nothing waiting for me.

I gaped for a moment at the empty space, blinking rapidly as if my eyesight was to blame. But, no—the only thing at the bottom of the chest was dust.

Laevateinn was gone.

“Interesting,” Sinmara murmured, as if she hadn't just set me up.

“Where's the sword?!” I barked, slamming the last chest shut and furiously turning on the giantess—as if she couldn't crush my head between her palms.

She arched an eyebrow, seeming surprised by my reaction. “You tell me, *Völvadís*.”

Why does everyone speak in riddles around here?

The cave flickered in and out of focus, and I realized I was being pulled back to the island.

No, no, nononono...

“But you're the keeper of the sword!” I cried, willing myself to stay until I got answers.

Sinmara made a noncommittal sound. “This isn't *my* vision. And I'm not the one who guides the souls of the dead.”

Before I could *demand* she explain what the hell she was babbling about, my vision whited out again. As I was violently yanked into the ether, my last conscious thought was that I hoped I could find my way back without the *Völva's* staff grounding me.

Because how else will I find my way home?

SURTR

I didn't know why I bothered setting rules about what Iola and Jör could do together. The entire house—the entire island—smelled like her anyway, and I was slowly suffocating in a cloud of lust.

Taking out my frustrations on my plaything these past few nights had been a temporary salve. But the instant I was done with him, Jör's attention was already back on the seer, and the way he followed her around during the daytime, like a stray mutt, was sickening.

What does she possibly offer that we don't?

It had taken hundreds of years for me to truly trust Fen and Jör, despite having fought on the same side during Ragnarok. They were the only two creatures I cared about—in this realm or the eight others that existed—and I didn't plan to waste *my* time adding a half mortal to my shortlist of approved companions.

Even one with a supposedly magical cunt.

I knew sex was occasionally used as a divination tool in the ancient rituals involving *Völvas*, but the last thing I needed was to get dragged into the chaos of Iola's bed. She was distracting enough as it was—with her sharp edges and hint of danger, like a sword still in its sheath.

Our plan had been unchanged for centuries, and now more than ever, we *all* needed to stay the course. The new Asgardians thought they could change our destiny and keep us

out of Valhalla, but no one defied the *Norns* without consequences.

And I cannot wait to be the reason for those consequences.

Iola was a means to an end. Despite how uneasy she made me, I would tolerate her presence for now—at least until Laevateinn was mine again.

Then I'll probably kill her.

Maybe.

Because, for some godsforsaken reason, I was currently standing guard alongside Fen and Jör as they anxiously waited for Iola to return from wherever her soul had traveled.

Never mind that I'd come running the instant I realized something was wrong.

I told myself it was because I'd never heard such terror in Fen's voice before, and assumed something had happened to our serpent. Jör was the only thing holding my sanity together most days, so I didn't want to consider how the wolf would handle any harm coming to him.

By the time I reached Iola's bedroom, they'd covered her naked body with an oddly familiar shawl, but I still couldn't take my eyes off her. The others were frantically explaining the situation, but all I could see was Iola's flushed cheeks and parted lips, and the way her breaths were occasionally stuttering drove fear into my heart.

She can't die!

...not before she helps us.

Without a doubt, I fervently believed this seer was the key to us finally correcting our fates. I couldn't explain how I knew, but when Vann offhandedly mentioned her existence, *something* had sparked to life inside of me. It was a hunch—an inner knowing I hadn't felt since leading my fellow giants into battle. And since I had nothing else to lose, I allowed myself to hope.

I can't lose her now.

HOPE!

I can't lose HOPE now.

Before I could succumb to more bewitchery, Iola awoke with a rattling gasp. Fen was on her in an instant, and Jör was already wrapped around her like a clinging vine. I stayed right where I was, even though every particle of my being felt pulled to her, like a moth battering itself against a pane of glass, desperate to be let inside.

To die in the fire.

Which is ironic, considering who I am.

“Oh, thank fuck,” Fen breathed out in a mighty exhale, not even hesitating to pull her into his arms.

This action pulled Jör along with her, causing the shawl covering the girl to fall, revealing skin so smooth, I ached to touch it.

Focus, Surt.

“What did you see?” I demanded, averting my eyes from the temptation. My question came out harsher than I intended, but I recalled how quickly she'd forgotten details after the last vision. “Tell us everything you can remember.”

Iola's gaze snapped to mine with far more clarity than I was expecting. “Calm down, dude,” she scoffed, doing nothing to hide her nakedness, which only irritated me further. “It was an astral projection this time, so instead of seeing the future, I was elsewhere in the present. I remember everything.” Her haughty expression instantly shuttered, as if what she remembered was unpleasant.

Or something she doesn't want to tell us.

Before I could launch into a full interrogation, Fen shot me a disapproving look before turning his attention to our seer.

She's not ours.

She's nothing but an instrument of war.

“Take your time, Iola,” Fen calmly spoke, toying with her long red hair in an almost absent gesture. “Your comfort is our

priority.”

Oh, please.

Jör whimpered and nestled closer to both of them, causing irrational anger to sweep through me. “Oh, yes, because we have all the time in the world,” I huffed. “We’ve only been stuck here since Ragnarok. What’s several hundred more years?”

Fen’s eyes flashed yellow, which I hadn’t seen in a while, but before he could bark at me, Iola cut in. “About that...” She smiled so sweetly, I instantly knew I was in trouble. “I just met an old friend of *yours*, Surt. You’re apparently not the only ones surprised you survived.”

My blood ran cold. Besides the two men in this room, I didn’t have friends—only allies of convenience. If Iola astral projected to someone who was not only shocked to learn we still lived but powerful enough to have survived as well, it could bring unwanted attention our way before we were ready.

“Tell us who you saw, witch,” I gritted out, tired of waiting. Tired of how she taunted me at every turn. “Before I make you talk.”

Fen opened his mouth to come to her defense, but it was Jör who spun on me.

“HOW DARE YOU SPEAK TO MY MATE THAT WAY!” he roared, rows of sharp teeth flashing as he threw himself at me.

I was so shocked by his uncharacteristic fury, I barely had time to block his attack. “Calm yourself!” I snarled, wrestling him to the floor—although it was more difficult than usual. “You barely know the girl. How, in Odin’s name, would she be your mate?”

This is madness!

“I know it like I know my serpent still exists beneath my skin,” he growled, struggling in my hold. “Like I know I survived Ragnarok so I could meet her.”

Nobody breathed. Even when I released Jör and stumbled backward, he remained where he was, panting as if the weight of his confession had caused him pain. I also felt injured—as if I’d been run through with a sword, with no way to stanch the bleeding. No hope of stopping the inevitable from this killing stroke.

“But... how—” I sputtered.

Oddly, it wasn’t that I didn’t believe him. Jör had always been the heart of our group, and he shared his emotions plainly. When we’d first banded together after Ragnarok, it was thanks to him that our shared mission eventually turned into more.

No—something else was bothering me about his statement, and I was horrified to realize it wasn’t *him* I was feeling possessive of in this situation.

It’s her.

Absolute madness.

“He speaks the truth, Surt,” Fen spoke on Jör’s behalf, sounding as wrecked as I felt. “Leave him be.”

Not you, too...

Iola cleared her throat before laughing almost nervously. “Well, I don’t have much experience being anyone’s mate, but I know better than to argue with a monster who claims I am.”

This is not funny!

“Do not think for one moment you will become a permanent fixture around here.” I advanced on the bed, pointing an accusatory finger her way. “We have existed just fine without you, and do not need to form additional bonds.”

Jör released a threatening sound while Iola wrapped the shawl around herself and observed me coldly. “Yes. Why would you when you already have a consort?”

Ah, fuck.

“You met Sinmara,” I stated as the fight bled out of me, recognizing the shawl and knowing what this meant. “And you

were denied the sword.”

Iola made a derisive sound that was so similar to my old companion, I flinched. “No one denied me shit.” She laughed humorlessly. “I used a godsdamn rooster feather to unlock nine chests, only to find the last one empty.”

Empty?!

“Perhaps Laevateinn was destroyed during Ragnarok,” Fen mused, gesturing for Jör to join him on the bed again.

“Mmm... I dunno,” Iola murmured, as she made room, and once again, I was irrationally annoyed by how comfortable the three of them already were with each other. “Sinmara seemed just as surprised as I was that it was missing.” Her gaze fixed on my face, amber eyes narrowing. “She asked me *why* you wanted it, Surt, and I realized I didn’t know the answer to that.”

That meddling giantess...

“Because it’s none of your concern,” I grumbled, already scheming on how to create a replacement sword.

And find a replacement seer.

“Actually, it *is* my concern,” Iola retorted. “Since I’m the one putting my life on the line, traveling all over the—”

“What do you mean?” Fen interrupted, looking frantic. “How is your life in danger when it’s merely a vision?”

Iola sighed and dropped her gaze. “I-I’m not sure. I’ve never been injured during a vision before, or been able to bring objects back and forth. Sinmara fed me stew, and I *tasted* it. I don’t know how it’s possible, but with these last two experiences, I’ve *been* there. Not just my spirit or whatever, but *me*.”

“That’s it.” Fen abruptly stood. “We will not continue with something that puts Iola in danger.”

Since when do we care about mortals?

“So we’re giving up, then?” I hissed. “When we’re so close to victory?”

Fen didn't answer at first. Instead, his gaze flickered between Iola and Jör before coming to rest on my face. My breath caught at the *helplessness* in his expression, but he quickly buried it beneath his signature calm exterior.

"Of course not, Surt," he evenly replied. "We will continue to explore our options *without* Iola's visions." He turned to face the girl in question. "Which means you are free to go."

What?!

"No!" Jör shouted, dramatically wrapping himself around Iola again.

"No," she echoed, in a much steadier tone. When we all looked at her in surprise, she elaborated, "Even though you've barely given me any information and roped me into this mess against my will, I feel oddly compelled to see this through. Morbidly curious, even. So you're stuck with me until the end, assholes."

Until the end.

How ironic.

"I'm never letting you go," Jör whispered, burying his face in the crook of her neck.

Something interesting passed over Iola's face as she glanced between Fen and me—almost like she was refusing to react to his declaration. "So what's next?"

Fen sighed heavily and ran a hand over his face. "It's time to pay a visit to our sister."

Oh, no.

Jör glanced at Fen in alarm, while Iola gaped. "You want us to go to... *hell?*" she hesitantly asked.

In a way.

Fen smiled grimly. "Yes. Helheim is not a place the living can physically enter without assistance, but what we need can be found on the gates, anyway. The challenge will be accomplishing our mission without alerting Hel to our presence."

Iola nodded, as if she were following what he was saying—which I found suspicious. “Okay, let’s do this. Let’s make you a new damage twig, Loki-style. But first, you need to fill me up.”

We all froze, and I did *not* appreciate how my body reacted to that idea.

The infuriating girl laughed at the tension-filled silence. “Minds out of the gutter, boys! I meant you need to *feed me dinner* first.”

I think I will kill her, after all.

IOLA

The group dynamic had shifted once again, and not only because of Jör's monster-version of a marriage proposal.

If it includes unlimited access to that dick, I'll consider it.

Maybe I felt like there was no longer a power imbalance, since my status as an all-seeing *Völva* made me valuable. But Jör's insta-love and the care Fen showed me—while pretending not to—also didn't go unnoticed.

Unsurprisingly, being told I could go only made me want to *stay*, but that was mostly because I was a nosey bish. I hoped that if I hung around long enough, these secretive monsters might share more about their plan.

In case I need to stop it.

Luckily, the guys had been so focused on Laevateinn missing that they hadn't asked for more details about my visit with Sinmara. I didn't have to gloss over how concerned she'd been with their continued existence, or that I was now watching their fine asses like a hawk.

Something wasn't sitting right with me about the entire situation, and I was determined to get to the bottom of it. I probably could have convinced Jör to tell me everything, but he wasn't exactly subtle. If the others found out I was snooping, they'd kick me off the island, and I'd lose my only chance.

At information and monster peen.

My loose plan was to soak up as much offhand intel as I could before putting the pieces together on my own. Then I could decide exactly how threatening these legendary monsters were to the general population.

As opposed to just my panties.

Sure, I felt a teensy bit guilty about spying—especially now that some of us had enjoyed some spicy extracurricular activities together—but they hadn't exactly been upfront with me, either.

All's fair in not-love and hopefully not-war.

My resolve to remain emotionally detached faltered after a delicious meal of a split pea soup, called *Ärtsoppa*, followed by crepes with strawberry jam. And all my covert plans flew right out the window when *both* Jör and Fen insisted on sleeping in my bed.

With Jör in the middle, of course.

Our needy little sea serpent had passed out with his face buried in my neck, as Fen spooned him from behind, and my cold, black heart could barely stand it.

Maybe it was the excitement of our journey to Hel tomorrow, or my proximity to double the hotness with a side of looming emotional ruin, but I couldn't sleep.

It didn't help that the light of the full moon was illuminating the near perfection of Fen's face only inches away from mine. His blue eyes were closed, but I could still admire the strong line of his jaw and the plushness of his full lips—parted just enough to allow a single fang to poke out.

Left alone with my thoughts—and with nothing else to do but creepily stare—I vaguely wondered how he'd hidden this fun feature when we first met. Unfortunately, that question only reawakened my earlier suspicion that *I* was allowing them to access their true forms more easily, like Leia had done for her men. This then had me replaying Jör's bold declaration that I was his *mate*, and soon enough, I was spiraling.

It turned out, while the *idea* of having my own stable of monstrous Skarsgards sounded like a dream, in reality, I was

still a commitment phobic ho with trust issues. I'd wanted adventure—and dick—on my two-week vacation, but now that I had both, I was weirdly wishing I'd stayed home to Netflix and chill with my box of toys.

Good vibes only.

“What’s troubling you, *sötnos?*” Fen’s smooth voice startled me from my anxious thoughts.

“Just... things,” I stuttered, further freaked out by how he knew I was freaking out.

His eyes fluttered open before he carefully examined my face. “It was Jör saying you were his mate.”

It wasn’t a question, and there was no use denying it. Not when he was looking at me like he could read my entire soul.

And maybe I want him to.

“Yeah,” I replied, barely a whisper. “Maybe.”

Fen observed me for another moment before quietly replying, “He’s never said those words to me.”

Fuck.

“I-I’m sorry,” I rasped, panicking—once again—that I was unnecessarily crowbarring my way into these existing relationships. “I thought... You guys have been together so long, I just assumed—”

“I have also never said those words to him,” Fen interrupted. “The idea of having a mate has never crossed my mind before now.”

Because it was irrelevant to his destiny.

Desperately needing to redirect the conversation, I focused on forcing a midnight confession of a different color. “Why are you so stuck on getting into Valhalla?” I blurted out. “Who cares what happens after you’re dead?”

“It’s what we are *owed*, Iola,” he vehemently repeated, although he kept his voice low, for Jör’s sake. “We fulfilled our prophetic roles, endured eons of suffering before meeting the gods of Asgard on the field, and we sent those same gods

to their eternal feast. We deserve to dine in Valhalla beside them.”

I frowned. The last thing I wanted to do was dismiss his anger, even if I was still confused by it. “Were you *explicitly* promised Valhalla after death?” I carefully asked.

He looked surprised by my question. “All of us are, and none of us. It is simply a fact that Valhalla is the afterlife for the greatest of warriors, handpicked by Odin’s *Valkyries*. Fólkvangr is the field ruled by Freyja, reserved for the remainder who died in battle, and Helheim is for those who perished from natural causes. There are other afterlives as well, yet we are still *here*, even after death. To be denied entry to *any* afterlife means we will never be at peace.”

The anguish on his face broke something inside me. While the way Fen forced me into this situation had been wildly inappropriate, I now understood the desperation behind his actions. However, I also saw how blindly he was following a singular goal—how achieving *death* had become his sole purpose in *life*.

And who would want that?

“What does peace look like to you?” I ventured, even as I swallowed down a larger question I didn’t dare ask.

Do you think you could ever find it here?

That you’ve already found it?

Fen dipped his head to softly trail his nose over Jör’s shoulder, inhaling the other man’s scent. The familiarity of the gesture was simultaneously adorable and devastating, and I instinctively cuddled Jör closer in response.

My movement resulted in Fen snapping his head up, and we both startled to find our lips only centimeters apart. Time ceased to exist. I was painfully aware all I needed to do was lean forward, and he would meet me halfway.

More than halfway, probably.

“I had children once,” he murmured, which was not at all what I expected him to say at the moment. “Skoll and Hati—

two wolves with deception and hate in their veins. When the gods tricked me into bondage with tethers created from magical ingredients, Skoll and Hati attempted to free me. Their punishment was to forever chase the sun and moon across the sky—an impossible task never to be accomplished. Or so the gods thought. The day came when they caught them both, and all light disappeared from the sky. Only then did my shackles vanish, and Ragnarok began.”

When Fen spoke like this, I found myself drawn into his world, hanging on every word, and one thousand percent agreeing with his righteous belief.

It doesn't hurt that he smells so damn good.

Unsurprisingly, his scent conjured up a pine forest after the rain—a remote place where no humans had ever set foot. My heart panged as I wondered how much of him felt wild at all anymore.

Leia's monsters had once told me how incredibly jarring it was for them to wake up as men—to have to learn how to exist in bodies that were so unfamiliar. But they also mentioned these new forms had allowed them to experience both pleasure and pain in ways they never could before.

And to find each other.

These supposedly mindless monsters deeply mourned what they'd lost, but most made the best of their circumstances. By the time Leia washed ashore, they still hoped to break their curse, but mostly, they wanted to escape from the limbo they'd found themselves in.

To be given agency over their own lives again.

Possibly for the first time.

“What happened to Skoll and Hati?” I asked, genuinely curious.

Fen smiled softly. “I assume, wherever they are, they're free.”

There it is.

“You feel trapped,” I stated.

“I *am* trapped,” he retorted.

“You think you won’t feel the same in Valhalla?” I hissed. The wolf flinched, but I kept going, suddenly irritated beyond belief. “And what if *you* end up there but Jör and Surt don’t?”

Would you leave them behind?

His breathing had turned ragged—his anger rising, perhaps—but I didn’t give a fuck. The logic of these mythological creatures was dizzying at best, and downright idiotic at worst.

I was about to point this out in so many words when Fen surprised me again. “If I don’t have *this*, Iola, what am I left with?”

Are you serious?!

“Him.” I pointed at Jör, who was stirring between us. “And that grumpy asshole down the hall. Your *mates*, whether or not you want to admit it.”

Two reasons to stay.

To choose life.

“No,” he murmured, sounding... *sad*. “Neither of them are my mates.”

“And how are you so sure?” I scoffed—tired of arguing with this immovable mountain of a man.

Before Fen could reply, Jör nuzzled closer. “Mmm... yesss... *my* beautiful mate.” He began trailing tiny kisses down my neck, nibbling playfully as he went. “Let’s make babies, Iola.”

Oh, lawd.

Where there are monsters, you can bet your ass there’ll be a breeding kink.

Fen’s gaze darkened, and I was desperate to redirect yet again. “I-I don’t know if that’s possible, pet. We’re, uh... I don’t think we’re the same species.”

“Regardless.” Jör sleepily lifted his head and licked his way into my mouth for a sloppy kiss. “I would like to try.”

Fen snorted, and I couldn't help the laugh that escaped me as the tension in the room evaporated. As much as I wanted to continue arguing with the wolf, there didn't seem to be anything that could dissuade the guys from recreating Laevateinn and riding off into Valhalla.

Leaving me behind...

I tamped down the unease I was feeling over the fact I'd be returning from this journey without them. We barely knew each other, and I had my own goals for the days ahead.

Spying and monster fucking.

Not necessarily in that order.

As much as I loved the idea of outsmarting fate, it was the middle of the night, and I needed sleep for the long journey ahead.

So what if the road to Helheim is paved with questionable intentions?

IOLA

As if my life hadn't already taken a turn toward the monster romance of my dreams, now we were veering into favorite trope territory.

There's only one bed.

Unsurprisingly, the sleeping situation on the yacht we'd chosen for our journey did not go over well with Surt. But when he tried to suggest—*demand, really*—that I sleep on a cot in some random cabin turned storage room, Jör started to Hulk out. And I didn't mean that figuratively. My sweet little snake started showing concerning signs of his latent sea serpent, so he'd been banished to the water for a timeout.

This left me and Surt to glare across the saloon coffee table while Fen attempted to both drive the boat and keep the kids in the luxury leather back seat from murdering each other.

Typical family vacation dynamics.

"Fine," Surt finally conceded, although his death stare was still firmly fixed on me. "*I will sleep on the cot.*"

"Orrr..." I sang, physically unable to leave this big grumpy man-monster alone. "You could just squeeze in with us. I saw the stateroom, and that bed is definitely big enough for you to safely ignore me aaalllll night long."

He scoffed as his gaze drifted out the window to the endless ocean surrounding us, his jaw ticking. "I suppose I'm also expected to simply ignore you fucking Jör and Fen at the same time?"

“Surtr!” Fen scolded.

Oooh, he just got full-named!

“That or join in.” I shrugged nonchalantly. “I mean, I *do* have three holes...”

Emitting a snarl that was probably supposed to scare me, Surt stood and stalked from the cabin without another word.

A simple ‘no thanks’ would have been fine, dude.

“You are worse than Jörmungandr...” Fen muttered, although I could see the amused smile twitching his lips from where I sat.

Leaping off my seat, I strolled to join my biggest fan at the wheel. “Be real with me, Fen. What are the odds that I get the chance to grab Surt by the horns and go for a ride?”

Assuming I can get his horns to appear...

How did I know he has horns?

Fen threw back his head and laughed—revealing those sharp canines I couldn’t stop thinking about. “Mmm... I fear it may be a *warm* day in Helheim before Surt admits he’s also feeling drawn to you, but who knows!” he replied with a mischievous sparkle in his eye. “If he’s deprived of Jör long enough, he may sneak in to join us after all.”

It was my turn to smirk. Not only had Fen revealed *he* was planning on bunking with Jör and me, but there was another slip in his statement that had me zeroing in like the shameless ho I was.

“Are you talking about Jör *also* feeling drawn to me?” I teased as I sidled closer. “Or is there someone *else* who’s having trouble keeping his wolf paws to himself?”

He froze, looking more like a deer in the headlights than a wolf. “I... do not think pursuing me would be wise, Iola.”

Fen’s words felt like a punch to the gut, even though I didn’t understand *why* his rejection would bother me so much. Jör was providing more than enough lovin’ to keep me satisfied, and Fen and I could still scene together with our

shared pet. I also sternly reminded myself that *this* was the guy who'd drugged and dragged me here against my will, although I wasn't even that mad about it anymore.

Little Iola wants what she wants, red flags be damned.

And Fen isn't outright telling me no...

I was convinced Fen wanted me as much as I wanted him, even though he was giving nothing away. He was cool as a cucumber, his gaze trained on the oh-so-treacherous—actually calm—waters straight ahead as he waited for me to wander off and go harass Surt some more.

I think I'll stay right here, theeenks.

“Wanna teach me how to drive the boat?” I asked, going for a wide-eyed and innocent expression, even though I'd been handling boats of all sizes since I was old enough to work at my local marina back on Long Island.

Fen startled, as if he'd been lost in thought, before glancing at me. “Very well. As long as you don't plan on abandoning us on some remote island for all eternity.”

His tone was casual, but I easily picked up on the genuine fear behind the words. If these men knew Vann, then they had presumably listened to him complain about the millennia he was trapped on a Greek island before Leia came along.

As if that salty squid didn't love every second of it.

“I won't abandon *you* as long as you don't abandon me.” I stuck out my hand to shake on it, but Fen simply frowned before pulling me into his lap.

Oh, okay then, sailor.

“You have the steering wheel and two throttles,” Fen murmured in my ear as he caged me in between two deliciously muscular arms. “The wheel is mostly for directional control while cruising, but the left and right throttle will be most useful for maneuvering in... tight spaces...”

Lord.

“Tell me more,” I whispered, wiggling just enough on his lap to feel some movement below deck.

He growled in a way human men could never, before continuing his lesson. “It takes a steady hand—sometimes two—to control a yacht of this size properly. And you must remain vigilant, in all conditions, or else you’ll find yourself in a compromising position where *you* are no longer the one in control.”

I’d be fine with that...

Fen’s voice had gone dangerously low. He dropped one of his large hands to my thigh and began inching it towards my throbbing pussy. “The most important thing, however, is to realize when naughty little treats know full well how to drive the ship, but pretend otherwise.”

Oops.

Busted.

I sighed as he casually placed his wayward hand on the throttle once again. “What gave me away?”

He chuckled. “Well, besides you correctly referring to our cabin as a stateroom, understanding what I meant when I asked you to check the starboard side for rocks, and being quite skilled at untying the cleat hitch back at our dock... it’s the way you *move* on deck. We are out in the open ocean, and while it’s calm now, I bet you wouldn’t lose your footing, even on the stormy seas.”

Before I could reply, *something* rammed us from below, making the boat violently lurch forward. Fen swore and wrapped one arm around my stomach while demonstrating some of that expert throttle control with his free hand, efficiently moving the boat astern.

Whatever it was nudged us again—almost playfully—and Surt appeared at the *starboard* window, banging against the glass as he hollered, gesturing urgently. It was difficult to make out what he was saying over the engine and wake, but as soon as I recognized the word ‘Jör,’ I shoved my way out of Fen’s lap and raced for the door.

MY BABY'S IN THE WATER!

“*Iola, WAIT!*” Fen shouted, but I was already on the deck and running full-speed for Surt.

With expert sea legs, thank you very much.

Something *big* was thrashing in the water, causing the yacht to rock precariously. I kept my gaze averted, afraid that if I spotted Jör’s dead body being tossed around the waves, I’d end up jumping in after him.

I can’t lose him...

“WHERE IS HE?!” I screamed at Surt, gripping his tree trunk arm with both hands as if to claw the information out of him. “Where is Jör?!”

I can’t, I can’t, I can’t.

Surt ripped his focus away from my death grip to squint at my face in confusion. “By Thor’s hammer, what are you yelling about?!”

The feminine urge to throw this man overboard as sacrificial chum was all-consuming, but I managed to rise above. “Just *please* tell me Jörmun... Jör hasn’t been eaten by a godsdamn sea monster!”

He continued to stare at me as if I had nine Hydra heads, before pointing past the railing. “That *is* Jörmungandr!”

Oh, fuck.

Swallowing hard, I turned to face the very large and incredibly close sea monster now rising out of the waves like a living nightmare.

Fuckity, fuck, fuck, fuck.

In this form, Jör looked like someone had attached Ladon’s dragon head to one of Timyn’s long Hydra necks—only bigger, toothier, and way scarier. If he wanted to, the World Serpent could simply open his enormous mouth and swallow us *and* our yacht whole before washing it down with half the ocean we were surrounded by.

Let’s hope he already ate....

Fen suddenly appeared at my side, gaping at the hungry-looking creature looming above us. “*Vafan!*” he gasped, and although I didn’t recognize the word, I agreed completely.

“Yes... We haven’t seen him like this in a while,” Surt mused, way more calm than the situation called for.

When Fen simply hummed in agreement, I dug my nails into Surt’s arm and gave the idiot a good shake. “What do we do? Is he going to eat us? He’s so fucking big, ohmygawd, *HE’S GONNA EAT US!*”

I yelped as monster Jör made a strange trilling sound, but once the others started chuckling, I realized the scaly bastard was *laughing* at me.

You just earned yourself a dry spell, mister!

Oh, who am I kidding—I want that dragon dick...

Now that the nonexistent danger had passed, I looked closer at my sweet not-so-little nope rope. To my relief, the same iridescent green coloring that adorned his monster peen was now covering his entire body, and his Ferris wheel-sized eyes were his familiar aquamarine.

He’s still in there.

“So he can... understand us?” I hesitantly asked, flinching as Jör lowered his head so his snout—and *concerningly sharp teeth*—were level with me.

“Of course,” Fen huffed indignantly. “We’re still completely sentient, even in monster form. Although, I can’t help but wonder...” He reached out to—*bravely... or stupidly*—run his hand over a glistening scale. “What allowed him to access this miniature version of his true form?”

MINIATURE VERSION?!!!

“Perhaps there was something in the water?” Surt mused, but I was still processing what Fen had said. “A ley line or a thermal vent leading to another realm—”

“Surtr!” Fen full-named him again, but it wasn’t from annoyance this time. The wolf was staring at the man behind me in awe. “Your horns!”

I spun to face Surt, gasping to find a pair of long horns curving out from his forehead. They resembled black rock, shot through with veins of molten lava, and something about their unusual appearance—combined with the enormous sea serpent *who was currently sniffing me like a dog*—was making my intuition buzz beneath my skin.

Where have I seen this before?

“This is... something’s wrong...” I muttered, suddenly dizzy.

I need to get away from...

Them?

My sea legs decided now was the time to fail me as I released Surt and clumsily stumbled away from him. Jör reared back, which then knocked the boat and caused me to lose my footing. Tripping over nothing, I hit the railing hard and tumbled overboard—inhaling saltwater as I broke the surface with a silent scream and fell into the fathomless depths.

The last thing I remember before everything went black was a hungry-looking sea serpent diving in after me.

JÖRMUNGANDR

I *frightened Iola.*

What if she never wants to be around me again?

How will we ever make babies together?!

I moaned in despair as I sank further into the stateroom's Jacuzzi tub. I didn't know *how* I'd accessed my true form in the water today, but once I felt that long forgotten *rightness* humming through my veins, I couldn't stop from frolicking in excitement.

So what if I accidentally nudged the boat a little?

When Iola appeared on the deck, my beast had immediately settled. Even in that form, I knew she was my mate, and would do anything to protect her.

But it's me she needs protection from.

When she tumbled overboard, I didn't have time to think. I simply shifted back to human form and dove beneath the waves to rescue her—feeling that familiar jolt of recognition as soon as I had her in my arms again. But then Surt snatched Iola away as soon as I set her on the deck, while Fen came running with towels to warm her. Seeing as I was no longer needed—and the cause of her distress—I shut myself in the bathroom, filled the tub, and had been anxiously hiding here ever since.

Valhalla may be the best option, after all.

A knock on the door had me surfacing, and I rapidly blinked the water out of my eyes to see Fen enter with a

bedraggled-looking Iola.

“Oh!” I exclaimed, instinctively reaching for her.

My mate needs me!

But I don't want to make things worse...

My heart sank as I withdrew my hands just as quickly. “I can just... Get out of the way if she needs...”

Anything but me.

“No.” Fen’s stern Daddy voice had me instinctively freezing in place. “Iola needs *you*, Jör, and you need your... mate.”

I sulked at how he spoke the word like an afterthought, but remained where I was, silently watching as he carefully undressed Iola and helped her step into the tub.

Fen’s gaze swept over her nakedness—*because she was perfect*—but didn’t linger. True to form, he concentrated on getting her comfortable before grabbing the shampoo and lathering up her beautiful red hair.

Blóduhadda.

Oddly, it didn’t agitate my beast to see another man handling her so intimately, but I assumed it was because I was already involved with Fen before she came along.

If only she could be with all of us.

If only the others would forget about this foolish quest...

Of course, that would never happen. We were from a time when death in battle was the highest honor, and Surt and Fen were as focused on Valhalla as they had ever been.

But times had changed. No longer were people fixated on a nebulous afterlife. Nowadays, humans created ‘bucket lists’ so they could make the most of their days while they still could. They knew death was coming for them, but instead of seeing it as the desired destination, they used it as motivation to live in the *now*.

They make their own fate.

And I want to do the same...

With her.

“I’m sorry!” I blurted out, accidentally splashing water out of the tub as I clambered onto my knees.

Iola furrowed her brow. “For what?”

“For scaring you.” I hung my head in shame. “I was having so much fun being in my true form again, I forgot how frightening I looked—”

“I wasn’t afraid of you... I was terrified something had *happened* to you,” Iola carefully replied before grimacing. “Okay, yeah, when I first saw you, it was kind of shocking, full disclosure. I guess I just... forgot what you really are underneath that hot bod of yours.” She smiled softly—reassuringly. “But you have to remember, I’m around monsters like you all the time...”

That made my possessiveness flare up. I did *not* approve of unknown monsters being anywhere near my mate—especially if she was ovulating.

I must kill them all.

Ever attuned to my needs, Fen softly spoke up. “These monsters Iola speaks of are already mated. And one is the Kraken, who would never dream of challenging the great Jörmungandr—”

“I knew it! This *is* all Vann’s fucking fault!, isn’t it?” Iola groaned. “That salty squid is such a gossipy drama queen, I swear to gawd. *He’s* the entire reason I got it in my head to track down the legendary Norse monsters who’d supposedly turned into hottie humans...” She trailed off as her cheeks turned the most delightful shade of pink, and my heart almost exploded with joy.

Today is the best day ever!

“See, Fen!” I exclaimed. “Meeting Iola *was* fate, and if we had originally gone to Valhalla, it never would’ve happened —”

“Enough!” Fen barked, uncharacteristically angry. When I flinched, he immediately softened. “I’m sorry, *beibe*. We’ve talked about this many times. Your destiny—”

“Is with her!” I cried, pointing a trembling finger at my mate. When he tensed, I offered up my heart, even though I knew it wouldn’t do any good. “And it’s also with you and Surt.”

Don’t you see?

“It can’t be both,” Fen sighed, as infuriatingly stubborn as always. “And having mates of any kind is *not* our destiny.”

He may as well have driven a dagger into my chest. The anguish quickly gave way to anger, and although my place was to listen to Daddy, I didn’t give a fuck at the moment.

I will make you see.

“Kiss her, then,” I growled. “If you feel *nothing*, so be it. But if you feel one iota of what I do, you need to rethink your idea of destiny.”

Fen frowned in disapproval, but I stood my ground, glaring in defiance. Caretaker that he was, he soon sighed and broke eye contact to show he didn’t want to fight. Instead, he focused on rinsing the shampoo from Iola’s hair before gently gripping her chin and lowering his head until his lips found hers.

Yessss...

As expected, it wasn’t a short-lived event. Iola and Fen released twin groans as she reached up and grabbed the collar of his dress shirt, practically pulling him into the tub as she took control to deepen the kiss. I’d never attempted to top Fen—wouldn’t dream of it—but he did not seem to mind as Iola snaked a hand into his hair and pulled hard enough to make him moan.

I can’t wait to see them fuck.

My cock tunneled out of me so fast, I gasped, gripping the base with both hands to calm myself down. The sound broke

whatever spell they'd been under, and Fen tore himself from Iola's grasp before standing and hurriedly backing away.

"No." He clenched a fist against his mouth, as if to stop himself from diving in for more. "This is not... this is not how it's supposed to be." Before I could argue, he yanked open the bathroom door and stalked away.

Such a stubborn man.

Iola huffed and sank back into the water. "All he's doing is cockblocking himself. Why not have a little fun before y'all head out for good, right?" She tilted her head and thoughtfully observed me. "But *you* don't want to go to Valhalla, do you, danger noodle?"

I blew out a heavy breath, expelling eons of tension. "No..." I admitted in a choked voice. "I do not wish for Valhalla, and why would I? Why spend eternity in a place that honors the very gods who abused us in life?"

Her brow furrowed, gaze flickering to the door even though the wolf was long gone. "Fen mentioned something similar. I-I don't want to trigger bad memories, but what did they do to you? If you don't want to tell me, that's totally okay..."

Gliding across the tub and into her arms, I laid my cheek on her delightfully cushiony chest, breathing in her cinnamon and floral scent before humming contentedly. Of course, both Fen and Surt knew what I'd suffered in great detail, but our collective trauma was never treated as anything but ammunition. No one had ever invited me to simply *talk* about it.

I'm definitely keeping her.

"It won't bother me," I murmured against her soft skin. "I want to tell you."

I want you to know me.

Iola didn't reply. Instead, she lifted a hand to the nape of my neck and began lightly scratching her nails through my hair, instantly relaxing me.

Unfortunately, my *cock*—already affected by my mate’s proximity—was reacting differently. But as she didn’t seem concerned by the needy appendage writhing against her thigh, I was determined to ignore it as well.

For now.

“Fenrir, Hel, and I were born from Loki and the giantess Angrboda, in the realm of Jotunheim. The gods of Asgard traced prophecies back to us that stated great mischief and disaster would arise from our existence—because of our mother’s antagonistic nature, but mostly because of who our father was. In response, Odin tossed me into the deep sea that lies around all of Midgard when I was still a baby.”

Iola hissed in a breath. “He... *WHAT?!*” she choked out, her grip tightening on my nape, which did nothing to discourage my cock.

Focus, Jör!

I began trailing kisses over her perfect breasts, licking away any droplets of water I found along the way. “In his defense, I was already about the size you saw me today.”

She huffed and resumed her caresses. “That doesn’t excuse what that asshole did. You were still too young to be alone.”

My beast purred to have her fuss over me—this half-mortal who was brave enough to call Odin an *asshole*. Plus, she was naked. The only thing that would have made this situation even better would have been if Fen was in the tub with us, equally naked and doing the same.

I will have to figure out a way to tempt him into our bed tonight.

Unless he’s jumped ship altogether...

“What happened after that?” Iola gently encouraged me to continue.

Fen’s story wasn’t mine to tell—and didn’t wish to enrage Iola further with what *he* had suffered—so I focused on my tale. “I was afraid at first.” I traced a finger over her light brown nipple, enjoying how she wiggled when I gave it a

pinch. “But I soon realized there wasn’t anything alive in the ocean big enough for *me* to fear. Thor and I had occasional altercations—archenemies that we were—but mostly, I simply... existed. That is, until the day I grew to be so large, I had no choice but to wrap myself around the earth and bite my tail to hold myself in place.”

My mate made a soothing noise. “That sounds lonely, growing up without your siblings like you did. I was an only child—well, until my stepmom started popping out a bunch of new kids a few years ago—but I always had Leia...”

I tensed, recalling how Surt had originally threatened Iola with Herculeia’s well-being if she didn’t cooperate. Violence was the norm for beings like us, but I now felt so protective of Iola that it extended to those she cared about as well.

How can Fen not believe this is real?

“I had a friend once. Hazun,” I hesitantly offered, wanting to soothe the anxiety I could feel radiating from her. “He was similar to what you might call a merman, although he wasn’t quite that. I tried to take a bite out of him the day we met—just to see what he was made of—and he punched me in the snout. After that, we were friends.”

Iola laughed heartily, and the sound of it felt like the sun warming my skin on a winter’s day. “You monsters are pretty much just big puppies, you know that, right?”

I grinned up at her. “Absolutely. We may bark and bite, but we also like to cuddle in a big puppy pile. At least, *I* do.” When she met my gaze, I tilted my hips—nudging her with my cock beneath the water. “I also like to fuck and would love to make babies with you.”

And I think I love you.

My mate huffed another laugh before growing serious again. “Jör... I won’t ask you to choose between me and the others. How about we just enjoy each other while we can?” When my face fell, she leaned down to brush her lips over mine. “Because I intend to *thoroughly* enjoy you. Would you like that, pet?”

All that and more.

It wasn't exactly what I wanted to hear, but I understood why Iola was being cautious. I fully intended on convincing Fen—and Surt—that *this* was our destiny. Not the far off halls of Valhalla, among gods who didn't deserve to eat our scraps, much less dine with us.

Not Ragnarok, but *this*.

Life.

And Iola.

IOLA

By some miracle—*probably his dick*—Jör convinced Fen to sleep with us in the stateroom. The wolf still attempted to lie down as far away from us as possible, but our slutty sea snake had other plans.

“Please...” he sweetly begged, cuddling me while blindly groping behind himself for Fen.

So greedy.

The other man sighed, but in a way that told me he'd already folded. “What do you need, *beibe*?”

Jör grinned mischievously at me, but kept his tone sweet and pleading. “You. Inside me—filling me up. I feel so empty, Daddy.”

He doesn't stand a chance.

“*Fuck*,” Fen murmured, confirming my suspicion that he was a goner. I heard the rustle of clothing before Jör was yanked backward—flush against his chest. “Very well. Which hole is the neediest?”

Jör's eyes were still on me when he replied. “Whichever one our Master says.”

You cheeky little devil.

Fen growled and rested his forehead against the other man's shoulder blade. My heart was racing—and I could already feel wetness gathering between my thighs—but I was in my element, patiently waiting for him to compose himself.

Get ready to play with the big dogs, Wolf Daddy.

With a slow breath, Fen lifted his head and calmly met my gaze. “Very well,” he repeated, his tone even. “Where shall I stuff him full?”

But first—you need to learn the rules.

“Nowhere.” I arched my brow. “Not until you address me correctly.”

Fen’s jaw ticked as we stared each other down. Before he could bolt again, Jör reached over his shoulder, holding the wolf in place as he shamelessly writhed against him.

“Please, Daddy,” he purred. “Just ask nicely—like you tell me to do.”

Such a delicious brat.

Smirking, I licked my lips, and Fen tracked the movement like the predator he was. I hoped he was remembering the kiss we’d shared in the bathroom, when white hot electricity raced through my veins.

Did you feel that, too?

“Where shall I stuff him full...” he repeated, low and gravely, his blue eyes darkening. “Master?”

Fuuuuck.

I bit the inside of my mouth to stop a moan from escaping, keeping my face as impassive as possible. I deserved all the gold stars for my performance, because never in the history of my entire dating career had a man sounded this hot while submitting.

He would sound even better on his knees.

“In his ass,” I coldly replied. “And go light on the lube. I want you to make it hurt so we can then make it better. Together.”

“Thank you, Master,” Jör breathily whispered as Fen dropped his head again with another curse.

Jör's cock had emerged to nudge against my stomach insistently, and I was tempted to hike a leg around his slim waist and begin rubbing my clit along those magical nubs once again.

But good little pets come first.

Wedging a hand between us, I found his frontal hole—unsurprisingly soaked—and slid two fingers inside with an obscenely wet sound. He whined and tried to take me deeper, but I held steady and peered over his shoulder.

“What are you waiting for, Fen?” I teased. “I want to feel you stuffing him full.”

I want to feel you.

The wolf's teeth were bared and his breathing was ragged. But he did as he was told—cracking open a bottle of lube to coat them both lightly before lining himself up.

I hadn't specified skipping the rest of the prep, but I trusted Fen knew Jör's body inside and out, so I wasn't worried. My suspicions were soon confirmed. The snake's expression turned more euphoric with every measured thrust, while I reveled in the feel of Fen's cock dragging over my fingers through the thin barrier separating us as he forced his way inside.

This is everything.

“Beautiful,” I murmured, rewarding my pet with a sweet kiss on his trembling lips. “So perfect while Daddy fills that tight little hole.”

“Odin's balls, Iola,” Fen gritted out. “You're going to fucking kill me.”

Oh, I'm just getting started.

“You're doing well, too, Fen,” I praised, smirking again as he growled in annoyance. “Such a good Daddy, giving our pet what he needs.”

He rolled his eyes while continuing to work his way in, but I could tell he didn't hate our roles as much as he wanted me to think. It took a special kind of man to not feel threatened by

a woman running the show like I was, and since Fen lived to please his *beibe*, I knew we shared a common goal.

Because what beibe wants, beibe gets.

“Please,” Jör whimpered once Fen was fully seated and waiting for him to adjust. “I *need* you both to fuck me. I-I... need to be full.”

I stilled my fingers. “Would you like me to get a toy from my suitcase?”

“No!” he gasped, reaching down to grab my wrist and hold me in place. “Don’t leave. Just keep going like this, but... *more.*”

Anything you want, pet.

It was addicting, wringing pleasure from this man, and not only because of how responsive he was. Jör had none of the usual hangups about sex, aside from his brief—and completely mistaken—concern that I wouldn’t be into his fancy monster accessories. Otherwise, he liked what he liked and was unashamed to ask for what he wanted until he got it.

And right now, he wants more.

Fen set a slow rhythm as I added as many fingers as I could short of fisting. The angle was slightly awkward, but when I tried to scoot lower, Jör whimpered—wrapping his arms around me to hold me in place.

“Such a greedy boy,” Fen chuckled, running his fangs down Jör’s neck before nipping at his shoulder. “Drunk on Daddy’s cock, but still wanting your Master.”

There’s my co-Dom!

“Yes!” Jör gasped as Fen snapped his hips to deliver a rougher thrust. “And I deserve everything I want.”

Acute sorrow flashed over Fen’s face, and I got the feeling he wouldn’t have allowed it to show had Jör been looking at him. “You do. And I wish I could give you everything you deserve.”

Well, fuck.

Imma catch feelings here, aren't I?

“You already do, Fen,” I scolded as I crooked my fingers, searching for Jör’s equivalent of a G-spot. “Doesn’t he, pet?”

Jör groaned as I hit *something* just right. “Yes, he does...” he panted, wiggling impatiently between us. “But I can’t help wanting more...”

I realized he was talking about the larger issue at hand—they both were. But right now, I wanted to keep all three of us in the here and now.

While we’re still here.

“Your fingers should also be inside him,” I stated matter-of-factly to the man taking up the rear, shifting slightly to give him better access. “Let’s see how much he can take.”

Fen barely hesitated this time. He paused his thrusts only long enough to curve his hand around Jör’s body and slide in two thick fingers alongside mine. Our pet cried out, dropping his head back against Fen’s shoulder as his hot little body went pliant—finally letting us take over completely.

“Thank you...” he murmured dreamily.

That was all the permission Fen needed to start up an almost terrifying rhythm, reminding me once again these monsters liked it rough. The wolf drove into Jör relentlessly—every thrust causing our sea snake to whimper and moan.

My pussy is going to spontaneously combust at this rate.

As if Jör’s slutty sounds weren’t already making me clench, the way he was holding me against him caused Fen’s knuckles to drag over my clit, making my eyesight grow hazy.

Nonono...

Now is not the time!

Determined not to disappear into another vision, I focused on the present. On the slap of sweaty skin against skin, on how deliciously wet and *tight* Jör felt stretched around us, and on how close I was to an orgasm of my own from nothing but this accidental stimulation.

Although, it's feeling pretty purposeful.

“Stay with us, *sötnos*,” Fen’s strained voice had me opening my drooping eyelids a crack. “I need to watch you come for me.”

I was dangerously drifting from reality to the space between, but I still found it within myself to tease. “Mmm... I dunno, Fen. I think I’d rather come on your tongue.”

With a growl that snapped me fully back to the present, Fen expertly twisted his wrist, immediately sending Jör over the edge with a shout. I’d only just registered the copious monster jizz now decorating my stomach when I was being tossed onto my back so roughly, the breath was punched out of me.

Holy hell!

“Is this what you want, Iola?” Fen snarled, looming over me like a perfect specimen of alpha hotness. “For all of us to simply forget that Valhalla awaits us?”

I mean...

The urge to deny it was strong. These men didn’t owe me anything, and I hadn’t been looking for anything more than a two-week vacation full of vitamin D. But there was no ignoring the unexplainable pull I felt toward this trio of monsters—*all* of them, whether or not I wanted to admit it—even if there was nothing I could do to force the hand of fate.

Not unless they want it, too.

Mature adult that I was, I deflected. “Is that what *you* want, Fen?” I snarled in return, placing my feet flat on the bed and spreading myself wide—smirking as his nostrils flared. “To blame your indecision on the best pussy you ever tasted?”

Fight me, bro.

Jör crawled across the bed on shaky limbs until he was cuddled up beside me again. “Please, Daddy,” he whimpered in that irresistible voice of his. “I want to watch you make Iola come.”

Fen huffed but didn't back down. Unchecked, our stand-off might have lasted through the night, but then Jör reached down and dragged his hand through the cum on my stomach. He transported it lower to coat my throbbing pussy—smiling with satisfaction as he pushed some inside me.

This. Man.

“I bet we taste even better together,” he added, like the best bratty wingman a girl could hope for.

This. Fucking. Man.

Jör definitely knew his target audience, as Fen was tongue-deep inside me before I even realized he'd moved. I gasped as he shoved my thighs onto my chest, digging his nails into my sensitive skin so deeply it felt like he was drawing blood.

Wait... IS he drawing blood?

At first, I thought it was the stateroom's low lighting, but Fen's body looked like it had grown larger. His back had curled as he feasted on me, the shadows swallowing him up like a coat of black fur...

OH, MY GAWD!

“Fenrir...” Jör whispered in awe as he casually played with my nipples, sending a confusing mixture of fear and pleasure ricocheting through my veins.

What have I done?

My survival instincts were telling me to run—to put distance between us before these men realized *I* was the reason they could shift so easily. But then *Fenrir* demonstrated how superior his tongue was in this form with a swipe up my center that had my legs shaking, already on the razor's edge of release.

Fuck it.

Arching my back, I buried *my* claws into the thick fur covering his shoulder blades, holding this wild beast-man in place so I could ride out my pleasure on his glorious monster tongue.

How will I ever be satisfied with human men again?

How will I ever be satisfied with anything after this?

This time, when I came, I didn't disappear into a vision or astral project to some mysterious location. I held on tight to what I could in the present moment, to the belief that I would pick myself up again once this was over. Just like I always did.

No matter what the future holds.

IOLA

“**W**HERE THE FUCK IS HE?!”

I was startled awake to find Surt glaring down at me like I'd personally pissed in his Cheerios.

Grumpios is more like it...

“Who?” I murmured, sitting up to rub the sleep from my eyes—noticing that someone had considerately covered me up with the navy blue quilt overnight.

Presumably after I passed out from orgasm overload.

Apparently not understanding how normal brain function didn't occur until *after* coffee, Surt threw his hands into the air in exasperation. “Fenrir, of course! He relieved me at the wheel around 3 am, but when Jör went to relieve him a few minutes ago, he found us anchored with no sign of Fen.”

Panic was bubbling to the surface, but I forced myself to remain calm and examine the facts. If it was foul play, whoever his abductor was wouldn't have bothered to anchor us, and if we were anchored, we were no longer in the open ocean.

Did he go ashore somewhere?

Flipping the blankets off me, I jumped out of bed and raced for the window—wrestling open the honeycomb shades to check out our surroundings.

“Could you at least put on a robe?” Surt grumbled. “It's distracting.”

I glanced at him over my *very naked* shoulder, so he could see me roll my eyes. “You could just not look, you know.”

“Not when you’re standing right in front of me,” he growled, as if he couldn’t just leave the room and take his pervy attitude with him.

Well then, enjoy the view!

I faced the window again and snagged a nearby pair of binoculars for a closer look at the island I spotted just beyond the stern. And yeah, maybe I wiggled my bare ass in Surt’s direction just a smidge while I did it.

Brat Mode Activated.

He hissed in a breath before clearing his throat. “Fen would have no reason to leave the ship and go ashore on an island in the middle of—”

“Why not?” I interrupted, annoyed at how *obvious* it was that the island was where Fen had gone. “It looks nice out there. It’s almost completely covered with pretty purple heather—”

“*FUCK!*” Surt shouted so abruptly, I dropped the binoculars on the floor with a loud clatter.

Someone woke up on the wrong side of the storage room cot...

I spun around to give the manic man a piece of my mind—*scandalous nudity be damned*—but the giant had already raced from the room.

Not wanting to miss the action, or my chance to join the search party, I quickly dressed in workout clothes and sneakers before heading for the deck. When I got there, I found Surt already lowering the dinghy and Jör in the water, halfway to shore.

“Wait for me, Captain Jack-off!” I hollered, awkwardly shimmying down the rope to join him before I was forced to jump into the drink along with the snake.

“What did you call me?” Surt’s eyes flashed with flame, which was a neat party trick I hadn’t noticed before.

No handlebar horns to be seen, though.

Rude.

“Jack. Off.” I enunciated each syllable as I used an oar to push off from the yacht. “You know... the thing you did in your lonely little cot last night while listening to Fen lick his way into Valhalla.”

To my surprise, instead of firing back—or lighting up my libido with a sexy glare—Surt *blushed* and hurriedly turned to give the outboard motor his full attention.

That hit a little too close to home, hmm?

Unfortunately, the idea of Surt’s enormous hand wrapped around his no doubt gigantic dick was distracting *me*, so I forced myself to refocus. “So, what changed your mind about Fen taking a day trip to this random island?”

“It’s not random,” Surt curtly replied. “It’s Lyngvi.”

Well, that... tells me absolutely nothing.

I sighed. “Okay, let’s pretend I didn’t grow up with Norse mythology—that I know nothing besides Fenrir being a big-ass wolf and Jörmun... being an even bigger snake who was thrown into the sea. And that you’re a grouchy horned dude from the realm of Muspelheim, who guarded the realm before leading your fellow fire giants into battle on Ragnarok.”

Surt squinted accusingly in my direction. “That is quite a bit more than the average mortal knows about me. How did *you* acquire such knowledge?”

I sighed again. Louder and heavier. “Your ex-fling, Sinmara, told me. She also said you were a closed book, so don’t worry. The rest of your thrilling secrets are safe.”

He snorted, seeming appeased. “That you speak to me in such a way only proves you have no idea who I am. And that you believe spreading your legs for the great Fenrir and Jörmungandr will change our destiny confirms you know nothing at all.”

Tell me how you really feel.

“Yeah, yeah... I get it,” I grumbled, flopping onto a bench as he fired up the motor and got us moving toward a thin strip of sandy beach straight ahead. “I know *I’m* the soon-to-be ex-filing, and that this little three-way death pact of yours is still the endgame. At least...” I smirked to myself, deciding to be petty. “For *two* of you, it is.”

Nothing like pointing out the existing dissension in the ranks.

“I swear, if something happens to Fenrir out here because you’ve bewitched him into abandoning our plan, I will rip your limbs from your body, one by one!” Surt barked.

Oh.

Right.

Because it’s all my fault that Fen dove into my pussy like he was in a pie-eating contest at the county fair.

I was about to give this grump a piece of my mind when I realized he thought I meant *Fen* was the one who no longer wanted to go to Valhalla.

Why would Surt not know about Jör’s indecision?

Filing that question away for later, I zeroed in on the more concerning issue. Specifically, how this supposedly fearsome dude was currently worried about the wellbeing of another equally scary guy—all because he took a side quest to an apparently *not* random island.

“Okay, so what makes *Lyngvi* a bad place for Fen to end up?” I asked, hopping out of the dinghy once we ran aground to help pull it further onto the beach. “Should I be worried about another hungry monster looking for a snack?”

Since I’m quite a snack, thank you very much.

Surt gave me the same confused look as when I’d asked if Jör the giant—excuse me, *miniature*—sea serpent was going to eat us. “There is nothing on *Lyngvi*, aside from *Gjöll*.”

I swear to all the gods...

“*WHAT THE FUCK IS GJÖLL?!*” I shouted, beyond done with this ‘who’s on first’ routine.

“It’s the boulder Fen was chained to before Ragnarok...”

I turned to find Jör jogging down the beach to meet us, as casually naked as if he were chilling on Little Banana Beach in Greece.

Sadly, his big banana was forced to go into hiding when Surt tossed the tiniest pair of swim trunks his way. “Put these on, for Freyja’s sake,” he grumbled. “Lest you two start fucking right here on the beach.”

And exfoliate my vajay?

I’ll pass.

What I wasn’t about to pass on was riling up the big guy some more. “Oh, I haven’t had the chance to stick my dick in either of Jör’s holes. Yet.” I smiled so sweetly, I got a toothache. “But we’ll get there!”

Surt cocked his head, his dark gaze running over my lower half in an assessing way.

Sizing up the competition.

My brain finally registered Jör’s words. “Wait. Fen was *chained to a boulder*? When was this?!”

“When *wasn’t* it would be an easier question to answer,” Surt muttered before peering around me. “Are you all right, Jör?”

The World Serpent was shifting from foot to foot, his gaze darting over our surroundings. “I-I’m just... I’m worried about —”

“I know,” Surt replied, in a kinder tone than I thought he was capable of. Then he turned to me. “But if something happens to him, I know who to blame.”

Enough!

“You know what?” I snapped, beyond done with being treated like some sort of Jezebel who’d infiltrated their little menage out of nowhere. “Fuck you, Surt. Fuck you and your

attitude problem and your constant commentary and sexy glares and the fact you apparently have horns, which, frankly, are just begging to be taken for a ride. I've done nothing but help you guys with my super rare gifts—while only being given the bare minimum of information to go on. *You* have no idea who *I* am, because, if you did, you wouldn't continue to treat me like garbage. So yeah. Again—fuck you!”

Jör took my hand in his during my rant, but Surt looked more and more confused the longer I went on. I couldn't tell if he was under the—mistaken—impression that he was owed more respect simply because of '*who he was*,' or if he just had the audacity to not see anything wrong with how he'd spoken to me since day one.

My question was answered when he replied, apparently focused on a single talking point. “You find my glaring... sexy?”

WHY DO MEN?!!!

With the huffiest huff, I turned and stomped inland, dragging Jör along with me. To be honest, I was a little worried I *was* to blame for whatever was going on with Fen. He'd been pretty insistent that it wasn't a good idea for us to fool around—despite clearly being attracted to me—but I'd dismissed his concerns and let Little Iola lead the way.

As usual.

Tears blurred my vision, turning the fields of stupid heather into one big purple smear of self-loathing. Before long, I was sniffing, and Jör cut short my march of shame by forcing me to stop and face him.

“*Blóduhadda*,” he soothed, carefully arranging my tangled hair over my shoulder. “This isn't your fault. While Fen enjoys pleasing others, he wouldn't do anything he didn't want to, I promise. This situation”—he waved a hand vaguely—“was already messy before you came along, but I'm thankful you did. I hope your presence forces Fen to rethink our plan, like I've been trying to make him do for... *centuries*.”

I allowed him to draw me into a hug, resting my cheek against the rune on his chest. As much as I *wished* I could change the threads of fate, it was a daunting task—especially when the others involved were content to let it ride. And even though Jör had apparently been questioning their path for *centuries*, in the end, I knew he would go with the majority.

Which won't be me.

Swiping a hand over my weirdly leaking eyeballs, I straightened and plastered on a smile I didn't feel. "It's fine. I hope you three can reach a compromise... although, I bet Surt won't be happy with anythi—"

Jör sharply shook his head, cutting me off while looking at something over my shoulder. I turned to find Surt cresting the hill and realized this difference in opinion *was* something Jör had only discussed with Fen.

Nothing like a little miscommunication to make things interesting.

The last thing I wanted was to cause *more* drama, so I nodded at Jör to show him I understood. Then I blew out a slow breath and braced myself for more commentary from Surt.

The big guy pointed toward a far off cluster of trees I could barely see. "Gjöll will be just beyond that thicket. But before we go, I would like to say..." His normally hard gaze softened the tiniest bit as it swept over me to land on Jör, and I foolishly believed he was about to apologize. "If Fen is tethered to the boulder again, there won't be anything we can do."

Jör released a shaky breath and murmured, "I understand," even as my brain took a moment to catch up.

Wait.

"Hold up," I snapped. "So we're just going to *leave* him here? You made it sound like he was tied to the rock for thousands of years the first time. There's no way in hell I'm going to let him rot for... *forever!*"

Surt sighed, but I noticed the bite was gone from his tone. "It won't be forever. It will simply be until Ragnarok happens

again. Which is what we want, anyway.”

WHAT?!!!

“*Ex-fucking-scuse me?!*” I shrieked, causing both monsters to step away from me warily. “Are you telling me you’re *trying* to bring about another end of days, just so you can sit at some dusty old table with a bunch of dead gods?”

Because he existed to try me, Surt dared to look *confused* again. “How else are we expected to accomplish it?” Then he muttered, almost to himself, “Fen said he would ensure you had all the information needed to help us...”

I wonder if stabbing him will help?

It would help me...

All at once, I realized just how many red flags I’d been ignoring during this entire adventure. And while most people wouldn’t assume the end of the world would be necessary for these three fools to enter Valhalla—not without insider knowledge—I *knew* how most monsters operated.

With minimum logic and maximum bloodshed.

“Welp,” I snapped, more irritated at myself than anyone. “That trickster son of Loki told me what *he* thought I needed to know, which definitely did *not* include ending the world. I should let him rot for that alone, but he’s way too hot to be chained to a rock for eternity. So let’s go rescue our boy, and then I am going to have a strong word with each one of you.”

“Yes, Master,” Jör obediently replied, falling into step as I briskly stomped toward the thicket.

Surt followed, muttering something under his breath—which struck me as unwise—but it was better for all of us if I kept moving. I was so angry, I could barely see straight, but deep down, all I cared about was making sure Fen was okay.

I’m such a fool.

If these idiots thought I was just going to sit back and let them jump-start Ragnarok for the second time, they *really* didn’t know me at all.

I would help them find Valhalla, all right, if only so I'd never have to see their stupid, sexy faces ever again. Then I would get on the first plane back to Greece—back to my monotonous life—because if this entire *misadventure* had taught me anything, it was that our fate was laid out for a reason.

And it's foolish to wish for anything more.

FENRIR

At first, I thought being back on Lyngvi was a nightmare—the same one I’d had countless times since waking up in this human form.

How wrong I was.

It had taken little coaxing from Jör for me to devour Iola. Her scent had been tormenting me since our first encounter in the library, and it was only through sheer willpower alone that I’d managed to not taste her before now.

And not even the Fates could keep me away from that temptation.

Departing Iola’s bed had left me unsettled, but I’d not only needed to give Surt a break at the wheel but get some air. He’d eyed me for a long moment when I appeared at the helm, but shockingly, kept his opinions to himself. Looking back, I wondered if this was because the giant knew it was only a matter of time before he succumbed to his desires as well.

Iola mistook his behavior toward her for hatred, but I’d watched him do this same dance with Jör centuries ago. Surt’s loyalty to our mission had always been admirable, but his unwavering focus caused him to believe nothing in life was worth his attention—that personal relationships of any kind would only distract him from his true purpose.

Glory in death.

He’d allowed me in first, because I’d asked nothing of him aside from companionship in rage. Waking up in a newly reborn Midgard instead of Valhalla’s hallowed halls was a

slight neither of us could forget, but this fury would have driven us to madness long ago if not for Jör. His natural sweetness thawed us both, and we each gave him what we could in return. Exactly how the World Serpent could turn such a devastating loss into a thirst for life still escaped me, but at least *I'd* tried to understand.

As much as I was able to, at least.

My role in our triad was a precarious one. I provided the care and attention Jör needed and encouraged him to experience everything our rebirth offered. I also fully supported Surt's plan to eventually snuff out the source of that joyful existence, and was even a willing participant in the plan.

This push and pull was exhausting, but it was the principle of the thing—even as I appreciated the love I'd developed for my companions on the way. I was the bridge between life and death, as steady as Bifrost before the weight of Muspelheim's attack shattered it to dust. I'd assumed I could hold my position until we took our final breaths, but I hadn't known just how delicate the balance truly was.

And I hadn't anticipated Iola.

Now that I'd tasted her, there was no going back. My wolf *knew* she was my mate, and I feared what might happen if I allowed myself to bite her, to knot her, to claim her as mine.

These concerns had circled my brain for hours as I mindlessly steered our yacht through nighttime waters. All the while, I ignored the almost overwhelming urge to return to Iola's bed below deck, knowing what would happen if I did.

I'll never want to leave.

Then I'd felt a *tug* from elsewhere—a subconscious awareness that a solution was close at hand.

That was when I saw Lyngvi.

Even with only the light of the moon to illuminate its terrain, I recognized the island which had been my prison. A smart man would have steered in the opposite direction, but I was desperate to stop what felt inevitable. So, with nothing but

a spark of intuition to guide me, I anchored the ship and swam for shore.

That I'd left evidence of my destination, and a way to follow me there, was purposeful. I trusted Surt and Jör implicitly—more than fate, and certainly more than I trusted my wolf and our foolish romantic notions. Most importantly, I needed to remind myself what my purpose here was, and there was no better place to do that than at the beginning.

The beginning of the end.

As soon as I set foot on the sands of Lyngvi, I began to shift. My bones rearranged as my body hunched into quadrupedal form—pale skin becoming overgrown with thick black fur as my claws and fangs lengthened. A partial version of this transformation had occurred earlier—while I tasted paradise between Iola's thighs—but I'd quickly regained my humanity after she soaked my fur in her release.

As if my body wanted to forget.

On Lyngvi, however, my wolf remembered everything, and instinctively knew which form was needed for what lay ahead. When I padded into the clearing where Gjöll sat—unchanged and immovable since the dawn of time—every atom in my being screamed at me to turn and flee. But this had always been my destiny, and no matter how badly I wished to spend my nights wrapped around my mate, there was no outrunning *this*.

Until the threads of fate are snipped for good.

A single figure awaited me—the god, Tyr. I knew it was a mirage, as Tyr had died in Ragnarok along with the brave warriors he was patron to. In his magically reattached right hand he held Gleipnir, the only rope that had ever successfully bound me. Even knowing what awaited, I approached, driven by forces greater than myself.

Falling for the gods' tricks, yet again.

“Are you ready to prove your strength, Fenrisúlfr?” Tyr asked, addressing me in the old language. “Surely a beast of

your legendary strength should be able to break free from such a delicate ribbon as this.”

Gleipnir *was* deceptively delicate, but the dwarves of Svartalfheim had crafted it from the sound of a cat’s footsteps, the roots of mountains, the breath of a fish, and the saliva of a bird. From impossible things, making it impossible to escape.

“As I suspect trickery, I require a pledge.” I bitterly played my role—the words like poison on my tongue. “Place your right hand in my mouth to show this shall be done in good faith.”

Without hesitation, Tyr calmly placed his hand in my gaping maw, knowing full well he was about to sacrifice a piece of himself for the greater good.

And be praised as a hero for it.

I felt shadowy hands bind my legs with Gleipnir while the magical rope was attached to Gjöll at the other end. As before, I tried to break free, to no avail, and upon realizing my predicament, bit off Tyr’s hand and swallowed it whole. The godly mirage instantly disappeared, but my torture continued. Gnashing my teeth, I howled to the moon above—my despair morphing into agony as a sword was driven through my jaw, successfully gagging me from continuing to voice my rage. From my saliva, a river formed, and it was given a name meaning *expectation*. Hope.

To me, it was only known as pain.

As before, I was still lucid enough to wonder what I had done to deserve such treatment from the very gods who’d raised and fed me. Eons ago, no one answered. This time, the wind wrapped itself around me like a caress—carrying a vaguely familiar floral aroma while whispering in my ear.

Your crime was being born.

From that point on, I lost track of time—my consciousness no longer able to decipher between reality or fantasy, past or present. My experience was an endless loop, foretold long before the gods discovered my existence until the day I ended theirs.

An early memory of Jörmungandr surfaced from before he was torn from our mother and tossed into the sea. This was followed by a vision of Surtr, aglow with vengeance as he led his army of fire giants to victory against the Asgardians. The sword piercing my jaw became Laevateinn, and the hand I swallowed my own, and through it all that sticky sweet scent of twinflowers was the only thing keeping me from passing on from this realm to the next.

“Hey... Scholarly Sven...”

Who would call me that?

“C’mon, Fen. You are way too hot to die on me.”

I know that voice...

Cracking open an eyelid, I beheld *Iola*, lit from behind by the rising sun—like a Valkyrie sent by Odin to choose me for Valhalla.

No.

Not a Valkyrie.

Something else...

“Stand back, seer. I don’t want you anywhere near his teeth when I do this...”

Before I could register what was happening, a searing pain radiated through my jaw, causing me to thrash wildly and snap at the air to ward off my attacker. A scream echoed off the surrounding trees, and I froze, my panicked vision clearing as I realized *my mate* was in trouble.

My mate...

I found *Iola* kneeling on the ground, clutching her elbow, and my eyes narrowed on the blood dripping from between her fingers.

Someone hurt my mate.

My growl echoed off the sky itself as my deadly focus took in two rival males moving in on what belonged to *me*.

“Mine,” I snarled, straining against the enchanted rope binding me. “Step away from my mate before I swallow you whole.”

The smaller of the two eyed me warily. “Why is he saying that? Doesn’t he know us?”

I know you’re a dead man if you touch her.

The other one—a giant of a man—held up his hand to silence the first. “Not right now, he doesn’t. But I wonder if Gleipnir can hold a wolf whose *mate* is in trouble...” With that, he grabbed Iola, roughly yanking her to her feet and wrapping one enormous hand around her throat.

HOW DARE YOU!

“Jesus, what’s your fucking problem?” Iola cursed, attempting to wiggle free. “All I did was scratch my elbow when I tripped over my own two feet—”

Her words cut off with a strangled sound as the man squeezed her throat. When I growled and thrashed, he began sliding his other hand down her body, toward where only *I* was allowed to touch her.

“What’s the matter, Fen?” he taunted, licking a path up her neck as his hand found its target on her cunt—causing Iola’s eyes to roll back in her head. “You suddenly don’t want to share?”

MINE, MINE, MINE!!!

With a roar, I broke free from Gleipnir and launched myself at Iola’s assaulter. He deftly tossed her to the other man and expanded his size to match mine before I took him down. Teeth bit, claws scratched, and fists punched as we traded punishing blows to the sound of Iola screaming at us to stop.

Why does she want him to live?

“Don’t listen to her, Fen,” the giant chuckled in my ear as we tussled—his blood mixing with mine to soak the ground of Lyngvi. “I love seeing you like this.”

Surt?

I instantly retook my human form, horrified to realize I'd almost killed one of my closest companions. "Surt!" I exclaimed, tears blurring my vision as I pawed at him—desperate to identify the deepest wounds. "I'm so sorry... I—"

"Freed *yourself* from Gleipnir." He was battered and bruised, but grinning wildly at me as he helped me to my feet. "Quite a difference from the last time, hmm?"

I freed myself...

Almost fearfully, I glanced around, half expecting to see the sky turning red with flames from the encroaching forces of Muspelheim. But the sky was cloudless and blue, and there was nothing to see besides the four of us, Gjöll, and the tattered remains of Gleipnir.

I freed myself, and Ragnarok did not arrive.

"What does it mean?" Jör whispered into Iola's blood-red hair, the pure hope in his eyes making me ache.

I wanted to tell him we were finally free of the prophecies that bound us from the day we were born, but I knew the truth. What it actually meant was that there was no escape from my desire for Iola—that even willingly undertaking my legendary bondage for a second time wasn't enough to keep me away from her.

That there are forces more powerful than fate.

Surt had his own interpretation of the day's events. "It means we are free to shape our destiny. That no one can keep us from Valhalla now. It means we are gods."

Heimdall save us all.

IOLA

While I was grateful Fen was back with us—relatively unharmed, thanks to his monstrous super healing—I was still struggling to understand his actions.

Why the hell would he go back to the island where he was imprisoned?

Since we'd reboarded the yacht, our runaway wolf had barely spoken a word. He'd tried to disappear below deck, but Surt wordlessly pointed at the saloon seating before taking the wheel. As soon as Fen obeyed, Jör wrapped himself around him like the snake he was, and I took a seat across the way. It wasn't explicitly said, but clearly, none of us wanted to let him out of our sight again.

Seriously, who does that?

While I wanted to focus all my annoyance on the wolf, there was another monster present who deserved a large slice of my irate attention. For some ungodly reason, I couldn't shake the visceral memory of being pressed against Surt's body—even if I was infuriated with the way he'd handled me.

Even if it did result in Fen freeing himself.

Even if I was kind of into the whole thing...

It wasn't like I *never* let men top me in the bedroom, but I made it my personal mission to never give men like *Surt* the upper hand. He was arrogant, disrespectful, and aggressive—the worst kind of self-proclaiming alpha male. Even more infuriating was how he *expected* submission, willfully

misunderstanding how another person kneeling for you was a gift.

And how they are actually the ones in control.

The thing that bothered me most was how he seemed to believe whatever he was packing was better than my store-bought cocks.

I wouldn't be so sure...

Technology has come a long way, baby.

All of this was why I was furious at myself for getting a lady-boner over the feel of his huge hand cupping my pussy while the other cut off my airways.

Stupid sexy glaring man.

Tearing my attention away from the giant at the helm, I refocused on the man seated across from me in the saloon. “Don’t do that again,” I hissed, keeping my gaze locked on Fen’s perfectly chiseled face.

Jör cuddled closer at my words, while Surt sharply glanced at me over his shoulder. Fen simply blinked before calmly meeting my gaze—annoyingly impassive. “Do what?” he asked, causing me to feel stabby all over again.

“Make a dangerous, life-altering decision that negatively affects everyone who cares about you,” I gritted out.

Fen flinched, but quickly recovered to reply in an icy tone, “I did what I thought was best for our mission.”

What an asshole.

Jör whimpered, but Surt surprised me by fully turning in his seat to face the wolf. “It worked out in our favor, but I agree—you should have discussed going to Lyngvi with the rest of us.”

I wonder if I'm included in that statement...

Doubtful.

It probably wasn’t the time to pile on the drama, but the bombshell Surt had dropped on me earlier was still bothering

me.

“And you should have told me everything about your plan for getting into Valhalla, Fen,” I added. “Like how it involved *ending the fucking world.*”

Fen’s unfeeling mask finally cracked, his anguish so acute, it startled me. “I *couldn’t* tell you, *sötnos!* You were our last hope, and I didn’t want—”

“You didn’t want to risk losing me as a useful tool at your disposal?” I snapped, my blood boiling with pent-up anger and worry and other shit I had no fucking time for.

Not when this is already destined to end.

“I didn’t want to lose *you,*” he replied, so quietly I almost missed it.

What?!

“You don’t even *know* me,” I grouched, even as my stomach did a somersault at the thought of him being attached to me.

Stop it.

“My wolf does,” he continued, holding my gaze with unwavering focus. “And even Gleipnir couldn’t keep me from my mate.”

Abort mission!

I abruptly stood, and the sound of my skin peeling from the luxury leather seat produced the perfect record scratch to accompany the moment.

“You know what... I’m a little tired,” I blurted out with a nervous giggle that was an octave too high. “What with all the excitement of rescuing self-sacrificing men from bondage... after those same men kept me up all night with their magic tongues.”

“That was fun,” Jör cheerfully interjected.

“Yeah, so I think I’m gonna go get some air.” I concluded my inarticulate babbling and scurried from the saloon like my carefully constructed walls were on fire.

Too. Many. FEELS!

I practically punched my way out to the sundeck, hoping none of the guys were planning on following me.

Especially Fen.

It was all too much. Yes, I was fulfilling my slutty Skarsgard dreams, but I hadn't signed up for a side of inevitable heartbreak to go along with my horniness.

How dare he?

How DARE he make the fated mates declaration when he's planning on leaving?!

“Trouble in love?”

I nearly jumped out of my skin for the second time in only a handful of days. Spinning, I gaped to find a *man* casually hanging off the stern with his lower half underwater—as if the yacht *wasn't* traveling at a steady 30 knots per hour.

“Or... trouble in the bedroom?” he added with a saucy wink.

“Both. Neither,” I automatically replied before shaking my head and scowling. “I’m sorry, but who the fuck are you?”

Because my stable doors are closed, dude.

“The more important question is, who are *you*?” The man cocked his head, scrutinizing me.

I returned the favor. At first glance, he was pleasant enough to look at, with warm brown eyes peering up at me through wet strands of jet black hair. His skin tone was a reddish brown that reminded me of terra-cotta pots in the sun, and there was no missing how stacked he was.

From what I can see...

But there was no land in sight, so I immediately realized this was no ordinary man out for a swim. He'd either swooped down from the air, swam up from the depths, or magically materialized out of thin air.

With the company I keep, it could be any of the three.

Mystery man continued to assess me shrewdly, as if he were trying to solve a complex puzzle. “Or perhaps I should ask... *what* are you?”

Same.

“Hazun?!”

Jör’s surprised voice had me spinning again. My sweet snake was staring at our surprise visitor like he’d seen a ghost.

A ghost from his past.

‘Hazun’ looked Jör over with confusion before leaning forward and taking a deep inhale. “Jörmungandr?” he gasped. His brown eyes widened in shock as he climbed onto the deck—disappointingly revealing human legs instead of a fin or tail. “Why in Anahita’s name do you look like a... *human*?”

The way he spat out the word in disgust had me cackling. “Um... *You* look human, too, dude,” I deadpanned.

Although he’s hung like a horse.

The not-quite-merman scoffed. “I certainly am not human. Didn’t you tell her anything, little snake? Or have you forgotten all about me?”

“Never!” Jör exclaimed. “I had no idea you survived Ragnarok and, as you can see”—he gestured to himself—“things have been a bit strange since then...”

My heart panged to hear my sweet snake sound self-conscious once again. “You do realize you are a total hottie, right?” I soothed, moving closer so I could wrap my arms around the only man on board not currently pissing me off. “And once I got over the shock of seeing you in your true form, you were kind of cute like that, too.”

“Ahhh... so the rumors *were* true,” Hazun murmured, looking Jör up and down with a blinding smile on his face. “The Seven Seas were abuzz with news of the great Midgard Serpent’s return. I swam all the way up from the Persian Gulf to see for myself.”

Instead of rejoicing over the reason for this reunion, Jör looked nervous, and it only took me a moment to realize why.

If all the Seven Seas know he's back, the gods will, too.

But maybe that's a good thing...

Once again, I found myself with a hard decision to make. Now that I knew their permanent vacation to Valhalla included ending the world, there was no way I could let them go through with their plans. It would be easy enough for me to contact Leia or the Fates psychically and play informant, but the thought of turning them in made me feel like I was going to throw up.

Maybe I can convince them to try infiltrating Valhalla some other way.

I sighed. No matter how much I tried to fight the feels, I was already tied to these three in ways I couldn't ignore.

Maybe I can convince them to stay.

STOP. IT.

“How did you access your true form again after all this time?” Hazun's voice yanked me away from my scheming.

“I'm not sure.” Jör shrugged before a beaming smile stretched across his face. “But it felt so *good* to be myself again.”

My heart sank. These men weren't meant to be *men*. Reclaiming their true forms—whether World Serpent, legendary wolf, or grumpy-ass fire giant—was the least of what they deserved. So while I still refused to be a world-ending accomplice, I could at least help them become fully restored to their former selves.

Which will officially end my Skarsgard stable adventures.

“Oh, I may have an idea what's happening here...” Hazun smirked as his gaze shrewdly swept over me once again.

Don't you fucking dare blow up my spot!

“Who the fuck is this?!”

I never thought I'd be *happy* to hear Surt's judgy voice interrupting the conversation, but so many strange things had happened lately, I wasn't even questioning my life anymore.

“An old friend, Sir!” Jör excitedly replied. “From before Ragnarok.”

“Is that so?” Surt narrowed his eyes at the newcomer. “And just how did you survive, *old friend?*”

Hazun looked about as concerned about Surt’s disapproval as I was, which immediately bumped him up a few thousand notches in my book.

“We all survived”—he shrugged, vaguely waving a hand at the surrounding water—“down in the deep.”

Who is this guy?

Surt was still eyeing him suspiciously when Hazun turned his attention back to me. “And Jör was just about to tell me how *you* all survived and where you found yourselves such a pretty little *seer.*”

Dude sure seems to know a lot about me...

The growl Surt released made me jump, but the real surprise came when he wrapped an arm around my waist and pulled me against him.

Have I entered some kind of alternate reality?

Besides what I’ve already been dealing with...

Hazun simply smiled, and I realized he was a powerful enough creature to remain unbothered by such a blatant show of aggression from the legendary fire giant.

“How fascinating that a son of Muspelheim also survived,” the mysterious sea creature mused. His eyes drifted upward—to the space directly above Surt’s head, where horns would be—as he added, “And a very important son at that... *Surtr.*” Again, his gaze locked on me, and a knowing smirk twitched to his lips.

You’d better keep those lips sealed, fish-face.

The boat slowed, and a moment later, Fen appeared on the deck to join Surt in glaring at Hazun. This only caused the not-merman’s smile to grow, no doubt putting the pieces together to identify the legendary wolf.

So what does his discovery mean for us?

Jör must have shared my concern as he cleared his throat. “We are not entirely sure how or why we survived, and would prefer not to involve the gods any more than we already have... At least, not yet...”

Hazun laughed, dispelling some of the tension. “Of course, of course.” He waved a hand dismissively again. “You know I don’t care for *your* gods, but I *am* fascinated by this turn of events. And because of the company the three of you are keeping, I can only assume you’re looking for the fastest route into Helheim.”

Fen scoffed. “We already know the fastest route, *sea-talker*, so you may stop gawking and go about your business ___”

“Clearly, you don’t, *fen-dweller*,” Hazun retorted, in the weirdest clapback ever. “Because you’re headed the wrong way.”

Oh, here we go...

“What do you mean?” Surt muttered. “How else would we get to Helheim?”

It was Hazun’s turn to throw him a judgy look. “The only way there is.” Again, he gestured to the sea. “Straight down.”

IOLA

I wasn't entirely sold on the idea of being dragged beneath the waves to reach the gates of Helheim. To my relief, Hazun mentioned a nearby waterfall we could pass under that would take us directly to our destination.

How exactly? No one seemed to have an answer to that.

You just have to suspend your disbelief with mythology.

And monster romance...

After giving the guys directions, the mysterious two-legged merman said his goodbyes to Jör and gracefully dove beneath the waves. I watched the area where he'd disappeared for as long as I could—but never saw him resurface.

Curiouser and curiouser.

"I don't like him," Surt grumbled, to no one's surprise. "How did he know where we were headed? Or that Iola was a seer?" He squeezed me tighter, apparently not yet realizing he was still *touching me willingly*,

Don't make any sudden movements...

Jör shrugged, unconcerned. "Hazun just *knows* things—the sea truly talks to him." As I caught up with the strangeness of this statement, his pretty aquamarine eyes narrowed. "Although, I should have asked him *how* I accessed my true form so easily, since he implied he knew..."

Nope!

Luckily, I was saved from needing to redirect the conversation when Surt busted in with his Very Important Opinion instead. “Obviously, it’s because we’re close to achieving our goal of entering Valhalla in our true forms.”

The sea snake frowned but nodded, his focus still out to sea. Unfortunately, Fen’s calculating gaze was locked on me, and I did not like it one bit.

Nothing to see here!

“We may never know,” I blurted out, elbowing my way out of Surt’s hold. “But if y’all can handle getting us to Helheim, I’m going to go lie down for a while.”

And I don’t want anyone following me this time.

I think...

To be honest, I wasn’t sure what I wanted the others to do. All I knew was I was feeling a lot of feels about a lot of things.

I was incredibly torn over my compulsion to *help* these men, even knowing their original plan was a doomsday death pact. I was also confused by how my body responded to both Fen’s mate announcement and Surt’s possessive manhandling. Most of all, I was frustrated that my misguided heart kept trying to steal the keys from Little Iola, even though putting *that* bish in the driver’s seat was a one-way ticket to disappointment.

And I’d rather return to Greece with some dignity intact.

Even if I wouldn’t mind other parts of me getting wrecked...

One thing I understood completely was how godsdamn horny I was. The last thing I needed was for my current condition to obscure the larger issues at hand, so I beelined for the stateroom to see what I’d packed that could scratch the itch. After rustling around in my luggage, I released a cry of triumph to discover my vibrating rose nestled among my other toys.

Good thinking, Past Iola!

Not wanting to be interrupted while tending to my dire needs, I grabbed the rose and slipped back into the hallway before choosing another door at random. I froze when it led to the storage room where Surt had been sleeping, but then a slow, evil smile crept over my face—like when the cartoon Grinch got a wonderful, awful idea.

Time to return a favor.

Because yeah, I hadn't missed the puddle of cum waiting for me on my first night on the island, even if Fen had tried to strip the bed before I noticed. Call me petty—and you would be correct—but I could think of nothing better to ease my aggravation than marinating Surt's pillow in my womanly juices.

Enjoy the petty pussy perfume, motherfucker!

The rose wasn't really designed to ride, but that wouldn't stop me. I quickly stripped and climbed onto Surt's cot—stuffing the pillow between my thighs before balancing the rose on top with one hand. Getting myself situated, I fired up my toy and lowered my clit into the magical hole of vibrating goodness.

“*Oh, fuck!*” I gasped—just like every time I busted out this modern marvel.

Seriously, whoever had invented the rose toy should be given an award for how expertly it sucked my soul from my body, only to resurrect it and unalive me all over again.

Literally a second coming.

As always, it wasn't long before my legs started to shake and my knuckles turned white from where I was gripping the sheets to hold on. I was so delirious with my impending orgasm that I almost missed the door slowly opening.

Because, of course, they couldn't stay away.

“Fen...” I moaned as my body seized up, unable to stop the waves of pleasure from washing over me.

Or the eye contact I was making with Sexy Sven while it happened.

Oops...

I turned off the toy as I came down from my orgasm—not even mad that Fen’s unexpected appearance had made the experience ten times better.

Thanks for the assist, dude.

His heated gaze dropped to the toy between my thighs—still clutched in my hand and decidedly wetter than when I started.

“Again,” he murmured. His tone was low, but the *command* behind his words was unmistakable.

“What?” I panted, trying to sound annoyed even as my pussy throbbed in approval.

Fen’s gaze snapped to mine. “Give me one more. I want to watch you soak his pillow like a good girl.”

Jeesussss...

All at once, I *got* the daddy kink thing, because there was suddenly nothing I wanted more than to desecrate another man’s pillow and make this one proud.

I’m gonna be the goodest girl for Wolf Daddy.

“Fine,” I huffed, shifting onto my back and propping myself up on my elbows. Fen had heard me recite the traffic light system to Jör earlier, so I knew all I had to do was safe out if I needed to—which I wouldn’t. “I suppose you want a front-row seat?”

“Yes,” Fen replied without hesitation, closing the distance between us in two strides before sitting on the rickety bed. With unwavering focus, he watched me use the pillow as leverage to reposition the rose against my clit and turn it on again. “This next orgasm belongs to me.”

Jesus Christ!

“You can tell yourself that if it helps,” I breathily replied, even as I dropped my knees open to give him a better view. “For all you know, I’m thinking of Jör’s dragon dick... or whatever double-fister Surt’s packing...” My voice caught as I

did just that—feeling orgasm number two already barreling toward me at an alarming rate.

Fen smirked, his gaze still locked on my pussy as he began trailing his fingertips along my calf and up my inner thigh. His touch was so light, it bordered on nonexistent, and I whined when he came close to my pussy, only to turn back—all the way down to my ankle—before starting all over again.

“I’m sure you *are* wondering how Jör would feel inside you,” he absently mused, continuing his tortuous loop as I tried to subtly nudge his hand where I wanted it to go. “And how thick Surt actually is.” His blue eyes met mine, and I almost came on the spot from the raw lust waiting for me there. That his irises were ringed in mildly threatening yellow only dragged me closer to the edge. “But what I want you thinking about right now is *me* stuffing that pretty cunt with my cock. Stretching you until you’re ready to take my knot.”

Jesus FUCKING Christ!

I practically ended up on the ceiling with how intensely my back arched as I came again—shouting loud enough to wake the dead.

Never mind if it was Fen’s name on my lips.

I’ll take that to my grave.

Apparently, Wolf Daddy took my orgasm-drunk babbling as the invitation it was. His lips were suddenly crushed to mine—his tongue licking its way into my mouth as he swallowed what was left of my cries.

“Please...” I gasped, turning off my toy and kicking the soggy pillow out of the way before pulling him closer. Realizing it wasn’t clear what I was begging for, I slid my hands down his muscular body and began fumbling with his belt buckle.

Gimme that wolf dick.

He chuckled, helping me unbuckle and unzip until his deliciously fat cock was lying heavy in my hands. I’d only enjoyed a glimpse of it when we tag-teamed Jör. This time, I took a moment to map its length and thickness with my hands

—tracing a throbbing vein to the half-inflated knot above his balls.

I can totally take him.

I think...

“Two orgasms weren’t enough for you, *sötnos?*” Fen whispered against my lips, thrusting into my hands. “Do you still feel empty, babygirl? Do you need to come on Daddy’s cock?”

Jesus Christ and the entire Greek pantheon!

The yacht could have been sinking to the bottom of the ocean for all I cared. Right now, this slutty babygirl needed Daddy’s cock like she needed air.

Give. It. To. Me.

“Fuck...” he choked out, as I lined him up and expertly hooked my ankles over his thighs—trapping him against me with the juicy head of his cock tapping at my door.

“What’s the matter, *Daddy?*” I teased, swiveling my hips to better work him in. “You’ve never been topped from the bottom before? Red means stop!”

Fen chuckled before nipping at my bottom lip with those tasty fangs. “You can tell yourself that if it helps... but I promise, you will know exactly who’s on top once I’m inside you.”

Bet.

I opened my bratty mouth to continue the banter, but my words came out as a shriek as he suddenly buried himself to the hilt.

To the knot, really.

“Fuck, you feel good,” he groaned, caressing my thighs before lifting my ass onto his muscular thighs for a different angle. Then he began to thrust lazily—slow and deep—stretching me just like he’d said he would.

Now that I’d survived the shock of the intrusion, I could appreciate how incredibly full I was. I’d thought Fen couldn’t

possibly be thicker than some of my more adventurous toys back home, but I now realized I had grossly misjudged the situation.

Though, the knot might be ambitious...

But I wasn't a quitter, and I sure as hell wasn't going down without a fight.

Or without drawing blood.

With a growl that rivaled his, I began fumbling with the buttons of Fen's dress shirt. He backed off slightly to assist with getting his top half naked, and I momentarily forgot my plan as his broad chest and cut abs came into view for the first time.

Absolute. Perfection.

"Like what you see, babygirl?" He smirked, and I had to forcibly tamp down the full-body shudder that threatened to surface.

"Yes, Daddy." I smiled sweetly in return—opening my arms and legs to tempt him back into my grasp.

Apparently, identifying potential threats came with the territory, as Fen abruptly flipped me onto my stomach before yanking me up onto my knees with my ass in the air.

What the hell?!

"Mmm... much better," he purred, curling his body over mine—caging me in with his delicious muscles as he lined himself up again. "The better to keep you in line."

"It takes more than talk to keep me in line, Wolf Daddy," I taunted, glaring at him over my shoulder. "If you're going to fuck me, then fuck me already."

The grin that stretched over his handsome face was the epitome of wolfish. "With pleasure," he replied, before driving back in with enough force to slam the cot against the wall.

That's more like it!

I attempted to get my hands under me—to meet him thrust for thrust as he started up a punishing rhythm—but he

wrapped a large hand around the back of my neck and slammed my top half back onto the bed.

“Not today,” he gritted out, sounding perilously close to the edge already. “I need... my *wolf* needs to mate you, Iola. Let me, please...”

Fuck.

As if only just registering what he'd said, Fen stilled with his enormous cock buried inside me. When he didn't immediately withdraw, I realized he was waiting for consent.

Double fuck.

The strong independent woman in me wanted to tell this guy to get bent—that there was no way in hell he was gonna make me his *mate* if he was just planning to leave. My body had other plans, however, because I also felt like I might physically die if I didn't get mate-marked and knotted in the next two minutes.

Talk about mixed signals.

What tipped the scales was the deeply buried part of me that hoped Fen would give up this ridiculous quest for Valhalla if *his wolf* staked its claim. And while I knew using sex as ammunition was shady as fuck—especially if his primal nature was in control at the moment—I selfishly decided I no longer cared.

All's fair...

“Do it,” I hissed, even as tears pricked my eyelids at how this would inevitably end. “Make me yours.”

Green light.

I braced myself for impact, but Fen's touch turned gentle instead. Sweeping my hair out of the way, he ran his nose up and down my neck, soothing my tangled emotions as he breathed me in. He then slid a hand beneath me, rubbing slow circles on my clit as he began steadily dragging his thick cock over my g-spot—making me forget every single reason this was a bad idea.

What's one more log on the pyre, after all?

Angling his hips, Fen worked his way in deeper with every thrust, methodically stretching me with his knot until it miraculously breached my opening.

The instant it locked into place, I bucked, sobbing into the mattress as an orgasm unlike any I'd ever experienced before tore through me. Not only was it the most intense, but it felt like it would never end—rippling through my nervous system like an echo. This made me wish for *other* things to last forever. Things I had no business hoping for.

Impossible things.

Please...

“Mine,” Fen groaned as I tightened around him, his fur tickling my sweaty skin as he sank his fangs into my neck—claiming me as his.

Another orgasm shot down my spine as he shattered... filling me up even as he took something vital from me. Something I'd never get in return, because I would never ask for it.

Please, just tell me you'll stay.

SURTR

I *t won't be long until we leave this cursed realm.*
All we need is Laevateinn.

My lips flattened into a grim line as I steered us through the waterfall the Persian *Hafstrambr* had provided directions to. Despite his meddling, I knew the sea-talker spoke the truth, even if I didn't approve of how he apparently had a history with *my* Jörmungandr.

Or how interested he'd been in... *my* seer.

Godsdamnit.

The pull I felt toward Iola was driving me mad—to where I now took any opportunity to touch her, simply for the relief it brought. That bit of contact was all I would allow myself to pursue, however, even if sinking into her wet heat would soothe the beast writhing beneath my skin.

My true form.

Fen and Jör smelled like Iola constantly now, which also wasn't helping my restraint. Just yesterday, the wolf had rubbed salt in the wound by sneaking off after Iola, like a stray dog sniffing out a bitch in heat. When *she'd* reappeared with a godsdamn *mate bite*—after defiling my cot with her scent—I almost snapped.

Certainly, I deserve Valhalla after this.

The seer may have occasionally proven herself useful on this journey, but the distraction that came along with her constant presence was taking its toll.

It would be best for all of us to part ways.

Exactly *how* to get rid of her—aside from throwing her overboard—was what I was mulling over as the gates of Helheim came into view beyond the icy waters. Jör had already declared her as his mate, and Fen was close behind on adopting the foolish notion. Neither seemed to understand how ridiculous the concept was, so I had to tread carefully with how I dealt with the situation.

“We must be stealthy in our approach.” Fen appeared beside me at the helm with arms crossed—radiating unease at the sight of his sister’s domain. “In and out before she notices we’re there.”

I scoffed, unable to resist throwing a barb. “Is that how it went when you and the little witch defiled my bed together?”

Fen threw his head back and laughed, sparking my annoyance. “Well, I’d like to think I lasted longer than that, but probably not.” His expression turned sly as he leaned in—simultaneously invading my space and ensuring I caught her lingering scent. “Just you *wait* until you’re inside her, Surt. Then you’ll understand.”

Fuck off.

“That won’t be happening,” I gritted out, even as my cock thickened at the thought. “We have a mission to complete, and this random girl bewitching us into her bed was *not* a part of the plan.”

As usual, Fen didn’t match my anger, although I saw his jaw tick as I insulted *his mate*. “You claim you want to change our fate,” he quietly replied. “Yet you aren’t open to considering more than one possibility—”

I spun on him as white-hot fury raced through my veins. “Are you suggesting we abandon Valhalla?! All because Jör’s cunt isn’t enough for you—”

“She’s our *mate*, Surt,” Jör interrupted from somewhere behind us. “And this new connection changes nothing about our existing relationships.”

I turned to face the man responsible for my bothering with personal relationships at all, incensed that his reassurances soothed something inside me. This triad we'd formed centuries ago had become more important to me than I'd ever admit, so yes, I'd not taken kindly to Iola's infiltration. But the beauty of our plan—the plan I thought we were *all* on board with—was that we would continue to be together in the afterlife.

Do they not want that anymore?

“Yes, plaything,” I snarled. “You've been quite vocal about your misguided affections. Just remember, Iola has done *nothing* to deserve Valhalla, so she will be left behind when we go.”

“What if I don't want to go?” Jör replied, respectful but firm.

Fen tensed beside me, but I was already pointing an accusatory finger at the World Serpent with righteous anger scorching through my veins. “Are you seriously considering remaining here on Midgard forever, simply because you found a half-mortal who wants to fuck a *monster*?”

The instant the words left my mouth, I regretted them, and the acute pain that flashed across Jör's perfect face made me wish I'd never learned to speak in the first place.

But what's done is done.

And it needed to be said.

Jör turned and walked out to the deck without another word, and it was only then that I noticed Iola standing at the top of the stairs leading below. The look on her face told me she'd heard everything, but I maintained challenging eye contact—assuming she'd do nothing but glare and follow my plaything outside.

Where she can continue to turn him against me.

Instead, she approached, aggravatingly unafraid. Once she was close enough for that intoxicating scent of hers to enrage me further, her judgmental expression softened. “He's not a monster, Surt. None of you are.”

I could only gape as she spun and exited the helm station, unsure how I felt about her unexpected words.

What did she mean by that?

Despite Fen's eyes upon me, I staunchly refocused on steering the yacht close enough to the rocky shore so Iola could climb down to help tie us off.

Maybe I could leave her here...

I'm sure Hel needs a handmaiden.

"Iola isn't the only reason Jör is reconsidering Valhalla," Fen finally spoke. "He's been feeling this way for quite some time—"

"Is that so?" I snapped, irrationally angry that Jör's confession was apparently no surprise to the wolf. "Why only tell me this *now*?"

Why keep it from me?

Fen sighed and slung an arm around my back before nestling close. Only he would be brave enough to touch me in this state, but I also understood that his beast was desperate to soothe me in the only way he knew how.

And I don't completely hate it...

"Old friend," he murmured, rubbing his cheek over my shoulder—leaving his scent on me. "You know you can get a bit... combative, and our sweet serpent is not a fan of quarrels. And don't forget, there is a power imbalance between you and him..."

An imbalance I imposed.

I allowed myself to lean against Fen's solid frame for support. "Why did he tell *you*, then?" I asked, unable to keep the bitterness from my voice. "You also demand he yield."

Fen chuckled and gave me an affectionate squeeze. "I do... but mostly in the bedroom. And I never demand absolute submission. However," he quickly added as I tensed, "our dynamic differs from yours, just as it differs from yours and mine. The three of us have been together so long, it's become

far too easy to fall into established roles, instead of questioning whether they still work for us.”

“And what if they don’t?” I scoffed, unsure where the conversation was going, but worried I already knew the answer to that question. “Are you suggesting Jör no longer wants me to own him? Or that *I* should kneel for *him*?!”

In what realm would that happen?

The wolf laughed and released me, stepping back to better meet my gaze. “We both know Jör loves nothing more than kneeling for both of us... for all *three* of us now.” Before I could fixate on how our perfectly good dynamic had been ruined by the seer, he added, “And it’s not a bad thing that he suddenly found the courage to speak up to his immovable Daddy and *very stubborn Sir*. Perhaps you could start by trying to understand *what* Iola provides for him?”

Things we can’t, apparently.

I huffed as I turned off the boat and followed him out to the deck. “Why is her providing some magical benefit to our snake my concern at all?”

Fen roughly gripped my biceps, stopping me in my tracks before we got close enough for the others to overhear. “Because maybe she could provide it for you, too.”

Speechless for the second time in the past few minutes, I climbed down and walked with Fen to where Jör and Iola waited in front of the massive wooden gate leading to Helheim. It was an imposing structure—black and weathered and built to stop anyone from crossing its threshold in a direction they didn’t belong.

In theory, I agreed we should get what we needed and depart quickly, but I couldn’t help fantasizing about leading the forces of chaos to the gods’ doorstep once again.

Especially with Laevateinn back in my grasp...

I had never met Hel face-to-face, but she’d aided us during Ragnarok by providing Loki with an army of the dead and the ship that carried me and my fellow fire giants into battle.

Assuming she'd survived the catastrophic event, she would no doubt still be banished to this realm, as Odin had first decreed.

And therefore, possessing a bone to pick with the remaining gods...

My schemes were interrupted by the sound of Iola squealing in both delight and fear. Fen was balancing her on his shoulders while she strained to reach the protruding branches we'd need to craft the weapon. She was a few inches too short, which led everyone to turn to me expectantly.

I'm still needed for something, apparently.

With my beast greedily urging me onward, I allowed Iola to clamber onto my shoulders before wrapping my hands around her tiny ankles to steady her. Gritting my teeth, I swallowed down my visceral reaction to her skin touching mine before the others spotted it. But *she* noticed, and peered down at me with a question in her eyes.

It's never going to happen, seer.

"Focus on the task at hand," I growled, needing this sorceress to be looking at anything other than me. "It's your destiny to retrieve a new *damage twig* for me, so that's what you—" I trailed off as I recalled a comment made by the sea-talker yesterday, before he disappeared into the waves.

"Because of the company the three of you are keeping, I can only assume you're looking for the fastest route into Helheim."

Into Helheim.

I'd also caught more of the conversation before I made my presence known, and Hazun had seemed determined to not only figure out *who* Iola was, but *what*.

Perhaps she's my ticket to an audience with Hel...

A smirk curled my lip as Iola snatched a handful of branches with a triumphant sound and tossed them down to Jör and Fen. I waited until the two men were occupied with stacking our bounty before abruptly shifting on my feet, so Iola had to scrabble against the gate for purchase.

“Careful, you big oaf!” she yelled. “I’d rather not end up in the realm of the dead.”

“Oh, calm down, seer,” I teased, adjusting my weight so her shoulder landed against the wooden doors with a painful thud. “Only those with a purpose here can open the gates.”

Let’s see what you’re made of.

What you’ve been hiding from us.

As if on cue, the doors swung inward with a creaking sound that echoed off the icy cliffs surrounding us. I caught Iola before she fell to the frozen ground, but she pushed away from me and ran for Fen—as if not understanding it was *her* touch that had opened the gates.

Interesting...

I didn’t get the chance to question the extent of her knowledge. The doors finished opening to reveal a tall figure waiting for us on the other side. She was one of the most beautiful women I’d ever seen, with flowing black hair and tanned skin, despite the sub-zero conditions she lived in.

She seemed to pose—tilting her head away, as if to display her perfect profile. As she turned to face us head-on, I flinched. The opposite side of her face was now visible in gory detail—with pale, bluish skin, like a corpse who’d been found floating in the sea. Her full lips gave way to skeletal teeth, and bits of bone and skull showed through where her flesh had rotted away.

Hel.

Daughter of Loki and Angrboda, sister of Fenrir and Jörmungandr, and ruler of Helheim within the realm of Niflheim.

She who welcomes the dead not killed in battle.

With the help of her guides...

“Greetings, Brothers... Surtr”—she craned her neck to peer toward where Fen’s enormous frame was hiding Iola —“and little *Völvadis* who knocked on my door.”

“Nope! That wasn’t me,” Iola called, peeking out from behind him. “I mean, it was an accident. We got what we need now so we’ll just be on our way... scary half-zombie lady...”

“Nonsense!” Hel replied with an airy laugh that didn’t match her macabre appearance. “You have delivered the very souls who can assist me in seeking retribution.”

Iola, Fen, and Jör all froze.

I smiled.

Looks like the seer is still useful, after all.

IOLA

How the *HELL* would I be guiding souls?
I mean, how the Hel...

Helheim—aka Niflhel, apparently—was a frozen afterlife, the domain of the half-terrifying, half-goddess leading us to her palace. She referred to this looming fortress as Eljudnir—the *damp place*—which we had to access by crossing a threshold simultaneously known as a stumbling block and where one falls to their doom.

So homey.

“Sleeping quarters are that way, and I shall ask the staff to fetch your luggage,” Hel pleasantly chirped, waving her skeletal hand down a hallway that looked exactly the same as the twenty others we’d passed. The entire place was cave-like, with dark obsidian rock that was intricately carved, and it smelled like a grotto—which was surprisingly pleasant. “Hopefully, the bags will arrive in time, as my servants are a bit slow and lazy...” She sighed and gave me a look that said ‘you can’t find good help these days, nawmean?’ before continuing her Tower of Terror tour.

To be honest, I was only half-listening. My anxious mind was too busy wondering how we’d ended up here, whether we could leave, and why *I* was the one who’d somehow opened the gates.

Daddy that he was, Fen voiced my concerns without me needing to say a word. “Sister. What did you mean when you

referred to the three of us as ‘souls?’ Surely, we are not dead! We’ve been interacting with mortals in Midgard for centuries.”

Hel glanced over her shoulder to where Fen walked beside me. “Not dead, but perhaps not meant to still be alive... if the prophecies are to be believed.”

Her bitterness was so thick, I could practically taste it, and I recalled Jör telling me how he and his siblings had been ripped away from their mother, all because the gods got their panties in a bunch over a prophecy.

That they then helped fulfill, by doing just that...

Of course, the opportunist in the group latched onto her words to validate his infuriating narrative. “Precisely!” Surt butted in, with the same level of confidence as every mediocre man I’d ever sat in a meeting with. “We were not meant for this continued existence. Our destiny is Valhalla.”

I scowled at the back of his stupid head, hoping he could feel it. Jör had outright *told* Surt he didn’t want to go to Valhalla anymore, and all this idiot had done with the information was dismiss my sweet snake’s needs and hurt his feelings. Even now, Jör didn’t pipe in to back up his Sir. He simply pressed his lips together and dropped his pretty gaze to the flagstone floor as we followed Hel deeper into her fortress.

I’ll make it better, baby—promise.

Hel tilted her head to shoot Surt an assessing look. “I assume that’s why you were *borrowing* pieces of my gate, hmm? To reconstruct Loki’s famous blade?”

As bratty as my mouth was, I would have shut the fuck up if this goddess—rightfully—accused me of stealing her damage twigs. But Surt was too blinded by his own superiority complex to notice the dangerous territory he’d wandered into.

Typical.

“Precisely,” he repeated, returning Hel’s gaze with enough heat in his expression to force a possessive growl out of me.

Oh, my gawd, whyyyyy?

Hel spun to face those of us bringing up the rear, eager for the tea. “It does not seem like your mates are keen on supporting your plan, fire giant...”

The only reaction Surt gave was to stiffen his spine. “She’s not my mate,” he scoffed—either missing how *mates* was plural or willfully ignoring it. “The seer is merely a marginally useful tool to be used along our journey.”

Gee, thanks.

“Surtr!” Fen scolded, causing my new mate bite to throb. Grabbing the other man’s shoulder, he forced Surt to stop walking and turn around to face him. “You will not speak about Iola that way. Not when she’s done nothing but help us —”

“If by help, you mean spreading her legs, then yes,” Surt hissed, causing Jör to growl this time. “And I suggest you both enjoy her while you can, because once we enter Valhalla, she will be nothing but dust in a world rightfully burned in our wake—”

“*I’M NOT GOING!*” Jör shouted, stamping his foot and causing the stone walls to shake. “So if you want to burn the world, then you’ll be burning me along with it.”

Surt stumbled backward, his shock morphing into dismay and anger as he absorbed what the serpent was saying. “Y-You... you’d *choose* the witch over me? She’s poisoned your resolve, Jörmungandr.”

Excuse me?!

“No, she hasn’t,” Jör softly replied, his narrow shoulders slumping as the fight went out of him. “Iola said she would never ask me to choose. And I don’t *want* to choose, Surt. I-I want all of us to be together—all *four* of us—even though I know how impossible that is to hope for...”

With a heartbreaking sob, he turned and ran back the way we came. I made a move to follow him—not only to comfort my pet but to get the hell away from this incredibly awkward situation—when I felt a hand on my forearm.

A skeletal hand.

Shiver...

“Let him go, little *Völvadis*,” Hel rasped in what was probably meant to be a soothing tone. “I would like a word with you—woman to woman. Walk with me.”

I don't like the sound of that.

Unfortunately, Fen didn't come to my rescue this time. His furious gaze was fixed on Surt as he gritted out, “That works, as I would like a word alone with Surtr—man to man.”

Okay, but I'd much rather go watch that brawl instead...

I desperately tried to catch Fen's eye as Hel forcibly dragged me away, but she quickly pulled me down another side hallway and out of sight.

Hopefully, not to my doom.

“Ugh, how do you stand them?” she dramatically groaned once we were out of earshot, loosening her literal death grip on my arm. “So much male posturing. I was tempted to put them all in the dungeon to cool down for the night.”

I blinked stupidly, not at all expecting this about-face—even with *that* face. “Um... Well, they're fun in bed. I mean, your... brothers... are, at least.”

What is the matter with me?

Blessedly, Hel was unbothered by the idea of me boning her bros. She was way more interested in why I hadn't bagged the grumpy one yet. “The fire giant is giving you trouble, hmm? You want me to sneak a little Rhodiola into his mead later?”

Only if it's poisonous...

I was *not* the type to assume other women were my competition—*sisters before misters any day*—but the *look* Hel and Surt had shared a few minutes ago was still bothering me, big time. “I dunno, Hel,” I sniffed, feeling saucy about all the things. “Are you sure *you* don't want to keep the fire giant for yourself? You both seem to be on the same page with the whole revenge as foreplay thing.”

The goddess of the dead stared at me for a long moment—long enough for me to wonder if perhaps my sass had sassed its final sass—before she threw her head back and cackled ominously.

I'm about to die.

“Oh, I assure you, I have no interest in Surtr.” She wiped an imaginary tear away from her one good eye. “Men are much too aggravating for me to bother with.”

As a bisexual, I truly wish I could say the same.

“Besides,” she continued, assessing me shrewdly. “I believe all it would take was *me* laying claim to *you* for the fire giant to reveal his true feelings.”

I scoffed, even as a pathetic part of me did a happy ho dance at her observation. “Honestly, that man only has eyes for Valhalla. If he could marry the place and make babies with it, he would.”

Surt and Valhalla, sittin' in a tree...

Hel sighed, her gaze growing distant. “It’s an outdated worldview—believing death is superior to life, or that one afterlife is better than another. Even here in Helheim, where it’s nothing but common folk, the dead are treated well. It could be a bit *warmer...*” She shivered dramatically, making me smile. “But the only downside is that once here, most cannot leave.”

I swallowed thickly. “Does that include us? Because I prefer a more tropical climate.”

Again, Hel eyed me for a moment before replying. “I was talking about *me*, but... you truly don’t know what you are, do you?”

Not this again.

“I’m a seer,” I carefully replied. “A *Pythia* to the Greeks, and a *Völva* to the Norse. Which, sidenote, is a word just asking for trouble—”

I trailed off as I realized Hel referred to me as a ‘*Völvadis.*’ Sinmara had called me that, too, even if I’d been too annoyed

at the time by the empty chest to question it.

Völva.

Dís.

“What’s a *dís*?” I asked, my voice barely above a whisper.

Hel smiled, and it was both comforting and terrifying—making my instincts go haywire. “The short answer is a spirit guide. Odin’s Valkyries were *dísir*, but you are not one of the ‘choosers of the slain’ on the battlefield—bound for Valhalla.”

Much to Surt’s disappointment, I’m sure.

All at once, I realized that grumpy idiot had somehow figured out my connection with the dead before using me as a godsdamn battering ram to open Hel’s gates. “Okay then, what is my role in all this? Was I just destined to bring the three stooges *here* so you could all band together and end the world a second time? What if I don’t want any part in that, huh? Why don’t I get a say in my own fate?!”

I knew it wasn’t wise to raise my voice to a powerful goddess who could snap me like a damage twig with her creepy bone fingers, but I was on a tear. I’d already dealt with some fairly shocking revelations about my heritage during my adventures with Leia in Greece, so the last thing I needed was to learn I was even *more* of a pawn in a game where no one had bothered to explain the rules.

Not today, Satan.

Err... Hel...

To her credit, Hel smiled with as much sympathy as her face allowed. “I also understand how it feels to have no say in one’s path. While I cannot be certain without hearing it from the *Norns* themselves, I believe your role was simply to connect with *these* three souls specifically—Fenrir, Jörmungandr, and Surtr. To guide them to where they can finally be at peace.”

Stupid tears pricked my eyelids, making me wish I could rewind time and tell Fen to keep his mate bite to himself. “Yeah, well, maybe I don’t want to guide them to a place

where I'll never see them again. And I definitely don't want to end the world in the process."

Hel looked thoughtful. "Let me think on this for a bit, Iola. Perhaps a solution can be found that—while not ideal for everyone—will at least give you *some* control over your destiny."

While still providing the retribution she seeks...

I sighed, but knew her offer was the best I was going to get. I'd never been the chosen one—the one with all the luck. It seemed to be my destiny to help others find their happily ever afters, while I waved from the cheap seats and watched them ride off into the sunset.

Pity party for one, please.

The goddess of Helheim patted my shoulder—with her human hand this time, *thank Christ*. "Try not to worry, little *Völvadís*. The *Norns* have a plan for us all."

Don't I know it...

"But in the meantime!" She brightened, somehow dragging me out of my dark mood. "Why don't you go comfort the World Serpent? Surely you have something in your luggage that would soothe the beast in both of you, hmm?"

I smiled. Hel's joy was infectious—especially given her circumstances—and her suggestion was on point.

Time to fuck the pain away.

IOLA

Luckily, my undead wingwoman guided me back to the hallway where our bedrooms were located before grabbing a servant to lead me the rest of the way.

Because I would've totally ended up in the dungeon on my own.

The goddess assured me she would stop Fen and Surt from killing each other, with a promise to send a servant later to collect us for dinner. So all I needed to worry about was Jör.

My sweet baby.

Whose ass is about to get wrecked.

When I got to our room—another obsidian-black space, but with softer surfaces this time—I found Jör, naked and curled up on the far side of the enormous bed. In the low light, his skin had an almost greenish hue, and he looked like he was trying to contort his human body into an animal shape for self-soothing purposes.

Fuck.

Not for the first time, I realized how ridiculous I was being. Yeah, some part of me had believed Jör when he called me his mate—and that Fen marking me actually meant something—but wanting to keep these men was selfish.

Not least of all, because they were never meant to be men.

“Hey, danger noodle...” I murmured, climbing onto the bed and crawling toward him—keeping my movements as

non-threatening as possible. “What do you need right now, *beibe?*”

Fen’s chosen nickname slipped out before I could stop myself, but apparently, it was the magic word. Jör rolled to face me with a broken sob. “I-I... don’t want to lose you,” he wetly gasped against my throat. “I don’t want to lose any of you.”

Ughhhh...

That was it. I’d officially caught an incurable case of *feelings*, but how could I not? My guys were magical, multi-faceted creatures—way more complex than the original purposes they were created for. They deserved to be happy, and I truly hoped Hel could come up with a solution to give everyone what they longed for in the end.

As impossible as that sounds.

Actually, I’d be happy if she just made sure the guys got their due—without ending the world, of course. I was fairly skilled at brushing myself off after disappointments, so I’d be fine, no matter what. Sure, I’d probably spend a chunk of time drowning my sorrows in alcohol, meaningless sex, and gallons of ice cream once I returned to Athens, but I’d eventually move on with my life.

Eventually.

Maybe...

The idea of going back to Greece, only to fly to Sweden occasionally on business and get bitch-slapped with memories, sounded about as appealing as a root canal. Working for Ancient Olive had been a fantastic opportunity, but I no longer knew if it was right for *me*. The only thing I felt sure about was my monsters—the one thing I was destined to lose.

So I might as well enjoy them while I can.

“Would you like me to make you feel good, pet?” I asked, including his honorific in my question, so he understood playtime had begun.

Jör sniffled once more but then pulled back to better look at me. “Yes, Master. Please show me I belong to you.”

Always, danger noodle.

I spied my luggage next to the bed. “How does me fucking you with a toy sound? We’ll still be following your *Sir’s* rules—mostly—but disobeying just enough to make things fun.”

As expected, the promise of bratty disobedience turned Jör’s frown upside down. “Oh, I like that! Anything to please you.”

So perfect.

“You already please me, simply by existing,” I reminded him with a sweet kiss on his cute little nose. “Now get on your hands and knees and prep your slutty ass for me.”

“Yes, Master!” Jör enthusiastically replied, scrambling for lube that was already conveniently out on the bedside table.

I mean, what else is there to do in the afterlife?

While Jör positioned himself on the edge of the bed, I opened my suitcase and found the satin bag holding the crown jewel of my toy collection. My vibrating, waterproof, strapless strap-on with nine-speed double motors, and G-spot, P-spot, and clitoral stimulation.

My precioussss...

Jör was already two knuckles deep by the time I’d undressed, lubed up, and inserted the short end of the toy into myself. I messed with the vibration modes for a few minutes as I watched him work himself open—drinking down each soft little moan he released.

“Are you loose enough for me, pet?” I brusquely asked, standing far enough behind him so he could get a good look at what was coming.

Besides both of us.

“Yes,” he gasped, his gorgeous eyes widening as he spotted my sleek, hot pink cock over his shoulder. “Is that... will it feel good for you, too, Iola?”

My heart!

“Yeah, Jör,” I softly replied, breaking character along with him to offer reassurances. “We’re going to feel so good together.”

“Fuuuuck,” he groaned, quickly stuffing a pillow under his stomach and lowering his elbows to the mattress. “I can’t wait to feel you inside me. Filling me up. Making me *yours*.”

LAWDAMERCY!

I was grateful that what I was packing wasn’t a real dick, because I would have blown my load just from hearing those words alone.

Deep breaths, Iola.

This isn’t your first rodeo.

Stepping forward, I swept my fingertips over his adorable little butt, making him tremble. This left a trail of goosebumps in my wake that briefly morphed into a gorgeous smattering of scales—a hint of his true form.

“You’re already mine, pet,” I whispered, the words catching in my throat. “No matter what happens, you’ll always belong to me.”

Mine.

My head snapped up as the bedroom door opened, but it was just Fen slipping into the room. He smiled warmly at us before turning and yanking Surt through the doorway after him.

Looks like the gang’s all here.

Surt’s deep brown eyes narrowed at the scene, so I took a step back to give him the full view, stroking my strap-on just to freak him out some more.

Welcome to the Iola show!

He huffed, although I couldn’t help noticing his eyes stayed locked on my hot pink cock. “I am *not* taking part in—”

“That’s fine,” I curtly interrupted. “Because all *you’re* invited to do at the moment is watch me own Jör’s ass until he soaks the bed. Can you do that, Surt? Can you sit still and look pretty for me?”

His jaw ticked, but before he could retort, Fen cut in, “Yes, let’s watch our *Master* at work, Surt. It’s no different from when the two of us take turns.”

Now that I’ve gotta see.

I wanted to ask if they ever double-teamed our snake, but Fen was already pulling up a chair and gesturing for Surt to do the same. Unsurprisingly, the giant refused to take a seat—choosing to stand imposingly where he was, instead.

Probably to get a better view.

“Do you like this, pet?” I crooned as I stepped closer again and notched the head of my cock against his twitching hole. “All of your alphas watching you be a good little slut?”

“Fuck,” Fen murmured, shifting in his chair as Surt sharply inhaled.

“Yessss...” Jör moaned as I breached him—rocking my hips to work my way in. “I love having all the attention on me.”

And I love how unapologetic you are.

I love everything about you.

Keeping my gaze on the action, I steadily buried myself to the hilt before waiting for him to adjust. It wasn’t an overly large toy, but it had unusual curves and ridges that were probably different from what he’d experienced before.

Although, I still don’t know what Surt is packing...

“Ready?” I asked the star of the show, running a soothing hand down his spine as I coolly glanced around the room. “Is everybody ready?”

Fen nodded gravely as Surt continued to stare as if he’d never seen a girl wield a dick better than him before.

“Wait!” Jör cried, and I immediately started pulling out. “No! I *want* this...” He nodded at me over his shoulder before facing forward again. “But I also need...”

I patiently waited for him to elaborate, but, for once, my vocal pet seemed lost for words.

That’s... odd.

Fen moved first—gracefully rising from his chair and sliding onto the bed. “What is it, *beibe*?” He carded his fingers through Jör’s soft brown hair. “Is it too much with Surt and me in the room?”

“No, Daddy,” Jör purred, pushing back against my cock to get me fully inside him again. “It’s just... I need *all* of you.”

An orgy it is then.

“Do you need to wrap those pretty lips around another cock, pet?” I cooed, starting to thrust—slow and deep—to coax him into deciding. “Do you need all three of your alphas to fill your holes?”

I accidentally made eye contact with Surt as I asked these pressing questions. Instead of scowling or looking away, he held my gaze—shockingly, without challenge or judgment in his expression. It almost seemed like he was waiting for *someone else* to make the call about what happened next.

That’s... unexpected.

Jör whimpered and reached for Fen’s belt buckle with trembling hands. “Yes. I can make Daddy feel good,” he murmured in reply, wrestling the other man free. “But you need someone to make *you* feel good, too.”

I immediately dropped my gaze from Surt’s—not at all wanting to see his reaction to *that* suggestion. “That’s very thoughtful of you, pet,” I lightly replied, reaching down to turn on the vibration setting on my side of the toy. “But I can take care of myself...”

Surt stalked around the bed and I froze, half-expecting him to tear me away from Jör and take over. Instead, he stopped behind me—close enough for his clothing to brush against my

naked skin—before reaching down to place his hand over mine on the strap-on controls.

“Let *me*,” he gruffly insisted. “Our plaything demands it.”

Okay, but this is adorable.

Normally, I wouldn’t dream of giving Surt the keys to my pleasure, but I also didn’t want to stop the big grumpy giant from doing something nice for Jör.

Aaaand... maybe I want his big stupid hand near my vajay.

Sue me.

If the only way the two of us would ever scene together was at Jör’s request, I could accept that. Surt was even more unyielding than I was, so—despite my filthy fantasies—I’d probably never see the man on his knees.

Despite how pretty of a picture it would paint.

Deciding to play nice, I slipped my hand out from under his and attempted to maneuver his huge mitt to the correct spot. “There are nine-speeds,” I instructed, my voice catching as he grazed my clit with the rough pad of his thumb. “And these buttons control each end of the toy.”

“Just a toy, hmm?” Surt murmured in my ear—his breath causing loose strands of hair to tickle my skin. “You feel more like a weapon.”

Before I could taunt him about how *my* damage twig was more powerful than his, Surt tapped the button on my end three times, making me gasp and plunge into Jör harder than I meant to.

“Mmph!” Jör exclaimed around Fen’s cock, but it was a happy sound, so I relaxed.

As much as possible, considering the circumstances.

I could handle my hot pink ‘weapon.’ I could handle fucking a beautiful boy in his juicy peach, even while his mouth was otherwise engaged. But what was making my head spin was the man looming over me, suffocating me with his

delicious woodsmoke scent while he casually rested his enormous hand on my hip—poised to attack.

“Why aren’t you fucking your pet?” Surt rumbled, flicking his thumb to kick me into fourth gear.

Fuck.

“Like this?” I plunged into Jör again, making him yelp.

“Yes,” Surt replied, surprising me once again by sounding nothing but genuine. “I want to watch you own him.”

You don’t have to tell me twice.

With a smirk, I gripped Jör’s waist to hold him steady before starting up a rhythm that was fast and rough enough to satisfy everyone involved.

Including my co-Doms.

I had never shared a sub like this before—never thought I’d enjoy it—but I was now officially a fan. Jör was in heaven, moaning deliciously, and meeting me thrust for thrust while he deepthroated his Daddy. Fen’s chest was heaving, his pleasure-drunk gaze flitting between where Jör’s mouth was working him, and my face as I chased my release.

It was the perfect visual, but I was still acutely aware of Surt. He was now pressed against me from behind—seemingly not to control my movements, but to ride along with me. Every so often, he would increase the vibration on my toy, until I knew it wouldn’t be long before I exploded.

“That’s it, pet...” I panted, draping myself over Jör so I could reach beneath him for his cock as my thrusts grew uneven. “Come for your alphas like a good boy.”

Surt must have hit the other button, as I felt the second motor fire up. Jör released a keening sound as he stiffened, coating my hand—and the bed below—with copious monster cum.

Such a good boy.

Fen immediately followed him over the edge, and I wasn’t far behind. Surt used his thumb to press the stimulator against

my clit as I came—forcefully prolonging my orgasm until I thought I might pass out.

Or disappear on another out-of-body adventure.

“Fuck,” he growled in my ear—wrapping his other arm around my waist to stop me from collapsing as my legs shook. “You drive me crazy, little *mækir*.”

Whatever that means... The feeling is mutual.

I suddenly *needed* this man—needed to feel his skin on mine. Blindly groping behind me, I grabbed his rock-hard cock through his pants, gasping to discover I could barely stretch my hand over its girth. And that it was *radiating* heat.

Surt tensed and immediately backed away—out of my reach—leaving a blast of cool air in his absence. I bit my lip and dropped my gaze to focus on carefully withdrawing from Jör, realizing I’d overstepped.

How did I misjudge the situation?

“That was... enlightening...” Surt cleared his throat and began striding for the door. “Let’s all reconvene at dinner—”

“Surt...” Fen began, with disapproval in his tone.

“—to discuss strategy and next steps with Hel,” the fire giant concluded, as if he were saying his goodbyes at a casual luncheon gathering.

What a fucking asshole.

He paused at the door before briefly glancing over his shoulder to meet my gaze. For a moment, I thought he might say something, but he simply pressed his lips together and faced forward again before slipping from the room.

Good riddance.

And don’t let the door hit you on the way out.

IOLA

Dinner was a little... *tense*.

To be fair, I'd completely added to the tension with my glares, heavy sighs, and snarky comments. I was a little black rain cloud pissing all over Surt's parade as he vehemently pushed his agenda, and this angry state was where I was determined to stay.

Because the alternative is unacceptable.

Stupid feelings...

"And I say the gods won't take us seriously if we arrive without an army at our backs!" the fire giant shouted, banging a fist on Hel's obsidian—*surprise!*—table as the goddess tried to explain her extremely reasonable alternative plan.

Hel had way more patience than me, as she simply sighed and tried again. "Surt, I understand that the elements of your realm and mine—fire and ice—are in opposition, and when combined, can create and destroy the world. But the army I sent to Ragnarok for Loki is long gone, and I would assume your fire giants are as well. We can only hope that the reappearance of Laevateinn, and the three of you in true form once again—with me at your disposal—will be enough to convince the gods to take our requests seriously."

I support this plan.

Surt nodded, finally keeping his idiotic ideals to himself, for once. Then a sly smile stretched across his annoyingly handsome face as he turned to acknowledge me for the first

time since we'd all shown up for this high-stakes dinner meeting.

“Well, it looks like we won’t be needing the seer any longer,” he smugly announced. “Especially as Fen decided Iola using her powers was too dangerous—rendering her useless.”

ENOUGH!

My chair scraped over the stone floor—like nails on a chalkboard—as I abruptly stood. “Sounds good to me. As long as you won’t let this psychopath end the world”—I nodded at Surt while addressing Hel—“then I am totally fine with hitching the first ride back to the surface.”

Since my work here is apparently done.

I heard Jör whimper and Fen whisper soothingly in return, but I staunchly kept my gaze averted from my men. As much as the idea of leaving *all* of them felt like a punch to the gut, the way Surt had behaved in the bedroom—how he continued to behave—was the last straw.

Hel’s expression was thoughtful as she observed me for another long moment. Part of me hoped she would argue—that she’d tell me I was a fool to willingly leave these men behind—but deep down, I knew how expendable I was. Their connection to each other was decided by destiny long before I showed up.

And I was only meant to be a temporary guide on their journey.

She nodded once. “Very well. As you were simply fulfilling your role of *dis* to these three souls, you are under no obligation to remain in the realm of the dead. But first, we will need your blood.”

Say what now?

Gods knew where she’d been hiding it, but Hel suddenly slapped a massive wooden sword on the table with a resounding thud. Surt dramatically gasped, and it didn’t take Scholarly Sven to decipher that this blade was his new damage twig.

Laevateinn.

It didn't look as terrifying as I'd expected, and it wasn't glowing—although just where I got the idea that it needed to be was beyond me. I focused on processing Hel's request when the blood in question ran cold.

Is she... do they need to sacrifice me to activate the glow stick feature?!

The goddess must have read the fear in my eyes, as she quickly elaborated, "Laevateinn was originally infused with the fires of Muspelheim. But as the only fire giant in our midst seems unable to access his powers consistently... for some *strange* reason..."

I couldn't tell if Hel was honestly confused by Surt's impotence, or if she'd figured out how my presence played into it—but she had one hell of a poker face.

The fire giant in question grumbled under his breath, but the goddess powered on. "I'm proposing an attempt to activate the sword with shared blood. Specifically, blood from those connected by fate."

"Like... mates?" Jör asked hopefully, his eyes cartoonishly wide. I could almost see little animated sparkles floating around his head to illustrate his unbridled excitement.

Kawaii Serpent.

Hel smiled kindly. "Yes, I would call this connection a mate bond. There is a common misconception that soulmates only come in pairs, but certain cultures believe in multiple mates for each soul. Some are romantic and some platonic, while others are karmic or simply remnants of past lives. Perhaps it was that I was born with one foot already in the grave, or simply the time I've spent ruling the dead, but I've developed a knack for sensing these connections. I intrinsically understand how they're formed, strengthened, and broken." She paused, presumably for dramatic effect, before continuing, "And such connections are *strong* in this group—all around."

Surt looked confused, but at least he didn't immediately start arguing with the poor woman again. Instead, he nodded thoughtfully and tried adding to the conversation instead of dominating it. "Upon finding each other in this new world, I *did* sense Fenrir and Jörmungandr were important to my journey... and not only because of how we all survived Ragnarok."

Fen and Jör were both silent, allowing him to say his piece, but I couldn't resist poking the bear. "Did you think they were important because you actually *cared* about *their* journeys as well, or were you only interested in them as 'marginally useful tools' to be used along the way?"

The giant scowled, but Hel smoothly cut in. "Yes, your triad certainly shares a bond that spans many classifications, which is what inspired my theory. Therefore, I would like each of you to donate a drop of blood to Laevateinn. I'm curious to see if your combined destiny is enough to reawaken its flames."

All three men stood, and Hel passed around a small blade which they used to prick their fingers over the blade. As each droplet hit the wooden surface, it sizzled—as if heat were simmering below the surface—and I could feel my unease growing with each passing moment.

I don't like this...

Once the ritual was complete, we all held our collective breath, but the results were anticlimactic. While Laevateinn was emitting a soft glow, it was nowhere near what I would call flaming.

And not at all how I remember it.

Wait.

When would I have seen this sword in action?

"Mmm... I suspected as much," Hel hummed thoughtfully, leaning forward to pass the knife across the table. "I know this isn't what *some* of you will want to hear, but I believe Iola may play a far bigger role than simply being your group's *Völvadis*."

“Well, *I* believe it’s highly inappropriate for the half-mortal’s blood to join ours on the blade,” Surt huffed, drawing my attention to him as I reached for the knife.

I was so distracted by his sour commentary that I hadn’t noticed Hel was handing it to me blade-first. Before I could react, she swiped, cutting a shallow line over my palm that stung like a bitch.

“*FUCK!*” I hissed in pain and stumbled, pitching forward.

“Iola!” Surt shouted, attempting to grab me before I touched his precious blade.

Too late.

My bloody palm touched the wood just as Surt wrapped his grabby hand around my arm. The world went dark before spinning into a kaleidoscope of blurred colors where I couldn’t tell right from left or up from down. When my vision cleared again, I was alone, lying on my back in the soft grass and gazing up at a blue sky through leafy green.

Where...

“*WHERE IS IT?!*” Surt’s furious voice had me sitting bolt upright and glancing around in a panic. He was standing a few feet away with his horns fully on display, but before I could point out this fancy feature, he stomped closer. “Your hand was on Laevateinn before I could stop you, so *Where. Is. It?!*”

“I... I don’t know!” I replied, beyond confused how *Surt* was in my vision with me.

When I’d guided Leia in the past, it was usually from within a dream inside *her* head. She had astrally projected herself to Delphi when I was still searching for her on the mainland, and then we both visited the original temple together, through a shared vision. But those instances were because of her own gifts working with mine, the mystical island we were both pulling power from, and that the two of us had an unbreakable connection.

So how did this jackass manage to tag along?

Refocusing, I realized Surt was babbling about “missing the one thing we need” while frantically gesturing toward what looked like a wall of wood.

No...

A really big tree trunk.

The World Tree.

So, we're back on this bullshit...

“Surt.” I massaged the bridge of my nose, absently noticing my hand still stung from where Hel had cut it with the knife. “There’s no need to climb to the top and kill Norwegian Heihei because you’re *no longer* planning on sneaking up on Asgard with an army for him to crow about—*remember?!*”

Try to keep up.

The giant was so caught off guard by my words that he forgot to stay mad. “Who’s... Norwegian Heihei?”

I grimaced. It was easy to forget how it was usually just me in these visions—especially as I only recalled bits and pieces after returning to my earthly form. So subjecting another person to my weird head movies in real time was a surreal experience...

Hey, wait a minute.

If I was simply *dreaming* about Surt—*gross*—then I could say anything I wanted to him, with no consequences.

“Vídópnir,” I replied. “Because he reminded me of the dumbest cock I’d ever seen.” Then I gave the giant a lecherous once-over. “Speaking of which... your sexy horns are showing, dude.”

Surt’s eyes widened, his hands immediately flying to his head to feel the evidence himself. “By Mjöllnir,” he gasped, before gazing up at the tree reverently. “It must be my proximity to Yggdrasil...”

I sighed. As much as this big idiot had pissed me off recently—*since we met, really*—it didn’t feel right keeping a key piece of evidence from him.

Especially if it might encourage him to rethink his plan.

And stay.

Stop it, Iola...

“Actually...” I cleared my throat, deciding to shoot my shot. “I think it’s your proximity to *me*. At least, that’s how it worked with Herculeia and her monsters.” When he turned to face me again—horror movie slow—I hurriedly added, “Which you guys should’ve already known... I mean, what kind of stalker-kidnappers *are* you, anyway?”

He stared at me for a full minute—all scary and smoldering and hot AF—before huffing a laugh that sounded surprisingly genuine. “Kidnapping you *wasn’t* part of the original plan, little *mækir*. That was Fen choosing the path of least resistance, as usual...”

That tracks.

I stood and slowly approached. “*Mækir*, huh? You called me that earlier, too... You know, when you were rubbing your cock on my ass while I fucked Jör.”

Remember that?

Surt growled, making me stifle a moan. Before I knew what was happening, he’d backed me against the World Tree and caged me in with his enormous body.

“Hel almost had me convinced that you *were* a *dís*, sent to guide us on our noble journey.” He dipped his head and took a deep inhale of my hair, making me shiver. “But I believe you were sent here to *test* me. To see if I was strong enough to remain focused on my true destiny.”

Let me guess...

“Valhalla, right?” I sneered, trying, and failing, to push him away. “And yeah, I get it, *I’m* in the way of your Very Important Plan, but what about the others? What about the actual *love* you’ve found with Fen and Jör? Has *that* served no purpose besides distracting you from your dumb fucking destiny that you wouldn’t be so obsessed with if you bothered

pulling your head out of your ass to notice what you already hamph—”

My rant was silenced as Surt’s mouth crashed against mine—his tongue invading my mouth with the exact amount of aggression I would expect from a grade-A asshole like him.

And I love it.

I loved it because I knew I could match him with everything I had, and, instead of running, he’d simply go harder. So I tangled my tongue with his, wrestling for dominance as our teeth clashed and his beard rubbed my face raw—each of us swallowing down the other’s moans like they were the only thing that could feed us.

“Trust me, Iola,” he snarled when he came up for air—backing away so I couldn’t pull him back into our kiss. “I am well aware of what’s right in front of me. But what if I give in to these earthly desires? What if I allow myself to grow so complacent that years pass—centuries, even—where I barely remember my purpose? Where does that leave me?”

You absolute idiot.

I opened my mouth to tell him this, but immediately snapped it shut again. For once, Surt wasn’t trying to argue. He was explaining why he *couldn’t* get close to anyone—at least, not any closer than he’d already allowed himself to be. As hard as it was for me to understand his *obsession* with Valhalla, it would be hypocritical to pretend I didn’t know how it felt to hold everyone at arm’s length. To think that *this* half-lived existence was all I was meant for.

“Happy,” I murmured with a defeated sigh—causing him to hiss in a breath before turning and stalking away. “You’d be happy.”

And so would I.

IOLA

Why is this vision dragging on?
Wrap it up already!

It wasn't that I had anywhere else to be, or that the broody company wasn't secretly delicious. But I usually only spirit journeyed long enough to get the message I—or someone else—needed, and rarely was my time spent doing mundane things.

Like... hiking across a landscape, with no clear destination.

Since I hadn't wanted to get separated from my field trip buddy, I'd hustled after Surt before he could stomp out of sight. He'd graciously slowed his pace so I could catch up, but didn't say a word as we continued traveling away from the World Tree.

It looks like you'll live to crow another day, Norwegian Heihei.

The briny smell of the sea hit me a few minutes before we emerged from a thick pine forest to find nothing but rocks and an endless expanse of whitecaps. I stopped walking at the edge of the pebble beach, curious to see if *Surt* would just keep going until his—*still sexily visible*—horns disappeared beneath the waves.

He could go hang out with Hazun.

Go be salty together...

My traveling companion planted his boots at the shore and stared out at the waves—his long hair blowing wildly around his head like a demonic halo. I wrapped my arms around myself, wishing I was wearing more than the thin sweater I'd thrown on over my workout clothes.

“A storm’s coming,” Surt finally spoke—his words carried on the wind. He turned to face me with an unreadable expression. “We should seek shelter for the night.”

I squinted up at the sky. It was overcast but unthreatening, and I would’ve guessed we still had hours to go before sunset. But I was also an ex-Girl Scout, so I knew the importance of ‘being prepared’ in advance—especially with how fast the weather could change on the coast. Plus, for some weird reason, I wanted to show off my latent survival skills to Surt, even though he could probably *feel* the changing winds in his hot-bod supernatural bones.

Maybe there’s a Monster Fucking merit badge for convincing Mr. Grumpy Pants to share his body heat with me tonight...

“Okay!” I clapped my hands together—more than ready for our team-building exercise to begin. “Let’s go scout for a lean-to location. I’m gonna show you what I can do!”

Reentering the woods, I quickly spotted a flat clearing with enough space between two trees for Surt to lie down his gigantic body comfortably.

Because you better believe this will be an only-one-bed scenario.

Only one lean-to.

Surt simply crossed his arms and watched as I worked my Girl Scout Jamboree magic. In no time—*okay, it took forever*—I had a horizontal ridge pole set up, covered with a makeshift roof of branches facing the wind. I was working on the sides when Surt started collecting fallen pine boughs to arrange over the branches for insulation.

I wonder if he’s done this before?

Unfortunately, all this wayward thought accomplished was to conjure up an image of the guys cuddled up together in a big puppy pile. Then I mused over how I hadn't seen that in action yet, followed by an acknowledgement of how I'd probably implode—*vagina first*—if I did.

I would have been content to keep my filthy thoughts to myself, but forgot how a single drop of arousal could be sniffed out from a mile away by these monsters. Surt growled almost threateningly, nostrils flaring as his heated gaze met mine. I instinctively froze—like prey trying to evade a predator—but he simply snarled again and stomped away, presumably to collect more materials.

Or jerk-off.

Sorry, not sorry, dude.

Stop being so hot.

Interestingly, he never once suggested making his *own* lean-to, but I'd figured out a few things about Surt. Like how, when he was out of his element, the big guy simply clammed up and waited for someone *else* to call the shots—which seemed counterintuitive to the Sir vibe he tried to evoke. Fen was just as much an alpha as him, so their shared authority worked well in those situations, but it was shocking to think Surt was actually deferring to *me* on our overnight plans.

Maybe he wants me to take charge...

The thought sent such a bolt of lust shooting through me that I had to close my eyes momentarily to recover. When I opened them again, Surt was standing at the edge of our little clearing with a dead rabbit—once again staring at me like he wanted to eat me alive.

Desperately needing to ignore the rapidly increasing tension, I focused on securing our rustic love shack the best I could while Surt skinned the rabbit and began constructing a campfire.

“Ooh, ooh, let me!” I yelped, tripping over some extra pine boughs in my haste to reach him and show off my mad firestarter skills.

Surt's beard twitched, but he dutifully sat back on his heels and gestured for me to take over. Grabbing some dry pine needles and leaves, I built a tinder nest and used a sharp stick to cut a v-shaped notch in the flat branch I was using as a fireboard. I then stuffed a piece of birch bark under the notch, stuck my chosen stick in the hole, and started grinding.

The innuendos write themselves...

My stick handling skills were rusty, apparently, because no matter how fast I rubbed one out, no sparks were flying.

I've been out of the survivalist game for too long!

"Allow me," Surt chuckled, flicking his finger and lighting up the entire campfire in a single blast.

Oh... right.

Fire giant.

"Well, now I feel like an idiot." I laughed, rolling my eyes self-deprecatingly. "Why didn't I think of asking *you* to do it?"

Surt was staring at the flames with almost as much awe as me. "I wasn't entirely sure I still could," he admitted. "It's been a... long time since I've been able to access my fire like that."

"Still think it's the proximity of the World Tree?" I teased, even as I placed my hand over his disproportionately larger one and gave it a comforting squeeze.

His eyes were firmly fixed on the fire. "No. But I think some part of me has known what's happening for a while." When all I could do was gape at him for being so uncharacteristically candid, he finally raised his gaze to meet mine. "And now we're stuck here together, for some reason..."

Unsure if he thought that was a good thing or not, I removed my hand from his and awkwardly shrugged. "Well, I've only brought someone else along with me once before, soooo... yeah. Whatever the message is must be for both of us."

Like... just bang it out already.

Surt's stare was unwavering. "You truly believe we're in one of your visions?" When I nodded, he continued, "Outside of reality?"

I nodded again, and patiently waited as he absorbed the information, curious to see how he'd respond. His gaze flickered to the campfire for a moment before landing on me again—almost cautiously.

"And will either of us remember what happens here?" he asked, so softly, I barely heard it.

Shit.

I knew exactly where he was going with this. Surt was so fixated on his path to Valhalla, so obsessed with controlling everything along the way, that he refused to give *himself* an inch of leeway. He'd established these strict boundaries in his relationships with Fen and Jör—and they'd been mostly content with what little he could offer—but then I'd come along like a chaos grenade in his carefully constructed world.

If this fateful—*mateful*—connection had only existed between me and the others, he could have simply left me in the dust come judgment day, but resisting the pull between the two of *us* probably felt like walking a tightrope to a control-freak like him.

What it sounded like Surt was suggesting, in so many words, was that being thrust into this vision together was a convenient loophole—one where self-imposed rules could be lifted, if only temporarily.

So why not take advantage of this dreamworld while we can?

"I don't know," I hesitantly replied, even as I inched closer, praying I was interpreting his signals correctly. "When it's just a vision, I only remember bits and pieces, and those quickly fade after I wake up. When I'm astrally projecting, I remember more, but I doubt that's what this is..."

It was a half-truth, and a selfish one at that. But if *this* was the only way I could convince this stubborn man to give in to what he clearly wanted—and what I wanted as well—then I

would tell him whatever he *needed* to hear to finally get out of his own way.

Consequences be damned.

Surt blew out a slow breath before nodding, almost to himself. I opened my mouth to give him one last little nudge, but all that came out was a strangled yelp as he tackled me to the ground.

FUCK YASSSS!!!

The next minute was a blur of torn clothing and muffled curses as we both scrambled to get the other person undressed as quickly as possible. It was a—completely unsurprising—battle for dominance once again, and by the time I was wrestling with Surt’s pants, I was almost feral.

He batted my hands away and sat back on his heels to unzip himself. My gaze was *riveted* on the action—as if I was afraid both he and his dick might disappear if I didn’t track every movement.

The moment of truth.

I froze as his fancy equipment finally came into view, and not only because of how freakin’ enormous it was.

It was... glowing.

The smooth skin of his cock looked like his horns—like obsidian interspersed with bright orange veins, like lava flowing beneath the surface. Again, *something* about this odd appearance was tugging on my awareness like *déjà vu*, but I didn’t know what to do with that information at the moment.

Déjà vu within another vision?

How meta.

Surt must have misinterpreted my hesitation as nerves, as he chuckled darkly. “What’s the matter, seer? Surely you know how to handle a monster cock by now?”

I rolled my eyes. “Please. I was handling *monsters* long before I even met you three.” When that earned me a

possessive growl, I grinned. “I’m just... hoping you’re not gonna melt off my vajay with that thing.”

He chuckled again and gave himself a rough stroke. “It feels fine to me... But it’s all right if you’re too scared to find out—”

That arrogant asshole didn’t get the chance to finish his thought, as I gathered saliva in my mouth, leaned forward, and spit.

On his cock.

What? I’m testing the temperature!

Surt’s jaw dropped open as he released his dick like it truly *was* on fire. “Did you just...”

“Spit on your cock?” I helpfully finished his sentence, relieved to discover my saliva wasn’t sizzling on the surface. “Sure did. That makes it mine now, you know.”

I expected more snark, but Surt surprised me yet again by visibly *melting* at my words. “Fuck,” was all he managed to choke out, and my dominant instincts roared in triumph.

Come for Mommy.

“Lie back,” I commanded, deciding we didn’t need the safeword speech for vision sex. “I want to ride your cock like I own it.”

Because I do.

Surt shuddered and did as he was told—his unexpected submission making me dizzy. Before he could change his mind and turn grumpy again, I climbed aboard and positioned my pussy directly above his red hot poker.

Right where I belong.

Placing my hands on his enormous pecs, I hummed in satisfaction at how pleasantly *warm* his skin was. Even beneath his coat of hair, I could see his chest was completely tattooed in the same blackwork style as Fen. For a moment, I pictured his entire body made from the same black rock as his horns—somehow *knowing* that was his true form. Not wanting

to get distracted, I shook off the mental image to focus on the task at hand.

Somehow fitting this beast inside me.

Luckily, between his copious precum—which, sadly, did not resemble liquid hot magma—and my own wetness, things felt properly lubed. Still, I took it slow, if for no other reason than not puncturing a lung.

And for the look on Surt's face.

His gaze was locked on mine as I pumped my way down his length, and I couldn't remember the last time I'd maintained such intense eye contact during this crucial moment. It added an intimacy to the act that I absolutely would *not* have stood for under normal circumstances. But this was *vision sex*.

So anything goes!

Surt wrapped his hands around my thighs. At first, I thought he planned to control my movements, but quickly realized it was more to steady *himself*, which I could appreciate. Besides how surreal of an experience this was, it was also kicking up all sorts of pesky emotions, which I did not appreciate one bit.

C'mon, read the room.

The lean-to...

I refocused yet again, realizing to my dismay that I'd only made it partway down his shaft, yet was already stretched impossibly tight.

“That's enough,” he gruffly said, and I tensed, worrying he'd changed his mind about the whole thing. But then, he reached between my legs and fisted the base of his dick—ensuring I wouldn't take any more than I could physically handle.

That's actually... really considerate.

Afraid I was about to catch *more* feels, I smirked down at him with as much swagger as I could muster while being stuffed like a sausage. “Ready to get owned, fire giant?”

“Yes.” He surprised me yet again with the honesty of his reply. “Let’s pretend I could be yours.”

Fucking hell.

I’d been ready to ride this man into the ground, but the way he was looking at me now—like *I* was his endgame, instead of Valhalla—made me switch gears.

I’m going to make him shatter.

Slowly.

Never mind that neither of us might remember this after we returned to Helheim—or that fate had decided two perfectly matched hotheads like us should meet under impossible circumstances. Just for tonight, I was going to pretend *I* could have everything I wanted.

Including him.

Kissing during sex was *not* my jam, but I felt compelled to lower my mouth until my lips brushed his. “I hope you remember this,” I whispered, like a prayer to his subconscious.

“I will,” Surt replied, even though we both knew he had no business making any promises.

Then, I began to move. Tilting my hips, I slowly dragged myself down his length, gasping as his fiery veins sent tendrils of pulsing pleasure through my core. His grip on my thigh tightened—urging me to go faster with his thumb relentlessly circling my clit—but I kept my pace relaxed, drawing it out for as long as possible.

For as long as I get to have him.

“Fuck, Iola,” he rasped, clearly nearing release despite my edging. “Why do you feel so fucking good?”

“Because this is fate,” I boldly replied, since there was no one here to challenge us. “And I’m going to pretend I’m yours as well.”

“Mine,” he growled against my lips.

Wrapping his arm around my back, Surt held me tightly against him—making me forget who was in control here, or

why I even cared. With a moan I hoped I'd never forget, he stiffened and spilled—filling me up with everything he could give.

Finally allowing himself to do so.

Flicking my clit, he dragged me over the edge, and I found myself babbling promises to him as well. Promises that all said the same thing.

I'm yours. I'm yours. I'm yours.

Once I'd stopped shuddering, Surt carefully slid his hand out from under me, but otherwise, we remained joined as we caught our breath. Resting my head on the unfamiliar rune tattooed over his heart, I allowed the steady beat to drown out the wind battering against our lean-to, and the dread building in my gut.

“What does *mækir* mean?” I sleepily mumbled, assuming it was Old Norse for pain in the ass.

Surt sweetly rubbed my back—almost subconsciously. “It translates to sword. To me, it means the object of my obsession.”

And the object he's destined to lose.

This confession felt like a punch to the gut. “Don't call me that again,” I raggedly replied, infuriated that tears were traitorously leaking from my eyeballs. “Not if you're still planning on leaving me behind.”

He nodded, but didn't reply, which I both appreciated and hated with every ounce of my being. I knew each second that passed inched us closer to when this vision would end, and the tenuous thread between us would be cut. But all that did was make me cuddle closer, stubbornly believing I could redirect our destinies if I held on just a little longer.

Even if I know it's all a lie.

JÖRMUNGANDR

W *here could they be?!*

The others had been missing for over 24-hours, and the only thing stopping me from diving into the sea to search the ocean floor was Fen's steady presence.

"It's all right, *beibe*," he soothed from where he calmly steered the yacht, smiling softly as I growled at him in response.

I will not be placated!

When Iola and Surt had disappeared into thin air from Hel's dining hall, we hadn't known what to make of it. Yes, Iola's consciousness had left us before, but even when she astrally projected, her physical form remained. Now there was no way to monitor her, or know if she was okay.

My Master could be alone... and hurt.

And what if she and Surt didn't end up in the same place?

WHAT IF THEY'RE BOTH DEAD?!

It was highly unlikely that Surt would have been killed, since we were oddly resilient, despite our human forms. But Iola was a half-mortal, and even though she was a fearsome little thing, it wouldn't take much to permanently send her to Helheim where I could never reach her...

Even the gods themselves couldn't retrieve their beloved Baldr from the realm!

“Jör.” Fen’s firm voice coaxed me out of my panicked state once again. “We *will* find them. Laevateinn will show us the way.”

I blew out a breath and peeked behind us at where the sword rested on the low table in the saloon seating area—willing Fen’s words to calm me.

After the shock of Iola and Surt’s disappearance had faded, Hel noticed Laevateinn moving of its own accord—like the magnetic needle of a compass. She’d urged us to follow the trail, offering to send a messenger if they showed up again in her realm. We agreed, choosing to rely on intuition and blind hope the sword was searching for the one destined to wield it.

Surt.

Beneath my worry, I was still furious with him for how he’d treated Iola. Even after she’d welcomed him into bed with us, he’d pretended it meant nothing—that *she* meant nothing. But I knew the truth. I saw how he looked at her. It was the same way he looked at *me* when he thought I didn’t notice.

No.

Not the same.

More.

“What if...” I choked out, my chest heaving as the dark walls of panic closed in again.

I can’t lose them.

I can’t, I can’t, I can’t.

Fen removed a hand from the wheel to rest on my forearm, but before he could speak, I heard a noise behind us. Turning so quickly, I almost fell over, I saw Laevateinn spinning wildly on the table before abruptly stopping, pointing to the right.

“Starboard!” I yelled, attempting to muscle Fen out of the way and take over at the wheel.

“Settle down,” he snapped—the first he’d raised his voice to me since this nightmare began. “*You* watch the blade while

I steer. Can you do that for me?"

Blowing out another breath, I begrudgingly obeyed, if only because working together seemed the quickest path to finding our lost companions. Over the next several minutes, we focused on following the erratic movements of Laevateinn until the blade leveled out, pointing north.

"There's nothing this way but open ocean," Fen muttered, but still headed in the direction I told him.

Thank you, Daddy.

The sword didn't move again. I'd just started fretting over whether it had been a glitch when a small strip of land appeared on the foggy horizon, illuminated by shafts of early morning light.

And from it rose an enormous tree—so massive it disappeared into the clouds.

"Yggdrasil..." Fen murmured, gazing in awe.

There was no way to fully appreciate its size, since the World Tree stretched from Niflheim, through Midgard, and up to Asgard in the heavens. While I always knew it existed—and that the legends stated it was on an island far out to sea—it was an overwhelming experience to be this close to the bridge between realms.

Oh, no...

I started panicking again, for an entirely different reason. While I'd made it clear how I wished to choose *life* over Valhalla, Surt remained stubbornly dedicated to his path. Reuniting the fire giant with his legendary sword, in a location where he could easily reach the gods, would only enable him, and possibly ensure a repeat of Ragnarok.

I must stop that from happening!

Fen anchored us offshore, but physically restrained me from diving into the icy depths. "I don't want you catching cold," he explained as he lowered the dinghy, and even though I grumbled, I appreciated Daddy fussing over me.

As soon as we reached the rocky beach, however, all bets were off. I leaped from the dinghy and hoisted Laevateinn into the air like a medieval knight—*willing* it to guide me to my mate.

Both my mates.

I'd realized the ache I felt at the thought of dying—of possibly not seeing Fenrir and Surtr on the other side—was because *they* were my mates as well. It took Iola's arrival to open my eyes to this. It may have been naive, but I suspected she'd done the same for Fen, and I wondered if he would still follow through with our outdated plan, now that Iola could be *ours*.

She already feels like ours.

The real challenge would be convincing Surt. The only strategy I'd come up with was to *demand* he stay—power dynamics be damned. *I* wanted to stay, and therefore, I wanted my three mates to stay with me.

It makes sense to me.

I gasped as Laevateinn gave a sudden jerk forward, nearly sending me to my knees. It was pointed at the pine forest on the edge of the beach, and I squinted as movement within caught my eye.

Is that...?

“Lower your weapon, serpent.”

My gaze shot straight up, eyes widening as I found what looked like an oversized falcon hovering directly above me. It had ochre-colored feathers, with wings forged from razor sharp metal. Even its beak was edged with bronze—resembling a weapon. I tensed, but the talking bird didn't attack. It simply continued to observe me, waiting to see if I would obey.

I probably should.

Fen growled, shoving me behind him as his body began to half-shift into a wolveren form.

Can he do it that easily now?

“Oh, that’s interesting...” the bird spoke, its beak creating an unpleasant metallic scrape as it did. “The vision Iola sent didn’t mention any *mates*.”

Wait.

Iola... sent a vision?

She wouldn’t!

Fen experienced a similar thought. “You lie!” he snarled. “Iola would never contact anyone behind our backs. And who the fuck are you?”

Ignoring Fen’s question completely, the bird tilted its head back and released an ear-splitting caw—like a signal.

Or a battle cry.

I gripped Laevateinn tighter, determined to defend Fen if this creature attacked, and vaguely wondering if *I* could just as easily access my true form, if need be.

Luckily, the enormous falcon simply drifted down to land in front of us before shifting into a man himself. His feathers morphed into ochre skin stretched taut over a muscular form, while his all-black irises softened to include flecks of bronze. The razor-sharp wings still rose from his back, and I got the sense he was in complete control over how much of him was human versus other.

By Odin...

He’s one of us!

Only naked...

“This is Iola’s doing, hmm?” He casually gestured at Fen’s wolfish features, drawing my curious attention away from fixating on whether he had a cock hidden inside *his* frontal hole as well. “Her proximity feeds the beast, you know. And if you’re able to shift between forms so easily, I’m assuming you’ve also solidified the mate bond at this point.”

“How do you... know all this?” Fen began when a deafening roar shook the ancient pines lining the beach.

When I raised my gaze again, I truly felt like a medieval knight of old—because the creature circling us now was one I’d only read about in fairytales.

A dragon.

How cool!

The strange bird-man didn’t seem surprised, so I assumed they were together. And when the dragon gracefully landed on the beach, I noticed three figures riding on its back.

A green-haired woman and two men.

One of which was the Kraken, Vann, in his human form.

Oh.

“All right, assholes, where the *fuck* is Iola?!” The green-haired woman had barely been lowered to the ground by the dragon’s tail before she was stalking toward us with murder in her eyes. “And which one of you creeps is *Fen*?”

“The blond one,” Vann helpfully interjected as he slid off the dragon’s back, followed by a dark-haired man with brilliant green eyes.

“Stand down, *Strategos*. They mean us no harm.” Bird-man grabbed the woman before she could reach us—chuckling as if her hotheaded, violent behavior was an everyday occurrence.

Which makes sense, if this is...

“Herculeia?” I hesitantly asked. When she only narrowed her eyes in response, I dared to continue. “We don’t know where Iola is! That’s why we’re here. S-she fell into a vision and *disappeared* right before our eyes.” Every emotion that had been coursing through my veins—concern, fear, anguish, fury, helplessness—all converged until I was hoarsely sobbing through my explanation. “L-Laevateinn led us to this island, but we’re unsure if that means she’s here. We’ve been so worried and I... I don’t know what I’ll do if I lose her...”

Even if I do know.

I will tear this fucking world apart.

Perhaps I should have been embarrassed for showing such vulnerability in front of those I hardly knew, but I didn't give a fuck. "And I understand you are looking for Iola as well," I continued, roughly brushing away my tears so I could meet Herculeia's gaze. "But I will not be stopped. *Two* of my mates are missing, and I feel as if my skin were being flayed from my body."

Not to be dramatic.

"I like his style," the green-eyed man said, which made Vann growl possessively. I then felt a nudge against the barriers of my mind as he telepathically added, "*If you're a sea dragon, please forgive me while I fangirl.*"

"Like I don't know you're mind-speaking with him, Timyn," Vann hissed. "Keep it in your pants, you slutty lake snake."

Timyn winked at me before turning to the ornery Kraken. "Don't worry, *calamari*. I'm only a slut for you."

Herculeia snorted and rolled her eyes at the pair. "The lie detector test determined *that* was a lie."

They are just like us!

Her expression softened as she turned to me again. "Okay, there's no way I can stay mad at you because you're fucking adorable. And I bet Iola has already *devoured* a tasty snack like you..." Herculeia's voice trailed off as something behind us caught her eye. "Ah, speak of the devil. It's the elusive hoebaggler herself, caught in the wild."

I spun, gasping to find Iola emerging from the treeline, followed by Surt. Neither looked any worse for wear, although both wore confused expressions and smelled deliciously like sex.

Solidifying the mate bond, indeed.

"What are *all* of you doing in my vision?" Iola asked.

"This isn't a vision, bish," Herculeia scoffed. "This is a godsdamn search party. Because not only did you *ignore* Vann's text when he told you to stay the fuck away from the

actual Fenrir”—she gestured at Fen for emphasis—“but then you confirmed my suspicions when you didn’t give me a play-by-play of how good his dick was.”

“*What?*” Fen choked out.

Herculeia ignored him. “He’s a wolf, so I assume he’s packing a knot, right? We’ll compare notes later. Anyway, you gave us a scare, Io. Why would you just fall off the map like that... without checking in at all? Kind of inconsiderate, if you ask me.”

Iola’s confusion gave way to annoyance as she crossed her arms and jutted out a hip—uncannily mirroring the other woman. “Maybe I needed a break from being required to report my every waking move, Leia. Ever think of that? This was *supposed* to be my two-week vacation from my soul-sucking job. It wasn’t exactly my plan to get drugged and kidnapped—”

“*THEY DRUGGED AND KIDNAPPED YOU?!*” Herculeia’s fury had every monster in attendance shrinking backward in alarm.

Even Surt.

Iola grimaced. “Yeah... but I got over it. A lot has happened in the past few days. Or... week? Whatever. Listen, my guys are dealing with a curse similar to what *yours* went through, except they also need to find a way into Valhalla—”

“Is that Laevateinn?” Vann’s icy tone cut through Iola’s babbling, and I realized I was holding the infamous sword out in the open, where a fellow Norseman could easily identify it.

Oops.

“What’s it matter to you, Kraken?” Surt replied, and it was only then that I realized his horns were out and his skin was changing shades as his true form rose to the surface.

Beautiful.

“It matters if you’re planning to end the fucking world, fire giant!” Vann growled before shifting into *his* legendary shape of a gigantic squid.

This is not good.

“Oooh! Is it time to battle?” Timyn clapped his hands and quickly morphed into an odd, nine-headed... dinosaur.

Why on earth does Vann call him a lake snake?

“Whoa, whoa, WHOA!” Leia shouted, waving her hands—apparently well-versed in stepping into the monstrous fray. “Time out. Is *that* the plan here, Io? Are you... are you actually helping your kidnappers with a fucking doomsday plot?”

When you put it that way...

“No!” Iola hollered back. “I mean, at first I didn’t know *what* they were up to because they were keeping shit close to the chest. So, I played nice, figuring I could stick around long enough to—”

“To *what*, seer?” Surt sneered, spinning to face Iola as his skin finished its metamorphosis to molten lava. “To fool us? I knew it! All this time, you’ve been *pretending* to care for Fenrir and Jörmungandr for your own agenda.”

She’s been... pretending?

“What?” Iola was frantically shaking her head. “That’s not...”

“Don’t deny it!” Surt boomed as he rapidly increased in size, dwarfing the woman I’d mistakenly *thought* was my mate. “You lied to us. You lied to *me* about this being a vision, simply to add me to your conquests. That’s exactly what you’ve been doing. Luring each of us in so you could tempt us away from our true destiny—from the one thing we *deserve*. From Valhalla!”

I’ve been such a fool...

The noise I made wasn’t even remotely human. Fen was already shifting into his full-sized wolf as Laevateinn flew from my grasp and into Surt’s—increasing in size to match its master. Herculeia’s monsters vainly attempted to intervene as the wolf and fire giant began trampling the forest on their

march toward Yggdrasil, but their efforts were inconsequential.

Like fleas buzzing around a pair of elephants.

Now that my worst nightmare had been confirmed, I took one last look at Iola, then turned my back on her tearful, deceitful face before jumping into the icy sea. My heart was nothing but broken shards, rattling in my chest as my body grew and rearranged, but I welcomed the pain. It reminded me I wasn't meant for love, because I wasn't a man.

I'm a monster.

A monster all should fear.

They may not have predicted that the great Jörmungandr would end the world *twice*, but it mattered not. I would show them all exactly how formidable I was—how terrifying. The gods would have no choice but to open the gates of Valhalla and bow as I entered, with the blood of billions on my hands. I may have only just survived the greatest pain I would ever experience, but I would rise again, reeking of death and destruction.

Victorious.

IOLA

Tears were streaming down my face—blurring my vision. Surt willfully misinterpreting *everything* between us was painful enough, but helplessly watching both Fen and Jör believe his hateful words felt worse than death.

How could they think I deceived them?

There was no time for anyone to listen to me explain. Ladon and Zephyr had already flown after Fen and Surt as they advanced on the World Tree, while Vann and Timyn had leaped into the sea after Jör. Because of their unfathomable size, I could still clearly see my men, but I didn't know who to go after to stop the inevitable.

Is there anything I can do?!

“Well, shit,” Leia cleared her throat from where she remained on the beach with me. “That’s... not how I saw things going.”

Blind rage descended as I spun on my bestie, deciding *she* was going to get the brunt of my wrath. “And how *did* you see it going, Leia? Did you think you’d just swoop in and save me from another one of my many bad decisions? Because there was no way I could have possibly met three guys who would actually be interested in me, right? Or that I’d be busy doing *anything* that didn’t revolve around *you!*”

I knew I was being cruel, but if anyone could handle me at my worst, it was my ride-or-die. And even though I should have brought up my deeply rooted issues long before now—or

maybe looked into actual therapy instead of just dick-therapy —I couldn't bottle it up any longer.

What better time than the end of the world to get shit off my chest?

Because she was the best, Leia didn't return my energy. She simply nodded and blew out a slow breath before replying, "Thinking someone had hurt you just made me see red, Io. But yeah... I probably should have asked a few clarifying questions before showing up, ready to throw hands. Especially because I *know* you wouldn't suddenly join some doomsday cult. Not unless the dick was top tier, I mean."

I groaned as the fight went out of me. "It *was* top tier, but..." My voice caught in my throat, and I hesitated, even though Leia was the last person I would be embarrassed about getting emotional in front of. "It's so dumb, but I thought *I* would be enough for them to no longer want to go to Valhalla."

But I'm never enough.

Leia sighed, but it was a sigh of loving exasperation. "You're more than enough, and I will fight anyone who says otherwise." She squinted in the direction Fen and Surt had stomped off. "But it's good to know you're still a size queen."

And you're still my number one bish.

Her comment did the trick. I barked a laugh, even as more tears sprang to my eyes from sheer helplessness. "How did you even know where to find me?"

She cleared her throat again—awkwardly. "Well, I've been practicing honing my visions lately. Alcmene... has been helping." When my jaw dropped at *this* unexpected intel, she shrugged. "Yeah. I know. Hell froze over. Anyway, I wanted to see if I could connect with *your* dreams, for once. It was kind of all over the place last night, but then snapped into focus on the World Tree, followed by the sight of two world-ending monsters approaching it."

I stumbled backward as a rush of clarity hit me. All at once, I *knew* I'd seen this happen before—in the vision *I* had

when Vídópnir the rooster lost its shit.

Looks like Norwegian Heihei is not just a dumb cock, after all.

Blowing out a steadying breath, I peeked at her. “Do you think your guys can stop them?”

Leia grimaced. “I honestly have no fucking idea. I would have brought the entire 12-pack of psychos if I’d known shit was gonna go down like this.”

I moved closer and grabbed her hand, giving it the same comforting squeeze we’d done since we were kids. “So we’re fucked, is what you’re saying.”

“Giving up already? Typical human.”

We both turned to face the water, and I gasped to find Hazun washed ashore—casually eavesdropping while stretched out like a Playgirl centerfold.

Dude should really invest in a Speedo.

Not that I’m complaining.

“Another one of yours?” Leia asked, raising a judgy eyebrow as if she *didn’t* have a stable packed with 12 men, 16 dicks, and one cockpocket at home.

Hazun answered for me. “Pshhh... No thank you. I don’t do humans.”

“He’s not human,” I stage-whispered as Leia’s brow furrowed in confusion.

“But I *do* occasionally help them,” he drawled, absently examining his fingernails as if the end of the world wasn’t upon us.

“Is this the part where I promise my firstborn, in exchange for your help?” My tone was laced with sarcasm, even though I honestly would have given anything at this point to have my men back with me.

Anything to not lose them.

The smile that stretched across Hazun's face was chilling, but he shook his head. "No need. This one's on the house."

"What's in it for you?" I asked, knowing full well how these supernatural types operated. "Why bother saving the world when you care so little for humans? It's not like our extinction affected you the first time."

Hazun glanced over his shoulder to better observe the now full-sized Jör *still* snaking his way over the horizon. "It's true." He turned to face us again and rose to stand. "Should the world end again, I'll be safe in the deep with my kind. However, I rather like how things turned out on the surface this time around, so I'll lend a hand."

How charitable.

"Okay," I sighed, willing to take whatever help he was offering, firstborn children be damned. "What do you plan to do?"

Hazun gave me a pitying look before holding out his hand. "Oh, no, little seer. *You're* the only one who can stop this."

Me?!

"Me?!" I echoed my own frantic thoughts. "How? This is all happening *because* of me. *I* gave them the world-ending intel they needed through my visions, even if I didn't know I was doing it at the time. Then I stuck around... to keep an eye on things, but also because I started to care about them... and that gave them the power to access the true forms they needed to fulfill their plan. And now, even *Jörmungandr* is going through it, because my sweet danger noodle—all my mates—believe I played them!"

And why is that, Iola?

Not even successfully saying Jör's full name could turn my frown upside down as I realized a harsh truth. If I'd just been honest with the guys about my feelings before this point, things might have turned out differently. Jör professed his undying love to me almost since day one, and Fen gave me his mate bite, but I still insisted on playing my cards close. I'd been the most honest with *Surt*, and that was only because I

thought we were in a dreamworld where neither of us would remember what happened.

I'm such an idiot.

My two-week, dicked-down vacation had exceeded my wildest dreams, yet I never allowed myself to fully appreciate my monsters. The barbed wire fence I'd constructed around my heart may have kept me safe before, but it had stopped me from experiencing the very thing I longed for. Despite both Jör telling me—and Fen showing me—otherwise, I'd assumed there was no way they could care about me. And by operating as if they'd inevitably leave me in the end, it had become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Maybe it's time to assume the best?

I've got nothing else to lose!

I glanced at Leia. “If I fuck this up and the world ends... I want you to know *I'm* the one who ate the last Magnolia red velvet cupcake on your birthday last year. I just blamed it on the guys because they were all so drunk, they couldn't argue.”

She nodded sagely. “I know, bish. You're the only ho who loves them as much as me. But you're still my ride-or-die.”

I smiled and turned to face Hazun again, before taking his outstretched hand. “All right, dude. What do I need to do?”

He grinned, revealing teeth that looked a lot sharper than I remembered. “You can start by breathing underwater.”

Wait...

“*UNDERWATER?!*” I yelped as the salty psychopath scooped me into his arms and raced headlong into the sea. “Wait! I can't breathmphhh—”

My words were lost as he abruptly dove beneath the waves, whether or not I was ready. I clamped my mouth shut, wishing I'd had the chance to suck in some extra air, and wondering how long it would take this jackass to realize I wasn't aquatic.

As he dove deep, I frantically gestured toward the surface, but the not-merman simply laughed and kicked his swimming

speed into fifth gear. The water was rushing past my face so fast that I was getting exfoliated, which I wouldn't have minded had I been in a relaxing spa setting and not in the middle of the open ocean.

This vacation really didn't go as planned.

My body finally gave up, and I instinctively inhaled, but instead of a lungful of saltwater, I found I could breathe just fine.

“What the fuck?” was all I could think to say, which felt appropriate.

It was then I noticed we were surrounded by a magical air bubble that reminded me of some 1980s My Little Pony television special Leia made me watch once.

With a hot demon centaur as the bad guy...

Hey! Maybe Hazun is a Sea Pony.

“Simply signal SOS!”

Shaking the related doo-wop ditty from my mind, I realized to my horror that we were headed straight for the end of Jör's massive tail.

“What the fuck are we doing?” I elaborated on my previous statement. “It's not like we can yank on the World Serpent's tail and scold him until he stops.”

“That's not the plan,” Hazun calmly replied—way too calmly, given the dire circumstances. “But Jörmungandr's aim is to encircle the earth and bite his own tail. Once he releases it, the motion will cause destructive waves to crash over the land, wiping out all living things. We can't allow that to happen.”

No shit.

“Again. *How* am I supposed to stop this?” I not-so-patiently asked, my anxiety rocketing past level eleven the closer we got to the wildly thrashing appendage.

Hazun grinned again—which I now recognized as a Very Bad Sign—before reaching out a hand and boldly grabbing

onto an oversized iridescent green scale. Then he grabbed *my* hand and placed it next to his, as if hitching a ride like this was nothing but a Sunday drive.

“I’m not... What... Fuck?!” I stuttered, squealing in terror as Hazun let me go.

Now the *only* thing I had to hold on to in this great, wide ocean was Jör, the murderous danger noodle.

Imma die.

“Don’t let go, little seer,” Hazun chuckled in my ear. “When our serpent goes to bite his tail, he’ll see *you*—his *mate*. Surely you’ll then be able to convince him to abandon this foolish plan.”

WAIT.

“*THAT’S THE PLAN?!*” I screeched, but Crazy Sea Legs had already disappeared into the depths, leaving me to complete my powerwash facial with a not-so-happy ending alone.

We’re all gonna die.

The only silver lining was that Hazun had left me the air bubble, but my relief was short-lived. I tensed as the surrounding ocean abruptly settled—like the receding that occurred before a tsunami—and I found myself being lifted out of the water, along with Jör’s tail.

Eek.

I’d seen my sweet snake in his true form before—even if it was apparently only the ‘miniature’ version—but nothing would have prepared me for what awaited me above the surface. Awkwardly clambering to the topside of the tail, I found myself face-to-face with a serpent so enormous, he could’ve taken a bite out of the Chrysler Building like it was a Quarter Pounder with cheese.

Eeeeeeeek.

The World Serpent cocked his gigantic head, as if trying to determine if I was a barnacle he’d picked up from Bikini Bottom. Even though I was shaking in barely contained terror,

I managed a smile, desperately clinging to Fen's claim about them still being sentient in their true forms.

"H-hey, danger noodle," I hesitantly spoke, assuming he could still hear me through the bubble. "Do you recognize me? It's Iola. Y-your mate."

He recoiled as if I'd struck him, and I held my breath, hoping against hope that his journey around the world had given my sensitive baby time to forgive me for being an emotionally stunted ass.

"Please, Jör," I begged, not even caring that my voice cracked with emotion. "Don't do this. I don't *want* you to go to Valhalla. I need you here—with *me*. You and all my mates. Please."

Jör's pretty aquamarine eyes narrowed, and I barely had a moment to prepare before he opened his massive jaw and snapped it shut.

With me inside.

IOLA

H *e ate me!*

And not in the fun way.

At first, I was shocked, then horrified, as I prepared for Jör to swallow me whole. What followed was irritation mixed with resignation, along with a random train of thought over how long I'd survive in his belly, like a slutty Geppetto.

Waiting to be saved by a real boy.

But Jör *didn't* send me to my doom. Instead, he cradled me in his—still alarmingly toothy—mouth and took off at a dizzying speed. As I was still inside Hazun's magical air bubble, all I could do was bounce around like a hamster in an exercise ball and hope for the best.

Like not throwing up while I'm stuck in here.

When Jör abruptly stopped, I braced myself for the possibility that he'd simply carried me to his favorite dining location to digest. But then, he spit me out, and I peered through my saliva-covered sphere to find Leia smirking down at me.

“Well, *someone's* looking rode hard and put away wet! Typical.” She cackled before casually returning to her conversation with Ladon and Zephyr in their human forms.

Bish.

My bubble burst—figuratively and literally. If Leia's guys had returned, that meant they'd either successfully defeated *mine*, or Fen and Surt were still rampaging unchecked.

I would bet money on option two.

“Where’s my... my...” I scrambled to my feet and looked around, hoping Jör hadn’t disappeared back into the sea to fulfill his doomsday destiny.

Every atom of my being breathed a sigh of relief to find my big scary snake in handsome human form. He was standing in the shallow surf, with a hand covering his crotch and a heartbreakingly unsure expression on his face.

Oh, sweet bb.

“Zephyr!” I called over my shoulder, while smiling at Jör encouragingly. “Tell Jör what you’re packing.”

The Stymphalian Bird furrowed his brow in confusion, but Leia was ready to assist with the overshare, as usual. “A cockpocket!” she crowed, spinning her naked mate—*they were always naked*—to face mine. “It’s a crowd favorite in our house.”

Same, girl, same.

Jör’s cheeks pinked, but he smiled gratefully before lowering his hand. When he looked at me again, his expression was still cautious, and I knew we needed to clear the air.

It’s time to show your cards, Iola.

“I’m so sorry, Jör,” I croaked, hustling over to where he stood—needing to be close. “I’m sorry that my trust issues made it easy for you to believe I deceived you. What I should have done was just *tell* you guys how I felt. I should have said that the thought of you three disappearing to Valhalla felt like a death sentence—even without the end of the world—because I can’t imagine living without you.”

Might as well be dramatic.

I was speaking my drama noodle’s language. His pretty eyes were glassy with happy tears as he reached for me. “Does this mean—”

“Yes!” I cried. “I’m your *mate*, Jör! I’m definitely your mate.”

“—that you want to make babies with me?” He laughed, peppering me with kisses. “I already knew you were my mate, *Blódughadda*,” he joyfully added.

And I should have listened in the first place.

I laughed, too—a little overwhelmed to be back in his arms, but incredibly grateful for it. “Well, I still don’t know if we *can* make babies, but we can sure as hell try!”

Jör nodded solemnly. “I like that plan.”

Same.

“Not to interrupt...” Ladon’s resonant voice did exactly that, but it was a good thing, since we still had two murderous mates to collect.

I turned to the dragon, who I rarely saw in human form—if you could call it that. With his iridescent scales, bright green hair and ruby eyes, Ladon looked more like the hero from a hot-bod alien romance.

Maybe I should look into reading some of those next...

“The wolf and fire giant were past the point of reason when we caught up with them at the base of the World Tree,” Ladon continued with a grim expression.

“Like Berserkers.” Vann’s voice sounded from behind me, tinged with signature annoyance.

I turned to discover him and Timyn emerging from the surf, one looking way more excited about their recent adventure than the other.

“Whew!” the Hydra exclaimed, approaching Jör with the same star-struck expression he usually reserved for his dragon idol. “You were *fast* out there, Jörmungandr—and so... *big*...”

A massive tentacle shot out of Vann’s spine to coil around Timyn, yanking him backward until he was flush against the Kraken’s front.

“If you keep flirting right in front of me, another tentacle is coming out,” Vann hissed. “And you won’t like where that one goes.”

“Oh, I think I will,” Timyn cackled. “You’re so hot when you’re angry, *calamari*.”

Zephyr snorted, while Ladon rolled his eyes. “As I was saying...” the dragon huffed. “Now that this one is no longer threatening to displace the entire ocean”—he nodded curtly at Jör—“we don’t need to worry about saving the human race. However, your other mates are currently climbing the World Tree, headed for Asgard. We should probably intervene, as I assume the gods won’t take kindly to the great Fenrir and Surtr showing up at their doorstep, hungry for war.”

My babies!!!

“We need to save them!” I shouted, causing Ladon to eye me appraisingly. “Stop them... whatever. But I swear, if the gods hurt one hair on their hot-bods, I am *THROWING HANDS!*”

“Yup,” Leia snickered, popping the p. “These fools are her mates all right.”

Damn straight.

“Very well.” Ladon solemnly nodded before shifting into his dragon form—his voice deepening as he did. “Let’s fly.”

While I’d used the Hydra as ground transportation a few times, I’d never gotten the chance to be a real-life dragon rider. Luckily, Timyn was fangirling enough for all of us as we climbed aboard, so my dorky excitement went blessedly unnoticed.

I do have a reputation to uphold.

Possessive alpha that I was, I made Jör bring up the rear behind me, so he wouldn’t be touching anyone else. Vann was directly in front of me, which I assumed was by design, since—besides Leia and Timyn—I was obviously his favorite.

“Thank you,” I whispered in his ear as Ladon lifted off with powerful beats of his massive wings. “I know you weren’t *trying* to set me up with my guys, but you did it, anyway.”

I'd expected his usual half-exasperated—and extremely loving—annoyance. Instead, Vann turned his head to offer me a secretive smile. “Yes, well, the *Norns* work in mysterious ways.”

Ain't that the truth!

Aside from offering to send them an email, I hadn't thought about my bosses much since sending them the cloudberry intel and kicking off my two-week vacation with an ill-fated *kaffi* date. A meeting between us would need to happen once I returned to Greece, because there was no way I wasn't immediately moving to Stockholm to bang hot monsters all day.

Okay, and maybe be in love, too...

Assuming the gods don't smite my rampaging boyfriends before I can tell them how I feel.

I gritted my teeth, wishing I understood *how* I'd teleported to this island in the first place, so I could get us all to the World Tree faster. Regardless, it still only took about ten minutes for Ladon to cross the island, shoot past a shooketh Norwegian Heihei, and land at the base of the apparently reconstructed rainbow bridge.

LGBTQ+ fever dream, here we come!

I didn't have time to admire my surroundings, as two extremely large and incredibly pissed off monsters were advancing on what I could only assume was Asgard at the far end. Blessedly, no gods had appeared to confront them yet, but that also could have been because the wall surrounding the city was even bigger than my guys.

The better to ignore anything that doesn't concern them.

Typical god behavior.

“You and Jörmungandr must continue on your own,” Ladon instructed, as he used his tail to deposit both of us on the shimmering path. “I refuse to endanger my honey bee by flying any closer.”

Leia preened while Timyn complained about “missing all the action,” but I was fine leaving the others behind. This was *my* mess to clean up, and the only one I needed by my side was Jör.

“Ready to collect our mates?” I asked as we jogged across the colorful span to catch up with the two lovable Berserkers.

The snake grimaced. “I-I will try my best, Iola, but Fen and Surt haven’t exactly... listened to me in the past.”

There’s a new sheriff in town, beibe.

All his concerns did was make me more determined. “Oh, we’ll *make* them listen, Jör. No more of this grumpy dictator and his enabling second-in-command business. From now on, our quad is a *team* that discusses things, like big decisions and... feelings...”

Deep breaths, Iola.

Staunchly ignoring my deeply ingrained instinct to flee from the threat of emotions, I continued to march toward my mates. For being so large, they weren’t covering much ground, but once we got closer, I realized the *pull* between us was slowing them down—that they were fighting for every step they took toward their supposed fate.

Good.

Because your destiny is with me.

“Hey, assholes!” I shouted, assuming the insult would get their attention, but also knowing I was about to play my ace. “I spoke to the *Norns*, and none of you are getting into Valhalla.”

So what if it was a little—okay, big—white lie? If these single-minded idiots were still caught up on the *shoulds* of their ageless existence, then I was going to introduce them to the possibilities.

And I don’t see anyone here to stop me.

As expected, the oversized wolf and horned fire giant immediately stopped their death march to turn and face us—*radiating* righteous anger. If it had been anyone else, I would have pissed myself, but I knew I had nothing to fear.

Because they're mine.

“More deception, little witch?” Surt sneered. “Our paths have been destined from the moment we were created. What makes you think anything *you* say will change that?”

I was torn. Yes, I was *technically* lying about where my intel was coming from, but I knew in my bones these three were my mates, and I no longer wanted to pretend otherwise.

So tell them that, dummy.

“I don't want to lose you, okay?!” I shouted back, crossing my arms and trying to look as imposing as possible while facing down two behemoths. “And neither does Jör. I don't give a flying fuck you interpreted some bullshit prophecies a certain way, or that you decided I was playing you without giving me a chance to defend myself. You belong *here*, with *me*. The four of us are destined to be together—not in some vague afterlife but in the real world—and I don't need the Fates to tell me it's true. I just know.”

So there.

As expected, Fen folded first. My wolf shifted back to his human form before gazing up at Surt imploringly. “Perhaps we should rethink our plan, old friend.” When the giant simply grunted noncommittally, Fen added, “Because I... I believe that as well.”

Daddy Wolf with the assist!

Surt glanced down at the man by his side, and I saw him soften the tiniest bit. All at once, I realized he didn't necessarily *want* to call the shots—it was just his way of feeling like he had one iota of control in an existence that felt completely off the rails.

It's like looking in a mirror...

“Please, Surt,” I begged, letting him *see* the desperate love on my face. “I need you, too. From one stubborn ass to the other, please, just... *look* at what's already in front of you. Not the halls of Valhalla, but *us*. Your mates. *Please...*”

Please choose us.

The fire giant stared at me for a long moment while I sweated bullets. I knew it was a big ask to expect this Norse warrior to simply give up his dreams of eternal glory. But I was hoping—praying, even—that he would finally see his destiny *wasn't* set in stone. That he could choose a different path.

Please choose to be happy.

“I... don't know if I can,” he finally rumbled—and again, I understood how incredibly frightening the unknown was to someone like him.

Because I'm the same way.

“Can you try?” I dared to ask. “With me?”

We can do this.

Together.

I almost collapsed in relief when he joined Fen at a more manageable, but still massive, size. He stiffly nodded, and his expression was still a mix of cautious and hopeful, but that was good enough for me.

“Finally!” I heard a familiar voice exclaim.

Always showing up a second too late to assist.

It must be fate.

With a sigh, I turned to face *the* Fate I now knew as Clotho—the spinner—unsurprised to also find the allotter, Lachesis, and the inevitable, Atropos, standing by her side.

Aka, the *Morai*, the *Norns*, and the owners of Ancient Olive skincare.

My Girl Bosses.

I cleared my throat, knowing I was about to be called out for going off-script with their bread and butter. “Yeah, soooo... I kind of decided these legendary Norse monsters should *not* get into Valhalla, because I think they belong with me...”

My next performance review is going to be interesting.

Clotho and Lachesis stared at me in confusion, but Atropos threw her head back with a light laugh. “Oh, Iola... that’s because they *do* belong with you! Why do you think we’ve been sending you to Sweden on so many business trips over the past year? Your fate has always been to meet these three and guide them to their *true* destiny. Not Valhalla, but *life* on earth with you! If you’d simply *asked* us, we would have gladly told you where you were all destined to end up.”

So this could have been an email...

“I knew it! Iola is our mate and we are all meant to be together,” Jör crowed triumphantly before looking slightly embarrassed. “I mean, assuming that’s what Sir wants as well...”

Sweet little snake.

Surt had been frozen with his jaw practically in Midgard as Atropos said her piece, but he snapped to attention at Jör’s words. Closing the distance between them, he gathered the other man into his arms before depositing a soft kiss on his head.

“I want to be wherever you are, Jörmungandr,” he whispered as I imploded from cuteness overload. “Wherever *all* of you are.”

He glanced at me as he said this—still adorably wary—but I was already throwing myself into the puppy pile, along with Fen. “Same! You guys are stuck with me forever now. *And* it’s fate, so there’s nothing you can do about it. Ha!”

Jör let out a shaky sigh and Fen huffed a laugh, but Surt’s eyes narrowed in challenge. I shivered in delight as he gave me the smexiest of sexy glares before a smile twitched his lips. “Very well. I will try my best not to kill you, *mækir*, but I can’t make any promises.”

And I wouldn’t want it any other way.

EPILOGUE

IOLA

Things moved fast after that fateful—*get it?*—day on the fabulous rainbow bridge.

My bosses were unsurprisingly supportive of me putting in my notice with Ancient Olive and moving from Athens to the north easternmost island in the Stockholm Archipelago. They'd even offered to put in a good word for me with Ellin and the cloudberry Swedes, if I needed a job, but I politely declined.

I'd rather choose my own path from here on out, thank you very much!

However, I *had* made some important promises during my Scandinavian adventure and shamelessly used my connections to put things right.

It turned out the extreme cold affecting the cloudberry harvest was because of Hel's attempts to escape her icy realm. At my request, the *Norns* paid a little visit to Asgard. The next day, the goddess of the underworld was miraculously allowed to leave Helheim whenever she pleased.

Granted, she had to wear a veil around unsuspecting mortals, but she spent most of her time on Midgard visiting us on the island, anyway—where she could be herself.

Where we all can.

Leia visited often—no surprise—along with the Dragon Express and whichever monsters couldn't bear to let her out of their sight that week. At first, it felt strange to say goodbye to

my bestie, knowing I couldn't just hop on a boat and be at her mystical island in under an hour. It was good for me, though. While my ride-or-die was still my number one bish, it was time for me to start living *my* life—free from someone else's shadow.

And free from my own emotional crutches.

Oddly, my visions settled down once again, despite my newfound proximity to the three men I'd been sent here to guide. Maybe it was because they kept me fucked to the point of exhaustion or—as Hel had suggested—I was only meant to help them find peace.

And we've all found that.

Together.

When I did experience a vision, it was way less dire, and I could actually control when it happened. So, of course, one of the first things I did after settling in was to initiate a sex magic orgy to send my naked ass straight back to Sinmara's cave—where I handed Laevateinn to the giantess to lock up for good.

Nine locks ought to do it.

It wasn't easy for my Big Grumpy Giant to stop pining for Valhalla, but he kept his word to *try*. I now knew the rune on his chest was *Thurisaz*, which represented conflict, resistance, and finishing the fight. But it also stood for breaking down barriers and recreating something new, and Surt had—bravely—done just that.

It was a powerful lesson for all of us, and after some education from Scholarly Sven, I decided on a trio of runes for myself. The most obvious was *Laguz*, for dreams, psychic powers, and the astral plane. Next was *Berkano*, for rebirth and safety. The last was *Perthro*, the rune of fate and probability.

Of course, I asked my guys to come with me to Stockholm so they could witness me getting my symbolic armband tattoo. It seemed fitting, since all three felt like integral pieces of my journey.

The runes and the monsters who inspired them.

It was wild to see my men out in the wild. While they could now seamlessly shift between their two forms, just knowing I was in the company of monstrous mates disguised as human hotties gave me a thrill.

And they're mine, all mine!

While on the mainland for my tattoo appointment, we also returned Fen's books to the Stockholm University library and stopped for a *fika* break with *kanelbullar*—to celebrate our lives no longer feeling so... rushed.

Since the world is nowhere close to ending.

Jör wore a brand new pair of sexy lederhosen for the occasion—along with my Malibu Barbie fanny pack—which drew appreciative glances from both men and women walking by. My sweet little snake barely noticed. He was too busy pouring entire boxes of cinnamon Red Hots down his throat, while Fen made sure he didn't choke.

Daddy has something different for you to choke on, pet.

I could sense a lightness in Fen that hadn't existed before. He no longer had to play mediator between two opposing sets of desires, while never addressing his own needs with the same amount of care. He still doted on Jör and me, but I fussed over *him* in return.

This second chance we'd all been given was a gift—free of vague prophecies and expectations, and full of a sense of *possibility* we'd all been lacking before. I was determined to not let *any* of us forget just how loved and worthy of love we were.

Especially those of us determined to disbelieve it.

Surt and I were both learning to be vulnerable, which wasn't easy for a couple of stubborn, suspicious assholes like us. First, I made sure my grump understood we'd all chosen *him*, so he could let down his guard, go with the flow, and trust in this path we were on together.

And to try giving up control every once in a while.

The best, and most satisfying, way to practice surrendering was in the bedroom. While he still maintained his role of Sir with Jör—and co-Dom when we all played with our plaything—when Surt was alone with *me*, he knew exactly who was in the driver’s seat.

Little Iola.

“That’s a good boy,” I panted, tightening my sweaty grip on Surt’s horns while I rode his face. “This pussy tastes like heaven, doesn’t it?”

He mumbled something beneath me—the vibrations of his words making me moan. Clamping my thighs tighter around his head, I fucked myself on his tongue, crying out as my *third* orgasm of the day rocketed down my spine.

But who’s counting?

“Better,” he gasped as I rolled off and collapsed on the mattress of our newly expanded bedroom suite. When I turned to face him, he genuinely smiled—even as his beard being wet with my release gave it a filthy edge. “Better than heaven. Better than Valhalla, even.”

Gah!

I was saved from my pesky emotions by Jör joyfully tumbling into the room, followed closely by Fen. They’d been out on the island all afternoon, preparing the guest houses for Leia and all twelve of her men—plus offspring—to arrive later in the week. I was looking forward to the visit, especially because I had exciting news to share.

Not that kind of news!

For now, the breeding kink is enough...

I’d started my own business—offering guided speedboat tours of the archipelago that included immersive Norse mythology. It was a partnership, actually. I handled bookings—*through the island’s Wi-Fi, thank the gods*—and manned the ship while Scholarly Sven recited ancient history from memory during our expeditions. Thanks to some thirst trap-style advertising, word had quickly spread about the hot piece

of man meat tour guide who knew everything about Ragnarok in gory detail.

Too bad he's mine, bishes.

Until the end of time.

“Ohhh... you taste like my favorite snack!” Jör had already plastered himself to Surt, licking the other man's face like an overly enthusiastic golden retriever.

Accurate.

“We ran into Hazun down by the beach.” Fen spoke conversationally while he stripped. “He was asking all sorts of interesting questions about *you*, Iola.”

That's weird...

“Yes!” Jör confirmed, attempting to wiggle out of his clothes while still licking Surt's beard. “Mostly questions about the basic care and feeding of humans.”

It sounds like someone has a new pet.

Funny, considering how much he supposedly despised humans...

Flipping the switch to Sir-mode, Surt growled and tossed Jör onto his back, all but tearing off his clothing to get him naked for us.

Alphas assemble!

“Fuck,” Jör rasped as Fen then flipped him onto his stomach, working his lubed Wolf Daddy dick into his *beibe's* tight ass while he squirmed in delight.

“That's the plan,” Fen replied as he laid back, taking Jör with him and spreading him wide. “We're all going to fuck you until you can't walk.”

“I'm so lucky...” our slutty serpent hummed—already going glassy-eyed as he submitted. Surt then positioned himself between his legs, waiting until Jör's cock emerged before stuffing his frontal hole full.

Because—unlike me—Jör can take the entire glow stick.

“And so loved,” I cooed, carefully straddling my pet—hovering my pussy over his glistening dragon dick. “Would you like us to show you how much we love you, mate?”

Jör released a broken sob as I slowly lowered myself onto him, but I knew it was a happy sound. My sweet boy had dreamed of this for so long—to remain on Midgard with *all* his mates—and now he had every ounce of happiness he deserved.

We all do.

“Fuck,” I echoed as Jör’s delicious ridges rubbed over my G-spot. “My legs feel like Jell-O, right now from too many orgasms.”

It’s a rough life here on Swedish Meatball Island.

“Poor baby,” Surt chuckled, gently pushing me down until my chest was plastered to Jör’s. “Let me take over, then. I’ll gladly fuck you both.”

“Mmm... sounds good,” I murmured, soothing Jör’s trembling lips with mine before tilting my head to kiss Fen over his shoulder. “Make me come on his cock.”

“With pleasure, *mækir*,” Surt growled, setting the pace for all of us.

Since Fen already had Jör’s thighs wide open and secured, Surt dug his fingers into mine for leverage—sliding me along Jör’s shaft while he plunged into his hole.

“I can... feel... all of you,” Jör gasped, his hot little body shuddering as his first orgasm approached. “I’m gonna make such a slutty, filthy mess.”

He’s so perfect.

I laughed and found Jör’s lips again. “We love you messy,” I whispered. “Now come for us, like a good little pet.”

“Yes... Master,” he choked out, tensing beneath me as he began to shake and spill. “I’m going to fill you with seed until your belly is round with my spawn... and then I’m going to fill you again and again, so no others try to mate with what’s *mine*...”

Breeding kink babble activated.

“Fuck!” Surt barked, gripping my thighs so tightly I knew I’d have bruises tomorrow. “You have such a tight little cunt, plaything. So perfect for me to breed...”

Apparently, the babble is contagious.

Jör’s pretty eyes had rolled back in his head as he continued to convulse, implying he was experiencing both an inner and outer release.

I’m not at all jealous.

Just the sight of Jör helplessly shattering beneath me was enough to tip me over the edge, and Fen wasn’t far behind. His gaze stayed locked with mine the entire time, his blue eyes tinged with yellow as he entered his hottie primal state.

After catching their breath, both Surt and Fen carefully withdrew and left the bed to grab aftercare materials. I was too wrecked to move, so I simply laid my head over the rune tattoo on Jör’s chest and allowed the steady sound of his heartbeat to bring me back to earth.

The realm where we all belong.

Jör rubbed my back while I absently examined the scar on my palm, left over from when Hel cut me to harvest my blood for Laevateinn. It had healed messily—which was a metaphor in and of itself—but I didn’t mind. I *liked* how it cut through my fate line, creating an entirely new path. It served as a jagged reminder that even though our life is allotted by the Fates themselves, the direction we take can always change.

Because destiny is what we make of it.

My eyelids grew heavy, and I barely registered when strong arms lifted me from Jör to gently deposit on the bed. A warm wet cloth brushed over my sticky skin before I was comfortably sandwiched between two muscular mates. Who exactly, it didn’t matter.

All I knew was that I was safe, cared for, and loved.

And I was worth it.

REVIEWS

If you have enjoyed **Valhalla is Full of Hunks**, please leave reviews! It helps other readers find my work, which helps me as an indie author. *Thank you!*

[Amazon](#)

[Goodreads](#)

[Bookbub](#)

But don't stop there: Tag me in your reviews, stories, edits, videos, and fan art on social. I love to share these posts with my followers!

MONSTROUSLY MYTHIC PLAYLIST



Please enjoy [this Spotify playlist](#) inspired by the Monstrously Mythic series (and [let me know](#) if you have the perfect song to add).

BOOKS BY C. ROCHELLE

Looking for signed paperbacks, N/SFW art prints, bookplates & other goodies? My store can be found at C-Rochelle.com/shop (and [Patreon](https://Patreon.com/C-Rochelle) members get discounts on art prints and signed books, plus extra swag and personalized inscriptions in their books!)

MONSTROUSLY MYTHIC SERIES (HERCULEIA ALSO [ON AUDIBLE](#)):

[The 12 Hunks of Herculeia](#) (Herculeia Duet, Book 1)

[Herculeia the Hero](#) (Herculeia Duet, Book 2) ([sign up for the newsletter](#) for the bonus epilogue: *Three Heads Are Better Than One*)

[Herculeia: Complete Duet + Bonus Content](#) (includes *Calm Down Monster-Fucker*, *Three Heads Are Better Than One*, & the Thanksgiving Special: *Get Stuffed*, plus UNcensored art)

More Monstrously Mythic Tales:

[Valhalla is Full of Hunks](#) (Iola's standalone story)

And yes, our salty not-merman will get his own tale someday...

VILLAINOUS THINGS - SUPERHERO/VILLAIN MM ROMANCE (HIMBOS [ON AUDIBLE](#) WITH THE REST COMING SOON!):

[Not All Himbos Wear Capes](#) ([sign up for the newsletter](#) to get the *Only Good Boys Get to Top Their Xaddys* bonus epilogue)

[Gentlemen Prefer Villains](#) ([sign up for the newsletter](#) to get the *Yes Sir, Sorry Sir* bonus epilogue)

[Putting Out for a Hero](#) ([sign up for the newsletter](#) to get the *Idiots in Love* bonus epilogue)

[Enter the Multi-Vers](#) (the twins)

Villainous Book 5 (reunion book)

Want More Villainous Tales? The evil author is already scheming multiple spin-offs!

THE YAGA'S RIDERS TRILOGY (ALSO [ON AUDIBLE](#)):

[Rise of the Witch](#)

[A Witch Out of Time](#)

[Call of the Ride](#)

[The Yaga's Riders: Complete Trilogy + Bonus Content](#) (*The Asa Baby Christmas Special & the Too Peopley Valentine's Day Special*)

More Yaga's Riders Tales:

[A Song of Saints and Swans](#) (*Anthia spin-off novella, which includes From the Depths & the Halloween Special: It's Just a Bunch of Va Ju-Ju Voodoo*)

WINGS OF DARKNESS + LIGHT TRILOGY:

[Shadows Spark](#)

[Shadows Smolder](#)

[Shadows Scorch](#)

Wings of Darkness + Light: The Complete Trilogy + Bonus Content (*Oversized Cupids V-Day Special, The Second Coming Easter Special, & the Sexy Little Devil Halloween Specials Pt. 1 & Pt. 2*)

More from the Wings Universe:

Death by Vanilla (Gage origin story novella)

COMING SOON:

Meet more monsters in the **Strange Vacationland** universe (*coming 2024 - includes the previously published anthology tales Be Not Afraid and You Can't Get There from Here*)

CURRENT/UPCOMING ANTHOLOGIES:

Creepy Court: A Monster Mall anthology (featuring my tale - Vampires Totally Suck - coming Friday, October 13th)

And there will be a bonus Monstrous holiday special in the forthcoming **Snow, Lights, & Monster Nights** charity anthology (coming December 31st - preorder link going live soon!)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

C. Rochelle here! I'm a naughty but sweet, introverted, Aquarius weirdo who believes a sharp sense of humor is the sexiest trait, loves shaking my booty to Prince, and have never met a cheese I didn't like. Oh, and I write spicy paranormal/monster Why Choose + MM, MFF & MMF romance with dark, naughty humor. #loveislove

Want More?

- [Join my Clubhouse of Smut on Patreon](#)
- [Subscribe to my newsletter at C-Rochelle.com](#)
- [Join my Little Sinners Facebook group](#)
- [Stalk me in all the places on Linktree](#)



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Iola's story has been a long time coming... and the thirsty monster hoes were forced to wait longer than usual, as my muse veered off to focus on gay superheroes and the prequels to a *new* monster-verse in the meantime.

So I'm thankful for all of you proud Weird-Ho's who were still cheering on this smutty little tale all the way to the finish line! That being said, writing an entire book in one month—chock full o' mythology and monster peen—did a number on ya girl. 0/10 would not recommend.

But WE DID IT and, as usual, I couldn't have done it alone.

Thank you to my alpha readers: Author Ariel Dawn, my head cheerleading crew from Patreon—Billie, Katie, Kayla, and Kristina—and my precious proofreader, Lindsay Hamilton.

To ALL my lovelies in my Clubhouse of Smut on Patreon—thank you for continuing to cheer me on through not just advanced chapters but my “Deep Thoughts with C” rambles where I give you the realest real-talk about the reality of this author gig. It's wonderful to have a safe space to share such things.

An extra smutty shout-out to my Patreon Va Ju-Ju Voodoo Queens: Adrienne, Brooke, Ciara, Danielle, Diana, Elizabeth, Emily, Fawn, Jamie, Jasmine F., Jazzy OG., Kaitlyn, Kayla, Kaylah, Kelly, Kimmy, Kristina, Lauren, Liz, Natasha, Shawn, Shawna, Sophia, Stephanie, Taylor, and Wraithy. Thank you for supporting (and continuing to support) my author journey in this way!

As always, extra butt pats and sloppy kisses to my author friends—whether monster fudgers, polyam peddlers, or the ones who make the men kiss. And to my wrangler—Alexandra

Sherrod—and my ARC Team! Thank you for all you do to keep this little smut engine rollin' along the track.

XXX

-C

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY NOTE: Being “humanized” as they are, Iola’s monsters speak English, with various Scandinavian words thrown in (including from Old Norse). For readability, I have anglicized certain words more than others. Please reference the glossary below for definitions and don’t be shy about reaching out if I got something totally wrong. I’m no historian, simply a mythology nerd who likes writing filthy retellings, so go easy on me.

If you spot an error, please do NOT report it to Amazon.
Send me an email:

crochelle.author@gmail.com

SLANG NOTE: There is also a bit of American slang peppered in, but I didn’t bother translating, as much of it is common lexicon at this point. When in doubt, use Google, or contact me using the methods above if you truly believe it’s a typo.

First, let’s meet Iola & her men/monsters:

- **Fenrir/Fenrisúlfr** (*aka Fen*): A giant wolf. Son of **Loki**, father of the wolves **Skoll** and **Hati**, who killed the god **Odin** during the events of **Ragnarok** (and then was killed by Odin’s son **Vidar**). His name translates to “fen-dweller” in Old Norse, which is why our not-merman **Hazun** calls him that in the world’s weirdest clawback.
- **Jörmungandr** (*aka Jör—the J is a Y sound in English, by the way*): An unfathomably large snake known as the World/**Midgard** Serpent who is also a

son of **Loki** (deal with it—mythology is WILD). He dwells in the world sea, encircling the Earth/Midgard and biting his own tail. When the tail is released, **Ragnarok** will begin. He brings the drama.

- **Surtr** (*aka Surt*): A fire giant (possibly the original fire giant) who was tasked with protecting the realm of **Muspelheim** before wielding a flaming sword (possibly **Laevateinn**, see below) and leading his fellow fire giants in battle during **Ragnarok** (where he then defeats the god **Freyr**). His name translates to “swarthy one” in Old Norse, so therefore he is a hottie pirate in my eyes.
- **Iola**’s name is a play on **Iolaus** (*Greek*), who was known for being an Argonaut and Heracles’ nephew/squire who helped with some of his 12 Labors (most famously, with defeating the **Hydra**). Just a fun li’l Easter egg for **Herculeia** fans.

Now the side characters and Herculeia duet cameos:

- **Agape** and **Alcmene** (both briefly mentioned): Agape means “unconditional love” and is Leia’s chimera baby with the guys (non-traditional pregnancy... it’s a whole thing) while Alcmene is Leia’s mother (yes, named after Heracles’ mother... but not the same person...). All you need to know for *this* book is that Leia doesn’t have the best relationship with her mother, but they are now both (miraculously) working on it.
- **Hazun** (*Arabic*): A Persian creature who is close to a merman but not quite. In his culture he’d be one of the “sea-people” (who sometimes have fins and sometimes don’t—I chose for him to have legs). The sight of a mermaid/man there is considered good luck, and therefore, the name Hazun translates to luck/fortune. *I will eventually write a Persian-mythology Monstrously Mythic tale for our salty sea person, so stay tuned!*
- **Herculeia** (**aka Leia**): Our original heroine/head hoebagger and Iola’s bestie/ride-or-die (there’s more

to their relationship, but I'm avoiding spoilers in this book).

- **Ladon:** The dragon that guarded the golden apples in the Garden of the Hesperides (Heracles' 11th Labor).
- **Timyn:** The nine-headed Lernaean Hydra (Heracles' 2nd Labor).
- **Vann:** Our Kraken (giant squid) and the only Norseman of Leia's stable of Greeks (and in *my* version of events, he's related to Heracles' 5th Labor). He's also the one to blame for everything that happens in this book.
- **Zephyr:** One of the Stymphalian Birds (Heracles' 6th Labor). You can meet (and learn more about) all of Leia's monsters in **The 12 Hunks of Herculeia** and **Herculeia the Hero** (or the Herculeia omnibus + bonus content!).

A note on the nine realms of Norse Mythology: I'm going to start by saying, I know it's up for debate which realms are the official nine realms. For *my* purposes, I chose to have **Helheim** (aka **Niflhel**) be located within **Niflheim** (like Tartarus in the Greek underworld). I also don't mention all the realms—only the ones related to my tale:

- **Asgard:** Realm of the gods/Asgardians/Æsir.
- **Jötunheim:** Realm of (some of) the *jötunn* (see below).
- **Midgard:** Realm of humans/Midgardians (Earth).
- **Muspelheim:** Realm of the fire giants, and where **Surtr** was stationed before leading his army in **Ragnarok**. When **Sinmara** recites her epic poem about “the sons of Muspell” is actually from the *Gylfaginning* section of the *Prose Edda*.
- **Niflheim:** Realm of the frost giants and the realm of the dead—with **Helheim/Niflhel** ruled over by the goddess **Hel**.
- **Svartalfheim:** Realm of the dwarves.

Again, I admit this is extremely simplified, and not universal. Hopefully, we can all agree these realms are held in the branches and roots of the World Tree/**Yggdrasil**.

A note on the Norse gods: Throughout the book, I make casual mention of a few of the gods—mainly the most well-known and/or ones with major roles in **Ragnarok**. I'm going to trust that Marvel has made the average person more aware of who's who (even if they got some details majorly incorrect...), but will briefly explain who's who below. I also mention **Zeus**, **Hera**, and **Hades** (more the place than the god) from Greek mythology, but won't be taking the time to explain them here. If you want to learn more about the wild and wacky world of Norse or Greek mythology (and the gods therein), feel free to fall into a research rabbit hole, a la Scholarly Sven.

****All words in the GLOSSARY below are Scandinavian, unless otherwise noted****

Anahita (*Old Persian*): Iranian goddess venerated as the divinity of “the Waters” and therefore associated with fertility, healing and wisdom.

Angrboda: Jötunn/giantess known primarily for being the mother of **Fenrir**, **Jörmungandr**, and **Hel**.

Ärtsoppa: Swedish split pea soup.

Atropos: One of the three Fates known as the Inflexible/the Future/the Inevitable (see **the Norns**).

Baldr: Son of **Odin**—most beloved of the gods. All you need to know here is that he was killed (due to **Loki**'s trickery, of course) and not even Odin could get him back from the realm of the dead.

Beibe: Fen's nickname for Jör. It's a partially made up term of endearment but means baby/babe to them.

Berkano: A rune associated with rebirth and safety (among many other things).

Berserkers: Old Norse warriors said to have fought in a trance-like fury.

Bier ist leben (*German*): “Beer is life.”

Bifrost: A rainbow bridge that connected the realm of the gods (**Asgard**) to the realm of mankind (**Midgard**). LGBTQ+ fever dream, y'all!

Blóðughadda: One of the nine daughters of **Ægir** and **Rán** (gods of the sea). She was a wave personified, and her name means “bloody hair.”

Calamari (*Italian*): Squid (and a hilarious nickname for a Kraken).

Clotho: One of the three Fates known as the Spinner/the Past (see **the Norns**).

Dís/Dísir: A female deity, ghost, or spirit associated with Fate who can be either benevolent or antagonistic toward mortals. Dísir may act as protective spirits and guides. Valkyrie are a form of dís, although not all dísirs are valkyries. **Hel** combined this term with **Völva** to describe what **Iola** is.

Fika: Translated as “a coffee and cake break,” but so much more than that. Fika is a state of mind/attitude and an important part of Swedish culture—a chance to pause and enjoy the moment.

Fólkvangr: A meadow ruled over by the goddess **Freyja** where half of those that die in combat go (the other half go to **Valhalla**).

Freyja: Goddess of love, beauty, fertility, sex, war, gold, twin of **Freyr**, and patron of those who can predict the future (seers/**Völvas**). Oversees the realm of **Fólkvangr**.

Freyr: God of kingship, fertility, peace, prosperity, fair weather, and good harvest, and twin of **Freyja**. Destined to be killed by **Surtr** during **Ragnarok**.

Gebo: A rune associated with sex magic but also gifts and thankfulness (among many other things).

Gjöll: The name of the boulder where Fenrir was bound. It's also the name of the river separating the living from the dead (like the Greek Styx), but that got too confusing to mention.

Gleipnir: The binding, created by the dwarves of **Svartalfheim**, that manages to hold **Fenrir** to **Gjöll**. It was

crafted from impossible things—the sound of a cat’s footsteps, the roots of mountains, the breath of a fish, and the saliva of a bird.

Gungnir: The spear of **Odin**, known for never missing its mark.

Hafstrambr: The Norse word for merman (more of a monstrous/dangerous one—like a Rusalka, for those who’ve read my Yaga’s books), even though that’s not really what **Hazun** is.

Hagalaz: A rune associated with bad weather/storms, catastrophe and loss, but also rebirth and the opportunity to make things right (among many other things).

Heimdall: The watchman of the gods who dwelled at the entry to **Asgard**, where he guarded **Bifrost**. He and **Loki** killed each other during **Ragnarok**.

Hel: Daughter of **Loki** and **Angrboda**, sister of **Fenrir** and **Jörmungandr**, and ruler of **Helheim** (since **Odin** banished her there), where she welcomes the dead not killed in battle. She is often depicted as a beautiful woman with half her body looking like a rotting corpse.

Henbane (*Latin: Hyoscyamus niger*): A poisonous, psychedelic herb in the nightshade family, possibly used by ancient **Völv**as to induce prophetic hallucinations.

Jezebel (*biblical—Old Testament*): Wife of Ahab, King of Israel, and an extremely outdated term to describe a woman who seduces others to get what she wants.

Jord: Goddess who is the personification of Earth.

Jötunn: A varied race of supernatural beings in Norse mythology who were often at odds with the gods (although misrepresented as being “evil”—probably thanks to **Loki** being part jötunn). They are sometimes referred to as “giants” but weren’t always large, and while most dwelled in **Jötunheim**, not all of them did. It’s confusing but interesting if you want to research more on your own.

Kaffi: Coffee.

Kaka: Cookie/biscuit/small cake.

Kanelbullar: Famous Swedish cinnamon buns (although they are not the same as American cinnamon buns, as they don't have icing and are spiced with cardamom and topped with pearl sugar).

Laevateinn: A weapon/sword (a “damage twig” if you will) crafted by **Loki** from the gates of **Helheim** to slay the rooster **Vidopnir** atop the World Tree—to stop him from alerting **Heimdall** of the army marching on **Asgard**. There is debate whether this is the “flaming sword” wielded by **Surt** during **Ragnarok**, but for *my* purposes, I decided it was.

Lachesis: One of the three Fates known as the Allotter/the Present (see **the Norns**).

Lagom är bäst: Swedish for “the right measure is best” (all things in moderation).

Lederhosen (*German*): Word used in English to refer specifically to the traditional suspended leather breeches worn by men in Austria/Bavaria. Jör looks super hot in them.

Loki: Our favorite non-binary trickster god. I'm not even going to bother trying to explain him because then we'll spend all day talking about the time he fathered (actually mothered) the eight-legged stallion **Sleipnir** so the gods could get out of their contract for the construction of the wall surrounding **Asgard**. It's complicated.

Lyngvi: The island where the boulder **Gjöll** is located, with a name meaning “covered in heather.”

Mækir: Old Norse for sword (and one of the few times you'll see **Surt** being sentimental).

Mímir: Husband of **Sinmara**, renowned for his wisdom, who is beheaded during the Æsir–Vanir War. Afterward, **Odin** carries around his head so it can recite secret knowledge and counsel to him. You can't make this shit up.

Mjöllnir: The god **Thor's** HUGE hammer.

Norns, The: Aka, the Fates (the Moirai to the Greeks), a group of three weaving goddesses who assign individual

destinies to mortals at birth. Their names are **Clotho** (the Spinner/the Past), **Lachesis** (the Allotter/the Present) and **Atropos** (the Inflexible/the Future/the Inevitable). They had enormous power and even the gods couldn't fight or dispute their decisions. *Unfortunately, their identity as the three sisters who own Ancient Olive skincare was a Herculeia spoiler that was unavoidable for writing this book, but it's still not a major spoiler to the overall series.*

Odin: The supreme ruler in the Norse pantheon, and god of wisdom, healing, death, royalty, the gallows, knowledge, war, battle, victory, sorcery, poetry, frenzy, and the runic alphabet. Destined to be killed by **Fenrir** during **Ragnarok**.

Perthro: A rune associated with fate and probability (among many other things).

Poetic Edda and **Prose Edda:** **Poetic Edda** is the modern name for an untitled, anonymous collection of Old Norse narrative poems. It is distinct from the **Prose Edda** written by Snorri Sturluson (with heavy Christian influence), although both works are important to the study of Old Norse poetry.

Pythia (*Greek*): The Greek term for seer/oracle, especially when referencing the high priestess of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. (See also, **Völva**).

Ragnarok (*Old Norse: Ragnarøkkr*): A foretold series of impending events, including world-ending natural disasters and a great battle in which numerous great Norse mythological figures will perish. Good times.

Rhodiola (*Latin: Rhodiola rosea*): A plant with a long history in traditional medicine, including use as an aphrodisiac (which is why **Hel** suggests lacing **Surt**'s mead—alcoholic, fermented honey drink—with it).

Seven Seas (*various*): A figurative term for all the seas of the known world. With Hazun being the one saying it, he probably meant the *historic* Seven Seas (now known as the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, the Strait of Malacca, the Singapore Strait, the Gulf of Thailand, and the South China Sea).

Sinmara: A giantess, usually considered a consort to Surt, but wife of **Mímir**. Sinmara is only mentioned in a single stanza in the poem *Fjölsvinnsmál*, alongside Surt, and described as keeper of the legendary weapon **Laevateinn** (and this is what she is reciting during Iola's visit).

Skarsgard: In reference to the famous Swedish family consisting of actor Stellan Skarsgard and his collection of physically blessed sons—including Alexander, Bill, and Gustav (my—and therefore, Iola's—#1, #2, and #3 choices, respectively).

Skoll and Hati: Fenrir's children—two wolves, known as “deception” and “hate” in their veins. When they attempted to free **Fenrir** from being bound to **Gjöll**, the gods punished them to forever chase the sun and moon across the sky. The day they caught them both, all light disappeared from the sky—resulting in Fenrir's shackles vanishing, and **Ragnarok** beginning.

Smorgasbord: A word used to describe a wide variety of anything, but originally a buffet of food (and in this case, a very tasty sea serpent spread out for sampling).

Sötños: A Swedish term of endearment meaning “sweet” (or “candy”...unclear).

Stockholm/Stockholm Archipelago: The capital of Sweden and the cluster of some 30,000 islands, skerries and rocks that begins just a few minutes away from the city.

Strategos (*Greek*): Military general, and our “murder bird” Zephyr's adorable nickname for Leia.

Laguz: A rune associated with dreams, psychic powers, and the astral plane (among many other things).

Eljudnir: Hel's palace in Helheim, known as “the damp place.”

Thor: a hammer-wielding (see **Mjöllnir**) god associated with lightning, thunder, storms, sacred groves and trees, strength, the protection of humankind, hallowing, and fertility. He's archenemies with **Jörmungandr**, and the two kill each other during the events of **Ragnarok**.

Thurisaz: A rune associated with conflict, resistance, and finishing the fight, as well as breaking down barriers and recreating something new (among many other things).

Tyr: A god who is the patron of warriors and mythological heroes. He's known for sacrificing his hand to **Fenrir**, who bites it off when he realizes the gods have bound him. As much as Fen would have loved to finish him off, Tyr is consumed by the similarly monstrous dog, Garmr, during **Ragnarok**.

Vafan: A general curse word in Swedish (like “fuck”), but translates to “what the devil.”

Valknut: A symbol consisting of three interlocked triangles, often associated with **Odin**.

Valkyries: The female hosts of **Odin** who decide which dead on the battlefield will end up in **Valhalla**. Translates to “choosers of the slain.”

Vardlökkur: Singing/songs used to attract spirits.

Vidar: The son of **Odin** who avenges his father's death by killing **Fenrir** during **Ragnarok**. He is also one of the gods said to have survived Ragnarok.

Víðópnir (*aka Norwegian Heihei*): A mythological bird (rooster) inhabiting the top of the World Tree, **Yggdrasil**, and acting as the “Ragnarok alarm clock” for **Heimdall**. I took a *lot* of liberties with this dumb cock, not least of all, referring to him as “Norwegian Heihei” (which is a silly reference to the rooster in the Polynesian mythology-based movie, *Moana*).

Völva: In Old Norse society, a (usually female) practitioner of magic divination and prophecy—a seer. (See also, **Pythia**).

Hel combined this term with **Dís/Dísir** to describe what **Iola** is. If you really want to fall into an interesting research rabbit hole, I suggest this.

Yggdrasil: The unfathomably large World Tree that stretches between all nine realms in Norse mythology.

Other random references in the book:

The **1980s My Little Pony television special** *Iola* refers to is *Escape from Midnight Castle*, and features a very catchy Sea Pony song and a hot AF centaur/demon daddy bad guy.

Don Quixote: A classic novel from 1605 which portrays the life and insightful journey of Don Quixote de la Mancha, a Spanish man who seems to be losing his mind on his quest to become a knight (“tilting at”—fighting—windmills). On the flip side, the novel’s message is also about staying true to yourself and your dreams, no matter what anyone else thinks.

Twilight of the Gods: Richard Wagner’s opera *Götterdämmerung* is the German equivalent of Ragnarok—translated to “twilight of the gods.”

“Who’s on First?” This is an old Abbott and Costello comedy routine (you can find it on YouTube) that perfectly demonstrates how it would be trying to communicate with a mythological creature.