Mamamshul-ʻibinê
by FromTheBoundlessSea

Summary

Willow Baggins met a dwarf in Bree when she’s drinking away her sorrows as her ex-husband, Otho, gets remarried and takes her home away from her. The next morning the dwarf disappears and Willow is left more broken than before.

Years later, the dwarf that left her shows up on her doorstep thanks to a pesky wizard. But Willow isn’t the same hobbit Thorin met all those years ago. Now, she has someone to care about and someone who cares about her.

Notes

From what I’ve found “mamamshul-ʻibinê” means “my hoarded gem” in Khuzdul.
Willow looked at her drinking companion and smiled. “Can you make me forget?” She lowered her voice into a soft purr. “For one night, can you make me feel wanted?”

The dwarf’s blue eyes turned almost black as she leaned closer to him. She didn’t know how it started. Perhaps it was because he was alone and didn’t seem to want to carry a conversation. So, she simply sat down next to him and told him everything as she drank.

She told him how her husband of two years had divorced her because she couldn’t get with his child. She told him how Otho was marrying her cousin, Lobelia, who was already growing with his child. She told him how the nursery she had been raised in and had hoped to put her own faunt in was now going to cradle another woman’s babe. She told him how the only home she had ever known was lost to her. She told him how she could never get it back because she had no children to fill Bag End with.

Willow touched the dwarf’s knee and slid her hand up his thigh. His breath hitched in his throat as his hand wrapped around hers. “I have a room,” she whispered. “Won’t you come with me, Master Dwarf? You look as though you have felt sorrow as well.” She leaned in and pressed her lips to the shell of his ear. “Shall we go be broken together?”

His grip on her hand tightened. Willow led him up to her room and to her bed. The dwarf took her body and worshiped it. He whispered what seemed like prayers in a language she didn’t understand. She clawed at his back as his breath burned his words against her skin. His beard scratched and she cried out in pleasure against him. She felt like a forge as he took her apart and brought her back together over and over and over. He found his pleasure and she gave it to him as well.

For a brief moment, Willow could imagine what it would be like to be loved.

After they were both sated and boneless, she rested her head against his shoulder, trying to find breath. Her hand played with the dark hair on his chest as he traced designs across her back. He began to whisper only a little about himself. He was from Ered Luin, formerly of Erebor. It was the anniversary of his younger brother’s death. He just wanted to be away from other dwarves. He just wanted to forget who he was for only a little while.

“And did you forget?” Willow shifted and nuzzled his jaw, a slight moan came at the friction. “Was I able to make you forget?”

A growl escaped his lips as he forced her on her back and claimed her mouth. Willow wrapped herself around him as he took her again. He was rougher that time. He pounded her into the mattress and she cried out for him, begging him to fill her and to let her fill him. He collapsed on top of her and Willow held him in her arms. His weight felt right against her, as though it was where he belonged. The dwarf shifted again and turned on his own back, holding her to his chest. They both drifted off to sleep.

In the morning, the dwarf was gone.

Willow came down and asked the innkeeper where the dwarf who had shared her room had gone. He looked at her with a mix of pity and disgust.

“Said he had to get back to his wife and child.”
The hobbit felt sick. She thanked the man and then made her way back to the Shire.

Without stopping, she made her way to Asphodel Burrow, the place she would call home from that day onward. There were few things she had been allowed to keep after the divorce. Two of those items had been her father’s old chair and a quilt her mother had made for her when she was a tween (“For your children someday,” she had said). The hobbit climbed into the chair and wrapped herself into the quilt and began to sob.

What little there was left of her, shattered completely.

***

It was one thing for Gandalf to bring people into her smial, it was a completely other matter for him to bring dwarves to her home in the middle of the night. She was barely able to keep them from screaming their songs and breaking what little cutlery and dishes she had. Things couldn’t get any worse and then Gandalf said there was one more.

Willow was lulled into a stupid sense of security when the eleven dwarves at least tidied up after themselves. Then a knock came to the door and the old man became rather serious.

“He is here.”

Willow followed Gandalf to the front door, as did the dwarfs. Whoever this ‘he’ was, he must have been rather important. Gandalf opened the door and Willow felt her heart stop.

“Willow, may I present Thorin—”

“You!” Willow shrieked and the dwarf at her door froze, his blue eyes widening. She wasn’t going to cry. She wasn’t. Instead, she grabbed two daggers, one in each hand, that the blond dwarf had set down on her chest upon his arrival. She threw them at the dwarf at her door. Willow picked up more things and threw them at him with every exclamation. “You vile! Horrible! Wretched! Do you have any idea what you did?!”

To his credit, he dodged most of what she threw at him, only taking the impact when hit with something sheathed (which was most of the weapons). “Mistress Hobbit!” He tried.

“No!” She was throwing books now, tears bubbling in her eyes. “You leave without a word and then I have to find out the truth from someone else! You loathsome! Horrible! Stonehearted little —”

“Mum? What’s going on?”

Willow froze, book lifted and behind her head. She dropped it and everyone turned back and saw the young person standing there, his eyes wide in horror. His eyes were her soft brown. His short hair was black, but curled like hers. He had a scruff of a beard, but that was all he was able to grow. His brown eyes went from his mother to the dwarf, Thorin, she had been chucking things at. His gaze turned stormy when he saw Willow’s tears.

“What did they do?” He scowled, rushing over to his mother. He cupped her face in his hands. “Are you okay, Mum?”

“I’m fine, Kílian,” she whispered.

Kílian glared at the wizard. “You might be able to bully my mother, Gandalf. But you can’t bully me into putting up with your schemes. We don’t deal with dwarves in this smial.” He looked at
Thorin with a burning hatred before turning back to the wizard. “You’re lucky my cousins aren’t here. The Toooks won’t be happy that you brought him of all dwarves here.”

“Kíli, please.” Willows lip trembled. She hated looking so weak in front of her son. “We… we shouldn’t be impolite.” She straightened out and wiped her tears away. “Baggins are proper even when no one else is.”

The dwobbit looked down at his mother and sighed. “Fine.”

Willow glanced at the father of her faunt and felt her stomach churn. “Come in, Master Dwarf,” she said, lifting her chin. “Your company left some food for you.”

She turned to the kitchen to make some soothing tea. Her son, Kíli, followed closely behind her, glaring at every dwarf as they parted to let the two through.
“You!”

Thorin froze. His eyes widened as he saw the hobbit he had met a little over forty years ago. Her golden hair had turned to a soft blonde, but her brown eyes were as vibrant as they had been on the night they had shared. He hadn’t meant to leave her as he had. But a message had come to the inn, telling him his sister, her husband, and his nephew had been trapped in a rockslide. Víli had died in the accident. Dís and Fíli were all he had left. He had to leave. He asked the innkeeper to leave a message with the hobbit he had stupidly never asked the name of.

He had thought of her many nights since the one they shared. But that didn’t much matter now.

She began throwing things at him. He recognized them as Fíli’s daggers. “You vile! Horrible! Wretched! Do you have any idea what you did?!”

He dodged most of them, although a few did hit when he recognized that most of them were sheathed and would only cause slight bruising. “Mistress Hobbit!” He really should have learned her name.

“No!” A book whirled by his head. He began to panic as he saw tears streaming down her cheeks. “You leave without a word and then I have to find out the truth from someone else! You loathsome! Horrible! Stonehearted little—”

“Mum? What’s going on?”

The hobbit froze and dropped a book she had been about the throw. Thorin peered around her and saw a dwarvish looking hobbit standing at one of the entryways in the hobbit hole. He had brown eyes like the woman in front of Thorin and, although his hair was as curly as the crying hobbit, the person’s hair was near black. He also had a scruff of a beard. The person looked from the woman to Thorin and then back again. He began to scowl when he saw the tears in the woman’s eyes.

“What did they do?” The boy scowled, rushing over to the hobbit woman. He cupped her face and his scowl softened to deep concern. “Are you okay, Mum?”

Thorin felt his stomach lurched. This boy… he looked to be about forty… could….

“I’m fine, Kílian,” she whispered, patting his hands reassuringly.

Kílian glared at the wizard. “You might be able to bully my mother, Gandalf. But you can’t bully me into putting up with your schemes. We don’t deal with dwarves in this smial.” He looked at Thorin with a burning hatred and then back to the wizard. “You’re lucky my cousins aren’t here. The Tooks won’t be happy that you brought him of all dwarves here.”

“Kíli, please.” The mother of his child’s lip trembled. “We… we shouldn’t be impolite.” She straightened out and wiped her tears away. “Baggins are proper even when no one else is.”

“Fine.”

The hobbit woman glanced at Thorin and there was so much indifference in her eyes that Thorin
felt his stomach drop slightly. “Come in, Master Dwarf.” She lifted her chin with an air befitting a queen. “Your company left some food for you.”

***

His company was silent as the hobbit and her son settled in the kitchen. Thorin watched as the boy draped himself over her back, resting his chin on her head. He was mumbling something and she laughed gently reaching behind her to pat his cheek.

“Thorin,” Dwalin said from beside him in Khuzdul. “What did you do to anger the halfling?”

Thorin rubbed his face. “She and I shared a night together in Bree. I left without telling her.”

Fili whistled, causing Thorin to glare at him. “Sorry, Uncle.”

“Lad, you can’t mean to say you think that boy is—” Balin began.

“He is saying it because it is true,” Tharkûn interrupted. “Young Kili is Thorin’s son.”

Thorin glared at him much like his son had. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“It was not my place to say. By the time I visited Willow, Kili had already been born and none of her family accepted my offer to seek you out. When you said you needed a burgler I felt Willow would be the proper choice and it would be a chance for you to meet Kili.”

Her name was Willow. Thorin closed his eyes. He could still feel her fingers clawing at his back as he made her his own. He could still—

“It’s rude to speak in a language only you can understand.” His son sat down opposite Thorin, his mother beside him. “But then again, all dwarves are rude, I suppose.”

“Kili Baggins,” Willow admonished.

His son was of age now. He had missed… he had missed everything.

“Why are they here, Gandalf?” Kili said, looking slightly chastised.

“Ah, right you are, Thorin, why don’t you share about what happened at the meeting.”

Thorin sighed. Of course the wizard would put this off on him. “Envoys from all seven kingdoms came. They will not come with us. They say this quest is ours and ours alone.”

“You’re going on a quest?” Willow asked, her eyes wide. Thorin glanced at her and she looked away from him.

“Willow, my dear, let us have a little more light.”

She was about to stand to do so when Kili stopped her and got the candle himself. He sets the candle down near Gandalf, who had pulled out a map and spread it across the table.

“Far to the east, over ranges and rivers, beyond woodlands and wastelands, lies a solitary peak.”

Kili narrowed his eyes. “The Lonely Mountain?”

“Erebor,” Thorin corrected, which earned him a glare.
“Aye!” Glóin shouted. “Óin has read the portents and the portents say it’s time.” The other dwarves grown. He had said that for most of the journey to the Shire.

The healer nodded. “Ravens have been seen flying back to the mountain as it was foretold: when the birds of yore return to Erebor, the reign of the beast will end.”

“What beast?” Willow’s voice was oddly quiet.

Thorin was about to reassure her when Bofur cut in. “That would be a reference to Smaug the Terrible, chowders and greatest calamity of our age. Airborne fire-breather, teeth like razors, claws like meat hooks. Extremely fond of precious metals.”

Kíli rolled his eyes. “We know what a dragon is.”

“The task to win back the mountain,” Balin interjects, “would be difficult enough with an army behind us. But we number just twelve, and not twelve of the best.”

At the insult the dwarves began to argue again.

“We may be few in numbers, but we’re fighters. All of us, to the last dwarf!” Glóin said proudly.

“And don’t forget,” Fíli interjected, “we have a wizard in our company. Gandalf must have killed hundreds of dragons in his time!”

The wizard became flustered. Thorin was rather certain he had never even faced a dragon. “Well, no, I wouldn’t say that I—”

“How many then?” Thorin’s nephew asked.

“What?”

“Enough!” Thorin shouted, standing. “If we have read these signs, do you not think others will have read them too? Rumours have begun to spread. The dragon Smaug has not been seen for sixty years. Eyes look east to the mountain, assessing, wondering, weighing the risk. Perhaps the vast wealth of our people now lies unprotected. Do we sit back as others claim what is rightfully ours? Or do we seize this chance to take back Erebor?”

While the speech seemed to have the desired effect on the dwarves, who began to jump and cheer. Willow appeared slightly horrified. Kíli went to his mother’s side and put his hands protectively on her shoulders.

“You forget, the front gate is sealed! There is no way into the mountain.” Balin said, standing.

“That, my dear Balin,” Tharkûn said calmly, “is not entirely true.” It was then that the wizard produced the key that belonged to Thorin’s father. So, not only did the old man neglect to tell Thorin about his son, he had neglected to inform him about the fate of his father.

“The task I have in mind will require a great deal of stealth, and no small amount of courage. But, if we are careful and clever, I believe that it can be done.”

“That’s why we need a burglar.” Óin said.

“A good one too. An expert, I’d imagine.” Willow, said quietly.

Thorin’s head snapped up. She didn’t know. He glared at Tharkûn, who was conveniently looking away. She didn’t know?!
“And are you?” Glóin asked.

Willow froze, half confused, half afraid. “Am I what?”

“She said she’s an expert!” The healer exclaimed.

Several dwarves chuckled, but Willow and Kíli blanched.

“No,” Kíli said quietly. Then, he glared at Thorin again. “No! You are not asking my mother to go in and face a dragon!”

“I agree with the boy,” Thorin said. “This is uncalled for, especially if she hasn’t actually agreed to any of this before hand.”

“I didn’t even agree for any of you to eat here either,” Willow muttered and Thorin felt a twinge of guilt.

Tharkûn continued, “Hobbits are remarkably light on their feet! In fact, they can go unseen by most if they choose. And while the dragon is accustomed to the smell of dwarf, the scent of a hobbit is all but unknown to him which gives us a distinct advantage.” He turned to Thorin to make his final point. “You asked me to find the thirteenth member of this company and I have chosen Miss Baggins. There's a lot more to her than appearances suggest, and she's got a great deal to offer than any of you know, including herself. You must trust me on this.”

“No,” Kíli crossed his arms. “Why can’t you use one of the Tooks? You aren’t sending my mother to face a dragon. If you need someone, send me in. I’m half hobbit.”

“You aren’t light on your feet like your mother. You have a different part to play in all this. As a master archer, you would be valuable to this quest as well.”

Kíli narrowed his eyes. “It’s highly convenient, isn’t it Gandalf, that you come here only a little while after Mum and I decided to move to Rivendell.”

“You what?!” Thorin almost roared.

Chapter End Notes

This one will probably just be random updates as i write chapters. They might come quickly, they might not. But I will always try to work on it and post it.
Kíli gave the dwarf a hard stare. Although the other dwarves had been murmuring before, they were completely silent now. “Mum and I are moving to Rivendell.”

Thorin opened his mouth to retort but stopped when the older looking dwarf, Balin, put his hand on the leader’s elbow.

“Why is that, lad?”

Kíli scowled. “There’s only so much hobbits will allow. Especially now that I’m of age. We’re going to Rivendell since Mum will be happy there and I can train with Lord Elrond’s sons for the Dúnedain Rangers.”

“What do you mean now that you’re of age?”

“Simple. Hobbits don’t like outsiders. Most think I’ll be just like him,” he indicated Thorin with his chin, “and get their daughters pregnant then leave.”

“Kílian Baggins!” His mum’s cheeks flushed bright pink.

“It’s the truth, Mum.” Kíli said, putting his hand on hers. “The Tooks only tolerate me because of you and the Bagginses barely acknowledge me as it is.” He looked back at the dwarves. “I would leave the Shire by myself if it meant my mum could be happier, but she doesn’t want me to be alone. So we decided on Rivendell.”

“You’d trust those tree-shaggers?” The bald, tattooed dwarf, Dwalin spluttered.

“Lord Elrond has been nothing but good to us. Far better than any dwarf or hobbit.” Kíli set his mouth in a stern line. “I won’t have you disrespecting him or his people in this house.”

“Gandalf?” Kíli’s mum squeezed his hand.

“Yes, my dear.”

“Will you be going to Rivendell?”

“I had plans on it.”

“We will not seek help from—”

“It is necessary. I am certain there is something on this map that could help us find the hidden door. I believe Lord Elrond might be able to help. So, yes, I believe we will be going to Rivendell.”

“This quest is to win back the dwarves’ home, isn’t it?” Kíli looked at his mum, horrified. She looked up at him and smiled. “I know what it’s like to lose a home to someone else, Kíli. If I could get Bag End back, I would do it.” She looked to Thorin. “If you give us a few days to set everything in order here, we’ll load you up with enough supplies for the journey to Rivendell. I can’t say that we’ll go with you past that point, but I want to help as much as I can.”

“Mum!”

“Kílian Baggins, if we go with them, I’ll feel much safer. Rivendell is far away and the Rangers won’t be here for another three months. The sooner we go the sooner we can settle.” She patted his
cheek tenderly. “Besides, I know you have questions about half of your heritage that I can’t answer. This may be your only chance.”

“But, Mum—”

“Yes, I was angry. I shouldn’t have lashed out like I did.”

“He—”

“Gave me you and you have been the best thing to have ever happened to me. I can be angry, but I can’t be angry forever because I have you.” She looked to Thorin again. “If you’ll have us, we can help as much as we can and if you don’t wish to ask Lord Elrond for assistance, I can ask on your behalf. We can just say it’s for academic purposes.”

“Thank you, Miss Baggins,” Thorin inclined his head to her.

She smiled softly, still clutching Kíli’s hand.

***

“My Willow Baggins!” Kíli’s cousin, Adalgrim Took, stormed in during Second Breakfast. His son and Kíli’s friend, Paladin, followed behind, mouthing an apology to Kíli as his father stomped past the eating dwarves and straight to Kíli’s mother. “You can’t expect me to believe that you’re going to be traveling with HIM of all people!”

“They’re heading to Rivendell anyway,” Willow said, gently. She continued on with what she was doing, despite his crowding. She put a plate of more food on the table. “I would feel safer heading out sooner, Kíli can start his training sooner too.”

“That dwarf left you to die!”

“Grim, this isn’t the time or place to bring up past grievances. This is Second Breakfast. We should at least wait until Afternoon Tea.”

“This isn’t a joking matter, Will!”

“I’m not joking.”

“Does he even care that you almost died?”

The dwarves paused in their eating. Kíli saw Thorin stiffen and eyes widen in horror. Kíli winced himself. He knew this was why his Took relatives had some grievances against him.

“Grim!”

“You were dying and when we went to that blasted mountain, what did they do? They sent us away! When we asked to speak to their king and to ask for him to seek you justice, what did they do? They laughed in our faces and told us you were a lying whore!”

“Adalgrim Took!”

“Willow Baggins!”

Kíli’s mother folded her arms and lifted her chin. He knew Adalgrim said all of this out of care for Willow. He was probably the closest thing Kíli had to a father figure. This also meant that Adalgrim was saying this out of caring for Kíli as well.
“They’re just taking us to Rivendell. I’m not going with them as a bed warmer.”

Adalgrim spluttered and Paladin choked on the toast he had swiped to eat.

“Mum!” Kfli shouted, horrified.

“Willow, you can’t trust them.”

“I don’t. I trust Gandalf. He’ll be there too.” She put her hand on her cousin’s shoulder. “I made choices I’m not proud of, but this gives Kfli a chance to know about his father’s people. He’s of age. He deserves to have a choice. His father’s choices and my choices don’t have to dictate his.”

Adalgrim sighed. “I’m not going to talk you out of this am I?”

“If I couldn’t, you probably wouldn’t be able to.” Kfli said without humor.

Adalgrim shook his head and went to Kfli. He put his hands on the young man’s shoulders. “You’re a good lad Kfli. These stone-eaters and our own folk might not be able to see it, but you are. You look after your mother. Keep her out of trouble.”

“I’m a grown hobbit!” Kfli’s mum huffed.

“And you’re my little cousin.” Adalgrim looked back to Kfli and cupped his cheek. “Keep your mother safe and, if you can, show up these stone-eaters and show them what they missed.”

Kfli smiled. “I will.”
"You’re a girl, aren’t you?"

Fíli froze and turned to look at his cousin.

It was their first night on the road.

The dwobbit was looking at Ori, eyes narrowed in confusion. The dam was pale, her eyes wide. The prince’s mouth went dry as he tried to think of an excuse, something to put Kíli off.

“I won’t refer to you as a girl in the present of others outside the company. But you’re a girl, right?”

She nodded quickly. The scribe turned pink. “How could you tell?”

He shrugged. “Thought it was obvious. My mum wondered it too, but she thought it was rude to ask.”

“And you didn’t?” Fíli asked.

Kíli looked over at Fíli and he was rather surprised at how much he looked like Thorin. “Not really. I’m guessing it’s to protect her. No one referred to her with pronouns so I wasn’t sure and didn’t want to assume.”

“Dwarrowdams are really precious,” Ori squeaked. “It’s safer if outsiders think were men so they don’t try to take advantage.”

Kíli snorted. “I suppose that’s true. I know some of the Baggins figured if my mum dressed as a lad, she wouldn’t have been taken advantage of.”

Fíli scowled. “Uncle didn’t take advantage of your mother.”

He scoffed. “You obviously don’t know your uncle.”

“He wouldn’t shirk his duties,” the prince said darkly.

“What do you call bedding a girl in an inn and then going home to your family in the middle of the night?” Kíli glared at Fíli. “I suppose you lot don’t care about women unless they’re your own kind.”

“Well maybe it’s your mother’s fault.” Fíli lifted his chin. He highly doubted Mistress Baggins was to blame. It probably was Thorin’s fault. However, Fíli didn’t like this dwobbit or whatever he was speaking about his uncle that way. “She was the one who slept with a—”

Ori screamed as Kíli barreled into Fíli, knocking the air right out of him. Fíli was easily able to flip
him over but Kíli did the same soon after. The two of them tumbled through the campsite, neither gaining the upper hand. Pretty soon after, the two were pulled off of each other. Dwalin had hold of Fíli and Thorin had hold of Kíli.

As soon as the dwobbit saw who had him, he yanked from his father’s grip. “Get off of me!”

“Kílian Baggins!” The hobbit rushes to her son and started checking his face and arms and chest for pain.

“I’m fine, Mum.”

She scowled up at him. “The second we get to Rivendell you are grounded.”

“Mum!”

Despite the circumstances, Fíli snickered.

The hobbit’s heated gaze landed on the prince. “You are not much better. I am not your mother so I can’t reprimand you. But you two are both adults and can finish arguments like adults.”

“It was just a fight, Mistress Baggins,” Thorin tried to assure her.

Her gaze turned to him. “I don’t know how you dwarves deal with arguing, but hobbits talk things out and don’t try to kill each other when there’s a disagreement.”

“Mum, it’s really—”

“Bed.”

“Mum.”

“Bed!”

Fíli watched as the dwobbit grumbled but did as he was told. Fíli didn’t feel proud either way. Especially considering how disappointed Thorin looked.

Chapter End Notes

Whose perspective should I write from next?
Dori remembered when the hobbits came to Ered Luin. He only heard about it through Nori. His brother had shaken his head and told the tailor how a group of hobbits had come trying to find the dwarf that had gotten their cousin with child. They even asked for a midwife if one were available.

“They laughed right in their faces,” Nori whispered. His brother was always smug about something, but in this moment, he was pale and looked as though he were going to be sick. “Said it was her own fault for getting in the family way. Called her a bunch of names too, although the hobbits probably didn’t understand it.”

Dori couldn’t help but think of their amad, buried within the mountain. He couldn’t help but think of little Ori who was curled up in her cradle at that very moment. It was no secret that all of them had different fathers. He thought about how dangerous it was going to be for her. There would be assumptions made. He wished he were able to go out and represent the hobbits, but he had Ori to think about.

***

His gut clenched as he now watched the hobbit he hadn’t reached out to walk over to he and his siblings after sending her son to their pallet.

Willow smiled gently at him. “I’m sorry for my son’s behavior,” she said. She looked to Ori who was tucked under Dori’s arm. “I’m sorry he frightened you.”

“It’s okay,” Ori replied quietly.

Willow smiled. “He’s not usually so violent. I think he’s angry at me right now for agreeing to this. He’s also probably angry that I am not angry at what was said.”

“You heard?” Ori tensed under Dori’s arm and he began to wonder what the blond prince had said.

“I can guess. My son rarely gets angry unless it’s on my behalf,” she chuckled. “He’s too protective.” She glanced at Dori. “I’m sure you understand.”

“Of course,” his breath caught in his throat. “Mistress Baggins?”

“Willow, please. I’m only eighty-four.”

She would have barely been in her majority when she had her son then. Dori’s heart clenched. She would have been a year or two younger than Ori was now. “Willow,” he said the name slowly. “I was wondering if I might ask a personal question.”

“I don’t see why not, I can always decide not to answer.”
“Why did your family come to the mountains?”

The hobbit cocked her head to the side. “Ah, you’re probably wondering why they would seek Thorin out since it was obviously a one night sort of thing.”

Dori rather doubted his king had entered something of that nature, but Thorin had done nothing to indicate the opposite either. “I was wondering.”

“How long do dwarvish pregnancies normally last?”

“Twelve months.”

Willow nodded. “That makes more sense then.”

“Miss Willow, how long do hobbit pregnancies last?” Ori asked, pulling her journal out.

“Five months.” Dori’s stomach dropped. “I carried Kílian for nine. My family was worried. Our midwives thought I might not make it. He was getting too big for me to carry.” She glanced over at her son. “I wanted to find the father, even if he already had a family to care for, in hopes my child wouldn’t lose both parents. The sons of Lord Elrond were passing through with the Rangers and they were able to call their father to help deliver my son.” She smiled as Dori noticed Kíli curl into a ball in his sleep. “My family decided it was best that we not attempt to reach out to the mountains again.”

“You had no say?” Ori asked, eyes wide.

“I had some, but based on what the guards said to my cousins, I didn’t want to risk Kílian being mistreated because of who his mother was or that his father did not want him.” She turned back to the Ris. “I’ve taken up a lot of your time. Goodnight.”

“Miss Willow,” Dori began, the rest caught in his throat.

“Hm?”

“I apologize that my people did not help you.”

She smiled up at him slightly. “No need for apologies. There was nothing to be done.”

Dori watched as Willow laid down next to her son and the boy curled around his mother in a protective embrace.

***

Of all the things Dori imagined happening when he signed onto this quest, being stuffed into a sack by trolls had not been thought of.

He frantically searched for Ori and only felt slight relief when he found her. She was crying silently and shaking terribly. Kíli was near her and Dori watched as the dwobbit slowly moved himself so that he was in front of her. The dwobbit was saying something to her in low whispers and Dori watched as his sister began to shrink and Kíli seemed to be attempting to make himself bigger and more of a target. Kíli caught Dori’s eye and the lad gave a swift nod.

The trolls then began debating on how best to cook the dwarrow.

“Never mind the seasoning; we ain't got all night! Dawn ain't far away.”
“Wait!” Willow shouted, pushing herself up into a standing position. “You’re making a terrible mistake!”

“You can’t reason with them!” That might have been Glóin. “They’re half-wits.”

“What does that make us then?” Bofur grumbled.

“I-I meant with the seasoning.”

What on earth was she talking about?

“What about the seasoning?” One of the trolls asked.

“Well, have you smelled them? Believe me, if you don’t season a dwarf properly you’ll have stomach ache for weeks.” This has to be the most ridiculous thing Dori had ever heard. But the other dwarrow began to kick up a fuss about Willow’s implications. “When I ate my son’s father I got a belly ache for nine months.”

“Mum!”

She turned bright red, but kept a very straight face.

“What do you know about cooking dwarf?” Another troll asked.

“Plenty,” Willow nodded. “I was hunting this lot with my son before you found us. I was planning on making a lovely roast. Here, let me help.” Just like that, Dori watched as Willow shimmied out of her sack, which hadn’t been that tight on her anyway, and walk casually to the rim of the trolls camp site. She came back holding some leaves and berries. “This should make them nice and tasty. It was my mother’s receipt.” She tossed them into the pot and promptly took the large spoon away from the cooking troll and began to stir.

This was the most ridiculous thing Dori had ever witnessed.

“There, have a taste!” Willow offered the spoon to the cooking troll and another one dipped his finger in the broth for a taste as well.

“Sweet,” the cooking troll said and the other one actually hummed in agreement. Then, the two seemed to seize before collapsing to the ground.

The third troll paused for only a second before roaring in anger and grabbing Willow by the scruff of her collar. She screamed as the troll lifted her to his mouth.

“The dawn take you all!” Gandalf’s booming voice came into the clearing and the trolls, both dead and alive turned into stone.

Chapter End Notes

Ori’s perspective next!
Did you guys like the troll scene? It’s my first time writing one.
“Thank you,” Ori said as she watched the others in the company look through the troll horde.

Kíli glanced at her curiously. He tilted his head and seemed to think for a moment. “No problem. It’s what anyone else would have done. I was just in the position to do it.”

Not really. Ori wasn’t sure anyone, even her brothers, had been thinking properly. Only Miss Willow and Kíli had been. “Still, thank you.”

“I’m sorry for scaring you when I got into a fight with the blond dwarf.”

“His name is Fíli and it’s okay. Your mum already apologized.”

Kíli nodded. His eyes shifted and then narrowed. “Gandalf, my mother doesn’t need a sword!”

He gave a curt nod to her once more before going to where Tharkûn and his mother were. Ori glanced to where the were and the wizard had, indeed, given Miss Willow a sword—it was probably a letter opener, but to someone as small as Miss Willow, it might as well have been a sword.

“You like him, doncha?” Ori barely reacted when Nori seemed to materialize next to her. She blinked up at him. “The bastard prince,” he added.

“He seems nice, so there’s no reason for me to dislike him.”

“He’s an interesting sort. That’s for sure. His mum has some good assets.”

Dori happened to check on them just at that moment and the eldest Ri slapped the back of his brother’s head. “Behave. The woman has been through enough.”

“Ow! I meant she has some brains. Not like Thorin was gettin’ us outta that,” Nori huffed. “I respect the lass too much to have meant anything improper.”

A loud rustling came from deep within the forest. Thorin and Tharkûn called everyone to arms. Although Ori saw Miss Willow pull out her letter opener, Kíli put himself between his mother and the noise.

“Thieves! Fire! Murder!”

***

Kíli made his talent with the bow known as the company fled the orcs. If Ori were to be honest, they would all probably be dead without him. The dam was also quite shocked about how little the wargs seem to faze him. He didn’t look bored, per say. He had this look she had sometimes seen on Thorin when he had taught Fíli in the training grounds when the blond prince was a tween.

Miss Willow didn’t seem too worried either. She was sprinting along with the rest of them and Ori was surprised her bare feet aren’t in pain. “Don’t worry,” the hobbit said. “We’re almost there.”

“Where are you and the wizard leading us?” Thorin demanded. Tharkûn was gone and they were
almost surrounded.

“Rivendell,” she replied.

At that moment, Kíli swore and shot another arrow, felling another warg. “There are too many orcs here.” He pulled out a horn Ori had noticed him carrying and blew it. “The others should already know the orcs are here. At least they know we’re coming too.”

“In here, you fools!” Tharkûn shouted from a hiding place in the rocks.

The company made their way into what appeared to be a hole into an underground passage. Kíli remained behind, keeping most of the orcs and their wargs back. It wasn’t until the company was safe that he ran to their cover as well. He slid down the hole as other horns began to sound.

Ori watched as the dwobbit landed and he aimed an arrow at the entrance.

“There’s a way through!” Dwalin shouted. “Should we follow it?”

“It’ll lead you to Rivendell. There’s a barrier the orcs won’t be able to cross,” Kíli shouted back at the guard. “I’ll hold up the back. Just get my mother through.”

The company, led by Gandalf, made their way through the passageway. Kíli did as he said and followed from behind. Ori was next to Miss Willow, who was noticeably paler now that they seemed to be out of immediate danger. She was smaller than Ori, which was a rare thing when someone was fully grown.

Something in the passage seemed to shift and Tharkûn relaxed and Kíli made his way to be next to his mother. He put his arm around her as the company stepped out to view the great city of Rivendell—Ori had only heard about it in books.

It was beautiful.

“I believe it wise if you and young Kíli come to the front, my dear,” the wizard said to Miss Willow. “I fear some of the company,” he glared at Thorin, “should not make their opinions widely known.”

Thorin and Kíli both scowled and Ori was again struck by how alike the two were.

Kíli and his mother moved to the front of the company as another horn sounded and horses approached. The company grew restless and Nori pushed Ori behind him.

“Miss Boggins!” Two young voices exclaimed. Two young elven warriors leapt from their steeds and rushed to embrace the hobbit.

“You were not to come for another month!” One exclaimed.

“You have denied us the chance to be your loyal guards!” The other said, putting a hand over his heart as though he were wounded. “How on earth did you manage with only Kíli? Surely he must have gotten you lost!”

“It was one time!” Kíli groused, although Ori heard no true bitterness in his tone. “It’s good to see you too, Elladan, Elrohir.”

The two elves stood and rustled the dwobbit’s hair. “You killed quite a few orcs and wargs.” The first to have spoken said. “Left barely any for us.”
“Yeah,” Kíli smirked. “Well, now I need to resupply my quiver so I can’t have that promised shooting match right now.”

The two elves snickered.

“I see you have come in your own time, then, Miss Willow.” Another elf, one who was older but looked like the two who were already standing by the two Bagginses, said as he too got off his steed.

Willow curtsied and Kíli bowed.

“I hope you do not mind, Lord Elrond,” she said.

“You and your family have always been welcome in my home, my dear. And as I have told you many times before, Elrond is fine.” The elf knelt down and Miss Willow gave him a hug.

“Then you should call me only Willow then.”

The elf smiled. “And I see young Kílian has grown since I last saw him. Even sporting the shadow of a beard.”

The twin elves snorted.

Ori glanced at Kíli, who was rubbing his chin self-consciously. In the Shire, Ori had noticed that the hobbits didn’t appear to grow beards. His beard was rather under-grown by dwarven standards. She wondered if it was a sore spot for him. He had more beard than she did, but she was a dam and their beards were always sparse and was more sideburns than anything.


Thorin scowled. “I do not believe we have met.”

Lord Elrond’s lips formed a tight line. “You have your grandfather's bearing. I knew Thror when he ruled under the Mountain.”

“Indeed,” Thorin lifted his chin. “He made no mention of you.”

“I suppose not.” His gaze returned to Miss Willow. “You and your companions are welcome, Willow. We shall prepare a feast. No doubt you are hungry.”

“Starving, really.” Miss Willow smiled sweetly. “We ran into trolls last night. It makes it quite difficult to eat.”

“Trolls!” One of the twins exclaimed.

“Now that is a story you must tell! Arwen will no doubt be glad to hear the tale.”

“It is nothing so grand. It was rather my fault we got in such a mess.”

Ori glanced at the king and saw his body tense. No doubt he regretted getting as angry as he had after the others were freed from their confinement.
Dwalin’s next!
They had been shown their quarters, which the dwarrow refused, preferring to camp out in one of the pavilions. The hobbit and her son chose to stay within the accommodations they were used to when they visited—which apparently had been frequent since Kíli was a wee pebble.

There was a feast. Too much green for Dwalin’s taste, but they did provide some meat. The meal was a silent one on the dwarven side of the table save for the few conversations in Khuzdul to each other so as not to be overheard. The other side of the table where the hobbit and her son sat was not so silent but a pleasant sort of noise that echoed with the lass’ laughter and jokes from her son two the twin elves. At one point, the hobbit began spinning the tale of their encounter with the trolls. She painted to dwarrow in a rather good light, even commenting on how noble they had been in the attempt to rescue her. She then stated how she had been able to get out of them but put most of the praise on the dwarrow.

Dwalin glanced at Thorin and saw that his friend was eyeing the hobbit. It was subtle for all that did not know him.

“We should speak when everyone else has gone to bed,” Dwalin told him and Thorin nodded in reply before taking a drink from his goblet.

“Tell me, Willow, how did you come into the companionship of this particular group of dwarves,” Lord Elrond asked.

Dwalin sensed Thorin flinch beside him. Although they were trying not to be obvious about it, most of the company glanced at the hobbit to see what she would say.

Kíli opened his mouth but his mother put her hand over his and squeezed it.

“Gandalf asked me to house a company of dwarves as they set out on their journey to the Iron Hills to visit relatives. Since they were passing this way, I thought it would be fine to join them on their journey up to this point of it.” She smiled sweetly and Dwalin realized she was, no doubt, using her small stature to incur the masculine need to protect her. No wonder hobbits knew no wars. “Ah! That reminds me. A year ago, I came across a strange map in Bree and I recognized a few of the runes as that dwarvish language you once showed me. I had no need of it and thought the dwarves might like it since it was quite old. Apparently it is a map of their kingdom of Erebor. A relic. Truly remarkable. I thought it would be of interest to you Lord Elrond and Master Tho—Master Balin, their master scribe, was wondering if there were any secrets that might be uncovered from it. For academic and historic purposes of course.”

“Of course.” The elf lord turned to Thorin and held out his hand. “May I see the map?”

Slowly, Thorin withdrew the map from his possession and allowed the elf lord to see it.

“Remarkable,” the elf said. “You were right to believe that there were secrets hidden within. There are moon runes here.”

“Moon runes?” Kíli asked.

“Yes. They are written with mithril ink under a very specific moon and can only be read under the
same moon.” He glanced at Thorin. “It appears that it is auspicious that you once again found Willow and that she led you here. The moon to read this comes in two weeks and I have the correct room in which to decipher the runes.” He passed the map back to Thorin. “Until then, as guests of Willow, you are welcome to stay.”

***

“Why didn’t you tell me about her?” Dwalin asked after the rest of the company went to bed.

Thorin leaned against the wall and stared into the fire. “I always planned on going back for her.” He closed his eyes. “She touched my knee and I knew. I knew she was my One.”

“Then why didn’t you go back? Why didn’t you have one of us find her?”

“I had to help Dís with Víli’s funeral. I had to reorganize the mountain to make sure no one else would get hurt from the unstable cliff side. I had to be there for Fíli. I kept putting it off. I kept putting it off and I missed everything.”

“I heard about the hobbits that came to the mountain seeking help.” Dwalin turned away, not wanting to see his friend’s gaze. “I should have intervened but I didn’t. Thorin, you didn’t know.”

“I went to the Shire once.” Thorin said suddenly. “Years ago. Nowhere near where her home was. But I saw the land and its people. You saw them. You saw how happy and safe they all were. How free they seemed. What could I have given her? A cold mountain where we wonder if the food supplies will last. Where we live from day to day unsure of how we will the next day, month, year. I saw her people and saw I could offer her nothing.” Dwalin looked at his friend and saw his eyes shine with unshed tears. “I thought she would do better without me. And now I learn I left her to almost die.”

Dwalin had never seen his friend like this. But then again, Dwalin hadn’t known that Thorin knew who his One was. “You didn’t know Thorin.”

“It’s no excuse.”

“No,” Dwalin admitted. “I suppose it’s not.” They sat in silence for a few moments. “Tharkûn still wants her and the boy to come with us.”

“They would be safer here. I would not send my One or my son anywhere near that dragon. I don’t care what the wizard says. We’ll find another way.”

“Even if he’s illegitimate,” this caused Thorin to flinch, “Erebor is still his home by birthright. He has a right to come with us if he so chooses. He might be more inclined to if he knows his mother is safe here.”

“Fíli’s my heir.”

“I never said he wasn’t.” Dwalin crosses his arms. He was nearly certain his brother had said something about this to Thorin by now. “But the boy is still your son. He’s one of us and has a right to Erebor too. Listen, we have two weeks until the map can be read. Spend time with him. Him and his mother.” Dwalin put his hand on Thorin’s shoulder. “You have enough to regret Thorin. Don’t make this time you’ve been given one of them.”

Chapter End Notes
Whose perspective should I write in next?
Olórin watched from the sidelines as Thorin attempted to approach Willow and her son the first few days of their stay in Rivendell.

Willow was much kinder to Thorin’s attempt to speak, but it was fairly obvious how uncomfortable she was if they were not with someone else.

Kili was more likely to snuff his father’s advances.

Olórin has to hand it to the dwarven king, he was stubborn. At least he was trying. The istar didn’t believe he held all the facts of what happened between Thorin and Willow, but he knew Thorin to be an honorable dwarf. Surely he didn’t leave for no reason.

This all came to a head when, once again, Kili and Fili got into an argument. That was when Olórin and the rest of the Company came to know exactly why the young dwobbit was so upset and why Willow was so reluctant to be approached by Thorin, even in his most innocent advances.

“Like I would want to be a stupid dwarf!” Kili shouted. “All you ever do is run from your responsibilities!”

“That’s not true! We’re on this quest to get back our home! It’s our responsibilities as a part of the Line of Durin to win back our mountain!”

“Then why doesn’t your king do it?” Kili growled. “Hobbits may not know much about kings and all that, but they should be leading the charge instead of asking fathers to leave their children and wives at home for some stupid mountain when you’ve already got one!”

The clearing they were in grew quiet.

Willow went to her son’s side quickly. “Kili Baggins, don’t be disrespectful.”

“You mean you don’t know?” Fili asked.

“Know what?” Kili snapped.

“Thorin’s the king.”

Willow’s eyes grew wide and Kili’s jaw dropped.

“But…” Willow’s lip trembled slightly. “But the dwarf king isn’t married.”

Olórin watched as the comment clicked in Fili’s brain.

The prince’s expression crumbled. “Thorin isn’t married. Never has.”

Willow took a sharp breath. “Excuse me.”

She fled from the clearing with her son following closely behind.

Olórin closed his eyes. So much pain for nothing.
Olónir knelt before the sobbing hobbit as her son attempted to console his mother. Willow’s face was buried in her hands as she trembled.

“My dear,” the istar offered her a handkerchief. “Please, tell me what happened. Why did you think Thorin was married.” He needn’t ask why she did not know he was a king, no one had explicitly stated it. Elrond had mentioned that Thorin’s grandfather ruled, but that was it.

“He… he… he was gone by morning,” Willow blubbered. “I… I went to ask the… the innkeeper where… where he’d gone and he… he told me Thorin had to go back home to his wife and—” The poor hobbit’s voice broke and she couldn’t speak anymore.

Kili wrapped his arms around his mother and she curled into him. She really was a small thing in comparison to her son.

Olónir grimaced. So much heartbreak for miscommunication.

“Mum, it’s okay…” Kili stroked his mother’s hair. “It’s okay.” He pressed his lips to his mother’s hair. “We’re going to be okay.”

Kili carried his mother to bed. She had exhausted herself by crying. He followed the istar back to the clearing where the other dwarrow no doubt were.

“Is Thorin a good person?” He asked.

Olónir looked down at him. “I would like to think so. The dwarrow are a proud people who have suffered much. Thorin was there when the dragon came and was there when his grandfather’s head was cut off by an orc. He has faced many things and has overcome them admirably.” The istar paused. “If I am to guess when you were conceived, the reason Thorin left in so great a hurry is that he had just gotten word that young Fíli and his parents had gotten trapped in a rockslide. I’m not excusing him for not coming to look for your mother.” Especially considering Olónir believed Willow was Thorin’s One since dwarrow knew so based on touch. “But I am giving you a reason for why he did not.”

Kili nodded. “I won’t… I won’t hold it against him, but he… I don’t have a father. I don’t… I don’t think I can see him… like that.”

Olónir nodded. It was better than nothing and perhaps it was all Thorin would be allowed.

He hoped the dwarf would accept it.

Chapter End Notes

Bifur POV next!
Bifur sat next to his cousins as they ate. Because he couldn’t speak Westron, he could only really speak to the other dwarrow. That didn’t stop him from observing the hobbit and dwobbit in their Company.

Personally, Bifur didn’t think the hobbit lass should come on the quest. She was small and fragile from what he could tell. She had a quick wit, more so than the lot of them, but he doubted wit would come in handy when facing a dragon.

Her son, on the other hand, was fast and had a good head on his shoulders when it came to combat. His first instinct was to protect, made obvious by him putting himself between Ori and the trolls. He had good aim too. Better than any dwarrow Bifur had seen, but that might have been because he didn’t have a beard to worry about.

When the Company learned about what Willow’s point of view on the events that led to Kíli’s birth, they had all been mortified. She had thought Thorin was married and that had been why he had left and never came back. Bifur couldn’t blame Kíli for being so angry around Thorin when they started out from the Shire.

Kíli was being civil around Thorin now and was no longer openly hostile around the king. He asked a few skirting questions about dwarrow culture. He occasionally asked if some things were normal for dwarrow that he did that hobbits had found unusual. His mother had been right, he deserved some answers about who he was—answers she couldn’t really answer for him.

Willow was still withdrawn around Thorin. She preferred to not be alone with him and seemed to enjoy Dori, Glóin, and Bombur’s company. That, however, might have been because the three of them were parents in their own right or at least understood what it meant to raise a child in Dori’s case. She also spent some time with Ori who had many questions about hobbit culture.

***

“Do you think either of them will come?” Bofur asked on the sixth night.

“*The boy might*,” Bifur said. “*I don’t think his mother shall, even if Thorin would let her.*”

“Shall we bet on it?” Nori leaned in. “I think the little prince will come for no other reason but to know our people better. I think is mother will come to just keep an eye on him.”

“Lady Dís wanted to come too when Fíli volunteered,” Bombur said, thoughtfully. “So, the lass might come. She is mighty young though. Older than Fíli and Ori, of course, but she is still rather young, regardless of what Tharkûn says.”

They all nodded.
“She’ll come,” Dwalin said, sitting amongst them.

“Why do you think that?” Nori asked.

“Because she doesn’t quite trust us all yet. If her son comes, she comes too.”

Chapter End Notes

Nori is going to have a POV next.
Something important is going to happen next chapter. I’m not going to say what though. 😊
Nori watched everyone from the sidelines. He kept an eye on the Company and on the elves and on the hobbit and her son. He still remembered when the lass’ family came to Ered Luin seeking help. How desperate that situation must have been for her to seek out a dwarf she believed to be married. She had commented on it being because she wanted her baby to have a parent if she didn’t make it, but even so.

She was a small thing and Nori knew how big dwarf pebbles could get when they were in their mother. She was smart too. She’d have made an excellent queen, she’d still make one if she wanted to be (Nori had no doubt Thorin still wanted her). She didn’t hold grudges as easily as Thorin or the rest of their race did. When they had descended upon her home she had been courteous and kind, especially considering she hadn’t been expecting them. Aye. Nori figured she was the sort of queen he would get behind.

The bastard prince was a good kid too. He had a solid head on his shoulders and it was obvious to everyone how much he cared about his mother, something Nori thought to be a good sign for any lad. If you put your mother before anyone else, it showed a lad had a good heart. The bastard prince was spending more time with his cousin, trying to get to know him and not fight with him. They’d spar with Fili pointing out his younger cousin’s misuse of steps and such.

“I never fought anything that was the same size as me,” the bastard prince had said. It made his preference to distance fighting more understandable.

Nori watched the lad interact with his little sister as well. He was polite and courteous. He never invaded her personal space if he didn’t have to, which he rarely had to. Nori chalked most of it up to the fact that the bastard prince didn’t seem to have been allowed near most hobbit lasses when he was younger considering that was one of the reasons he and his mother had left their home in the Shire.

That night the elven twins had the young dwobbit singing a hobbit drinking song. The lad offered his mother his hand and she laughed as he pulled her up and swung her around in a stomping dance. It was probably the happiest he had seen the two. Her smile made her look years younger and his own grin had a boyish innocence to it that he definitely hadn’t inherited from his father.

The dwarven king watch the two carefully and quietly. He had heard some of the reason as to why the king hadn’t gone looking for his hobbit, but Nori still thought it was a stupid reason. Why would you let your One go like that. If Mahal made you for someone, then he made you so that you could take care of them and they you. It’s part of the reason why Nori was pretty sure he didn’t have a One himself.

***

It happened so quickly that Nori almost didn’t catch it.

One second his sister and the bastard prince were walking toward the library from the training grounds, Ori kept getting hopelessly lost if she tried by herself, and the next the lad had pushed her to the ground as a dagger whizzed by approximately where their heads had been. Nori shot up and headed towards his sister.
“Are you okay?” The lad asked, taking her hands and helping her up.

Ori blinked up at him. “Y–yes.”

He nodded and then turned to where the dagger had come from. “Oi! Man agoreg, pe-channasin?!” One of the elven twins shouted something back and the bastard prince began to yell some more. He looked back to Ori. “Are you sure your okay?” She nodded quickly. He looked back to the elves and started shouting again. “Dōl gǐn lost!”

Nori reached his sister’s side. “Ori, are you—” he stopped when she looked up at him. Her cheeks were red and her eyes were wide. “Namadith?”

“Nori…” she blinked up at him. “He’s my One.”

Well, sh—

Chapter End Notes

Man agoreg, pe-channasin?! – What did you do, idiots?!
Dōl gǐn lost! – Your head is empty!
namadith – little sister
Kíli

Chapter Notes

I’m back with angst!

---

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Kíli wasn’t an idiot.

He knew when he wasn’t wanted.

The dwobbit wasn’t sure what had happened. He felt like he was making a friend as he would talk and walk with Ori. She was funny, although she didn’t seem to think so, and she was smart. He liked talking to her and asking her questions about dwarves—dwarf—and she would ask about hobbits. But now she seemed to flee every time she saw him.

She didn’t make it too obvious, of course. She wasn’t rude. But Ori would make an excuse every time Kíli tried to approach her.

Then again, he was a bastard. Maybe Thorin hadn’t truly abandoned them in the way they had originally thought, but he had still left. Maybe Ori was starting to get uncomfortable around him.

It had started when he pushed her down so the twins wouldn’t accidentally hit her with a dagger. He hadn’t thought to apologize. What if she had been uncomfortable with him doing that and he ruined their friendship? What if he had done something that was considered offensive to dwarf and didn’t know it?

Kíli’s stomach twisted in knots at the thought.

He didn’t even really know who to ask about it either. Ori had mentioned that dams were well protected in their race. If he offended one, would they all turn their back on him?

Would Thorin?

Sometimes, Kíli wished he was closer to Thorin. Maybe he would have felt more comfortable to ask if he were.

---

“You’re pouting,” his mother said as she sat down next to him.

“Am not.”

“Brooding then. What’s wrong, sweetie?”

“I think I messed up, Mum.”

In an instant, she had her arm around him and carefully tucked his curls behind his pointed ears.

“What happened?”

“Ori’s avoiding me and the only reason I can think why is it I’ve done something.”
“Have you tried talking to one of the others?”

He shook his head.

“Sweetie, you need to ask.”

“What if Thorin doesn’t… what if he doesn’t want to try anymore if I’ve offended her?”

“Kílian Baggins,” she cupped his face in her hands. “What your father and I had is complicated and we both failed at multiple points when it comes to each other. I may not know Thorin well, but I am certain he cares for you. He’s trying and that’s more than most of the hobbits in the Shire.” She took a deep breath. “If he stops trying because you accidentally offended her because you don’t understand his culture, then it is his loss. You are a sweet and kind dwobbit with a good heart and you would never hurt anyone unless they spoke badly about someone you care about.”

Kíli pressed his forehead to his mum’s. “I thought I was making a friend, Mum.” Tears began to slide down his cheeks. “A friend who didn’t have to be because they’re family.”

“Oh, sweetie…” He curled into her chest and Willow wrapped her arms around him tightly. “I’m sorry, sweetie. It’s okay. It’s going to be okay.”

***

“Um… Ori?” Kíli rubbed the back of his head nervously. He knew approaching her when everyone else is around would either get her to listen or talk to him or would blow up in his face and the dwarrow would turn their backs on him. “Can we… talk, maybe?”

She looked at him with wide grey eyes and opened and closed her mouth a few times. Nori nudged her before she nodded quickly.

“I’m… uh…” Kíli looked back at his mother who was smiling at him and nodding encouragingly to him. He turned back to Ori. “That day… when the twins accidentally threw a knife in our direction…”

“Yes?” Her voice was so small.

Kíli felt himself blush. Yavanna, he really has no idea how to talk to girls. “First of all, I’m sorry they did that. They think it’s funny because it’s me and I do that to them sometimes because they’re like brothers to me. And…” Kíli looked down. “I apologize for having to push you down. There was probably a better way to move you then do that.”

“It’s okay.”

“And if I offended you in any way because of that, I’m really sorry.”

“Offended me?”

Kíli glanced up at her. “Well… it seemed like you were avoiding me recently and I… I thought… before we were becoming friends and then you started to avoid me and I thought… maybe… I offended you. I still don’t know that much about dwarrow culture and I’ve never been allowed to interact with girls back home because of the whole… yeah. So, I’m sorry if I offended you and I hope we can go back to being friends. You’re one of the first people I’ve become friends with that isn’t… that’s not family.”

“Friends?”
Kíli’s heart sank. Maybe she had just felt bad for him. Poor bastard kid who doesn’t know anything about dwarrow. “I… understand if that’s not what you were intending. I apologize if I misunderstood.” He have an awkward bow and rushed off. Embarrassed.

***

“Hey,” Fíli plopped down next to Kíli as he was fletching some arrows.

They had about three days left until the map could be read. He still wasn’t sure if he was going to follow the Company or not but he wanted to have enough arrows if he was.

“Hey.”

He wasn’t friends with Fíli. They were… cousins. That was the only way he could describe him. Kíli felt twinges of jealousy when he thought about him. Thorin had raised him like a son. He’d been there for everything that he hadn’t for Kíli. He was also probably considered good looking by dwarvish standards, at least that’s what Bofur had said. Long golden hair. Good braid arrangement. Beard coming in nice. Beard braids were a plus. Bigger nose. A prince.

“I was wondering something about hobbits,” the prince began.

“I’m not exactly the expert, you know. I wasn’t really allowed to… participate in things.”

“It’s an easy question,” Fíli said, rolling his eyes.

“You’d probably ask anyways o go ahead and ask.”

“Do hobbits believe in soulmates or stuff like that?”

“That’s a weird question.”

“Just answer it.”

“No we don’t. If you love someone you marry them. Well, if you think you love someone. My mum thought she was in love with her ex-husband but he divorced her when he thought she couldn’t have kids. Cheated on her with someone else long before he got the divorce papers lined up.”

“Divorce?”

“If two people who are married don’t love each other anymore or one does something that causes the other shame, they can end the marriage and act as though they were never married. The ex-husband got mum’s childhood home and most of the stuff when they divorced because he was a guy and my mum was considered defective because they thought she couldn’t have kids and she wouldn’t be able to fill the large smial with children.”

“So… soulmates aren’t a thing?”

“Nope.”

“That… seems sad.”

“Lady Yavanna doesn’t believe in a one. Relationships are meant to grow and be a mutual thing. Not some sort of cosmic ‘this person was made for you’ kind of thing. Could you imagine what my mum would have felt if her ex or Thorin were supposed to be her soulmate and they just up and abandoned her. She probably would have gone crazy. We don’t talk about it much, but I know she
was really sad when she was pregnant with me. She actually stopped talking for a long time.”

“I suppose… that makes sense.”

“Why do you ask anyway?”

“No reason.”

Kíli wasn’t an idiot.

He was certain there was a reason. But he wasn’t a dwarf and maybe it was something only dwarrow were supposed to know, so he let it go.

Chapter End Notes

I’m debating between having Thorin or Fíli’s POV next.
Fíli felt sick to his stomach.

Hobbits didn’t have Ones.

Inwardly, Fíli was swearing at all the Valar that this should happen not once but twice in the span of two generations.

Ms Willow had no idea that Thorin was bound to her in a way that couldn’t be put into words because no dwarf had ever needed to figure out how to. And now Ori was bound to Kíli in the same way.

Ori.

Shoot. How was he supposed to tell her that her One didn’t feel the same way she did? And how was he supposed to tell his uncle.

Maybe hobbits and dwarves weren’t supposed to interact. Never finding your One was less painful than your bond not being returned.

***

Since Ori was his best friend, he had to be the one to tell her.

She was heartbroken.

It was horrible seeing her like that. It reminded Fíli a bit of what his amad had been like when his adad died.

Dori and Nori gathered around their sister and comforted her as best they could.

“Don’t give up hope, Ori,” Fíli told her after she cried her eyes out. “They don’t have Ones like we do, but they still have love. Maybe… maybe he’ll fall for you too.”

“But what if he doesn’t come on the quest?” She asked. “What then?”

Fíli smiled sadly. “Then he’s an idiot who won’t know what he’s missing.”

He was able to get her to smile just a little bit.

***

Thorin was arguing with Balin again.

Fíli glanced over at Ms Willow and Kíli. The two were helping mend some of the Company’s clothes and packs for the rest of the journey. Dori was watching them and asking them random questions about their stitches and their way of patching things. Fíli knew it was to distract them from what Thorin and Balin were arguing about.

“He’s not your trueborn child! If you acknowledge him people would begin to question Fíli’s
authority as your heir! ” Balin shouted.

“ Fíli is and always will be my heir. It matters not if I have a son of my own. I merely wish to acknowledge him so he and his mother will not be ridiculed in our mountain! ”

“ She will not be— ”

“ She will be, Balin, ” Dwali cut in. “ You didn’t hear those guards when they sent her family away. Besides, it would look bad for Thorin if he doesn’t acknowledge him. Only a fool would be blind to how much the lad looks like Thorin. ”

“ Fíli— ”

“ I’m fine with Fíli being acknowledged even if he ultimately stays in the mountain, ” Fíli said, cutting off Balin. “ He’s my cousin and we have lost too many Durins. We are family. Are we to be like the hobbits that threw them out of their home because it inconveniences us? Are we not better than that? ”

Balin did not answer.

***

It was getting towards the end of their stay in Rivendell and Kíli had yet to decide whether or not he was going to join the quest and that worried Fíli greatly.

What he’s seen of his cousin, he appeared to be a good enough dwobbit. He would be good for Ori. They were both reserved in their own way, but he seemed content to fight if it meant protecting the honor of someone he cared about.

“Are you coming on the quest?” Fíli finally decided to ask him.

Kíli looked up at him as he fletched his arrows. He was a good shot. Probably the best Fíli had ever seen, not that there were many dwarves archers.

Kíli looked away and continued his work. “Maybe.”

“Maybe? What’s keeping you?”

“If I help you reclaim the mountain, what do I gain from it besides helping you reclaim your home. I won’t be welcomed there, much less my mum. Your people made that clear. Besides, you have all been avoiding me lately so I assume you don’t even want me on the quest anyway.”

Fíli grimaced. “Some… Dwarrow thing happened and we’re dealing with it.” Fíli paused. “Thorin plans on acknowledging you once OUR people return to the mountain. You and your mum.”

Kíli glanced at him. “And where does that leave you?”

“His heir, unless you want to be king.”

“I never cared for politics. I’ve never cared for power. It’s not the hobbit way of things. But I know enough that some might use me against you. Or try to, at least.”

“And will you be used?”

“I’m not an idiot, I know my limits. I’ll support you as my future king if my mum and I stay in the mountain. I’ll even be an ambassador to the Mirkwood since none of you seem to understand elven
etiquette.”

Fíli nodded. “So, will you come?”

Kíli was silent for a moment. “I’ll talk to my mum.”

Chapter End Notes

I think I’m going to have Willow’s POV next and then Nori’s
Learning that Thorin was not married was more painful than Willow could have ever imagined. The knowledge that he could have been with her all this time cut into her chest and bared all the heartbreak she had carried—all the shame she had swallowed out into the open. Thorin attempted to speak with her more privately but she could not trust herself to. She could not trust herself not to give herself to him again if he asked.

He wouldn’t. Willow knew that she was not pretty and that the young body he had known all those years ago had changed due to age and a difficult birth. Lord Elrond had told her that any child, hobbit or dwobbit, it did not matter, would be dangerous. Kíli’s birth had put too much of a strain on Willow’s body and it had nearly killed her. If Thorin wished to have her once more, to have his child fill her belly again—Willow wasn’t certain if she would refuse him.

She was weak around him.

For no other reason but she felt that he was the first person to let her understand what it was to be loved. She still dreamed of him sometimes and now she knew that there had been no one to keep him from her.

She pushed her own feelings away, or at least attempted to. She needed to put her son first. Kíli would always come first for her. He was her world. He was the reason she was happy.

***

When she had learned that she was pregnant, Willow had been mortified. So much so that she laughed until she cried. Her husband had been unable to give her children and now she had conceived a child with a married man who did not love her, had not bothered to wake her up and speak of his own shame to her.

It had taken her longer to realize she was pregnant because it was so slow. But she knew she could not hide it for long. Her Baggins family spoke little to her, blaming her for Otho’s unhappiness and his wandering gaze. What little protection she had as their relative would not save her from the disgrace they would see in her getting with child from a one night stand with a dwarf. Her Took family would be more understanding. They may not like the position she was in, but they would not cast her out of the Shire completely. She had been a vulnerable woman when she fell pregnant. They would say she fell pregnant to a brutal dwarf with their war-like tendencies.

She would never be able to tell them how she had begged for her dwarf to take her. How she had cried out for him. How she had clawed at his back and claimed him just as much as he had claimed her. There had been no violence, only a rough passion that made her feel wanted.

Even if fate had taken everything else from her, she had been given that at least. Even if her dwarf
did not want her, he had given her his seed and left her a child. All the love she had given that had been thrown back to her would then be given tenfold to her baby.

All the love the world had thrown back to her face with a sneer would be given to this child who was innocent of all things.

***

The pregnancy had been difficult.

She swelled to the point that she could not walk. Willow curled around her belly and prayed to Yavanna and even the dwarve's Aulë. She wanted to be there for her child. She wanted to watch them grow up and find all that she had been unable to in life. She wanted to give them so much more than she had been.

But there were whispers, whispers that she would not make it. That the child would live and she would not. Grim sat by her bedside while she was sick and in pain. Her favorite cousin. Her truest friend.

“The father,” she whispered.

“Wil, don’t,” he begged.

“He lives in Ered Luin. The Blue Mountains. He… he has a wife and child already.”

Her cousin blanched but he looked more sad than angry. “Wil, you don’t have to say—”

“This baby deserves to have at least one parent. Please. Please,” her voice broke. “He deserves to know. He deserves to know that he has another child. Please. He was… he had been kind. Please. Please…”

Grim pressed his lips to her temple. “I will try,” he promised her. “I will try and I will drag him back to the Shire so that he might be here with you. So that he might take part in the pain you bear for the pleasure he got.”

Grim and a few others of her family went to Ered Luin to seek the dwarf that had given her a child. Willow dreamed that her dwarf would come to her and tell her that all had been a mistake. That he was not married and that he had loved only her. That he had been gone for so long because he wished to make a home for her. A home that rivaled Bag End.

But her family returned with no dwarf and Grim held her as she cried for she had let her dreams become more than that. They had turned to hope. And failed hope was so much worse than failed dreams.

***

Her child’s birth had been painful.

Her grandfather had called upon Lord Elrond, an elf, for help in the birth. She had been so very weak. She prayed to all the Valar now. She wanted to be there for her baby. She wanted them to know that they were loved and that she did not regret him. Would they know that if she were not there to raise then? Surely Grim would let her baby know.

But when she held that large bundle in her arms, she knew it to be worth it. She could tell that her son took after his father. In all but the eyes. His eyes were hers and hers alone.
“You will always know what love feels like, little one,” she whispered to him as she fed him for the first time. “Always.”

***

“Mum,” her son stood by her as she continued to mend clothes. “What do you think I should do?” Willow looked to her son, his brow creased in such a way that reminded her of his father. How strange it was that their mannerisms were so similar when they barely knew one another.

“What do you want to do?”

Kili looked down at his feet. Willow smiled sadly and patted her leg and her son sat down at her feet and rested his head on her thigh as she stroked his dark curls.

“I want to get to know them,” he whispered. “I want to get to know him. I want to understand why.”

Willow smiled. A part of her always knew her son was not meant for a place like the Shire or even a place like Rivendell. He was made of stone, like his father. “Then go with them.”

“I cannot leave you.”

She leaned down and kissed his temple. “You will not, for I am coming with you.”

Chapter End Notes

Nori is next!
Nori

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Nori wasn’t all that surprised that the hobbit and her son decided to join them on the rest of the quest. He was secretly glad for it. It was also a chance for Ori and the bastard prince to get to know each other better. Nori supposed it was for the best. Ones always took things too quickly in his opinion. This let his little sister take things slow. The crown prince already promised to help keep an eye on them.

The king, on the other hand, asked Nori to keep an eye on Ms Willow. The hobbit was not meant for such a journey, but there she was, trying to keep up with them all, staying as near to her son as possible.

As they climbed up the Misty Mountains, rain began to give in and Nori worries for the hobbit’s feet. Her son wore shoes and had traction against the slippery rock. The thief had no idea how her feet would handle it. He noticed that the bastard prince kept a steady hold of his mother and kept a close eye on Ori when he could. Regardless of him understanding Ones or not, the prince knew to look after the womenfolk.

The rain was coming down harder. If Thorin didn’t—

“We must find shelter!” Nori heard the king shout.

Goo—

“Look out!” came Dwalin’s cry.

A large boulder soared towards them and crashed into the side of the mountain just above them. The Company pressed themselves to the mountain as rock and debris tumbled around them.

“This is no thunderstorm,” came Balin. “It’s a thunder battle.” The Company watched in horror as the mountains took the rough shape of two people. “Look!”

“Well, bless me,” Bofur shouted. “The legends are true! Giants! Stone giants!”

The two beings began to battle, throwing chunks of rock at one another. It was then that a third giant tumbled into life, and part of the Company had found a brief rest on one of its legs.

Nori shouted for his brother as they were separated. His brother shouted for their sister and Nori turned to see the bastard prince holding Ori and his mother to the side of the mountain, trying to keep them anchored.

They all looked on in horror as the leg carrying their friends and family swung around towards the rock near them. A scream caught in Nori’s throat as he watched the leg Dori was on get crushed into the side of the mountain. He heard the others crying out to. They all rushed forward, calling out to those lost.

No. He couldn’t lose Dori. He couldn’t lose him!

They all felt immense relief when they saw that their lost members were alright.
“MUM!” Kíli’s roar echoed through the mountain, splitting the rain with its horror.

“Willow!” Thorin shouted.

Nori was on his stomach in an instant, reaching towards the hobbit dangling along the side of the mountain. He and Kíli reached for her, trying to grab hold of something. The tips of her fingers brushed against Nori’s and it felt like lightning had erupted from the touch, it seared his skin like the heat of an anvil, sparking like a flint to a blade. He sought to touch her once more, to grab her and hold her to him.

Nothing else mattered.

Then, she slipped.

“Willow!” Nori’s scream tangled with Kíli’s cry for his mother.

A dark hulking figure swung down and grabbed her, pushing Willow up into her son’s arms. It took a moment for Thorin to pull himself up and then he was holding the both of them to his chest.

“I thought I had lost you,” the king whispered, but his voice was so hoarse that everyone heard it. Thorin looked to the others. “We need to find shelter!”

The Company moved, trying to find a cave or something. Nori followed behind them, watching as Willow curled slightly into Thorin’s embrace.

Willow…

Willow.

Nori glanced at his hand, at the tips of his fingers where he had first touched her skin to skin.

Sh—

Chapter End Notes

MWAHAHAHAHAHA!
Thorin held Kíli’s mother close as they found an entrance to a cave.

“It looks safe enough,” Dwalin said.

“Search to the back,” Thorin ordered. “Caves in mountains are seldom unoccupied.”

The guard went in and called that it was clear. They all settled in, Thorin still holding Willow tightly to his side.

Gloin dropped a bundle of, somehow, dry wood on the floor and rubbed his hands. “Right then! Let’s get a fire started.”

“No,” Thorin shook his head. “No fires, not in this place. Get some sleep. We start at first light.”

“We were to wait in the mountain until Gandalf joined us, that was the plan,” Balin countered.

“Plans change,” Thorin said, looking at Willow, who Kíli realized was still trembling. “It’s too dangerous to stay here. Bofur, take the first watch.”

They all settled on the cave floor.

“Mum, are you okay?” Kíli asked, taking his mother’s hand in his.

She nodded. “Just… just shaken.” She looked up to their leader. “Thank you, Thorin.”

He smiled at her and Kíli was surprised at how many years the expression seemed to shave off his father’s face. “I’m just glad you’re safe.”

He tilted his head forward and pressed his forehead to Willow’s. Kíli didn’t know much of anything about dwarvish culture, but he could feel in his very bones that this was intimate.

“If… if you and Kíli wish to return to Rivendell, I shall not stop you.”

“I made a promise—”

“We are not so far that you cannot return to the elves. I will come for you when the mountain is taken back.”

“Mum, I can go on the quest. Maybe Gandalf can return you to Rivendell once we meet with him again.”

“I’m staying,” his mother said firmly

“Alright, atamanel,” Thorin said gently. “We must rest now regardless.”

The three settled themselves for the night. Kíli laid with his back to his mother and faced the entrance of the cave, where danger would come from. Kíli has commandeered his mother’s sword and laid it out, sheathed, in front of him.
He glanced over and saw Ori twiddling her thumbs in nervousness, seemingly unable to sleep. She was close enough that he knew she would hear him.

“Are you alright, Ori?” Kíli asked.

She glanced at him and nodded. Her brothers were huddled behind her, putting themselves between her and the mouth of the cave. “I almost lost Dori today and Fíli.”

His heart twinged slightly, but he ignored it. “I’m glad everyone’s okay.”

“How’s Miss Willow?”

“Shaken, but okay. Thorin offered to let her go back to Rivendell. He actually said elves without a hint of malice.”

“They took care of your mother and you. More so than some of your own people did. Dwarves see that as being one of the most honorable things a person in this world can do.”

Kíli was starting to think that’s what his father was: honorable. Probably honorable to a fault. If anything, Kíli could tell that Thorin cared about Willow, would protect her, even at risk to himself. He could have fallen just as much as she could have out there.

“What’s that?” Ori was pointing at something in front of him.

Kíli looked down and saw that the line between the sword’s hilt and sheath was glowing blue. He sat up and grabbed the sword and pulled it out. The sword was glowing. Gandalf has said it would do so if orcs or goblins were present.

He heard the sound of gears and the crack of wood and stone.

“Wake up!” Thorin shouted. “Wake up!”

Before the Company could do anything, the floor of the cave opened up like a door and they fell down a chute of tunnels until key landed in a giant wooden cage. As they barely got their bearings, a horde of goblins attacked them, yanking and clawing at them. The Company tried to fight back but there were too many of them. Kíli was pulled away from his mother and found himself near Ori. He tried to protect her as much as he could a goblin rushed towards and knocked him and Ori over the side of the platform. He heard his mother screaming and Ori’s voice echoed in his ears.

He grabbed the girl and pulled her on top of his chest, hoping to absorb most of their fall. Kíli closed his eyes, preparing for impact.

Chapter End Notes

atamanel – endearment meaning breath of all breaths

Ori has a POV next!

End Notes
Come see me on tumblr at fromtheboundlesssea

feel free to message me about anything! I even have mood boards (of sorts) to my fics!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!