H is for Hercules

by GemmaRose

Summary

Luffy doesn’t want to be a hero, it just kinda happens.

Or: a shameless Hercules AU where Hades is pink and fluffy.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
Chapter 1

“I don’t get it.” Luffy frowned, tucking his hands behind his head. There was still something like half a year left until Rayleigh was supposed to be done training him, but now he was being lead through a forest of stone pillars on an island way bigger than Rusukaina. And Rayleigh was being stupid and not telling him why.

“I’ve explained it before.” the old man said, looking over his shoulder to fix Luffy with a glare. “Were you not listening?”

Luffy shrugged, and started picking at an irritating booger in his nose. If Rayleigh wasn’t talking about training, he got kinda long-winded and boring, and Luffy wasn’t good at paying attention to boring stuff. At least the old man didn’t usually mind, he was pretty cool like that.

“While your fighting strength and techniques are quite impressive, you need more than just combat training.”

Luffy nodded, but the rest of Rayleigh’s words kinda blurred together as he heard a faint crash. It sounded like a fight, and a fight would be the perfect thing to break up all this boring walking. Then someone screamed, and Luffy bounded away from Rayleigh towards the noise. It wasn’t long before he could sense the fighters, one scared and angry human versus one bigger and angrier thing that was kinda human but not quite.

“Not so fast, sweetheart.” sneered a voice that Luffy instantly disliked.

“I swear, Jack.” threatened a voice which Luffy thought sounded much nicer. Or at least like it didn’t belong to someone he’d want to punch in the face. “Put me down or I’ll-”

“Ooh, I like ‘em firey.” said the first voice, and Luffy ducked around the last stone pillar to see a massive thing that looked like it was half human, half hairy elephant. It would’ve been super cool if not for the squirming normal-size guy trapped in its left fist.

“You don’t know what you’re-”

“Hey!” Luffy interrupted the normal-sized guy, stepping into full view of the hairy elephant thing. Oh, yeah, Ray wanted him to work on being more polite, so he should probably figure out if this thing was a guy or a girl. He frowned at it for a second, then came to a decision. “Hairy elephant guy!” suddenly both pairs of eyes were fixed on him. He reached up to tilt his hat back as he looked up, but his hand fell to his side after meeting nothing but hair. Right, Rayleigh was keeping his hat until he was strong enough to go back to his nakama.

“Stay out of this, human.” hairy elephant guy snarled. Luffy crossed his arms.

“No. Put him down or I’ll-”

“Keep moving, kid.” said the guy, talking over Luffy, which was kinda rude.

“I’ll fight you.” Luffy finished, planting his feet on the edge of the water. Hairy elephant dude was big enough that it only came up to his ankles, but it would easily reach up to Luffy’s knees.

“I can handle Jack myself, you idiot.” said the guy held in Jack’s left hand, kicking at nothing. His hands and arms were pinned to his sides by giant fingers, though, so Luffy doubted that. Even Sanji would have trouble in that position, and there was no way this dude was a better kicker than Sanji.
“Still gonna fight ‘im.” Luffy grinned, activating Gear 2 and leaping up to Jack’s face level. “Jet Pistol!” his knuckles slammed into Jack’s left eye and the elephant guy roared, releasing the normal sized guy as he staggered back with both hands clutching his face.

It took a few more Gear 2 punches and one Gigant Pistol to drive Jack into the deeper water near the waterfall, and when the hairy elephant guy went down to his knees Luffy armoured up his fist for a haki-coated Gigant Rifle. Jack’s nose broke with an impressive spray of blood, and Luffy pushed off of the toppling unconscious body to land in water that was only knee deep.

Rayleigh was there to catch him before he could face-plant, and once they were on dry land Luffy was subjected to a very stern glare. “New rule, no wandering off while I’m talking to you.”

“Yes, Ray-san.” Luffy said, squirming free of his teacher’s hold. The skinny guy was sitting on a rock where the waterfall pool drained into a river, and the late afternoon sun bouncing off the water made the pale spots on his hands and face look like gold. Spotted-guy was definitely more interesting than whatever Rayleigh was trying to tell him right now, so he walked over and held out his hand.

“Hi, I’m Monkey D. Luffy. Who’re you?”

Spots-guy looked at Luffy’s hand like it was gonna grow fangs and bite him if he shook it. “Trafalgar Law.” he said after a minute, apparently done wringing out his spot-brimmed hat because he put it on his head. “My friends call me Law. At least they would if I had any friends.” he smiled, but it wasn’t a particularly happy smile. “Well, thanks for everything, Straw Hat. It’s been a real slice.” he made a weird gesture with his hand, like cutting away from his forehead, and turned to start walking away down the river.

“Oh, Torao!” Luffy called after him, stretching an arm to grab the guy’s sleeve. “Walk with us! We’re going to, uh, somewhere.” he grinned.

Ray smacked him with a haki coated hand, and Luffy let his arm snap back to its normal proportions.

“Don’t think old man Silvers likes that idea very much.” Law smirked. “I’ll see you ‘round, Straw Hat.” he turned around and started down the river again, waving briefly over one shoulder.

Rayleigh smacked him on the back of the head, and Luffy started following him again with a little more spring in his step.

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Law turned away from the river after a few dozen yards, starting into a patch of jagged-edged rock formations informally known as the knifelands. He had to figure out how to tell Doflamingo about how badly the negotiation with Kaidou’s representative went without setting himself up for any sort of “discipline” tonight.

The slight whistle of string through the air was the only warning he got before the pink-feathered demon was standing in front of him in the flesh, smile firmly in place. “Law.”

“Speak of the devil.” he said dryly, crossing his arms.

“Law. My right hand man, my heart, my prodigal son.” Doffy beamed, the expression setting Law even more on edge. “Why the long face?” he stepped closer, stooping and cupping Law’s chin in one hand. “I thought you wanted to be out of town, so I gave you an easy job. You should be happy!” his smile didn’t falter even for a moment, and his eyes were hidden by those hideous pink shades, but his eyebrows drew closer together. “Unless you have bad news for me?”

“I gave it my best shot, but Kaidou may no longer be dealing with you.” Law looked away, but
Doflamingo gripped his chin harder and forced him to look back.

“What?”

“His representative wanted me as part of the deal.” Law scowled, wishing he could slice Doflamingo’s hand off and get the hell away from the creep. “It was an offer I had to refuse.”

“Fine.” Doflamingo released his jaw and straightened up, turning to stride towards the capitol. “Instead of subtracting two months from your bargain, I’m gonna add two on, okay?” the blond grinned over his shoulder, sharp and vicious. “Give that your best shot.”

“It wasn’t my fault.” Law protested, hands curling into fists. He’d hoped to leave out his encounter with Straw Hat entirely, but if shifting the blame would get him back to his crew faster than he’d do it in a heartbeat. “It was that maniac, Straw Hat.”

“Straw Hat?” Doflamingo paused, turning around. “I thought he was dead.”

“So did I.” Law lied, doing his best not to think about the day he’d held the younger captain’s life in his hands. Doflamingo didn’t need to know about that, not now and not ever. “But he’s not, and he’s here.” Law almost said that Straw Hat was travelling with Silvers Rayleigh, but decided against it. No need to give the feathery bastard any more information than he had to.

“Well, no matter.” Doflamingo grinned, strings flying from his fingertips and dragging Law closer by the arms and legs. “I know just how you can redeem yourself, Law.”

“How?” Law asked after a minute. As much as he hated Doflamingo, playing along was the fastest way to get back to his crew. The strings around his limbs loosened, and Law tensed as the man behind the damned things stepped right up against him, pink fluffy coat obscuring his entire peripheral vision.

“Lure Straw Hat to his death.”
Chapter 2

“Straw Hat-ya! Luffy! Thank God.”

Luffy turned, and a smile split his face as he realized who was approaching. “Hi, Torao!”

The taller man stopped in front of him and bent over, chest heaving. Why was he wearing a jacket when it was so warm out? Silly Torao.

“You’ve gotta help.” Torao gasped, looking up with wide golden eyes. “At the coliseum- a fruit user- he’s gonna destroy the building!”

The coliseum. That was where Old Man Ray wanted him to train while they were here. If it got wrecked they’d have to go back to Rusukaina, and that’d be boring. “Which way?” he asked, pushing up his sleeves. Torao pointed towards a big round building, and Luffy grinned. He could make that, easy. “Hey, Torao, watch this.”

“No, Straw Hat-ya, I-”

Luffy shot his arms forward and up, and grabbed the lip of a tall building on the next block. “Gum Gum Rocket!” he yelled, pulling his arms back to normal size and launching himself through the sky, Torao screaming at his side. Luffy laughed, and as the round coliseum building approached he twisted to take the brunt of the impact. Torao was cool, but he probably wouldn’t like getting smashed into the ground at high speed.

“But you’re okay?” he asked, getting to his feet and dusting himself off. They’d come in through a wall, which was kinda oops since he’d been aiming for the roof, but he hadn’t counted on Torao being so heavy.

“I’ll be fine.” the building suddenly shook, and the pale bits of Torao’s face got even paler. “But not if the building comes down on our heads!” he scrambled up and gave Luffy a shove. “This way!”

Luffy reached up to adjust his hat, but his hand met his hair and he remembered that Rayleigh was wearing it right now. He wasn’t strong enough yet, but beating up a guy who could take down a building would be a good way to get stronger. Better than fighting dumb beasts, at any rate. The hallway ended in a T, and Luffy gasped at the view afforded by the wall of glassless windows.

There was a round ring in the middle of the building, surrounded by water and high walls. Standing on it was a huge bulky guy with a fat scaly purple tail and claws for hands, and patches of scales all over the rest of his visible skin. The guy lashed out with his tail and gouged a deep furrow in the wall, making the building shake and the watching people on top scream and run. Stupids, if they weren’t going to fight then why were they here?

“I’mma fight him.” Luffy declared, grabbing the edges of the window and backing up a few steps. He’d made a new friend, was gonna fight a really cool looking devil fruit user, and Rayleigh probably wouldn’t even be mad at him for running off. Today was shaping up to be a good day.

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“A stirring performance, Law.” Doflamingo grinned as Law entered the man’s private box. “Two thumbs way, way up for my leading man.”

Law shrugged, walking past the blond to lean on one of the window sills. “I just did what I was
told.” he said, doing his best to keep a neutral tone as he looked down on the fight. Luffy hit hard, hard enough to take off one of the rapidly multiplying heads with each blow. Usually the Mythical Zoa Snake-Snake fruit, Model: Hydra was only useful against opponents who fought with a blade, but it seemed like Doflamingo’s intuition had been correct about Luffy. The rubberman was plenty strong, but not very bright. He hadn’t seemed to grasp yet that the more heads he destroyed the more powerful his opponent would grow.

“Knock him in the water, you rubber idiot.” Law muttered under his breath, wincing as Luffy was knocked almost out of the ring. “Before it’s too late.”

The Hydra got a few more blows in, shattering a mouthful of teeth before coating all dozen or so remaining sets in jet black haki and biting into Luffy’s shoulder. The crowd had stopped fleeing, and now many of them were cheering. Whether for Luffy or the Hydra, Law couldn’t tell.

The Hydra got its teeth in Luffy’s arm, and flung the rubberman against the wall. Luffy found a handhold, and Law may have held his breath a little as he watched the stare-down. Luffy seemed to be contemplating something, and the Hydra was definitely gauging his next attack. Thankfully the fighting fish weren’t out today, so all Luffy had to worry about was getting knocked in the water.

“Aim for the chest you moron!” someone yelled from the stands, and Luffy grinned. He shifted how he was clinging to the wall, and Law watched as he seemed to sorta compress one leg. His skin went unnaturally pink, and steam rose from his body. Then he moved faster than any pirate Law had ever seen, and suddenly it was Luffy in the middle of the ring and the Hydra clinging to the wall. But the Hydra’s zoan form wasn’t built for hanging from anything, and before the man could shift back he was falling into the water.

Someone in the crowd cheered, and Law smirked. “Well, whattaya know?”

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“Luffy, you have to participate.”

Luffy groaned and leaned back over the railing of their balcony. They’d been here for months now and despite Rayleigh’s warnings he’d never fallen off even once, so he didn’t really listen as the old man started chastising him for doing it now. “But it’s so boring!” he whined. “I’ve already beat up everyone else who’s fighting today. At least on Rusukaina it was fun.”

Ray sighed and set the straw hat down on his nightstand. “Luffy, this isn’t about fun, it’s about—”

“Getting stronger, I know.” Luffy groaned, leaning back further so he was hanging by his knees. “I was getting stronger just fine on Rusukaina.”

“You’re competing today and that’s final.” Rayleigh said, and Luffy heard him leave the room. He could sense the old man’s movements, and best guess said the guy was going down to breakfast. Breakfast here was awful, they didn’t have any meat at all.

“The great Monkey D. Luffy, moping on a balcony.”

Luffy was on his feet in an instant, facing the man who’d just appeared in the room. A smile spread across his face as soon as he realized who it was, and a second later he was in the room hugging the taller man. “Torao!”

Suddenly he was hugging a throw pillow, and Law was sitting on the couch. “I overheard you whining earlier.” he said, crossing his legs at the knee and spreading his arms on the back of the couch. “How interested are you in playing hooky?”
“What’s hooky?” Luffy asked, sitting down on the foot of his bed and crossing his legs. “Is it a card game, ‘cuz Nami says I suck at those.”

“No.” Law grinned, small and brief but definitely genuine. “Playing hooky is when you ditch what you’re supposed to be doing and instead go around doing whatever you want to do.”

“Oh. Then yeah, let’s play hooky.” Luffy sprang to his feet, but stopped before taking a step. “We can’t, though. Rayleigh would catch us.”

Law smirked, and held out his hand. “Room.” A small blue bubble formed over his palm, then vanished. “Shambles.” he twisted his hand like he was going to cross his pointer and middle fingers, and suddenly they were on the roof. Luffy’s mouth fell open, and he dropped the pillow in his arms.

“So cool!” he blurted, bounding over to grab Law’s hand and look at it. “How’d you do that?” he asked, peering at the blotchy tattooed skin.

“It’s my devil fruit.” he said simply, pulling his hand free and muttering Room again. This time Luffy was watching, so he could see the bubble expand past him. “Shambles.” Law twisted his fingers again and they were on a different roof, several blocks away. Luffy laughed, and thought he caught a brief flash of teeth in Law’s answering smile.

“Let’s get breakfast.” he said decisively, hopping down to the street. “There’s gotta be somewhere around here that serves meat.”

Law laughed, a short and very nice sound, and did his Room-Shambles trick to get down to the street. “I think I know a place or two.”
Chapter 3

It was well into the evening before Law convinced Luffy to sit down for more than the time it took to stuff his face with meat. Thankfully they were near a public garden, one of the handful which didn’t close at sundown, and Law steered them down the stairs towards a bench.

“Today was fun.” Luffy mused, smiling fit to burst.

“I guess.” Law shrugged.

Luffy laughed that weird but somehow endearing laugh of his and folded his arms behind his head.

“That guy’s face when we ran out of the restaurant was priceless.”

“I still can’t believe I let you talk me into that.”

“Yeah, all it took was pointing out you didn’t have enough cash to pay.” Luffy laughed again, and Law couldn’t help but smile. He’d been supposed to figure out Straw Hat’s weaknesses today, but nothing jumped out at him. The teen was immune to poison, couldn’t be hurt by blunt weapons, and between his reflexes and haki he was basically immune to bladed weapons as well. And on top of all that, Law thought he might have developed a small (ok maybe not so small) crush at some point because he’d never actually wanted to be near someone before. Well, there was Bepo, but Bepo was too fluffy to count.

“Hey, Torao?” Luffy leaned in towards him, their shoulders resting together.

“Hmm?” Law tilted his head slightly. This was the quietest Luffy had been all day, including when they were trying to sneak away from some angry literally pitchfork wielding townsfolk after Luffy ate half the farmer’s market.

“I like you. Like, a lot.” he said quietly, sliding sideways until his head rested on Law’s shoulder. “But I gotta leave soon.”

“Really?” Law frowned. Straw Hat had only been here for a few months, but he was already such a fixture at the coliseum that it was strange to think of the place without him. “Because you’re bored?”

“No.” Luffy shook his head. “I gotta meet back up with my nakama.” a smile stole across his face, softer and more fond than any Law had ever seen.

“Tell me about them.” Law said, and that soft little smile swelled with pride.

“Zoro’s super strong, he’s gonna be the World’s Greatest Swordsman. He’s kinda dumb though, and he gets lost all the time.” Luffy chuckled, and Law only hesitated a moment before carding his fingers through the rubberman’s hair. “He fights with Sanji all the time, too. Sanji’s my cook, he kicks people super hard and is really dumb about girls an’ stuff.”

“Only about girls?” Law smiled.

“Pretty much. He’s all lovey dovey with Nami, even though she hits him a lot. Nami’s my navigator, and she’s the absolute best.”
Luffy kept going, and the longer he spoke the more Law missed his own crew. What he wouldn’t give to be away from Doflamingo and back with them.

“Torao’s thinking about something.” he said after he finished talking up the literal skeleton who had apparently joined his crew just before they reached Sabaody.

“Not really.” Law said, the lie slipping out on reflex.

“Hmm.” Luffy pursed his lips, and grabbed Law’s face with one hand. “Liar.”

Law rolled his eyes, and pulled Luffy’s hand far enough off his face to be able to work his jaw properly. “Just my crew.”

Luffy grinned, and suddenly went from halfway lying on Law to sitting up with his legs crossed and hands gripping his ankles, an eager expression on his face. “Your crew?”

“Yeah.” Law rubbed the shoulder Luffy had been leaning most heavily on. “We’re split up at the moment, and-”

“You miss them.” Luffy interrupted.

Law paused, then exhaled heavily. “Yeah, I do.”

“I know the feeling.” Luffy smiled, small and sad, and turned to sit properly on the bench again, drawing one knee up to his chest. “Being alone is worse than being hurt. Old Man Ray is nice, but, well...” he paused, looking down, and Law wondered what was on his mind. “It’s... better, with you.” Luffy looked back up with a small smile.

“Sometimes it’s better to be alone.” Law said quickly, looking away. He had to remember why he was doing this, why he’d agreed to let Doflamingo control him again.

“What?”

“Nobody can hurt you.” Law stood up and walked over to a nearby reflecting pool with a broken statue. Luffy was just another enemy of Doffy’s, one who could be the ticket to his freedom and a reunion with his crew. Except, he wasn’t sure he could do it.

“Torao?” Luffy joined their hands, stepping into Law’s field of vision. “I’m not gonna hurt you.”

Well, fuck. How was he supposed to respond to that? “And I don’t want to hurt you, so...” Luffy was pulling him in, leaning up with his eyes half shut. “Let’s both do ourselves a favour and...” Law could easily step back, easily break away and remain as loyal to Doflamingo as he’d ever been, but he no longer wanted to. “Stop this, before we-”

Luffy pulled him into a kiss, brief and chaste but so wonderfully warm, and Law couldn’t bring himself to pull away.

“Alright, break it up!”

Silvers Rayleigh’s presence was almost as oppressive as Doflamingo’s, and Law shivered as he pulled away from Luffy. “Sorry.” he said, and mentally kicked himself. Intimidating though Rayleigh was, the old man had no power over him. Still, he didn’t want Luffy to get in trouble for him doing his job, so he kept going. “This was my idea.”

“Of course it was. Luffy’s not smart enough to evade me all day on his own.”
“Am too!” Luffy huffed, crossing his arms.

“Without Trafalgar you wouldn’t have gotten out of the hotel.” Rayleigh said flatly, and Luffy pouted. Law had to admit the man had a point. “Come on, you need to apologize for ditching today’s fight.”

“One sec, Ray-san.” Luffy dug into his pocket, and pulled out a scrap of paper. Wiggling paper. A vivre card?

“Luffy-ya, it’s fine.” Law waved a hand dismissively.

“Well, if you ever need to find me... here.” Luffy pressed the paper into his hand and Law gripped it tightly between his fingers, lifting the little rough-edged square to shoulder height. Luffy stepped in close, lifted up on his tiptoes again, and pressed a kiss to Law’s cheek before waving and vanishing out of the garden after Rayleigh.

Law watched the paper in his palm inch towards his fingers, following the man it came from. When it reached his first knuckle he pinched it and sat down on a nearby circular bench to take his hat off. Holding the fluffy dome upside down, he pulled the inner hem thing away from the rest of the hat. Bepo’s card was tucked in there behind the brim, and after quickly labelling Luffy’s he tucked the new card in at the back of his hat.

“What is wrong with me?” he muttered, setting the hat back on his head and slumping forward. He shouldn’t be feeling this way, not for someone Doflamingo was trying to eliminate. Luffy’s card would burn up when Doflamingo made his move, and even if he wasn’t present to witness the battle Law would know. He would know, and it was going to hurt almost as bad as it would if Bepo’s card turned to ashes in his hand.

A song popped into his head, and Law groaned. It was some stupid, sappy love song that had gotten ridiculously popular recently. He must’ve heard it a dozen times today, running around the city with Luffy. And now it was going to be stuck in his head all night, unless he could get it out. Well, he needed to clear his head before reporting back to Doflamingo anyways. He picked a random path in the garden and started down it, singing under his breath.

“If there’s a prize for rotten judgement, I guess I’ve already won that. No man is worth the aggravation, that’s ancient history been there, done that.”

If only he had his crew with him. Actually, no, they’d be the chorus in this song, if not even more blunt. Shachi and Penguin would be their nosey obnoxious selves and probably try to be his wingmen. Jean Bart would be a smug asshole about it, when he wasn’t trying to stop Penguin and Shachi from being stupid. Bepo, at least, wouldn’t be too bad. He didn’t really understand human attraction, it was part cultural thing part species thing, but Law was sure his first nakama would be supportive in his own way.

By the time Law had hummed his way to the last verse, he was more or less back where he’d started. “At least out loud, I won’t say I’m in-love.” he took a seat on a round bench near the garden wall, and slumped over with a sigh. It was late, he should go back to Doflamingo and deliver the bad news. Luffy’s only weakness was his crew, who were scattered god-knew-where and therefore not useful as a threat. Or, well, they probably could be useful as a threat but Law wasn’t going to mention it. Some things were a step too far.

“So, Law.”

Law stiffened at the familiar voice, the towering presence behind him which could only mean
Doflamingo had gotten impatient and sought him out.

“Do you have some good news for me?” the pink-coated demon asked, leaning in far too close for Law’s comfort. Probably on purpose, the bastard. “What is the weak link in Straw Hat’s chain?”

Law gritted his teeth, and forced himself to exhale slowly. It was stupid and risky, but he couldn’t take Luffy from the rest of the Straw Hat Pirates. Not even for the sake of a faster reunion with his own crew. The Hearts were safe on Zou, they had Jean Bart and Bepo to lead them. Without Luffy, the Straw Hats had no-one.

“Find someone else for this.” he said as he sat up straighter, managing to keep his voice level. “I’m through.”

“I’m sorry, could you repeat that?” Doflamingo asked, laying a hand on Law’s shoulder. “I don’t think I heard you.”

“I’m not doing this anymore.” Law turned, rising to his feet. Annoyingly, he was still shorter than the feathery bastard. Probably because the monstrously tall asshole was crouching on the round bench instead of actually sitting.

“Law, Law, Law.” the blond tutted, putting a finger under Law’s chin and tilting his head up ever so slightly. “My sweet, deluded little minion.” he moved his hand to Law’s shoulder, long fingers digging into Law’s shoulder blade without applying much pressure at all. More intimidating than the show of physical power, however, was how he kept his tone so casual. “Aren’t we forgetting one teensy-weensy, but ever so crucial, little tiny detail?”

Doflamingo moved like lightning, and Law grunted as he was half thrown against the garden wall, half pulled by strings sprouting from the stone. The razor-sharp threads bit into his neck, his wrists, pressed against his arms and chest through his shirt.

“I OWN YOU!” Doflamingo roared, and Law had to focus on his painfully restricted airway to not be influenced by the conqueror’s haki imbued in those words. He’d belonged to Doflamingo once, a lifetime ago, but not now. Not anymore.

“You work for me!” the blond bellowed as Law kicked his legs, straining to find purchase. His hat fell off, but he didn’t care. The only thing that mattered was breathing, he had to keep breathing. Most of the threads released, freeing his arms and leaving him to hang solely from his neck. More string wound around his throat, and Law managed to get his fingers under some of it to pull himself up a little bit.

“If I say ‘sing’, you say, ‘hey, name that tune’. If I say, ‘I want Straw Hat’s head on a platter’, you say...” Doflamingo stopped just in front of him, and Law looked aside. He knew what he had to say to get himself released, but he couldn’t look his former captain in the eyes as he said it.

“Medium or well done.” he spat. The strings around his neck loosened, and all at once he fell to the ground, landing hard on his ass. His hands were shaking as he shifted forwards into a kneel, his chest heaving with rapid, shallow breaths. Not now, dammit! He couldn’t afford to show weakness in front of Doflamingo. “I’m not doing it.” Law said, lifting a hand to cover the slices on his neck. They weren’t bleeding too heavily, despite his pounding heart, so they couldn’t be more than superficial wounds. He would live, he’d survive this like he’d survived the White City and Amber Lead Poisoning and his first time serving under Doflamingo.

“I’m sorry, you hear that sound?” Doflamingo asked rhetorically, crouching a few feet away. “That’s the sound of your freedom fluttering out the window. Forever.”
Law looked down at his hands, at the symbols of his crew emblazoned on the backs of them over pallid childhood scars, and firmed his resolve. The Heart Pirates would be fine without him, they were safe on Zou, they had each other and the other minks. He looked back up and glared straight at Doflamingo’s stupid pink sunglasses. “I don’t care.” he snarled, rising to his feet. “I’m not going to help you hurt him.”

“I can’t believe you’re getting so worked up over some guy.” Doflamingo scoffed.

“I’m not.” Law snapped back, though he could feel his cheeks heat with a blush as he turned and walked over to his hat. Luffy’s vive card was sticking out of its hiding spot, since he hadn’t had a chance to pin it in yet like he’d done with Bepo’s. “It’s- I’m not going to be part of some scheme to bring him down.”

He had to keep talking, had to act like he was confident in Luffy’s strength. Doflamingo didn’t pick fights he felt he couldn’t win, so Law had to convince him that he couldn’t defeat Luffy. That was the only way to keep the rubber idiot safe. “In a fair fight, you’ll lose. You can’t beat him.” he picked up his hat by the bill, its weight familiar and comforting in his hand. “He has no weaknesses, he’s gonna-” Law turned to Doflamingo with a smirk, which died as soon as he saw the blond’s wide grin.

He straightened up as his hat flew out of his hand, twisting as Luffy’s vivre card lifted up out of the inner band and floated over to Doflamingo. “I think he does, Law.” Doflamingo pinched the piece of paper between his fingers, flicking his left hand in a familiar gesture. Strings curled around Law again, tugging both his arms and his left leg back hard enough to knock him off balance, making the thread around his throat bite in painfully as he tipped forward.

“I truly think, he does.” Doflamingo grinned, holding up the weakly fluttering piece of paper.

Chapter End Notes

The confrontation with Doflamingo is based on this comic by the lovely flaggermousse on tumblr. There was initially supposed to be a fourth chapter with Luffy agreeing to fight wearing a seastone cuff if Law got released from his deal, but it just wasn't flowing, so you can imagine that yourself.

End Notes

Luffy doesn’t recognize Law in this AU because Law wasn’t at the auction house. He’s gonna be fucking ecstatic to find out about Bepo.

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